

Habitat World



September 2012



FAITH

HOPE

LOVE

IN THIS ISSUE:

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- » Give the gift of Habitat

- CELEBRATING CLARENCE JORDAN
- TRACING THE IMPACT OF TITHE
- A PRAYER FOR SHELTER

Foundations

From Habitat CEO Jonathan Reckford

Improve, Increase and Inspire



STEFAN HACKER

Just prior to the publication of this issue of *Habitat World*, I turned 50. That seems a lot younger now than it did a few decades back! Milestone birthdays — often filled with great celebration and “not so subtle” reminders about growing older — tend to make us reflective. We examine what has come before and imagine what lies ahead.

I often think about the fact that Clarence Jordan, the spiritual father of Habitat for Humanity, never saw the incredible impact of his work. I consider Clarence a true prophet who gave himself completely to living out God’s love in this world. Along with Millard Fuller and other supporters of Koinonia Farm, he developed the idea of partnership housing, but he died in 1969 just before the first house was completed.

Through Habitat, however, Clarence’s legacy lived on and has grown into a worldwide ministry that has helped more than 2.5 million people. It has been an amazing journey, and this year, as we celebrate the births of Clarence and Florence Jordan 100 years ago, we also celebrate the lives that have been transformed by Clarence’s determination to live out the gospel.

Clarence measured every situation against the life and teachings of Jesus and wrote about spreading the radical ideas of the gospel message. His words continue to challenge us as we seek to act with courage and boldness. Joe Gatlin, Habitat’s director of U.S. field operations, reminds us on page 10 that Clarence would urge us to look forward. He would call upon us to renew our commitment to this work and to be faithful in our efforts to serve in partnership with the poor.

With that mindset, our board of directors approved a new strategic plan for Habitat in June. During the planning process, stakeholders around the world were clear that their desire was to have God at the center of our efforts. The new plan is deeply rooted in our Christian faith and also broadly inclusive in a way that welcomes everyone’s participation.

Because 1.6 billion people around the world still lack adequate shelter, Habitat’s strategic plan calls for us to increase our reach and our depth of impact. Repeatedly in the Scriptures, God tells us to love our neighbors and to care for the poor. Our response is that we will commit to improve, increase and inspire. We will help families improve their shelter conditions. We will partner with others to increase access to shelter, and we will seek to inspire action to end poverty housing.

I hope that you will pray with us and for us as we bring people together to build homes, communities and hope. ♣

JONATHAN T.M. RECKFORD
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
HABITAT FOR HUMANITY INTERNATIONAL

Habitat World

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MISSION VISION

A world where everyone has a decent place to live.

MISSION STATEMENT

Seeking to put God’s love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities and hope.

WHAT WE DO

Habitat for Humanity organizations build, renovate and repair houses in partnership with people in need of adequate housing. Homeowners are selected locally by Habitat organizations based on their need for housing, ability to repay a no-profit loan and willingness to partner with Habitat. Loan repayments contribute to help build and repair additional houses. Because Habitat’s loans are no-profit, they are affordable for low-income partners.

WHO WE ARE

Habitat World is the educational, informational and outreach publication of Habitat for Humanity International. The magazine is free to anyone who wishes to receive it.

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Your content guide to Habitat World

Koinonia Farm, the birthplace of Habitat for Humanity, was founded in 1942 as a "demonstration plot for the Kingdom of God."



STEFAN HACKER

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A guide that helps you give the gift of Habitat



ON THE COVER
This year marks the 70th anniversary of Koinonia Farm and also would have been the 100th birthday of its founder Clarence Jordan. This issue celebrates Habitat's spiritual roots, which run deep in Koinonia's rich soil.

IN EVERY ISSUE

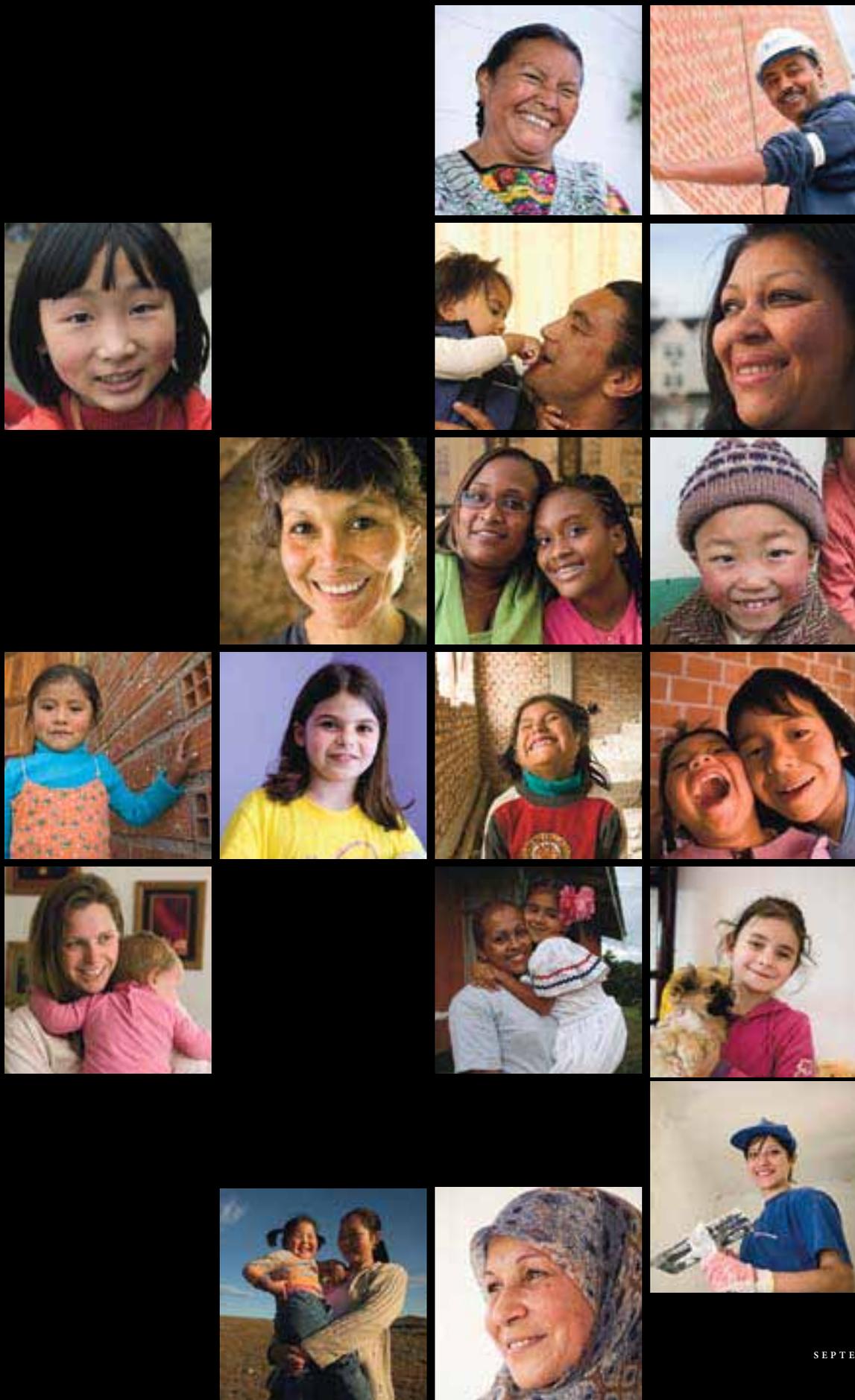
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[AROUND THE WORLD]

WHY WE BUILD

Habitat for Humanity has a vision of a world where everyone has a decent place to live. The joy of putting God's love into action brings people together to build homes, communities and hope.

For Habitat, 'why' isn't a question. It's the answer — it's *why* we build. To know just how many reasons there are, you only have to see the smiling faces of those who have felt the far-reaching effects of Habitat's work. And every face has a story.

Visit habitat.org/whywebuild to read more.

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Making a difference in the Dominican Republic

1 [DOMINICAN REPUBLIC] More than 50 Delta Air Lines employees traveled to the town of Haina to help 15 families build new homes in partnership with Habitat Dominican Republic. The weeklong build jump-started Habitat's larger revitalization plan for the region, which includes new construction, home repairs and rehabilitations, as well as micro-finance assistance, financial education and land-rights training.

The Haina trip marks Delta's ninth international build with Habitat. "One thing I always walk away with is a stronger appreciation for what I have," says Barry Matthews, a Delta team leader for the trip. "But more importantly than that, a stronger appreciation for what happens when you do for others. I always tell my fellow volunteers to never underestimate the impact they are having on the lives of those we serve through Habitat for Humanity."

This trip, Delta's crew of volunteers worked alongside local partner families to build healthy, concrete-block homes in Haina. The new housing replaces the make-

shift, dirt-floor structures that previously served as homes for these families. "Delta's donations and volunteers will help improve the living conditions of many in Haina," says Cesarina Fabian, Habitat Dominican Republic's executive director, "and provide critical support to our ongoing efforts aimed to serve more than 100 families in the region."

2 [UNITED STATES] As part of its 100th anniversary celebration, Catholic Charities USA is presenting Centennial Medals to individuals and organizations that contribute to the reduction of poverty in the United States and that are committed to similar principles of faith-based social services.

On Aug. 25, Catholic Charities USA's president, the Rev. Larry J. Snyder, joined Habitat CEO Jonathan Reckford on a house build in Atlanta. Snyder also presented Reckford and Habitat for Humanity International with a Centennial Medal for Habitat's commitment to "provide service to people in need, to advocate for justice

in social structures, and to call the entire church and other people of good will to do the same.”

3 [MONGOLIA] Habitat Mongolia completed its second consecutive “Blue Sky Build” this July, with international volunteers joining local residents to build homes in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar. Each home was built with polystyrene blocks, added insulation that means families will use less coal to keep warm during Mongolia’s vicious winters.

The largest contingent of volunteers came from New Zealand, but support also came from Australia, China, Hong Kong, Korea and the United States. Thirty-year-old Maitsetset Myagmarsuren worked with volunteers on her home during the July build. A single mother supporting two sons, she envisions her new home as a base for her children’s future. “I want my children to come home straight from school and do their homework with peace,” Myagmarsuren says. “I want them to become educated people whose lives are better than their mother’s.”

4 [ARMENIA] During the 1990s, a dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan resulted in nearly 1 million refugees. This summer, Habitat Armenia decided to host a weeklong “Peace Build,” bringing together families, neighbors and international volunteers to build houses in the town of Tavush, not far from the Azerbaijan border.

More than 50 percent of Tavush’s population lives in deteriorated, overcrowded homes with limited access to heating or water. Habitat Armenia has created a variety of solutions, including the construction of new, affordable houses as well as the completion and reinforcement of long-unfinished homes. Habitat has partnered with more than 900 low-income families since work began in Armenia in 2000.

5 [HAITI] Last year, hundreds of international volunteers joined President and Mrs. Carter in Leogane, Haiti, to build houses with earthquake-affected families. The 2012 Carter Work Project returns to the same community this November to build 100 more homes.

The Carter Work Project will conclude a

▣ Windows on the Work



[BEND, OREGON]

Serve and Preserve

Volunteers for Bend Area Habitat’s deconstruction crew were tasked with an unexpected job this summer: disassemble an old Oregon State Police building. The affiliate estimates the salvage job brought in \$26,000 through recycling programs and ReStore sales and kept 50,000 cubic feet of usable materials out of local landfills. In fact, some of the former police headquarters’ 2x4s were used in the construction of Bend Area Habitat’s 100th home, built in June.

STEFAN HACKER



Habitat partner family member Mariluz Encarnacion built and celebrated alongside Delta volunteers and Habitat Dominican Republic staff this spring.

International news



HABITAT IRELAND

“Transformational change can take place when people mobilize around a positive vision and follow through with purposeful action.”

— President Michael D. Higgins

Irish President Michael D. Higgins receives a tour of a recently renovated Habitat house in Dublin.

[ELLENTON, FLORIDA]

Strong savings

In Florida, intense heat and extreme weather make “sustainable building” mean even more. Manatee County Habitat’s latest neighborhood will feature 18 houses as strong as they are energy-efficient. Polystyrene-insulated concrete forms make up the homes’ walls. Volunteers pour concrete into the forms to create walls that can withstand hurricane-strength winds. Reflective, galvanized roofing, spray-foam insulation and high-efficiency windows further save energy, and costs, for the families that will soon call Hope Landing home.

two-month observance to bring attention to the need for safe and decent housing, which begins on World Habitat Day, Oct. 1. “Last year, Rosalynn and I worked side by side with families left homeless by the 2010 earthquake and Habitat volunteers to build desperately needed homes in Haiti,” says President Carter. “We were both deeply moved by the experience in a country we have known and loved for years. We have a deep personal investment in the future of Haiti and look forward to returning”

6 [LESOTHO] Until October 2011, orphans Maleshoane, Mpho and Jesi Sebeko lived by themselves in a deteriorating, one-room *rondavel*. Sixteen-year-old Maleshoane took care of her younger siblings

Mpho, then 14, and Jesi, 12. “The roof of the old house would shake whenever the wind blew and we feared it would be blown away,” Maleshoane says. “The door had holes and would let in cold air, which was very uncomfortable especially during winter.”

Nearly a year ago, Habitat Lesotho built the siblings a new, two-room house and a ventilated pit latrine with the help of a Global Village volunteer team from the Netherlands. In a country where 53 percent of children have lost parents to HIV/AIDS, Habitat Lesotho brings in partners to further improve the lives of orphans and vulnerable children. For the Sebeko children, that meant they received a sheep from World Vision, a gift that helps them financially and enables them to stay in school.

WHERE WE WORK

Habitat for Humanity started in the United States in 1976, and today its work reaches around the world. Currently, Habitat is at work in all 50 states of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Territory of Guam, the U.S. Virgin Islands and other countries around the globe, including: Argentina | Armenia | Australia | Bangladesh | Bermuda | Bolivia | Bosnia and Herzegovina | Brazil | Bulgaria | Cambodia | Canada | Chile | China | Colombia | Costa Rica | Cote d'Ivoire | Dominican Republic | Egypt | El Salvador | Ethiopia | Fiji | France | Germany | Ghana | Great Britain | Guatemala | Guyana | Haiti | Honduras | Hungary | India | Indonesia | Jamaica | Japan | Jordan | Kenya | Kyrgyzstan | Laos | Lebanon | Lesotho | Macedonia | Madagascar | Malawi | Malaysia | Mexico | Mongolia | Mozambique | Myanmar | Nepal | Netherlands | New Zealand | Nicaragua | Northern Ireland | Paraguay | Philippines | Poland | Portugal | Republic of Ireland | Romania | Russia | Serbia | Singapore | Slovakia | South Africa | South Korea | Sri Lanka | Tajikistan | Tanzania | Thailand | Timor-Leste | Trinidad and Tobago | Turkey | Uganda | Ukraine | Vietnam | Zambia

7 [REPUBLIC OF IRELAND] For more than a decade, a pair of derelict structures sat as eyesores in Dublin's Inchicore community. Today, those buildings are home to two Habitat partner families, renovated as part of a new venture between Habitat Ireland and Dublin's City Council. The council is identifying properties that Habitat can renovate, with the goal of reviving distressed city neighborhoods.

Local volunteers and future Habitat homeowners helped build the first two homes in Inchicore. When they finished, a special guest came to congratulate them on their work: Ireland's President Michael D. Higgins.

"Real engagement and meaningful participation by each and every citizen in building community and strengthening civil society is not just a hollow aspiration," Higgins told volunteers. "The work undertaken by Habitat for Humanity and its partners on this project is a visible manifestation of the kind of transformational change that can take place when people mobilize around a positive vision and follow through with purposeful action."

8 [SRI LANKA] Just a couple of years after the long-dreamed-of end to Sri Lanka's 30-year civil war, Habitat Sri Lanka used its ability to bring people together, rebuilding peace while building homes. In August, "Rebuild Sri Lanka" brought volunteers of disparate backgrounds together to build new houses with 24 low-income families in Negombo. More than 100 international Habitat supporters joined

local volunteer ranks for the build.

During their time in country, visiting volunteers had the chance to build walls with soil-compressed blocks and to see the solar cookers, water tanks and home gardens made available to each family. Volunteers also got to meet with homeowners such as Anthony Rajendra and Mary Inoka and their two children, Sugandika and Sudishanethini. It's a new start for her family, Inoka says: "I am most excited about starting a home garden to grow vegetables and fruit to help feed my children."

9 [TRINIDAD & TOBAGO] Hundreds of volunteers took part in Habitat Trinidad & Tobago's third annual Women Build in May. More than 60 women volunteers kicked off the first day of a monthlong build in La Platta, Valencia.

La Platta is where Jaiwantee Singh has raised her four children — ages 9 to 18 — in a two-room shack. "It's been very hard in this place, very hard," Singh says. "My children didn't ask for this, so I struggle and keep my children in mind."

"We join forces with female volunteers all over Trinidad & Tobago to bring relief to mothers in desperate need for a 'hand up' and not a 'hand out,'" says Habitat's national director, Jennifer Massiah, "to escape the hardship of the squalor of poverty. Together we can make the difference, one home at a time." ♠



[AHUACHAPAN, EL SALVADOR]

A commitment affirmed

From 2008 to 2010, U.S.-based volunteers with Thrivent Builds Worldwide worked alongside families in Santa Ana, El Salvador, to create 75 homes and a community called Villa Esperanza. In 2011, Habitat El Salvador took its holistic approach a few miles down the road to Getsemani. Thrivent Builds Worldwide supporters are again partnering with Habitat. During the three-year project, up to 90 Thrivent volunteer teams will work to improve the living conditions of 138 Getsemani families.

[ACROSS THE UNITED STATES]

The fabric of our walls

In the spring of 2007, volunteers from Cotton Inc. installed insulation in 12 homes built by Habitat Greater Baton Rouge — insulation created from Cotton's jean-recycling initiative. In the five years since, Cotton's "From Blue to Green" campaign has collected more than 662,000 used jeans, working with partner companies to transform the denim into donated insulation for Habitat affiliates. More than 1,300 Habitat homes have been insulated this way, at about 500 jeans per house.

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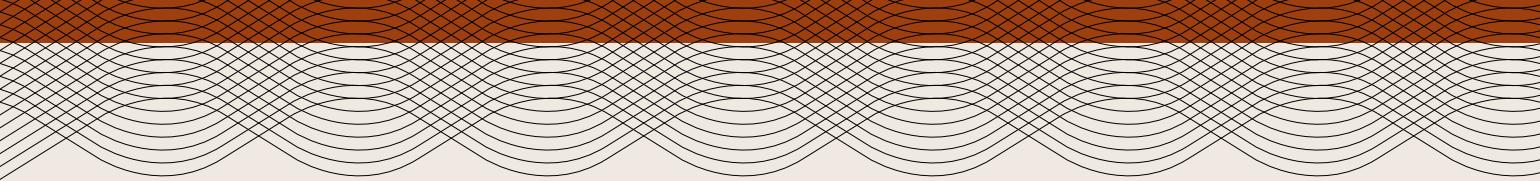
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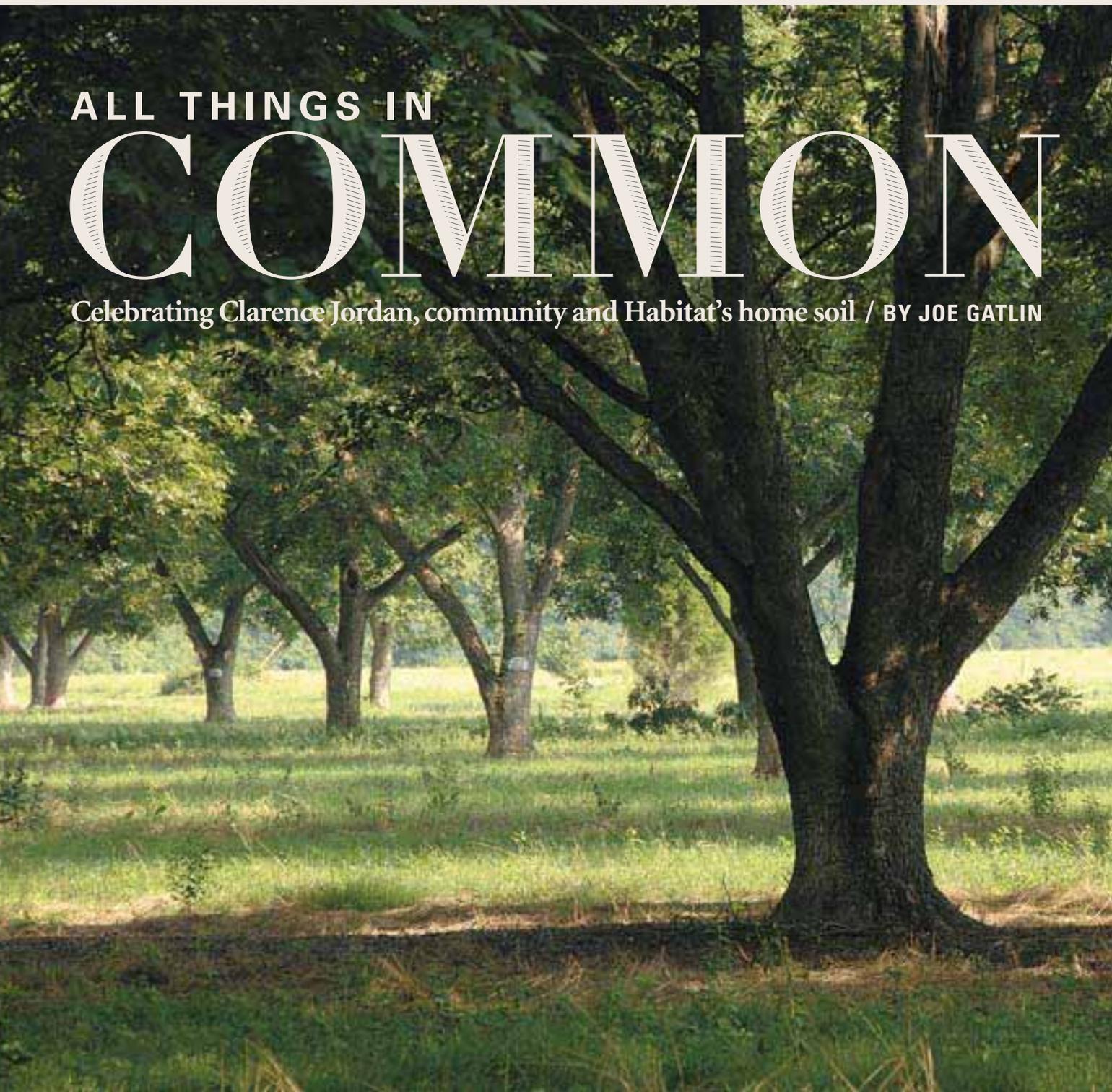
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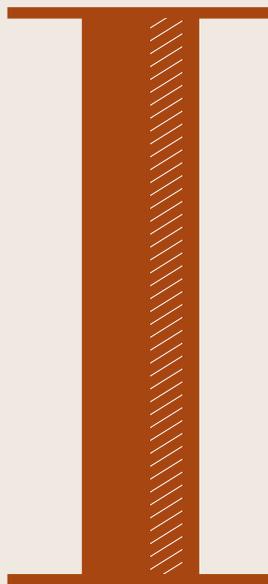
ALL THINGS IN COMMON

Celebrating Clarence Jordan, community and Habitat's home soil / BY JOE GATLIN





STEFAN HACKER



LIKE CLARENCE JORDAN.

But if he were around for his 100th birthday this year, it's unlikely he would feel honored by a virtual befriending or an electronic thumbs-up. Clarence — the Greek scholar, theologian, community-builder, social critic, prophet and farmer — would have wanted those thumbs in the dirt instead, planting seeds of justice and mercy. Or poking the ribs of the slothful to prod them into action or to jolt selfish numbskulls into radical generosity. These things Clarence would enjoy for a birthday celebration.

Clarence and his wife Florence, who would also be 100 this year, founded Koinonia Farm, a Christian community located just south of Americus, Georgia. This fall, Koinonia commemorates the Jordan birthdays as well as the 70th anniversary of their community. Habitat for Humanity's founder Millard Fuller claimed that Clarence was the spiritual father of Habitat. This anniversary is an opportunity for all of us who are Habitat adherents to listen to Clarence, reflect on our calling and renew our commitment to this work.

Clarence as a spiritual ancestor carries personal meaning for me. I'm marking one other anniversary this year: Forty years ago, in 1972 as a sophomore in college, I read Dallas Lee's book *The Cotton Patch Evidence* and first learned about Clarence and the Koinonia Farm "experiment." I was deeply moved, but to explain why that book was so formative in my experience I have to back up four more years.

1968 was the high-water mark of a season of worldwide turbulence; many spirits, including the one we call Holy, were moving across the face of the earth. In August of that year, Clarence and Millard called a group of people to Koinonia and innovated, not from scratch, but with ideas and values that were classic, vintage gospel. Their October announcement of the Fund for Humanity was, I am convinced, more foundational to Habitat than our actual founding in 1976.

The Fund for Humanity was to be collective wealth, a common purse so to speak, that would birth partnership industries, partnership farming and, yes, partnership housing. "What the poor need is not charity but capital, not caseworkers but coworkers," Clarence pronounced in words familiar to all of us in Habitat. "And what the rich need is a wise, honorable, and just way of divesting themselves of their overabundance." Their vision was global (reaching everywhere) and universal (for everyone).

That same fall, four states over in central Texas, as a 16-year-old I was also in the midst of change and searching. I had heard the bid of Jesus calling me to follow him, but the path of discipleship, I found, was obscured by 2,000 years of religious and institutional clutter. I wandered one way and then the other until I spied a landmark, the *koinonia* of the first church in Jerusalem.

Koinonia is the Greek word usually translated as "community" or "fellowship" and most familiarly used in Acts 2:44: "The believers came together and had all things in common [*koinonia*]." My heart was stirred as I read how the people met daily and "broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people." (Acts 2:47) This, I realized, was the fulfillment of Jesus' command to leave everything and follow him. From that point, I was on the lookout for live, tangible, 20th-century examples of *koinonia*.

In Koinonia's story and the founding of Habitat, I saw a coherence and train of development that could only be attributed to the Holy Spirit. Jesus commanded us to give it all away and follow him. The early church did exactly that and found *koinonia*. Clarence envisioned a radical extrapolation of *koinonia* into the Fund for Humanity. Millard established Habitat as an organization that would package and propagate worldwide the Fund for Humanity. In the fullness of this vision everyone, "the whole crowd" as Millard would put it, would gather around the table and break bread with glad and generous hearts.

While Habitat's roots took hold, my wife Nancy and I pursued, and made, a life in Christian community that took us to an inner-city neighborhood in Chicago. In 1976, I was able to make my first trip to Koinonia and had the privilege of meeting Florence. A few years later, as we started housing work in our Chicago neighborhood, I traveled back to Americus to consult at Habitat's headquarters. Then, in a turn of events that I have never humanly been able to explain, we moved in 1986 to my hometown of Waco, Texas — a place where years earlier I could not see *koinonia* — to help start Habitat's work here.

Several years ago I asked a friend and mentor who knew Clarence "back in the days" how she thought he would feel about the growth of his spiritual progeny called Habitat. She thought, smiled and said, "He might not understand it, for after all he was a farmer, but he would be pleased."

The gift of Clarence is not that he rediscovered a specific formula of the early church or that he left us with some memorable sermons. It is that we have a brother who daily, in his boots caked with red Georgia mud, walks with us, encouraging us to be faithful and courageous and to persevere in our calling to contextualize the gospel truth we have been given. ♣

Based in Waco, Joe Gatlin currently serves as director of field operations for Habitat for Humanity International. Visit www.koinoniapartners.org to learn more about this fall's celebrations, which begin with a Clarence Jordan symposium Sept. 28-29.

**“WHAT THE POOR NEED IS NOT
CHARITY BUT CAPITAL, NOT
CASEWORKERS BUT COWORKERS”**

– CLARENCE JORDAN



FROM PEANUTS TO PARTNERS

Clarence Jordan's son Lenny recalls life on the farm where Habitat was born.

AS THE SCHOOL BUS ROLLED to a stop, we saw the tractor with the tree planter and a stack of pine seedlings ready to go. As Daddy emerged from the barn, it was clear he had been patiently waiting for the bus — and he was ready for our help.

The old tractor moved slowly over the rough ground that just the year before still grew peanuts — peanuts we looked forward to picking green to boil. Bouncing along on the tree planter, placing small pine seedlings where marked, I realized that we would not be enjoying green peanuts again.

I didn't really understand that Koinonia could not rely solely on its farming operation due to the economic boycott under way because of views on racial equality. With timber in high demand, Daddy was planting a new vision that day. As I grew into my teenage years, those pines grew tall and straight. Each time I walked through them, I marveled at the orderly rows and the dense mat of needles keeping the weeds at bay. While the pine trees continued their rapid growth, however, Koinonia's community was growing smaller. The economic boycott and physical threats on the farm were having an effect.

Then in the late '60s, things began to change. Daddy had come up with the idea of setting up a "Fund for Humanity" to help nearby residents build better housing for their families. He explained his plan to Millard Fuller, and the concept was simple. Folks who had resources would donate to the Fund for Humanity, helping those without resources. Everyone would work together and partner families' payments on their homes would then go to help build or fix up houses for more people.

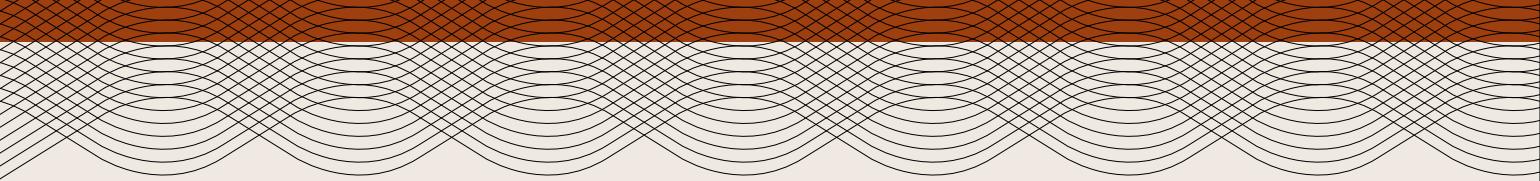
It was just a few short weeks before enough money had been raised to begin building a house. In south Georgia, there is only one good place to build a house: in the shade on a paved road. With those two criteria in mind, my former peanut field — now tall with pines — looked to be the perfect place.

Within days, chainsaws were carving out spaces for houses and roads. The Fund for Humanity's first house soon started taking shape, a place for Bo and Emma Johnson. Within months, construction began on more houses. Volunteers from around the world were helping build these first interest-free homes, reducing the cost of building and allowing more houses to be built.

Looking back, over the 40-plus years since the Johnsons' house was built, it is hard to imagine that the old peanut field — given up first for trees and then for affordable homes for our neighbors — marked the beginning of a worldwide effort to eliminate substandard housing. But that's what happened.

This year, Koinonia celebrates 70 years of simple living, focused on serving others. I might still miss those boiled peanuts we once eagerly awaited each year when I was young, but I now understand the vision that was driving Daddy and Millard when they set up the Fund for Humanity. ▲





EZRA WILLYSTEIN



HEY WHO ARE DEEPLY CONCERNED

are God's people, for they will see their ideas become reality.

They who are gentle are God's people, for they will be his partners across the land.

They who have an unsatisfied appetite for the right are God's people, for they will be given plenty to chew on.

The generous are God's people, for they will be treated generously.

They whose motives are pure are God's people, for they will have spiritual insight.

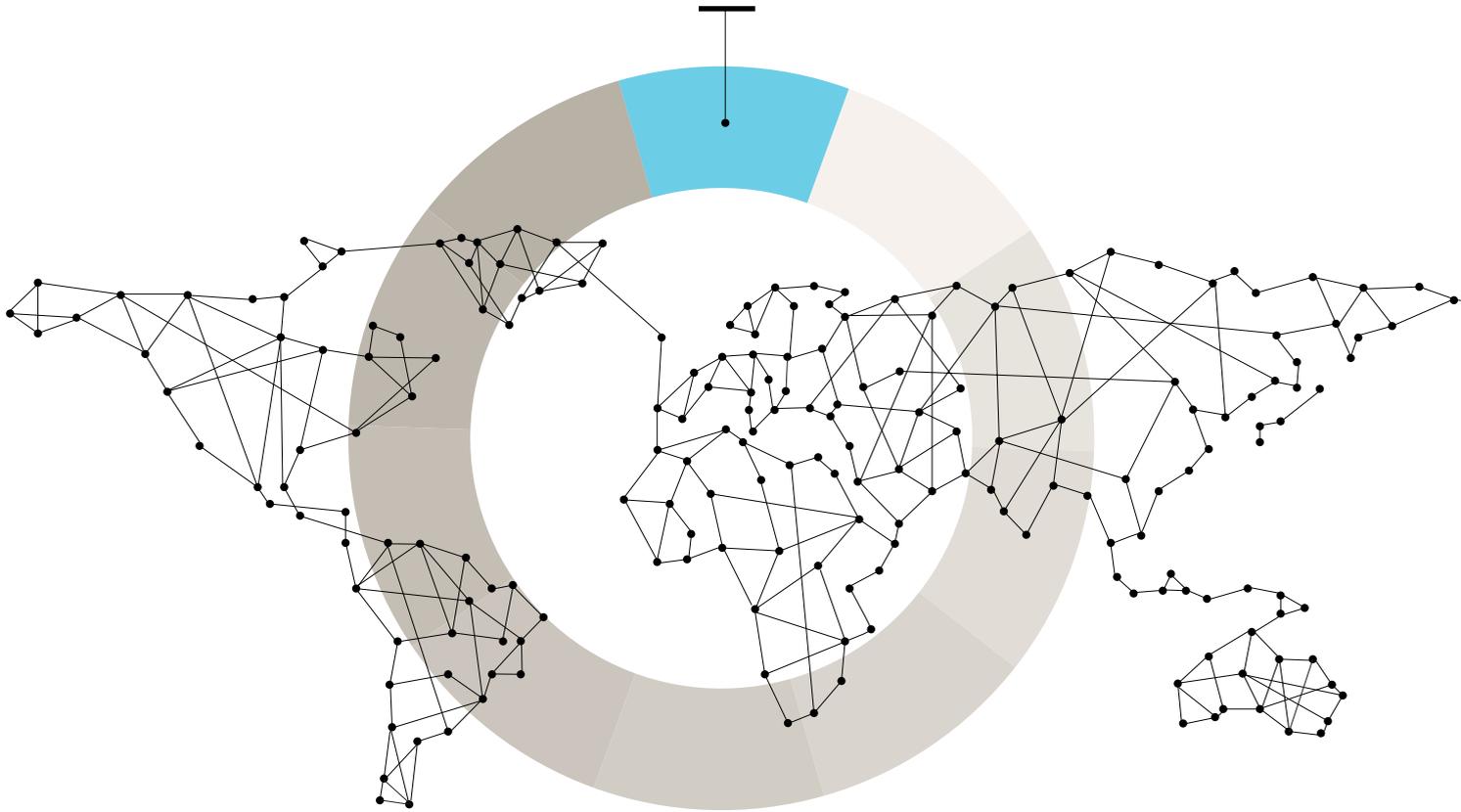
Men of peace and goodwill are God's people, for they will be known throughout the land as His children.

— *Clarence Jordan's Cotton Patch Version of Matthew and John*



View a multimedia celebration of Clarence Jordan and Koinonia Farm at MAGAZINE.HABITAT.ORG

TITHED TOGETHER



Financial support generated by Habitat's tithe program creates connections around the world. **BY PHIL KLOER**



TO UNDERSTAND THE SPECIAL HEARTS of Jean Claude Ntimpirangeza and Judith Uwizeyimana, it's best to start their story in the middle.

In 2009, Jean Claude, Judith and their seven children arrived in Jefferson City, Missouri, from a refugee camp in Tanzania. They could afford only a run-down apartment in a dangerous public housing project.

"They have such a heart to reach out to people," says the Rev. Lisa Deutsch, pastor at Jefferson City Assembly of God Church, which

assisted the family. "They cooked food, carried it around to all their neighbors, introduced themselves, said 'good to meet you.' I don't think the neighbors were overly friendly. It was such an idealistic view of America."

Their idealism was validated when the family moved into a house built with River City Habitat, the Jefferson City affiliate. "God showed me a miracle," Jean Claude says.

That miracle continues, thanks to Habitat for Humanity's tithe program, in which Habitat affiliates are encouraged to donate 10



EZRA MILLSTEIN

percent of all unrestricted cash donations to further the organization's work in other countries. When River City executive director Kelly Smith wanted to tithe in Judith and Jean Claude's honor, the affiliate sent \$8,000 to help build new houses in Habitat Uganda and Habitat Kenya, the two countries where Habitat builds that are closest to the couple's home countries of Rwanda and Burundi.

River City's tithe is one small strand in a vast web that joins the nearly 80 countries where Habitat works, the tithes that bind one to all. "It shows the full-circle aspect of Habitat's ministry," Smith says. "It just shows that it doesn't stop with handing someone the keys. It grows, and continues to grow, in our community and in other lands as well."

THE ROOTS OF TITHING

Tithing is as old as God's covenant with the Israelites. "Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house," says Malachi 3:10. "Test me in this, says the Lord Almighty, and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it."

Tithing in Habitat is as old as the organization itself. "This goes back to the Christian foundations of Habitat," says Doug Murrell, Habitat for Humanity International's director of faith engagement, "the whole concept that I have only a little in my hand, but when I release it and give it to Him, He does something miraculous. In Habitat, people have a little, but when they put it together, miracles happen."

When Habitat founders Millard and Linda Fuller revisited Zaire in 1979 after first applying the "partnership housing" concept there

in 1973, the tithe cycle began. At a home dedication ceremony, Sam Mompongo — an educator and leader who, with the Fullers' blessing, had expanded the model of enlisting volunteers to help families build houses to his own village — took up a collection and presented Millard Fuller with half of it: \$200. Fuller used the money to help start a new Habitat affiliate in Aguacatan, Guatemala.

From that \$200 donation, the entire Habitat tithe program grew. In fiscal year 2011, Habitat organizations around the world tithed more than \$13 million to one another, connecting people who would otherwise never be connected and sending a message that no one is alone. A neighbor, however far away, is always there to help.

BACK TO AFRICA

River City's tithe to Africa was used just north of Judith and Jean Claude's original homes, where Habitat Uganda helped 52-year-old Imalingat Loy, a mother of six, build a home.

"I feel like a thorn just got removed from my leg," Loy says of her new home.

Her family lived in a mud and wattle hut, battling termites that ate the support poles. As subsistence farmers, they grew corn, sweet potatoes and cassava, selling a portion for money that went mostly to medication and school materials for the children.

The family's health has improved since moving out of the hut. "We now sleep in a clean house, and all of us look a lot better and healthier now," Loy says. "We now have good storage space for our food, enough sleeping room for the children where they can read, and we don't have to struggle to get thatch grass for roofing.

"God should bless the people who helped us and keep them for many years."

Even as Habitat Uganda was getting Loy and her family settled, violence erupted in Cote d'Ivoire, as a disputed election escalated into

"We wanted to show that distance does not play any role when we want to achieve the common goal of eliminating housing poverty."

— MARAT JIDBAEV, HABITAT KYRGYZSTAN



HABITAT NICARAGUA



GREATER MUNCIE HABITAT



EZRA MILLSTEIN

Helped by tithe money from Habitat El Salvador, the Calero family built a safe, decent home in the Nicaraguan community of Masachapa.

Indiana's Greater Muncie Habitat and Habitat Bolivia enjoy a thriving tithe relationship.

a brutal armed conflict. When Habitat Uganda heard about the situation, it tithed \$5,000 to help families in the western African country.

'A MAGIC HAPPENED IN OUR LIFE ONE DAY'

In 2009, Habitat Kyrgyzstan sent a \$2,200 tithe from its local fundraising to Habitat Guatemala.

"From our colleague who had been there we heard about this culturally beautiful country and its big housing need," says Marat Jidebaev, Habitat's executive director in the formerly Soviet country. "We found out that with this amount we can build a whole house there. We also wanted to show that distance does not play any role when we want to achieve the common goal of eliminating housing poverty."

In the same time period, Guatemala tithed \$20,000 to Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan's neighbor to the south in Central Asia. As in many countries in the region, safe drinking water is a critical issue; only about 58 percent of the population has regular access to safe water. Water-borne illnesses such as typhoid and dysentery are a serious problem.

Habitat Tajikistan used Guatemala's tithe to build three community reservoirs, provide 150 families with new water filters and mount a water-hygiene education program.

Sixty-year-old Saidahmad Obidov is an art teacher, and his wife Shahriniso is a custodian at the high school in their remote village. "Our water was dirty, and of bad quality," he says. "Our community

in Kumsangir doesn't have good infrastructure and water supply system. The water we used was from contaminated irrigation fields.

"But then a magic happened in our life one day, when Habitat Tajikistan representatives met with our community."

The Obidovs received a new locally made water filter, made possible by Habitat Guatemala's tithe donation.

MORE THAN MONEY

In 1988, Indiana's Greater Muncie Habitat finished its first house and also sent its first tithe donation — \$3,378 — to Habitat Bolivia. Over the next 23 years, Greater Muncie Habitat tithed more than \$200,000 to Bolivia, helping serve at least 86 families there. One thing neither program managed, however, was a visit to see the other.

That changed last year, when Habitat Bolivia's Javier Espada and Celinda Melgarejo spent 10 days in Muncie, attending dedication ceremonies, working at a Habitat ReStore, volunteering on a Women Build and attending fundraising events. Soon, Muncie's Marty Kendrick traveled south to attend the blessing of Habitat Bolivia's 10,000th home. This September, a larger Muncie delegation will visit Bolivia as part of a Global Village trip.

"From that first visit, it was evident there was deep understanding and new friendship," says Lindsey Arthur, Greater Muncie Habitat CEO. "We talk regularly now, share ideas with each other and

In fiscal year 2011, Habitat organizations tithed more than \$13 million, connecting people who would otherwise never be connected and sending a message that no one is alone.



STEFFAN HACKER

can better show our own supporters why this relationship matters.”

“We at Habitat Bolivia completely understand the investment it takes to create a working relationship between affiliates. It is so important that people realize who they are donating their funds to and how this will help the development of that specific region,” says Christopher Sheehan, affiliate relations manager for Habitat Bolivia.

“This is what growth is about, how change is made and how under one vision, both organizations can become one headed towards a common goal,” he adds. “It is a true honor to have [Habitat Greater Muncie] alongside us. We feel really blessed!”

‘GOD WORKING THROUGH HABITAT’

Sometimes a tithe goes halfway around the world. Sometimes it goes a few miles. Habitat El Salvador has recently completed a three-year tithe commitment to Nicaragua.

“We decided on Nicaragua because they were getting back on their feet and they were right next door, so there’s an opportunity for really helping our neighbor,” says Kendal Stewart, international donor relations coordinator for Habitat El Salvador.

“We have tried to cultivate the partnership on a personal level,” she continues. “When Nicaragua hired their new Global Village coordinator, they sent her to El Salvador to train with us for about 10 days.”

In the Nicaraguan community of Masachapa, Lucelia Calero, her fisherman husband Walter and their two children, 8-year-old Wendy and 3-year-old Osmany, were living in a one-room shelter with a dirt floor and walls made of old pieces of zinc.

Using the tithe money sent by Habitat El Salvador, the family began building a safe, decent home with Habitat Nicaragua earlier this year. As the house began to take shape, Lucie Calero reflected: “Habitat has done more in the last six months than what the other

people that were helping us tried to do in the last three years. We are so grateful. This is God working through Habitat.”

CONNECTED FOREVER

To understand the full journey of Jean Claude Ntimpirangeza and Judith Uwizeyimana, it’s best to go back to the beginning, long before River City.

Judith was a teenager in Rwanda in 1994, living a normal, happy life and attending school when genocidal violence broke out, ultimately claiming 800,000 lives. She and her sister fled to the Congo and then to Tanzania, where she wound up in a refugee camp. She lived in a tent for 17 years, married, had two children and divorced.

Jean Claude fled similar violence between warring tribes in Burundi in 1993. When his wife died, he was left to raise four young children on his own, also in a refugee camp in Tanzania. Eventually, he found work there as a pastor and counselor.

On July 19, 2009 — Judith’s voice sparkles when she recites the



RIVER CITY HABITAT

Jean Claude Ntimpirangeza and Judith Uwizeyimana celebrate the dedication of their River City Habitat home.

date — the two met and were soon married. They merged their two families and had a seventh child together, a baby named Shalom.

“I asked God for a miracle — to get a wife,” says Jean Claude. “And I got two miracles — a wife and to come to America.”

After immigrating to Jefferson City, Jean Claude worked two jobs, unloading trucks starting at 4 a.m., then working a full shift in the kitchen at a nursing home. Unable to afford a car, he rode his bike to both jobs. Judith, trained as a nurse’s aide in Tanzania, found a similar job here.

The family of nine moved into their Habitat house in December 2010. At the dedication, volunteers, church friends and Habitat staffers crowded into the house to present them with keys, a Bible and a decorated Christmas tree. Jean Claude spoke, with tears in his eyes, telling the gathering that he had never had his own home.

They were pleased when River City’s Smith explained that they would be connected forever to new homes built in Kenya and Uganda through Habitat’s tithe program.

“For us, it’s part of our Christian walk,” Smith says, “the understanding that our brothers and sisters are not just part of our community; they are people all over the world, to whom we are to give blessings.” ▲



RIVER CITY HABITAT

“God showed me a miracle,” says Habitat homeowner Jean Claude Ntampirangeza, here hard at work alongside his wife Judith Uwizeyimana.

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TO GET STARTED!

PRAYER *for* SHELTER

LEADER:

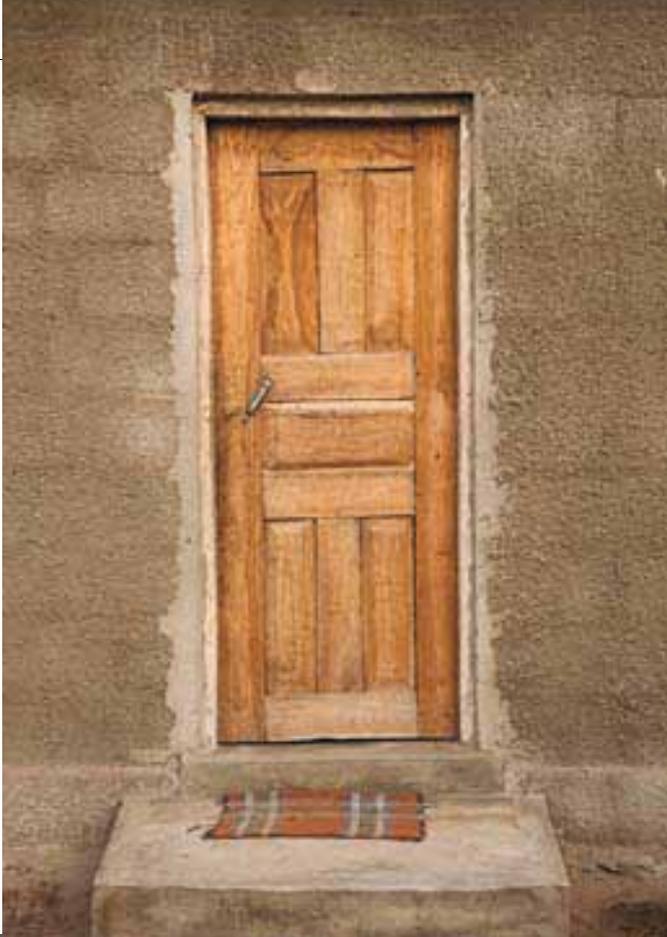
Loving God, you made us in your image and blessed us with wisdom, creativity, skill, compassion and love.

PEOPLE:

Give us sight to see your children in need, ability to hear your call to serve, and willingness to be your hands and feet.



EBRA MILSTEIN



STEFFANI HACKER

LEADER:

You have called us to share our food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter — when we see the naked, to clothe him.

PEOPLE:

Give us willing hearts, Lord, and inspire us to action.

LEADER:

How lovely is your dwelling place, O Lord Almighty! Even the sparrow has found a home and the swallow a nest — a place near your altar, O Lord.

PEOPLE:

Heaven is your throne and the earth your footstool. Empower us with your strength and wisdom to build safe dwellings.



STEFFANI HACKER



LEADER:

When you call upon the Lord,
spend yourselves on behalf of the
hungry and satisfy the needs of the
oppressed. The Lord will always guide
you. He will satisfy your needs and
strengthen you.

PEOPLE:

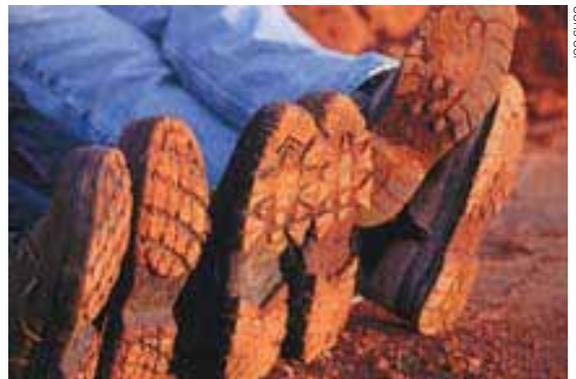
Grant us safety and protect us as we
build your kingdom through building
homes and communities.

LEADER:

He has showed you what is good.
And what does the Lord require
of you?

PEOPLE:

To act justly and to love mercy and
to walk humbly with our God.



JOO CHIOO



KIM MACDONALD

ALL:

Make us into one people — your people — like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.

EZRA MILLSTEIN

LEADER:

Transform our world and transform our hearts and minds.

PEOPLE:

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.



MIKEL FLAMM



Habitat for Humanity International board member Kevin Kessinger has written a song named "Mercy," whose lyrics draw on the message of Micah 6:8. To see more Prayer for Shelter images set to his inspiring song, visit magazine.habitat.org.

Find additional stories and dynamic multimedia presentations at magazine.habitat.org. The freshest features are highlighted on the homepage, but don't miss our archives! Use the magnifying glass icon at the upper right to access even more offerings.

NEW WITH THIS ISSUE

- » Celebrate Clarence Jordan's 100th birthday and the 70th anniversary of Koinonia Farm, Habitat's home soil. Watch a multimedia version of the Prayer for Shelter.
- » Return with a Vietnam veteran as he helps build three houses in the village of Binh Ninh.

RECENT ADDITIONS



A COMMON GOAL

Major League Soccer star Brian Ching teams up with Teresa Urbano to help build her family a new place to live — and play. [▶](#)



GOOD SPORTS

Celebrate high-profile athletes who also serve as Habitat for Humanity volunteers. [▶](#)



ROOM TO PLAY

View a slideshow of Habitat families at play around the world. [▶](#)



IT'S A TEAM EFFORT!

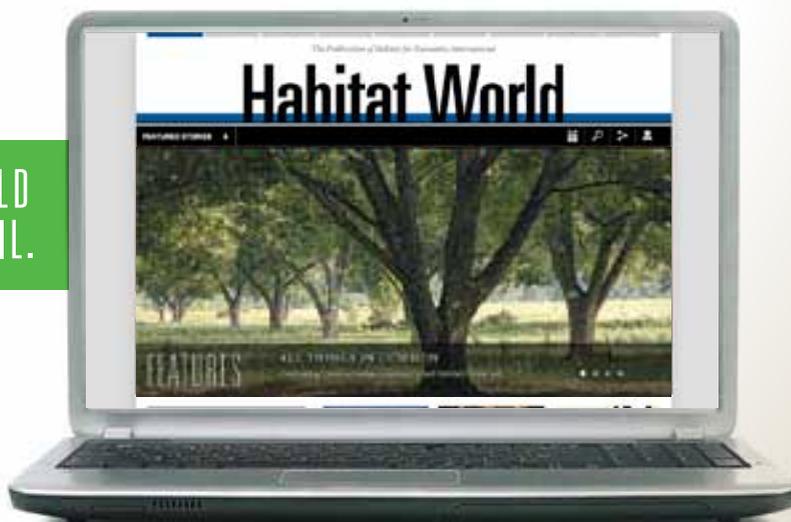
Step up to the plate, take a swing and help Habitat bring more families home! [▶](#)

AND MORE...

Experience the impact of Habitat's work through *Why We Build*, a series of stories that brings home the reasons for our work — and the long-term results. [▶](#)

Read weekly posts on the Habitat World blog from homeowners, volunteers, staff and supporters from around the world.

SIGN UP TO RECEIVE HABITAT WORLD UPDATES AT HABITAT.ORG/HWEMAIL.



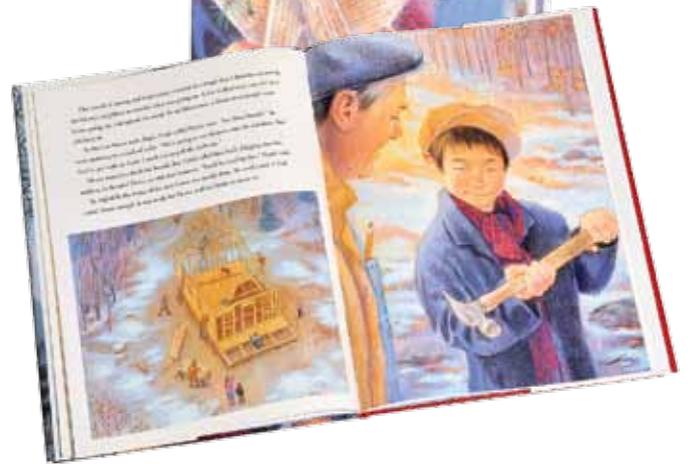
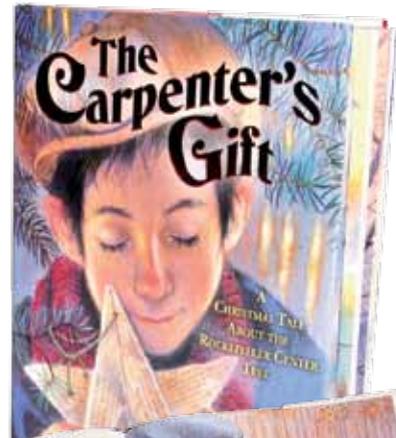
GIFTS *that do* GOOD

As the holiday season approaches — and all year round — consider these creative gift ideas that will help put Habitat on the hearts and minds of others.

A BOY, A TREE AND A WISH

Written by David Rubel in collaboration with Habitat and illustrated by Jim LaMarche, *The Carpenter's Gift* tells the story of a young boy in Depression-era New York whose wish for a decent home comes true in an unexpected way.

Visit habitat.org/thecarpentersgift for a list of online book and e-book retailers. You can also order a commemorative bookplate fashioned from special paper made from the 2010 Rockefeller Center Christmas Tree and a set of heartwarming holiday cards bearing illustrations from the book.



GIFTS FROM THE HEART

Make a tax-deductible donation to Habitat for Humanity in honor of a friend or loved one. Gifts from the Heart donations provide building materials, supplies and support for families around the world who are in need of decent, affordable homes.

Your recipient will be notified by a beautiful personalized gift card sent via email or postal mail.

Find out more at habitat.org/gfth.



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GIFT CARDS ARE AVAILABLE
IN DENOMINATIONS
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 **MORE GREAT GIFT IDEAS ON PAGES 26 AND 27!**

FOR FOUR-LEGGED FANS

Turn a walk in the park into a chance to talk about Habitat. Large pet bandana (\$2.50) includes a one-color screen-printed imprint on a 100-percent cotton triangle. Doggie tote (\$11.95) includes two collapsible bowls for food and water and a detachable zippered case for storing treats or baggies. Tote features a front pocket with hook and loop closure and a side mesh pocket.



ALWAYS BE PREPARED

Indispensible, durable and compact, this all powder-coated stainless steel tool is perfect for the pockets of those who like to be prepared. Tools include knife, file, saw, scissors, can and bottle opener, corkscrew, and two screwdriver tips. The Habitat logo appears in white on one side. \$8.35



PLANT AN IDEA

Sit this bamboo blossom kit on your kitchen window sill or in a special spot outside and grow marigolds as you help grow awareness of Habitat. Kit contains a floral planter sporting the Habitat logo, seed packet, peat pellet and instructions. \$3.75



GIFTS *that do* GOOD

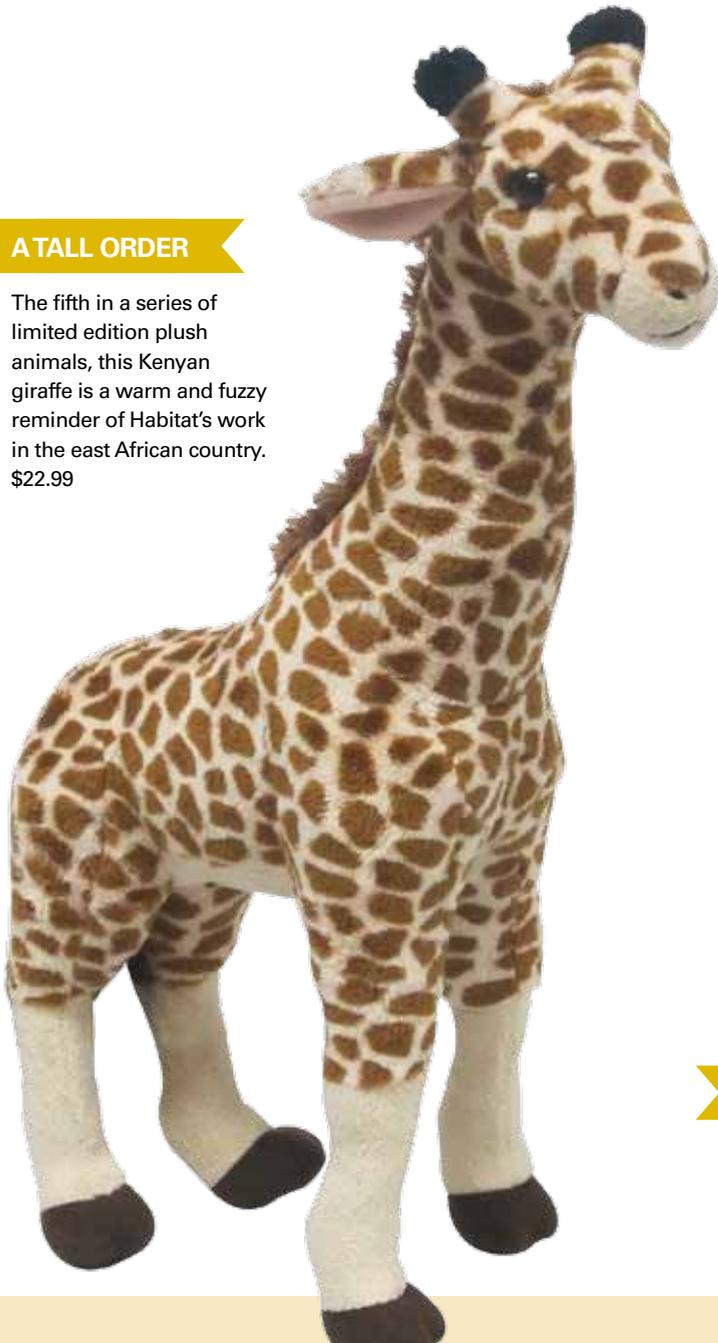
DRINKING IT ALL IN

The perfect gift for a new homeowner and a wonderful conversation starter with guests. Neonware glasses have a tapered body and a contrast base. Set of four. \$11.75



A TALL ORDER

The fifth in a series of limited edition plush animals, this Kenyan giraffe is a warm and fuzzy reminder of Habitat's work in the east African country. \$22.99



PEACE, LOVE, HABITAT

This 100-percent-cotton tie-dyed tee is made in Haiti and shares the Habitat message with a little bit of retro fun. Available in sizes S-2X. \$20.90

 VISIT HABITATSTOREONLINE.COM TODAY!

FieldNotes

Perspectives from around Habitat's world

Light and Life BY PHILLIP JORDAN

Habitat homes and vocational training open new possibilities for the blind in Cote d'Ivoire



CHRIS MATTLE

Blind since 2004, Amani Yao, left, also participates in a local Habitat partnership that provides training in Braille and teaches ways for him to be an active farmer in the fields of his family's cocoa farm.

Even with moonlight breaking through crumbling mud walls and a shredded scrap-tin roof, Amani Yao couldn't see the rodents that scurried across his dirt floor each evening. He didn't see the malaria-spreading mosquitoes either, before they descended stinger-first.

The 54-year-old Ivorian has been blind since 2004, the result of too many bites from the black flies that swarm the banks of the nearby Bandama River. Without vaccination, an accumulation of bites from infected flies over a long period of time can lead to a parasitic infection. Doctors call the resulting condition *onchocerciasis*. River blindness. People in Amani's

village of Beriaboukro call it *man konin*. Scratching.

"He was itching all the time," Vincent Yao says of his brother. "He would say, 'My eyes are painin' me.' But I couldn't do anything because I didn't know what happened."

More than 100 of the town's 1,500 residents have watched the world slowly disappear due to the disease. Amani knows he will likely never see that world as he did before. But he is still thankful for the light, a sensation that he says returned more fully to his life in 2007. That's when Habitat for Humanity Cote d'Ivoire entered his village with a plan to build houses and improve the lives of people living with river blindness.

The "Healthy Homes" initiative is part of Habitat Cote d'Ivoire's larger Orphans and Vulnerable Groups program, which builds subsidized housing for orphans, leprosy patients, disabled adults and other vulnerable people. Through partnerships with other aid organizations, families also receive ventilated latrines, insecticide-treated nets to prevent malaria, health education and livelihood training for the blinded.

"We are serving the need of those who might not get any help otherwise," says Richard Yao, Habitat Cote d'Ivoire's national director. "We are also bringing different people together to work as one, to build better communities to live in."

It has been five years since Amani, Vincent and five other relatives moved out of the darkness of a cramped, windowless home and into a house with a concrete

floor, sun-soaked windows and secure doors. To Amani, it's more than a safe, comfortable place to sleep at night.

"I may be blind," Amani says, "but I can tell when there's light. I can feel the difference in me. I was frustrated in the old house, but I feel at ease here. I can feel the warmth. I feel the glow."

RIVER FEARS

That such a vindictive disease could come from the inviting waters of the Bandama seems particularly cruel. The river flows like a vein through central Cote d'Ivoire, widening as it passes Beriaboukro, situated up a steep slope from the river's eastern edge. Tall, wispy-leaved trees provide shade near the shore. Kids race downhill, past rubber trees, trying to be the first to reach a long log that makes an ideal platform for showy leaps into the water.

Fathers and their sons fish in the river, using nets to catch carp and shrimp. Teenaged boys toss their younger brothers in the water here when it's time for them to learn to swim. Mothers paddle in a dugout canoe to reach the river's western bank, where they sell their crops or barter for other goods.

Where the women walk ashore on the western side of the Bandama is just to the north of a much broader swath of cleared brush: a river exit lane cleared by hippopotamuses. The giant creatures swim far south along the river during the day but always return to dry land opposite Beriaboukro each evening. Everyone living along the river knows not to cross here near dusk.

But on the Bandama, everyone is learn-

ing that the biggest river danger comes in a much smaller size.

LIFE REBUILT

As part of Habitat's holistic response here, advocacy efforts have encouraged the government to more regularly provide pills that can easily and effectively inoculate residents against the blinding effects of the Bandama's blackflies. Habitat Cote d'Ivoire also partners with a nonprofit training center here called Fraiche Rosee, which teaches vocational skills to those who have already lost their sight.

For Amani Yao, that training means he is learning how to read and write in Braille. He has also relearned something he has known nearly since birth: farming. Amani and Vincent's father left them a cocoa farm



"I was frustrated in the old house, but I feel at ease here. I can feel the glow."

— Amani Yao

when he died. Since Amani went blind, Vincent has had to tend the crop largely by himself. Now, agriculture specialists are teaching Amani to recognize herbs and crops by feel, to navigate rows of turned soil, and to physically do the work of a farmer.

Amani's agricultural training brings hope that he can help in the fields again soon. In the meantime, Vincent continues to serve as his younger brother's guide and protector, leading Amani around the village by hand.

"We used to work together at the farm, to do everything together," Amani says. "So I'm thankful that we can continue to live and work together. My brother has done things for me I will never be able to pay him back."

Vincent now has peace of mind to visit the fields each day, knowing that his brother is safe and comfortable at home. Vincent says their house — along with Amani's training — has given his brother renewed confidence. And that in itself has taught their community a lesson, too.

"(My village is) learning that being blind is not the end of the world," Vincent says. "Life is not finished." ♣

● Perspectives from around Habitat's world

Fresh Vision BY PHILLIP JORDAN

Students in the Hult Global Case Challenge give Habitat new ideas to try

For six months, a worldwide competition challenged business students in more than 130 countries to provide new ideas that could help leading non-profits solve some of the world's most pressing social issues. One of the questions posed: How can Habitat for Humanity multiply its ability to build safe, affordable housing with more low-income families?

Rolando Farrach, Simon Battah, Lesly Gonzalez and Frans Simanjuntak came up with an answer that ties housing solutions with job opportunities and financial services. In April, the four Boston-based graduate students pitched their plan to a panel of judges and were named the winner of the 2012 Hult Global Case Challenge on affordable housing. Judges included Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus, former New York Gov. Mario Cuomo and Habitat for Humanity International CEO Jonathan Reckford. Reward came in the form of a \$333,000 prize to partner with Habitat and have the proposal tested in the real world.

Reckford says the entire experiment is a welcome infusion of bold thinking. Habitat's ministry has been blessed to receive support from millions of volunteers, donors and advocates to help build a world where every person has the right to a decent home. With 1.6 billion people in need of adequate shelter, though, "building homes is only one step in meeting this lofty goal," Reckford says.

"To truly address housing on a global scale, we need innovative ideas and new technologies," he continues. "The Hult Global Case Challenge students have deliv-

ered. They have provided us with newfound inspiration and forward-thinking possibilities to pursue."

In partnership with the Clinton Global Initiative, the Hult Global Case Challenge annually invites college and university students to solve the world's most pressing social issues. This year, thousands of bright minds devoted fresh thought to the world's education, energy and housing needs.

"This was an invaluable opportunity to get feedback from really intelligent students who could look at all our successes and challenges and propose new and creative solutions," says Dave McMurtry, Habitat's senior vice president of strategy.

The Boston team members brought perspectives from disparate backgrounds. Farrach is from Guatemala, Battah from Venezuela, Gonzalez from Mexico and Simanjuntak from Indonesia.

Still, they all agreed that their approach "should keep our solution focused on giving the necessary tools directly to people to build a house," Battah says. "Use micro-finance to provide financial assistance. Use Habitat's expertise and resources to assist them."

"The other piece is to identify and partner with institutions that provide job opportunities to people at this end of the poverty scale," Farrach says. "Empower them through work, help people build new skills."

Ahmad Ashkar, founder and CEO of the Hult Global Case Challenge, says such socially conscious thinking is what he hopes the next generation of business leaders will remember. "In the next 10 years, these MBA candidates are going to be in leadership positions in their companies," he says. "I just want them to keep in mind how they can use their knowledge and assets to do good." ▲



A team of Boston-based graduate students were named the winner of the 2012 Hult Global Case Challenge on affordable housing.

Coming Home

The camera captures a moment in time



RETURN, REBUILD

THE FIRST TIME VIC ROMBACK SAW VIETNAM, it was 1967. He was a 20-year-old U.S. Air Force loadmaster entering the streets of Saigon with a busload of U.S. military personnel. Loadmasters during the Vietnam War secured cargo for flight: weapons, ammunition, troops. Forty-five years later, on his first return visit, Romback transported a much different load each day: trowels, wheelbarrows, hope. He came back as one of 22 veterans who helped construct three houses with Habitat partner families during the Vietnam Veterans Build in Binh Ninh village.

Romback and his fellow veteran-volunteers marveled at how wheelbarrows worked just as well for pushing laughing children

as they did for hauling materials and how sunglasses so effectively hid dedication-day tears. In the building of walls, they displaced despair. Installing windows, they chased away darkness. Instruments of peace this time around, the veterans and their hosts truly made manifest Saint Francis' powerful prayer. ▲

GO ONLINE » View a multimedia version of this feature online at magazine.habitat.org.

PHOTO BY EZRA MILLSTEIN



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