

THE HOUSE THAT 1,000 WOMEN WILL BUILD

By Dan Naumovich

Photos courtesy of Habitat for Humanity

Women have always made a significant contribution to the success of Habitat for Humanity - from raising money to swinging hammers. And now Habitat's Sangamon County chapter is looking to amass that goodwill and hard work on a single project through its 1000 Women Strong campaign. "Eighty percent of the families we serve are single moms with children," said Colleen Stone, executive director for Sangamon County. "What better way to help our community solve its long-term problems than by making one of the biggest positive differences in a mother's life - coming alongside her to build strength, self-reliance, and shelter."

The campaign is well on its way to signing up 1,000 women who will donate \$100 each towards the construction of an affordable new Habitat home - and then build it together, alongside the owner-to-be, from the ground up.

"We were inspired to do this by the outpouring of strong female voices in our community. We thought this would be a great way for them to demonstrate their strength," Colleen said.

Jean Pennell is among those who have already committed to the cause. She's been involved with Habitat previously, both as a donor and volunteer.



"I've connected with so many really find people," Jean said. "Seeing the impact first-hand and being part of that change - not just for homeowners, but for our community - is so rewarding and humbling."

Habitat is looking for both individuals and groups to participate. Amy Hagen, community bank president for U.S. Bank, was the first person to sign-on to the campaign. She first became involved with Habitat when she participated on a build with a group from the bank.

"Co-workers saw each other in a different light, had fun, and helped a great cause in the name of the bank," Amy said. "I learned that a willing attitude is all it takes, and that Habitat is an organization like no other."

If you would like to be among the 1,000 women who are joining forces for this project, you can contact



Shayne Squires at 523-2710, ext. 211 or ssquires@habitatsangamon.com.

The organization is also currently accepting applications for its home accessibility program, which installs wheelchair ramps at the homes of people in need. If you know someone who would benefit from this program, please call Scott Saunders at 523-2710, ext. 221.

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