



## HABITAT FOR HUMANITY COORDINATOR

MEET **WILLIAM "BILL" SARTOR**, FSHS CLASS OF 1960, INNOVATIVE TRADESMAN, HUMANITARIAN, AND COMMUNITY BUILDER.

### **William "Bill" Sartor** (1942-2014)

Industrial Arts. Wood Technology. Shop Class. No matter the course titles, those classes helped shape a life that touched lives from Faribault to the far side of the globe.

Following graduation from FSHS in 1960, Bill Sartor spent the next 35+ years honing his woodworking, people, and management skills at Foldcraft Company of Kenyon. Retired Foldcraft CEO, Steve Sheppard, stated, "From a work perspective, Bill was the finest example of self-development I ever knew. He started his work at Foldcraft in the most entry of positions and consistently sought to develop himself and to seek more responsibilities. He became the youngest supervisor in the company."

Recognized as one of the most effective and personable supervisors, Bill soon found himself being promoted to Foldcraft's Manufacturing Director where he "implemented manufacturing improvements for better safety, quality, and productivity" and "was among the first participants in the company's Cross-Boundaries Program which sent employees to other parts of the world," stated Sheppard.

Bill's travels took him to Egypt to build another Foldcraft factory which eventually manufactured school desks and furnishings; to Japan where he personally oversaw the creation of Foldcraft's new, factory-specific CNC (computer numerical control) machining tools; to El Salvador where Bill was instrumental in arranging funding and supplies for a shoe factory.

Bill is probably best known in this area for helping establish Rice County Habitat for Humanity (RCHH). "His work with it is the reason that today it is the sustainable affiliate it grew to be," said Habitat volunteer Ken Kangas. Bill was often referred to as "Mr. Habitat" and "the face of the organization" because of his unselfish and unwavering commitment to building many of the 38 houses constructed from 1991 to 2014.

Nominator Pauline Schreiber first met Bill when

covering a story for the *Faribault Daily News* in 1991. She reported that because RCHH lacked funding to build a new home, they partnered with the city of Faribault and the Minnesota Urban Renewal League to rehabilitate a dozen homes which were then sold to first-time, low-to-moderate income families. Bill was instrumental in recruiting volunteers. Says Schreiber, "Because of Habitat volunteers helping refurbish the homes, the city grant dollars stretched further so that more homes were rehabilitated."

"He was a very good organizer," recalled Lambert VanHaren who worked with Bill constructing concrete-insulated block walls for Habitat. "Bill was someone who wanted to make life better for everyone if he could."

RCHH Executive Director Dayna Norvold reflected, "Bill was relentless in his work with Habitat. He really did it all—from fundraising, to encouraging families to apply (to purchase a home), to construction, to training volunteers, to working with the Habitat board and committees. The solid foundation that Habitat has today is due in large part to Bill Sartor."

In 2012, Bill received the Sertoma Service to Mankind Award for his unselfish dedication to helping others. The former Sacred Heart School was transformed into the St. Vincent de Paul Center, and the Rectory for Divine Mercy Catholic Church was constructed with Bill's help. A much-needed entrance ramp was also constructed at Ruth's House. Bill assisted the Faribault Diversity Coalition by teaching carpentry skills to men desiring to learn a trade. Bill and his wife, Gini, joined the Social Concerns Committee of Immaculate Conception Church which led to their support of Global Missions. Bill served on the Board of Directors of the Foldcraft Foundation and chaired the board of RCHH.

Bill's legacy is the uniting of people and inspiring them to work for the betterment of others, which is evident yet in Faribault and beyond.