

Nissan and the media build again

Life is full of second chances, and we jumped at this one. by Joe Sage

Last fall, Nissan invited automotive media to their home turf in Nashville to build a house with Habitat for Humanity—a second House The Media Built. Four waves built for a day each, going from concrete slab to a fully enclosed new home ready for finish work. Last fall, we worked on day one, installing and plating wall framing and the first roof truss, giving a head start to wave two.

This spring, we picked up where we had left off, but on an entirely new house—this time, setting and hurricane-proofing roof trusses, sheeting the exterior and installing about half the windows.

Habitat began as a grassroots effort in Georgia in 1976. It is now a global nonprofit in 1,400 US

towns and over 70 countries. These homes are not giveaways. Believing everyone needs a decent place to live, Habitat partners with people to build or improve a home and to help arrange an affordable mortgage. Selected future homeowners learn construction skills, first working on other homes, then build their own homes alongside volunteers.

Nissan's work with Habitat began in 2005, with 50 donated trucks and employee volunteers to rebuild after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. By now, Nissan has donated almost 150 vehicles, and employees have volunteered almost 100,000 hours with Habitat on scores of homes across the US.

A new \$1 million grant is expanding the Habitat

vehicle fleet for disaster recovery and contributing toward the cost of building homes in areas where Nissan has an operational presence. Nissan's cash contributions to Habitat for Humanity in North America total over \$14 million to date.

The new owner of the home we built this year is Rochelle Grigsby (upper right, below), a lifelong Nashville resident who retired five years ago from the insurance business and found housing unobtainable as the area booms, now that she was on a fixed income. As the only person in her family who did not own a home, Rochelle says, "I love that Habitat teaches you how to keep your home. With all the homeownership classes, you really are prepared for the biggest investment of your life." She thanks Habitat for this chance to realize the American dream of owning a home. ■



Lower-left inset photo above: Sherri Tilley of TheFlashList.com by Scott Tilley.
Lead photo below by Joe Sage.
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