

Heart of Habitat



New home rises from ashes

And Habitat builds on after illness claims life of family patriarch



Habitat's Pat Filippone (left) is construction manager on the home for Lorine Ezell (center). Daughter-in-law B.J. Ezell is at right.

Jimmy Lee Ezell's family is keeping his dream alive.

He and his wife, Lorine, had lived in a wooden home in a South Apopka neighborhood for almost half a century. The blender for Deep South food manufacturers and his wife had worked hard to raise a family in the small shotgun house. The lot they owned next door provided room to play.

In 2006, six people still were living in the home on Easter Sunday. That's the night an electrical fire flared up. The brittle wood was no match for the flames, and the house burned to the ground.

Five people were home when the fire started, but by the grace of God, all escaped uninjured.

The loss of their home "really put a strain on everyone financially -- and emotionally," said B.J. Ezell, who is married to the couple's son Thurman. She said her relatives were blessed to have family they could stay with, but they really wanted to get back to their own home.

Thanks to Habitat for Humanity of Greater Apopka, Inc., it looks like the family will have that home. Sadly, Jimmy Lee Ezell, 81, died Aug. 10 before his
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ReStore's deals help dreams come true

Like the little engine that could, an unassuming store behind Habitat for Humanity offices in Apopka makes things happen.

Thanks to the businesses and individuals who have donated items to Habitat's ReStore and to those who purchase clothing, furniture, plumbing supplies, tiles and scads of other new and used discounted

items at the store, ReStore



was able to contribute enough funds to pour the foundation for the Ezell house at 1160 Robinson Ave. in South Apopka and buy supplies for the walls and roof. The store then continued to build the house with hands-on help from enthusiastic volunteers.

And the deals there are worth a look. See Page 2.

IT'S GOOD BUSINESS

ReStore partners with local businesses to raise money for Habitat for Humanity's mission of building homes. If you would like to join our business community and take advantage of tax-deductible giving, call 407-880-8881 to see how we can build together.

Habitat's ReStore offers new, gently used items at bargain prices

Perhaps without even realizing it, YOU are helping to build homes for deserving neighbors. If you've ever shopped at the ReStore at 2001 N. Rock Springs Road in Apopka, proceeds probably went toward making someone's Habitat for Humanity house a reality. And if you haven't shopped at the 8,000-square-foot ReStore, you still can. In fact, why wouldn't you want to? The bargains are amazing.

Does someone in your family need a pair of jeans? Come on down! World of Denim, which closed after 30 years and was one of our business supporters, donated four truckloads of clothes and other merchandise. There are still some left at an unbelievably low price. Plus, the store has some tops to sell. All our clothing is new.

Do you need a new sofa? Some bar stools? A table and chairs? Or maybe a dresser? The store is stocked with lots of furniture, and it's nice stuff. The bar stools are new and from a recent shipment.

ReStore also has some boxed glass tiles. What you can buy retail for \$100 can be had for \$35. There are lamps -- a roomful -- plumbing supplies, and even the kitchen sink.

You'll never know what you'll find here at any given time. Even the staff doesn't know. That's because our partners in the business community, as well as individuals like yourself, choose to assist in

the work of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Apopka by sending us their surplus items. If you have a quality item you no longer want, we even have a truck for pickups. Just dial 407-880-8852.

Remember, browsing is free, and if you do find a lucky purchase, your dollars will be doing double duty by helping Habitat for Humanity make someone's dream of a home come true.



The staff and friends of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Apopka look forward to doing business with you. Among them are (from left) Clement Ellis, Bobbi Mitchell, Ben Williams, Sue Blackwell, Jim Blackwell, and Marie Kiser.

Want to be a part of our next build?

Let's build a home for a single mom and her three children.

Construction is set to start in January. To volunteer, sign up at habitat-apopka.org or at the Habitat office. Special skills are welcome but not required. Just bring a willingness to learn. There's lots to do.

Volunteer Spotlight

MICHAEL KAYE'S LEADERSHIP, DEDICATION SPUR BUILDING

When Habitat for Humanity of Greater Apopka was ready to raise the walls on its most recent home, volunteer coordinator Debbie North sent out a request for help. Michael Kaye was among those who answered the call, and he has been a leader on the project ever since. "Michael works as our top crew leader on the job site, and he is available for us any time during the week that we need him and every Saturday, all day," Debbie said. "He is always the first to arrive and always the last to leave." When Tropical Storm Faye assaulted the area, Michael's house was damaged. Even so, he delayed making repairs on his own home to work on the Habitat building site. If that wasn't enough to make him an exemplary volunteer, he also worked for the Red Cross for many hours during a two-week period.

New home rises from fire's ashes in South Apopka

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dream family could be realized. But family members said they feel his presence on the building site and are keeping his hopes alive.

At a dedication ceremony Nov. 15, Lorine Ezell's family provided a barbecue for volunteers who helped build the house, which was 90 percent complete and will soon be ready to move into.

Attending was Bill Pass, program manager for Orange County's Housing and Community Development rehabilitation division, which provided \$50,000 toward construction.

"Every day we're improving somebody's life somehow," he said.

Volunteer coordinator Debbie North and construction manager Pat Filippone, who has built 11 Habitat homes, said major helpers included Steve Reddick, Arctic Cool, STE Electric, plumber Jimmy Elzinga, Wharton-Smith, National City, Hispanic Business Initiative Fund, Kaye Brothers Landscaping, and UCF.

Businesses that would like to provide materials for any Habitat house can call the Apopka office at 407-880-8881.

Individual volunteers can learn new skills, make new friends and enjoy the spiritual rewards of giving to the community and helping a family, Filippone said. Those 16 and older can sign up with Habitat in a group or individually to work on Saturdays at the site. Those under 18 must have a waiver, and background checks are conducted. Go online at habitat-apopka.org and register



Volunteers from Freedom Fire secure the trusses on the roof of the Ezell house the weekend after Tropical Storm Faye.

under "Volunteer" at the left of the screen.

The construction manager said she is always amazed by the talent that turns up to help, whether skilled or unskilled. People often discover they can accomplish much more than they thought, she said, and heartwarming stories abound.

For example, the trusses on the Ezell house were scheduled to be hoisted atop the walls the Saturday after Tropical Storm Faye drenched the area. Volunteers discovered they were unable to lift the waterlogged trusses into place. But after North called her brother-in-law, he and a crew from

Freedom Fire Protection, Inc. came out the next day with a crane and got the job done.

The family receiving the house also works on it. They put in 500 "sweat equity" hours, pay a down payment and an application fee, and take classes on the finances of homeownership, construction terms, decorating, and interior and exterior maintenance.

Lorine Ezell plans to live at the house with son David, granddaughter Tawona, and Tawona's daughter Majesty, 11, and her son Jadis, 6.

"I'm so grateful," Lorine Ezell said. "Thank all of y'all, and thank God."



Habitat workers make things happen at 1160 Robinson Ave.



Those who come out to help build a Habitat house don't go hungry. Restaurants often donate food.

Quick Takes

Homes for the disenfranchised

Renovated apartments in Apopka offer the solace of an affordable home to low-income persons with HIV/AIDS and their families, many with only disability and Supplemental Security Income on which to live.

The City of Orlando Housing & Community Development Department contracted two years ago with Habitat for Humanity of Greater Apopka to purchase and renovate apartments, using HUD funds. Another \$100,000 worth of the endeavor was provided through Habitat volunteers and in-kind donations, said Keith Theriot, program manager for Housing & Community Development in Orlando.

For more information related to this and other housing for persons with HIV/AIDS, contact the Center for Multicultural Wellness & Prevention at 407-237-3061.

MORE WAYS TO BUY

Major ReStore expansion

ReStore of Habitat-Apopka has opened a new building, a 4,800-square-foot Home Improvement Center. The grand opening was Nov. 8.

Items for sale at the center, which is across the parking lot from the entrance to the other store, include tile, carpet, wood flooring, shelving, cabinets, etc., at discount prices.

As always, the public is invited to shop for less at ReStore. Come on in to spruce up your home.

Look for us on eBay

You can make a bid that will assist local families that need a Habitat home. Some items donated to Habitat for Humanity of Greater Apopka appear on eBay's auction. For more information, call Terry Belschner at 407-880-8881 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. weekdays.

VOLUNTEERS WELCOME

Do you have a Habitat heart?

Volunteers are needed at your local Habitat for Humanity, and not only for building. Perhaps you could help out at the ReStore. Merchandise needs to be unloaded and displayed. Items need to be dusted and straightened. Clothes need to be hung up.

A helping hand is also welcome on our organization's committees. Whether your interest is community awareness, fundraising, family selection and support in obtaining a home, land acquisition or publicity, you can further our goal of affordable housing for deserving families.

To sign on, call 407-880-8881.



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Affiliate Office Hours

MON.-FRI. 9 AM TO 1 PM

ReStore Hours

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SAT. 9 AM TO 4 PM