



Quarterly Newsletter
Fall 2005

BALOGUNS BREAK GROUND ON 25TH HABITAT HOME



Gbenga and Lanre Balogun and family break ground on the 25th Habitat home July 16th on Summit Street.

Gbenga Balogun has only cried two times in his life. The last time it happened was six years ago when he learned he had received permission from his native country Nigeria to travel to the United States to continue his studies in anesthesiology and practice medicine. Gbenga became interested in the opportunity to live abroad when his college roommate, who also left Nigeria for the States, introduced him to the idea. "I did not know how it would go," Gbenga admits. "And it was different for me because I was married and had three children at the time. Everyone else was single. I was leaving behind my family for what I did not know. My youngest daughter who was then seven could not understand why I was going. I remember weeping in the shower."

Despite the heartbreak of leaving his family, Gbenga made the journey to the States and upon his arrival began studying to earn his license to practice medicine. It became too hard, however, to build a life here without his family and so two years after he arrived, Gbenga's wife Lanre and their three children traveled to the United States to join him.

Having his family with him has meant everything to Gbenga, but it has been difficult trying to support his family and trying study for his medical license. "I am still studying and I still hope to practice later on, but right now I am trying to get my family taken care of," he says. Gbenga and Lanre now have four children ages 18, 16, 14 and 2. They live in a small, crowded apartment awaiting their move into Habitat Lima's 25th home, a five bedroom structure located on Summit Street. The family officially broke ground on the home July 16th. "Up to now, to own our home was not affordable," Gbenga says. "Right now we are paying a lot of rent money to someone else for too little space."

Gbenga and Lanre look forward to settling into their own home with their children. Tolu, their oldest son, 18, hopes to begin college in the fall, studying medicine. Their youngest son, 2, can't wait to run and play outside in their yard. "We look forward to living in our home," Gbenga says. "Our little boy likes to play outside and I look forward to seeing him playing outside." Gbenga and Lanre's youngest son also loves dogs. "We'll probably be getting a dog," he admits. "But we will definitely be sending it to obedience school before we let it in the house."



From the Executive Director

Meet Kelly Hackworth... Kelly Hackworth of Delphos began employment with our affiliate on July 5, filling the position vacated by the resignation of Jack Black in early June for personal reasons. Kelly comes to our affiliate with experience in development and fund raising. Kelly was employed most recently as a Prevention Specialist for Westwood Behavioral Health Center in Van Wert. Her prior experience includes working for Ohio State University at Lima as Development and Communications Coordinator. In that capacity she was instrumental in planning and successfully completing a \$1.5 million capital campaign project. She is a 2001 graduate of Ohio State University with an academic focus on business, social, and organizational psychology. Kelly attends St. John Catholic Church in Delphos where she resides with her husband, Mark, and two teenage children, Katrina and Aaron.

Delay, delay, delay... As I write, it is August 10 and we have barely begun construction on one house this year. It seems that "delay" has been the name of our game in 2005. After our special groundbreaking on April 14 on Summit St., I was told that the city regulations under which the area would fall were different than we had experienced previously. The time for getting the needed permits could be lengthy.

So a decision was made to move the planned houses to two other lots we owned at the corner of High St. and Perry St. about a mile south. With clear title to these lots, I thought it would only be a short time until we would be able to begin construction.

But again, more delays confronted us. Finally temporary permits were given to excavate the crawl spaces. Thankfully an excavator was able to fit our work into his schedule. I thought we were on our way at last. But then we were told that one of the planned houses was too close to the street, well inside the thirty foot set-back required by city regulations. A variance would be needed. That the side of the other house, only about 15 feet off the street, was in line with the front of the offending house made no difference. We had to stop work on the house until a formal variance procedure could be acted on.

So one house is underway being constructed for partner family Juna Konst. The variance for the house for partner family Earnestine Ward will be considered August 24. At the same time the plot plan for the Summit St. lots will also be brought for approval.

Our challenge has been to wait, sometimes quite impatiently, for the processes to work themselves out. Knowing that six months of weather acceptable for building has passed by adds to the frustration. Yet we do want to believe that the regulations that have caused delays for us are on the books for the good of all the citizens of the city. So we walk with those who are most directly affected, the partner families, who have shown great restraint as they have waited.

Obviously we must learn from this to avoid similar delays in the future. If there is a "silver lining" it might be found in the potential for fall construction enabling greater use of the volunteer resources on our college and university campuses nearby.



Two lots at High and Perry Streets



Juna Koonst home currently under construction at High and Perry Streets



Juna Koonst home at High and Perry Streets



Summit Street site

Habitat for Humanity -- Lima proudly recognizes Sprint

our first corporate sponsor



Rickie Evans family home,
1014 S. Scott Street.

“It is Sprint’s hope that this will be the first of many homes in which businesses and corporations will step forward to sponsor for Habitat for Humanity.”

Claude Cliborne III

Community Affairs Manager, Sprint

Area youth complete mission work-- build sheds for Habitat

Ken Miller, youth director of Forest Park Church in Lima knew he wanted to organize a mission project for the youth in his congregation this summer. But he also knew he wanted to stay in Lima instead of traveling to a different state or country. “There were two main reasons I wanted to stay in Lima this year,” Miller says. “The first was financial savings. The second and more important reason was to show the needs right here at home, and expose our teenagers to a few of the amazing agencies making a difference in Lima.”

The youth group worked with Church United Food Pantry, Heart Beat of Lima Pregnancy Center, and the Lima Rescue Mission. And while some of their friends were planning get-togethers with friends, swimming parties and shopping excursions, the group of teens dedicated a week of their summer to build two sheds for Habitat for Humanity, Lima.

“Most of our time, energy and sweat went to help build two sheds for Habitat for Humanity,” Miller says. “Working with Habitat helped us realize how blessed we are, and how much good Habitat does for those deserving of affordable housing.”

The team consisted of four teens and three adults, most of whom were unskilled. However, with the help of Habitat Construction Supervisor Stan Bauman, the team was able to construct two sheds and grow closer as a church family in the span of about four days. Here is what two of the teens say about their experience:

“It was a great experience. Any time you can get up early, use power tools, and pound countless nails all for a good cause is definitely worth it! Doubly so if it’s during a heat wave! We started with a desolate lot, many of us having no experience, and left a week later with two (hopefully) sturdy sheds standing.”

Zac, a junior at Bath High School

“Just thought I would let everyone know that I was greatly impacted. To know that you have done something for someone that you didn’t even know was great! The feeling of finishing the entire project was amazing!”

Jesse, a sophomore at Bath High School

Other members of the team included: Karin, a senior at Bath High school; Birtny, a sophomore at Bath High School; Bonnie and Errol Plate; and Ken Miller, youth director at Forest Park United Methodist Church.

Building Houses Building Hope



Lima Area, Inc.
119 North Cole Street
Lima OH 45805

Non-Profit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit #129
Lima Ohio

\$10 a month can build three Habitat for Humanity homes per year

Club 1000 is an annual fundraising program for Habitat for Humanity, Lima Area Inc. It is a grassroots effort to bring together 1000 persons contributing a minimum of \$10 per month or \$120 annually.

One thousand contributors — individuals, groups, organizations, or small businesses — giving \$10 per month would enable the Lima affiliate to construct at least three homes each year — providing simple, decent housing to three families in need. Your membership in Club 1000 will allow you to bring great joy to those for whom home ownership would otherwise be impossible.

If you're interested in becoming a member of Club 1000, please call Kelly Hackworth at (419) 222-4937 or visit www.habitatlima.org.

Interested in learning more about a Women's Build?

Habitat for Humanity, Lima Area Inc. is organizing its first Women's Build scheduled for 2006. If you're interested in participating in training workshops, volunteering to build, or making a financial gift, please call Kelly Hackworth at (419) 222-4937.