

Bragg community helps build foundation for dreams

by Spc. JeNell Mattair
50th PAD

The lives of Soldiers and those who support them are demanding and hectic, particularly during a time of war. However, members of the Fort Bragg family are never too busy to lend a helping hand to those in need.

Proof came in the form of a check for more than \$10,000, donated to the Fayetteville Area Habitat for Humanity Oct. 17.

The money was collected from various church congregations on

post and hand delivered by Lt. Col. Kenneth Revell, Fort Bragg Chaplain's Resource Manager Office.

For Revell, the money was more than a simple donation to a charitable organization.

"It is a bridge builder," Revell said. "It also benefits us spiritually. There is a sense of personal gratification that you have left the world a better place."

Monetary donations aside, local Soldiers also break a sweat to make a difference. From going to a construction site and picking up a hammer or paintbrush, to serving lunch to volunteers, Soldiers are actively involved in improving the lives of the community members they serve.

"Certainly Fort Bragg has a very close relationship with Fayetteville and Cumberland County," said Col. Mike Thomas, deputy chief of staff for the Army Reserve, XVIII Airborne Corps. "I would encourage Soldiers to get out and volunteer for charitable organizations in the (local) community."

Thomas, who is on the board of directors for the Fayetteville Area Habitat for Humanity, understands the value of helping others first hand.

"I started by swing-

ing hammers at con-



photos by Spc. JeNell Mattair/50th PAD

struction sites," he said. "Everyone makes a difference in some way, shape or form." With the help of volunteers, the local area Habitat for Humanity dedicated its 84th home, Oct. 22. Tine McFadden, the recipient of the home, was moved to tears as she received the keys to a dream she thought was out of her reach.

"I feel blessed," she said. "I can finally say my family has a home of their own and I thank God for it."

The Fayetteville Area Habitat for Humanity, founded in Fayetteville in 1988, is not a give-away program. The McFadden family and others

before them worked hard for their dream of home-ownership to come to fruition. Through tax-deductible donations of money, materials and volunteer labor, Habitat builds houses with help officials call, "sweat equity." Present and future homeowners get their hands dirty and help build their own, and other family homes. Houses are sold at no profit to carefully selected families with non-interest bearing, 20-year mortgages.

"It is a hand-up, not a hand-out," Thomas said.

The homeowner's small monthly payments are deposited in a revolving fund which supports

the construction of new houses.

The local area Habitat for Humanity currently has nine homes under construction.

Soldiers and other community members who would like to get involved can volunteer every Saturday.

"Almost all Soldiers are extremely generous and care tremendously for their fellow man," Thomas said. "They have an inert desire to help people. (Volunteering) gives Soldiers the opportunity to express (these desires)."

Units or individuals wishing to volunteer should call the Fayetteville Area Habitat for Humanity at 483-0952.



Tine McFadden digs into the soil to place dirt around a tree planted in front of her new home. McFadden and her two sons were the recipients of the 84th Fayetteville Area Habitat for Humanity home.

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