



We might call it a mortgage loan.

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Blitz Build Brings Hundreds Together

By Nicole Winters
Published: July 26, 2011, 10:03 PM

SIOUX FALLS, SD - Three families in Sioux Falls will be getting a new place to call home thanks to Habitat for Humanity and Blitz Builders. And they won't have to wait long to move in. Construction started Thursday and will be done by the end of this week.

The thump of a hammer is sweet music to Adil Abdulhassan's ears.

"It's amazing; I can not express my feelings about it," Abdulhassan said.

That's because with each swing, his brand new home is closer to being complete.

"In a few days, I'm going to have my own place, my own house," Abdulhassan said.

It's the very first house Abdulhassan, his wife and eight children can call their own in the U.S. The home will be much safer than the one they once lived in in their home country of Iraq.

"Being in this gorgeous community, it's amazing. Just like all my dreams come true; whatever I left there is coming back here," Abdulhassan said.

But it's not just their family that's having a dream come true. Two other families are also getting a new place to live. All three homes are being built at the exact same time, all by volunteers, through Blitz Builders.

"They choose Sioux Falls this year and they started out and said, 'We'll come do one house,' and that kind of mushroomed into three," Steve Cook said.

Blitz Builders is a national organization that teams up with Habitat for Humanity. For 14 years, they have chosen one city to hold the amazing blitz. This year, Sioux Falls was the lucky recipient, adding to the number of families Greater Sioux Falls Habitat Humanity will help this year.

"This is huge. You take the 120 volunteers who are working here every day and you multiply that by the eight hours in the day, we're getting hundreds of labor hours everyday," Cook said.

All three families will live side-by-side and all are equally excited about the building process, through they are by far not the only ones.

"Amazing, just to see the look on their faces and to know they have a home to live in and know I built it, and I helped do everything," Riley Duer said.

Excitement and pride brought Duer five hours from Altoona, Iowa, to get her hands dirty as much as she can.

"Anything that needs to be done. I can't go up on the roof yet, so just a little ground work, and whatever needs to be done," Duer said.

There is a lot to be done. To get three houses complete in nine days, dozens of volunteers are needed. So far, hundreds from across the country have answered the call.

"These people have given-up their vacation. They're paying their own way here, paying their own hotel room. Other than the meals we provide at lunch, they provide their own meals," Cook said.

"They are doing a great job," Abdulhassan said.

But while much of the work is done by those that give their time, Abdulhassan and the other families are not off the hook. They too have to put on a hard hat and get to work, even if they're not experts at building.

"First hit was on my thumb," Abdulhassan said.

"Habitat doesn't give these homes away. These people, when they've got their sweat equity in, when we're done building the home, they'll have a home mortgage with zero percent interest," Cook said.

The payments go into Habitat's account to build more homes, while allowing deserving families to have something they may not have ever had.

"Thank you all. Thanks for Habitat, thanks for Blitz Builders, and thanks South Dakota people," Abdulhassan said.

A big thank you to all of the people who've put their hearts into his home.

"It's home. It's going to be my home," Abdulhassan said.

If you want to help finish up the project, or volunteer on another project call Troy Gordon at call (605) 339-6406 or (605) 370-3033.

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Tracy Lemieux-Bartz · Glendale, Arizona

Great story on the event. Thanks to the entire Sioux Falls community for such a warm welcome and taking great care of us. For the record, we are actually the Blitz Home Builders, not Blitz Builders, so if you are looking us up on the internet you can find our Web site. (blitzhomebuilders.org)

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