

**Women Build Volunteers Build In Newark and Gulfport, Mississippi, on May 9, 2009 in Celebration of National Women Build Week.**

Over 40 local women participated in the week-long event that was developed through the partnership between Lowe's and Habitat for Humanity. National Women Build Week challenges women to devote at least one day to the effort to eliminate poverty housing. The event is an initiative of Habitat for Humanity's Women Build program, underwritten by Lowe's, which brings women from all walks of life together to learn construction skills and then use those skills to build simple, decent affordable houses. Newark Habitat Women Build have sponsored and built two homes with mostly women labor in Newark and are currently raising funds to sponsor their third house.

Habitat Newark's volunteers worked on two sites: the first, South 11<sup>th</sup> Street in Newark where Habitat Newark is constructing a home and the other, in Gulfport, Mississippi, as part of the rebuilding of the Gulf Coast following the destruction caused by Hurricane Katrina. Approximately 15 women, many first time builders, worked siding the 11<sup>th</sup> Street home while another 15 helped freshen up the Habitat Park on Littleton Avenue.

A group of 16 Newark volunteers spent the week volunteering with the Mississippi Gulf Coast Habitat for Humanity (MGCH). The eleven women in the group planned to celebrate the event with Newark Habitat remotely and were invited to join the MGCH event on the same day when the affiliate learned of our plans. Two Women Build crews (one comprised mostly of Newark Women Builders) framed and raised the walls for two homes: a memory and achievement our first-time volunteers will never forget.

As a result of holding their builds, both affiliates' Women Builds should qualify to receive a Lowe's grant in recognition of their participation.