

# Groups labor as one to build three homes

Various volunteers form a partnership to help Habitat for Humanity Saturday.

By Mark R. Fletcher  
News-Leader

The sound of pounding hammers and buzzing saws filled the air Saturday morning in the 3100 block of West Lynn Street as groups of volunteers labored to build three houses for a Habitat for Humanity project.

Each of the houses was in a different stage. Early Saturday morning, one stood with its exposed skeletal lumber-frame and nearly all its outside walls raised. A second house had its subfloor laid, while the third had one wall up.

For the first time, the Springfield Habitat chapter is building three houses at once. The simultaneous build is possible through partnerships with the seven Catholic churches, Springfield Public School District employees and First & Calvary Presbyterian Church.

Habitat for Humanity helps low-income families build affordable homes. The families buy their homes for the cost of the building materials with a no-interest loan. They also must contribute 300 sweat equity hours in building their homes.

Becky Tittle, a 31-year-old mother of three, is one of the future homeowners.

She spent Saturday working alongside area volunteers.

Tittle was living in a shelter when she applied for the Habitat program.

"I was staying at a family-violence



Steve J.P. Liang / News-Leader

**Volunteers nail down the floor at one of three Habitat for Humanity houses worked on Saturday.**

shelter and they encouraged me to apply," she said. "I applied for several different things to get a place to live."

While the new homeowners are motivated by gaining a house, the volunteers provide their labor from a sense of service and a desire to stay

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active.

"I wanted something to do and I thought this was an excellent ministry to get started in," said 65-year-old volunteer Harold Carroll, a retired electrical engineer. "I'm one of those type guys that can't sit down in a rocking chair."

Other volunteers, who no longer have families to support, find they can give more time.

"I've raised my family, so I don't need big wages anymore," said 51-year-old volunteer Peggy Wissmueller, a carpenter and construction management major at Southwest Missouri State University. "All I've got to take care of is myself. Right now I'm doing it for the church and for fellow man."

Although Wissmueller and Carroll have construction experience, it isn't required.

"I'm definitely unskilled labor," said Rebecca Brown, a 32-year-old volunteer and area physician. "But they tell you everything to do."