

## A Story of Trust and Endurance: A Mother's never ending hope.

Sarah had no family in the area. The extended family that she knew and loved lived in Illinois so she was alone and cold in the small mining town of Victor, CO. Her husband was abusive so Sarah took her 2 small children and began a new life. She had no place to live. Her son, JohnMichael, was suffering with Juvenile Rheumatoid Arthritis and her daughter Rachael suffered with asthma. She had a job in a local casino but had very few options for affordable living for her children.

Sarah was strong and committed to do the very best she could for her children. She found an apartment on the 3rd floor of an almost vacant building. It was cold and drafty but it had working appliances and was secure for the kids. The situation was tolerable for Rachael because it was cool but JonMichael suffered with the 3 flights of stairs and a drafty bedroom. Even in these gloomy hard times Sarah was optimistic and wanted to do something special for her kids. She kept her change in a jar on top of the refrigerator to be used only for treats for the children. She didn't have much but she wanted to give her kids something to show them how special and important they were to her.

Sarah applied for a Habitat for Humanity home in 2003. She was accepted and the process began. Progress was slow but Sarah was gracious and understanding about the situation and was told a piece of land would be found for her. In the meantime she moved her children to a nearby community, Cripple Creek, CO. They lived in a mobile home that was closer to school and work but it was still very drafty and cold.

There was a new Habitat project starting in Cripple Creek, renovating Victorian homes. This project would have 6 family units and would be a "Neighborhood Block". In 2007 the first home was completed. Sarah and her 2 children moved into their newly renovated Victorian home.

This is not the end of Sarah's story it is only the beginning. Life for Sarah was good. Warm, stable and adequate housing gave her and her children the opportunity to excel. And that is what they did.

In her new Habitat home Sarah continues to work hard, Rachael is a tall, dark haired beauty. She is a cheerleader at her high school, plays volleyball and is on the track team. She is a blooming actress and has a part in a Murder Mystery at the local Opera House. After graduating from the high school with honors, JohnMichael is attending the Colorado School of Mines, where he is doing very well. Sarah recently had surgery, which put her out of work for 3 months. With

the budgeting training she received from Habitat she was able to keep up with her bills and now needs to replenish her savings. Sarah is very grateful for all that Habitat has done for her but it has been her strength and determination to make the lives of her children all that God intends for them to be that has made her successful.

Can this really be a true story? It is and this family will continue to grow and change not only their world, but the world for us all. This is a true success story for Habitat for Humanity of Teller County. Can you imagine...from the depths of poverty to the Colorado School of Mines in 2 years? By the grace of God, the patience, courage and strength of Sarah and the commitment of the volunteers of Habitat for Humanity of Teller County the cycle of poverty has been broken. Partnering with Habitat has been a life changing event in Sarah's and her children's lives. For generations this experience will be in the minds and decisions of many friends, relatives and people in this community.