Misty doing Sweat Equity work in her family’s future home

The family on the stoop of their soon-to-be home.

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YOU HELPED THESE FAMILIES!

“I don’t feel safe in our current home”

Can you imagine living in a home without a furnace or sheetrock and with mold and mice? Sadly, Misty, Blake and their two children, ages 9 and 15 are living in those horrible conditions. The owner of the house ripped out the furnace but then didn’t replace it so the family depends on two pellet stoves for heat, both with questionable piping to outside. The wallboard and many interior walls were ripped out as part of a renovation, but the owner moved out of state without replacing them. In fact, the owner went into bankruptcy and the house is now in foreclosure and Misty and Blake received an eviction notice. The daily stress and feelings of insecurity are unimaginable.

Kristy, the 9 year old daughter, said she doesn’t feel safe in the house and their son, Chad, worries that the house will fall down around them. Misty and Blake have tried many times to remove the mold with bleach but it hasn’t worked. Misty works full time as a Licensed Nursing Assistant, first at a nursing home and now doing home care helping seniors to stay in their own homes. Blake works full time for Lowell Moving & Storage, owned by an earlier Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity partner homeowner! They only have 1 car so it’s a juggling act to get to their jobs.

Facing eviction, even from such a deplorable home, has been very stressful for the family and when they learned that they had been approved to become homeowners for the Essex Triplex they were overjoyed: “The new home will mean stability, health and safety for our family” said Misty, and we’ll all have a bedroom, rather than sleeping in the kitchen by the pellet stove.”

Blake continued, “We will be so grateful to have a safe, permanent home for our kids to grow up in, where we can all develop friendships in our new community.”

“This is a will, there will be a way”

Dilip and Mongali Rai have been through years of misery but never gave up hope.

“If there is a will, there will be a way. Growing up in a refugee camp, living there for 20 years, there was no hope of owning a home” Mongali said “I want to salute the philosophy of Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity’s “hand up”, because that is making it possible for my husband and I to help build a home for our two young children. We are both custodians, doing maintenance for two local companies, and buying a home on the open market isn’t possible.”

Dilip shared that the apartment complex where they currently live has crime and it isn’t safe for their young son, who is 5 years old, has a speech impediment and is bullied. “Kids have spit in his face and broken a window in our apartment with a rock. We first applied for a Habitat home several years ago and have reapplied each year and are so grateful that we were selected! It will change our lives.

BUILDING HOMES IN THE FUTURE

We recently learned that a longtime supporter of Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity and the families we serve passed away and left a bequest to help build future homes in his will. It is always overwhelming to know that a donor shares our vision of a world where everyone has a safe place to live, not only by supporting the current needs but also in the future.

If you would like to add a bequest in your will, we thank you. Here is the simple legalize to do so:

“I (name) of (city, state, zip code) give, devise and bequeath to Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity, Tax ID 22-2558923, (written amount or percentage) for use at Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity in Williston, VT.
“A home for me and my three sons is a dream come true”

Brinkley and his sons Kellby, Jared and Tobias currently live in a very expensive 2-bedroom apartment in Burlington and they can’t wait to move into their new Green Mountain Habitat home in the triplex in Essex Junction. As you might imagine, they each have different things they are looking forward to.

Brinkley, who works full time at Lake Champlain Chocolates, is anxious for an affordable and safe home for his family in a nice location where they’ll be able to walk to many places including Brinkley’s school. “The luxury of having 1½ bathrooms will be amazing. I used to dream of building my own home and being able to do my Sweat Equity hours will make that dream come true. Owning an affordable home will be a game changer and provide stability for my family.”

Jared, in his second year at UVM’s Honor College likes how modern and efficient the new home will be. He has a full scholarship at the Honor College with a double major in physics and statistics and plans to pursue a PhD in Quantum Physics!

Brinkley said “Just having a place to call our own and with 3 bedrooms instead of 2 will be wonderful” said Kellby.

Youngest son Tobias is looking forward to trees to climb in the backyard.

“I’ve been looking at houses but couldn’t come close to affording them. We’re so fortunate to become part of the Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity family. The new home in Essex will let us become part of the community and they can’t wait to move into their new Green Mountain Habitat home in the triplex in Essex Junction. As you might imagine, they each have different things they are looking forward to.

Dawn and her 12 year old son Taylor have been through a lot. Several years ago, their apartment burned due to a fire caused by an upstairs tenant, and a friend offered them a place to stay. She has been paying rent and utilities to the friend but it’s been very stressful as the friend has said they need to find another place to live. Dawn works full time but doesn’t earn enough to even think about buying a home until she learned about Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity and the carriage house in Essex. Green Mountain Habitat, as you know, tore down a house which burned and has been building a new triplex for three families. On the property was a small 2 bedroom apartment over a garage, just right for a mom and her son!

“It will be a bright future for us, having our own home, because we have dealt with a great deal of stress. I feel like my son will grow and prosper in a safe environment — we’re still in shock that we were selected to become homeowners!” Dawn said. She went on to explain that her son has been very depressed with their current living situation. “The trailer park has kids who get into trouble and Taylor is afraid to go outside to play. But in our future home he’ll have his own room, there will be nice children to make friends with and he’ll do better in school. And I’ll feel much more secure about our future.”

Volunteering Weekly to Help Build Homes

“The partner family had no construction experience but was willing to do whatever needed to be done”

Bill Livingstone retired five years ago and wanted to do something to give back to others who weren’t as fortunate. He discovered that Green Mountain Habitat for Humanity builds homes for families locally, so he went to our website and signed up to work at the Albert’s Way neighborhood in Charlotte in May, 2014 and has been volunteering ever since.

Like many Vermonters, Bill bought an old house years ago and wanted to do improvements. He hired a local builder to help and ended up working on his crew for a while to gain experience as well. After gaining all that experience, he decided that helping to build homes for local low-income families was something that he had the experience to do. “It’s one thing to make a mistake on your own home” Bill chuckled, “but you sure don’t want to make a mistake on someone else’s home!”

“I met Mike Welch (a GMHH construction supervisor) at the Charlotte project and we just hit it off so I signed up to volunteer the next year at the Harrington Village homes in Shelburne. Mike is so good to work with and puts people at ease, whether they have any building experience or not. It’s a real skill to have 4 or 5 people show up on site every day and have to train and organize them, and then do it all over again the next day. Once Mike saw what I could do, he would have me take 1 or 2 of that day’s volunteers to work on a specific task and he would work with the others.”

Bill helped to build the home in Richmond in 2016 for the McSweeney family and in 2017 worked with Mike a day or two each week building the Elmwood Avenue house in Burlington for the Pradhan family.

“A home for me and my three sons is a dream come true”

“Home ownership wasn’t even a dream for my son and me”

Jared and Muna Pradhan are very hard workers,” said Bill, “and although they had no experience they would do whatever Mike asked. One day Muna, who had never been on scaffolding before, didn’t hesitate when Mike asked her to do some work on the scaffolding. I was very impressed with them. They are very hardworking people, with several jobs, raising their kids and willing to do whatever it takes to help their family become more secure. It’s been very rewarding to help families, who aren’t as fortunate as me, to become homeowners.”