

August 9, 2007

Helpers to build hope, 6 Habitat homes

Volunteers still needed as some church members gather at 4-H fairgrounds

By Katie Merlie

Katie.Merlie@TheNoblesvilleLedger.com

August 9, 2007

NOBLESVILLE -- Construction sounds will ring out Aug. 18 when hundreds of volunteers piece together wood to make six houses for families in need.

White River Christian Church has organized this year's Help Build Hope building project, which will take place at the Hamilton County 4-H Fairgrounds Aug. 17-18.

Derek Lynas, Community Works pastor at the church, said he's praying that about 500 people come to help build the homes for Habitat for Humanity of Hendricks County. The Hamilton County branch of Habitat was considered, he explained, but the logistics of keeping the houses here couldn't be worked out. Lynas said members of Cumberland Road Christian Church in Fishers will assist with the project, along with people from the community and 70 members of the Westfield Middle School football team.

White River didn't participate in Help Build Hope last year, but it did in 2005 when nearly 400 people from Hamilton County churches built four homes.

"On Christmas Eve, church elders and leaders discussed what to give Jesus for a birthday present this year," said Lynas. They decided to help build six homes. Through the generosity of church members, \$36,000 was raised to make that happen.

"It's really an expression of God's love by using spiritual gifts and putting them to good use," he said.

Mark Owsiejko has worked on several Habitat for Humanity projects, including Help Build Hope in 2005, and will be part of the Aug. 18 project.

"It's rewarding to help people get a nice home, and it's a way to get people together for a good cause," said Owsiejko, a custom-home builder and three-year member of White River.

Lumber will be taken Aug. 17 to the fairgrounds, where volunteers will cut it into manageable pieces and the next day put the walls together. Their work will be trucked to Hendricks County, where the homes will be fully constructed.

Church member Arlene Glover participated in Help Build Hope two years ago and said it's a very positive experience.

"You watch these families come together and hammer those nails and there's just so much joy that they're helping someone else," she said. "It's about being the hands and feet of Jesus."