

Pounding Nails & Building Walls - One Woman's Birthday Party

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The quiet chatter coming from the basement of the St. Joseph's Rectory, Maplewood, NJ comes to a halt as Co-Chair, Lynn Blasser, leads a small group of women in simple prayer -a prayer for guidance and strength.



Lynn is Co-Chair of Women Build of Newark, NJ, a program of Habitat for Humanity International, which promotes the involvement of women in the funding and construction of Habitat homes. The group empowers women as they address the issue of substandard housing. It is clear that this group of women possesses both the drive and skill needed to raise the walls for a family in need of affordable housing.



The commitment to provide affordable housing has never been greater as our nation continues to face difficult economic times. As our nation's small businesses suffer, donations plummet. Lynn and Co-Chair, Carol Pastor, push the group's creativity as an additional \$30,000 is needed to reach their financial commitment of \$90,000.



On this occasion, an opportunity has been presented to partner with The Women's Theater Company of Parsippany, NJ who is willing to donate the proceeds of an afternoon performance to the build. Within moments, the group of 12 quickly assign tasks and willingly take on the responsibility to assure the success of the latest fundraiser.



Unlike most women turning 60, Lynn did not visit the local nail salon or search for the perfect dress to celebrate one of life's milestones. Rather she grabbed her work boots and tools and joined those dear to her in the heart of Newark. Those invited to Lynn's 60th birthday party received an invitation to clear the earth as they prepared the site for the second build. In lieu of a gift each was asked to bring a check for \$35 made out to **Women Build**.

Lynn's infectious spirit and dedication to those less fortunate has brought over 300 women together since the inception of the Women Build initiative, which formed in 2003.

Along with her husband Don, Lynn was honored as "Volunteer of the Year 2005" for Habitat for Humanity Newark and the recipient of the "Advancing

the Status of Women" award from the Soroptimist International of Suburban Essex.

The power of one is a joy to witness and be a part of. The human spirit is truly abundant when encouraged.

For more information on Women Build, Newark please visit

http://www.habitatnewark.org/women_build.htm