

Volunteers pledge to replace house in 4 days

By Kevin Woster, Journal staff Tuesday, August 12, 2008

Volunteers from South Dakota and other states will gather on the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation next week to build a new house for the Varden and Mary Fast Wolf family of Red Shirt Table, who lost their home to fire July 29.

The Mission of Love Foundation, which is based in Youngstown, Ohio, will coordinate the building project. Volunteer teams are expected from other communities in Ohio, and from California, Pennsylvania, other states, and from Vermillion and other communities in South Dakota, foundation founder and director Kathleen Price said Monday.

“We’ll start on the 21st and within four days, that building will be up,” she said. “It will truly be a mission of love.”

The Fast Wolf family has been living in a home vacated for them by neighbors at the Red Shirt community since the fire. The Salvation Army and Black Hills Chapter of the American Red Cross have been helping with personal needs, and Rapid City businessman Stan Adelstein has pledged \$25,000 to the family.

“That was just so kind, just out of the kindness of his heart,” Price said. “It shows what one person can do.”

Individuals also may have a profound impact by donating time or materials, she said. Volunteer workers are welcome to join the building project. The foundation also seeks building materials, appliances and home furnishings to put in the house.

“We’ve got a lot of clothes, but no dressers to put them in. If we can generate a community coming together, we’ll get that done.”

The Mission of Love Foundation is engaged in charitable projects around the world, particularly for indigenous people who are often denied basic needs, Price said. Foundation volunteers have built 12 homes and a village school on the Pine Ridge reservation, Price said. They also had build additions on the Fast Wolf home, which were much needed by the family of 15, she said.

Foundation volunteers also built a home for one of the adult children in the Fast Wolf family. And family members in turn helped build homes for others on the reservation, Price said.

For more information on the foundation, go to missionoflove.org. To contact Price, call (330) 720-0278.

The Fast Wolf Fire Fund at Great Western Bank in Rapid City is accepting donations. The Salvation Army can be reached at 342-0982 and the Black Hills Chapter of the American Red Cross at 342-4010. Contact Kevin Woster at 394-8413 or kevin.woster@rapidcityjournal.com