

Habitat for Humanity Explains Services Before Edwardsville Fundraiser

by Sydney Sinks, News Reporter
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EDWARDSVILLE/GLEN CARBON - As the Edwardsville/Glen Carbon chapter of Habitat for Humanity gears up for their [“Blooming Where We Are Planted” fundraising event](#), chapter president Marc Gibbs is breaking down how the organization helps the community.

Gibbs explained that Habitat for Humanity connects volunteers with a family, and the volunteers donate their labor to build a new house for the family. Donations and fundraisers like the “Blooming Where We Are Planted” event, which is sponsored by [In Crowd](#), pay for materials and other necessities to build the homes.

“I like to think of us maybe more as a catalyst,” Gibbs said. “We kind of fill that space where we find a family that needs suitable housing and we kind of find them and then marry them with sponsors who are willing to donate financially toward the building towards building a home. And then also bringing together volunteers who are willing to build. So we’re kind of that middle space where we kind of connect those individuals.”

Gibbs noted that fundraisers like the “Blooming Where We Are Planted” event make their work possible. From 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Jan. 14, 2024, people can enjoy brunch from several local restaurants, live and silent auctions, and a dueling pianos performance with Mike Sonderegger. All proceeds from ticket sales and the auctions go to Habitat for Humanity.

Gibbs said a common “misconception” is that the homes are donated to the families, but this isn’t the case. Instead, the family contributes about 200 hours of sweat equity and completes a financial literacy class while also paying a mortgage. Because most of the labor is donated, this is cheaper than a traditional mortgage.

“I think it’s maybe more interesting because it’s not really a handout. It’s really a hand-up, right?” Gibbs added. “So it’s helping, taking somebody who’s already displaying not only the need but the desire to better their situation and just giving them that extra hand to kind of take it to the next level.”

The Edwardsville/Glen Carbon chapter is currently finishing a renovation project. A friend of the organization donated a house, which Habitat for Humanity has fixed up and will soon sell on the open market. They will use the proceeds from the sale to begin their tenth build in the spring.

Gibbs explained that the organization always builds houses for their families rather than renovating old houses. They want to make sure the family is set up for success.

“We build from scratch, and part of that is because homeownership can be a blessing or it can be a burden and so we try to make sure that we stack the deck in the favor of the

partner family to make sure that they're starting off this journey of homeownership with everything in their favor by having everything essentially new," he said, adding, "This partnership with In Crowd, we have been really excited about it."

Community members are invited to the "Blooming Where We Are Planted" event to help raise money for Habitat for Humanity. For more information, including how to [buy tickets](#), visit the [official Facebook event page](#).

To get involved with local Habitat for Humanity chapters, visit the [Lewis & Clark Habitat for Humanity website at LCHabitat.org](#).