

'Blitz Build' Brings Students Together

Members of Habitat for Humanity organized a weekend of house building by volunteers last semester.

By JERMAINE CALDWELL
Staff Writer

Wood was scattered everywhere, saw dust flew wild, hammers banged in unison and smiles appeared on many faces.

Everything came together for one goal — Orange County's first University Blitz Build.

"Come out with closed-toe shoes and a good attitude," senior Tia Lendo said over the loud speaker in the pit.

Lendo and other Habitat for Humanity members prepared for a weekend of construction by building saw horses and raising awareness.

Habitat for Humanity, a nonprofit organization formed in 1976, uses volunteers to build houses for homeless families.

These families pay back the no-interest loan in small installments.

A blitz build is the construction of a Habitat house in a short amount of time.

But planning for the blitz began months before the actual building.

As co-chairmen of the blitz, Lendo and her partner Derek Blackwelder inquired about a UNC blitz build while in Charleston, S.C., for last year's UNC Habitat for Humanity Fall Break trip.

Orange County officials had wanted UNC to get involved with Habitat for Humanity's Celebration 2000, the construction of 11 houses in one year. Lendo and Blackwelder were just in time.

One difference between a regular Habitat house and a blitz house is that the sponsors of the blitz build have to raise half of the cost of the house. In this case, the amount was \$25,000.

Even though organizers held several fund-raising activities during the last year, they still have \$7,500 left to raise.

But students and faculty alike worked side by side to see the project through.

UNC student Alexandra Manchik remembered the last time they had a hammer in their hands.

"To hang the posters in our rooms," she said.

"Habitat seemed like a little family," said Manchik, a junior from Grand Island, Neb.



Emily Wurth (left to right), Judy McCarty, Zubin Eapen and Rishi Oza help biology Professor Alan Jones on the first University Blitz Build, sponsored by Habitat for Humanity.

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"Plus you learn the many different kinds of nails."

A UNC faculty member led each team, which was composed of about five UNC student volunteers.

Sociology Professor Charlie Kurzman was in charge of six sociology

graduate students.

"In an era where no one wants to pay taxes and the need for public assistance is very real, people who don't want the government to do it should help take care of folks through nonprofit collective efforts," he said.

Kurzman, who helps Habitat most Wednesday mornings, said volunteering to build a house gave people a different perspective on the process.

Kurzmann said, "[They have] more compassion to the folks building their future houses."

Creativity Proves Key For Budget Decorating

By RUDY KLEUSTEUBER
Staff Writer

Since the dawn of time, the story of homo sapiens has been one of civilization, colonization and customization. Residence hall rooms are no exception.

But quality interior designing doesn't usually come cheap. So students at UNC use their brains to keep their decorating costs low.

"You can recycle things such as old calendars and art projects, and shop at thrift stores for furniture," said Jason Howell, a junior from Rocky Mount. Howell said the key to inexpensive design was being resourceful.

Howell and his roommate also kindled their flames of creativity to give their room a tropical climate.

They cut paper "flames" out of construction paper for two Tiki torches and constructed two large palm trees with cardboard carpet rolls for trunks and fronds made from green butcher paper.

Sophomore Mary Wood said the key to inexpensive decoration was an active imagination.

"Things you'd normally put up in the shower you can put up in your room to hold stuff," Wood said, explaining that she used a shower rack to hold shampoo and soap in her room.

If you're really trying to set a mood in your room, ambient lighting is everything, and nothing shows dust and pimples better than fluorescent tubes.

"For lighting, you can always get an

incandescent torchiere lamp," Howell said. "You can also get icicle lights or regular Christmas lights and hang them around your room for a festive effect."

To give a sure-fire tasteful flair to a residence hall room, consider curtains.

"They made the room look a little bit homelier," Wood said. "It feels like a jail cell if you don't decorate it."

Wood said she purchased her curtains from Wal-Mart, where they cost her between \$10 and \$15. Stores like Wal-Mart, Kmart and Target can provide inexpensive solutions for decor.

But in interior design, as in the rest of life, everyone knows that the best things are always free. "You can get movie posters from a video store for free usually," Howell said. Collages from magazine photos and pompoms from football games are other decorations that cost nothing.

When all other sources of gratis garnishes have been exhausted, there's always one more fallback — gifts from Mom and Dad.

Caleb Pineo, a sophomore from Meadville, Penn., said his mother gave him curtains to put up in his room.

Pineo said his curtains were a simple but unique addition to the room. "They actually kind of match the pull-down shade," Pineo said.

But in the world of free residence hall decorations, beggars can't be choosers.

"They are kind of lacy and stuff, but I don't care much about the image that the room gives off."

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