

As I sit down to write this, it is hard to believe it has been almost a year since our lives were forever changed. For those of you who have followed our journey, it began on June 12, 2008 when Bob fell approximately thirty (30) feet while fighting a fire in downtown Davenport during a terrible storm. We then spent a month in a Peoria hospital followed by two months at Genesis West Rehab while Bob recovered from his injuries and slowly learned to deal with the daily challenges of being paralyzed from the chest down.

The things that stick out in my mind as I look back though are not sad and depressing but rather uplifting and inspiring. So many cards, prayers, e-mails, and visits from friends and loved ones filled those months. Bob had a hard time accepting what people were doing for him as he had always been the one doing for others. There were so many fundraisers; all the way from the little boys at Washington School who sold suckers, to the elaborate party at the River Center, and every kind in between; all equally as touching to us and again so deeply appreciated.

By the end of September, Bob was ready to leave the hospital but again we faced the challenge of making our two story older home accessible and comfortable for him. We really wanted to try and stay in our home as it was a symbol of something that was not changing for our family. We soon discovered though that this was neither cost-effective nor the best thing for Bob.

Enter our "Army of Angels". We were approached by Shawn Larson of Big Dog Construction who said, "We will build you a house." We were overwhelmed to say the least. Building a house was not in our plan but after a few tears, we decided that this was the best way to go. As the winter months passed, an amazing home had taken shape.

Local tradesmen, firefighters, friends, and people we don't even know have all joined forces to make our beautiful and functional home for Bob a reality. This is so much more than a house. It is a symbol of what a community can do and of the love and support that we feel on a daily basis. As I walk through the house, I see the people who have given up their time and talent to better our lives. Words cannot express how blessed we are. Thank you.

I guess you could say this is the final chapter in this journey to wellness for us. Bob continues to get stronger each day and is busy helping with two baseball teams. He is anxious to return to the Fire Department in whatever capacity he can. He drives up to Iowa City once a week in his pick up truck, which has been fitted with hand controls, so he can participate in a spinal cord injury study.

Every time we watch our daughter Lindsey play soccer or our son AJ play baseball I know how lucky we are to still have Bob with us. His commitment to helping others has never changed and his courage and drive is an everlasting inspiration to us.

And if that wasn't enough, Bob is planning on participating in this summers Bix with a team of friends and family standing by if he needs a helping hand.

So in closing, we would like to thank our community that was ready to lend a helping hand when we needed a “push”. You will remain forever in our thoughts and prayers.

Nancy Juarez

Business Name/ Contributors to the Building of the Juarez House:

Big Dog Construction Company, Inc.
Steve Schalk, Atty
City of Davenport
Davenport Fire Department and Local 17
Greg Gowey, SGM
Adel Wholesalers, Inc.
Allied Waste
American Electronics Appliances & Furniture
Bakeris Roofing
Barron Equipment Company, Inc.
Bettendorf Fire Department Local 3190
Builders Sand & Cement
Carpenters Union Local 4 and Local 166
Carter Chrislynn Corporation
Central Siding and Supply
Clinton Fire Dept. Local 609
Comfort Concepts
Concept Bath Systems
Connor Company Water Heater
Cribbs Landscaping
Culligan Water Conditioning
Cyclone Builders, Inc.
Cyclone Cleaning
DECCO
Dave Kopatich
Dick 'N Sons Lumber, Inc.
Dolan Construction
Dyna-Kleen
Elite Concrete
Eller Construction Company, Inc.
Epic Stone & Granite
Fine Line Construction
Fireplaces Plus
Gerdau Ameristeel
Gypsum Supply Company
Gutterworks (Mark Stremlow)
H/C Heating and Cooling Supply
Hayman's Westside Ace Hardware
Hollingsworth Wall & Floor Coverings, Inc.
IBEW Local 145
Ideal Mechanical Heating & Air Conditioning
Iowa-Illinois Taylor Insulation
KBD Kitchen & Bath
K&K TruValue Hardware

Koesters Floor Coverings
Kohler Electric
Kramer Construction
Landscapes Landscape Design
Light Expressions by Shaw
Linwood Mining and Minerals/McCarthy Stone
Lujacks Auto Plaza
Miller Electric Company
Missman Stanley & Associates
Nu-trend Accessibility Systems
Operating Engineers Union Local 150
The Outhouse
P R Masonary
Pat McGuires Pub
Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 25
The Printing Store
Quad City Brick & Stone, Inc.
Radon Solutions
Republic Electric
Revival Works, Inc.
Rookies Sports Bar
Robertsons Manufacturing
Romeo Painting and Drywall
Saint Paul's The Apostle Catholic Parish
Seiffert's Lumber Company
Steve's Mirror & Glass
Stormwater & Management Services, S.A.M.S.
Sunderlund Bros Tile Company
Treiber Construction Company
Tri-City Electric
Tri-State Automobile Sprinkler, Inc.
Trissel Graham Toole
United Services by R.G. Iossi
W.G. Block
Wayne Montgomery Cash & Carry Carpets
Xenotronics Company