

## **Reflections from Ruth Wangerin Mission Trip of Housing, Helping & Healing**

I recently went on a house build mission trip to Juarez Mexico. My trip spanned 7 days, from April 13-19, where I had the opportunity to help build a home, spend a day with the workers and family and finally roof the home, before flying home. The impact of this experience will be felt in my heart for years. It was a wonderful life changing experience and has certainly shed new perspective on all the blessings we have in this country. The mission was to improve the living conditions of a family in Juarez Mexico.

### **Where in the world is Juarez Mexico?**

Juarez is located just across the border from El Paso Texas. There are over 2 million people living in Juarez. We were working on a home build as part of the San Alfonso Mission. They have currently built over 230 homes, a middle school, a technical college and they have setup a scholarship program to assist people to go through their college program.

This particular build was made possible through a memorial fund donation in memory of a fallen soldier Sergeant Joshua Brennan of McFarland, who was killed in the line of duty in Afghanistan October 26, 2007. His father Mike Brennan, a Madison police officer, was on the build and a great inspiration. It was a special honor, for all of us on the build to help two causes at the same time. The loss of one has helped to make a huge impact for a family of 5.

Our building crew group was 12 people strong, ranging in age from 40 to 79 years old. The Build was a 20x24 room addition onto a single family 12x14 house that was home to 3 children and two adults. We had 4 working days to build the structure of cinder block construction, featuring 2 windows and 2 doors. We hauled blocks, mixed mortar, layered cinder blocks, built roof trusses and finished it off with plywood. The joy of the experience was building new relationships with many people while improving the extreme living conditions of a few. The joy in the faces of the children we met was the true delight at the end of the day. The children of Mexico were filled with such a refreshing spirit, they were well kept, happy most of the time, and always ready to play or have their picture taken.

If you have ever wanted to participate in a mission trip, this one was very affordable and the rooming accommodations were pretty nice for Juarez. I would highly recommend this organization; Southern Exposure out of Colorado or locally you can contact Greg Simonis. Visit: <http://greatdesigns4u.us/juarez/> for additional information.

The heart of a REALTOR® is about the family, the relationship and the memories built over time in the house. My heart will forever be touched and I hope to build many more homes. If you would like more information check out my website [www.HomesInMadison.com](http://www.HomesInMadison.com)