

Purdy is recipient of new Habitat for Humanity home

Written by Darci Tomky

While some people might volunteer at a soup kitchen or at an orphanage, former Holyoke resident Angela Purdy has brought the idea of volunteer work a little closer to home. Picking up a hammer and some nails, she recently began construction on her new Habitat for Humanity house in Berthoud.

Purdy's journey toward a new house began in June when friends encouraged her to apply to Berthoud's Habitat for Humanity.

According to their website, Habitat for Humanity is a non-profit, ecumenical Christian organization dedicated to eliminating poverty housing worldwide. They bring together people with resources and people in need to build simple, affordable houses. The homes are sold at no profit through no-interest loans.

Purdy's application for the house included references, financial information, past history, credit standing and a background check. After reviewing her application, the Berthoud Habitat for Humanity board interviewed her in her home and went on to a unanimous vote that would make Purdy the recipient of the new house.

Purdy noted the board thought she and her two children—Heidi, age 13 and Noah, age 10—were deserving of the house.

On Oct. 17, Purdy received word that her application had been accepted, and the project began on Saturday, Oct. 24.

While Habitat for Humanity has built over 300,000 homes all over the world, this is the third house for the Berthoud Habitat for Humanity.

Without having a family in place, the organization started construction on the house in June, laying the foundation for the house and starting on the garage. In need of a new project manager, they put construction on hold.

When engineers Mike and Marilyn Cook stepped up and volunteered their time as project

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managers, Habitat for Humanity could start accepting applications for the house.

Purdy said while Habitat for Humanity pays for some things, a lot of the materials are from donations. All of the physical labor for the construction of the house comes from volunteers.

Project coordinator Dan Kube is in the process of setting up a database for those who have volunteered their time.

Purdy said volunteers don't need to have any construction experience as she already learned how to nail the floor. Even her son Noah helped out with the project. Besides the construction aspect, volunteers are also needed to do things like bring lunches to the workers.

Since this is Berthoud's third house, Purdy thinks the process will go smoothly and the house could be completed as early as June, 2010.

"I've been overwhelmed with the people stepping forth wanting to help my little family," said Purdy. The number of volunteers may have already set an area record with such a large amount of support for the Purdy family. She said she feels so blessed from the encouragement she has received from both the Holyoke and Berthoud communities.

One exciting thing about the new house, said Purdy, is that it will be a handicap accessible and barrier-free home. Her daughter Heidi was in a car accident in May, 1999. While 13 years old, Heidi is cognitively 3-6 years old. In April she had her 17th surgery—this one helping her with balance and keeping her toe from dragging.

While the family has been through so much in the past 10 years, Purdy knows it is all a part of God's plan, and this Habitat for Humanity house is just another stepping stone for the family.

She said the Berthoud community has been so welcoming, and she and her late husband were going to be moving there, just a few blocks from the new Habitat house, until the car accident in

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1999 drastically changed Purdy's life. Ten years later, she is excited to be living in Berthoud, and she added being in the front range will be a good opportunity for Heidi as she is closer to the medical help she needs.

For more information on Habitat for Humanity, visit their website at www.habitat.org or Berthoud's website at www.berthoudhabitat.org. To volunteer with the Purdy family's new house, email Dan Kube, the project coordinator, at oledanl@aol.com.