

Invitation to a Wedding!

By DAVID BRAY AND DIANE MORRISON BRAY

Habitat for Humanity is an embodiment of love in action. For Diane Morrison and David Bray, this was coupled with their love for each other when they became engaged following the first day of construction at the 2004 Jimmy Carter Work Project work site in Puebla, Mexico. "David definitely surprised me," said Diane.

Prior to meeting David, Diane had volunteered with several local environmental protection groups. She had also served with the U.S. Peace Corps in Kenya. In November 2003, Diane and David spent their annual vacation together volunteering with a dolphin research and protection effort. They shared a passion for both travel and service.

As fate would have it, Diane worked as a nurse at the Emory Cystic Fibrosis Center, less than two blocks away from David's office with the Centers for Disease

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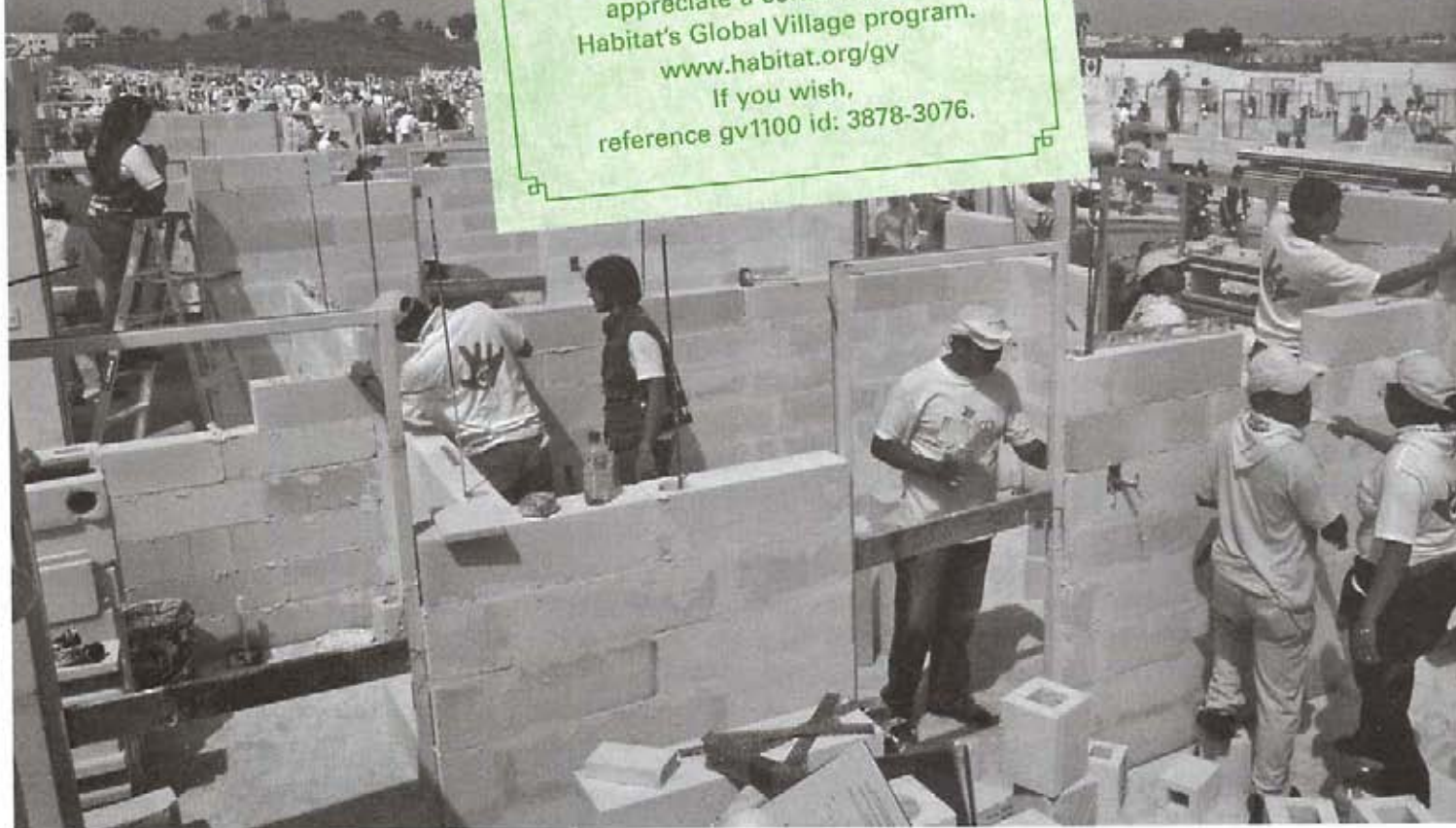
"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no records of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres."

—1 Cor. 13:4-7

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Control. Their apartments were within walking distance of each other—less than a mile apart.

David's first international Habitat experience was with the 1999 Jimmy Carter Work Project in the Philippines. Afterwards, he continued to volunteer abroad, taking an 18-month hiatus from school to serve as both a crew lead and EMT on different Global Village builds in Romania, Honduras, Nepal, Ghana and South Korea.

Later, David joined the CDC in Atlanta, Ga., as IT chief for the Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Program.

"Earlier last summer, I began a plan to ask Diane to marry me while at the 2004 JCWP," explained David. "However, I didn't want it to be a big scene or something that called attention to us, but

rather something that was quiet and memorable." David's initial plan was to propose that evening on site, when most volunteers were ending their day. "The first day on a build site always ends with an extremely positive feeling," said David. "Miraculously, different individuals from all parts of the world come together to help build homes. Within a few short hours, new friends are made. It's an extremely powerful experience."

The plan was modified a bit when Diane and David spent their first day laying

blocks and mixing cement. David could have put the ring on Diane's finger, but Diane might not have been able to take it off later!

"On the way back from the work site, David offered me some wet wipes to clean my hands," said Diane. "He's usually polite like that, so I didn't suspect a thing."

Habitat volunteers were dropped off by buses at a central location, in this case Puebla's central park (or zocalo). David suggested they walk together through the zocalo back to their hotel until they reached some secluded trees. Then David paused.

"He told me he needed a Band-Aid for a cut on his hand," recalled Diane with a smile. "David knelt down, opened his medical kit, and came up with a ring. I think I was a little stunned. He proposed—and I immediately said 'Yes!'"

Quietly, Diane and David opted not to reveal their engagement, focusing instead on constructing JCWP house number 12 with other volunteers and the future homeowners, a young couple themselves.

Five months later, on Sunday, April 10, 2005, at 2 p.m., Diane and David were married in a small ceremony at Emory University's Cannon Chapel in Atlanta, Ga. They chose to use elements from David's proposal to Diane in their wedding vows:

"I love you for your compassion and concern for others; for your caring spirit and human kindness; for the hidden, beautiful parts of me that you bring out; for drawing out into the light elements that no one else had searched deeply enough to find."

Instead of wedding gifts, Diane and David encouraged guests to make donations to Habitat's Global Village program. The 2004 Jimmy Carter Work Project indeed represented love in action for them on many levels.

Editor's Note: To date Global Village has received \$430 on behalf of the couple.

Triumph in Tajikistan

By Wanda L. Smith, Team Leader

A team of 12 excited individuals traveled to Tajikistan in June 2005 to serve as the first Global Village team to assist with building houses at the Khujand affiliate. Because travel arrangements had been complicated, just getting underway toward Tajikistan seemed a victory for the team. Little did we know that once we all met in London, the challenges were just beginning.

Routed through Moscow to connect with a flight to Khujand, veteran and novice team members had the opportunity to become better acquainted. The flight also proved to be a wonderful opportunity to interact with the friendly Russian and Tajik passengers. We found ourselves answering questions about Habitat, sharing candy and fruits, and receiving offers of volunteer help at the build site in Khujand.

Most of the work was at the main site in Khujand and involved building foundations. The extra-wide and tall foundations are constructed of stones surrounded by concrete which the team made from a cement mixture and carried in buckets to pour around the stones. The greatest challenge was dealing with the daily temperatures well above 100 degrees. Bottled water disappeared as fast as it was brought to the site.

Two days spent working inside abandoned former Soviet apartment block buildings gave us an intimate glimpse into what life must have been like during the Soviet regime. Rehabilitated apartments will become Habitat homes and the buildings will once again ring with the happy laughter of children and the chatter of busy

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STEPHAN HADNER