

RE/MAX TIMES

Caring Associate provides concrete assistance

New homes in El Salvador change lives

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PORT COQUITLAM, British Columbia – For 10 days every August, Mike Rasmussen builds homes instead of selling them.

Rasmussen, a Sales Associate with RE/MAX Sabre Realty Group, volunteers for the Handmaids of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, a Philadelphia-based order of nuns that travels to El Salvador each summer to build homes.

“Lots of the volunteers are college students,” Rasmussen says. “The nuns ask for only a 10-day commitment, so they don’t usually have any trouble finding people to participate.”

The vacation-length requirement has made it easy for Rasmussen, a Hall of Fame and 100 Percent Club member, and his family to travel with the group for the past three years. Rasmussen has the flexibility to volunteer at times when the market is less active or when the charity needs people.

“I wouldn’t be able to do as much if I didn’t work for RE/MAX,” he says.

Last August, Rasmussen and his two sons, Erik and Kurtis, made the trip to San Salvador. They took medical supplies and enough money to build two homes.

Each home costs approximately \$2,500 to construct. The homes are 10 feet by 20 feet and consist of a slab floor, concrete walls and a metal roof.

“They’re not much of a home by our standards, but it’s a huge improvement over what many people have,” Rasmussen says.

In addition to building homes, volunteers work at the Center for Malnourished Children. Many of the children have been neglected by their parents. Volunteers feed and hold them.

The group donates money to cover surgeries and other medical treatments.

Rasmussen says the trip is extremely fulfilling.

“My 16-year-old enjoyed the experience so much last year that he wants to spend

PREMIER COMMUNITY CITIZENSHIP

“(All) they ask is that we don’t forget about them when we leave.”

— Mike Rasmussen



BEFORE: Many of the homes are on the verge of collapse.



AFTER: Mike Rasmussen and the volunteers build sturdy houses for the villagers.

all summer down there this year,” Rasmussen says. “It’s really made an impact on my family.”

During the next trip, Rasmussen and other volunteers are hoping to build a medical clinic with help from a team of doctors. The group is also looking into digging a well for the town to collect and store water.

“During their rainy season, people gather and store water in anything they can find,” he says. “They store it in

antifreeze containers, oil containers, anything. It’s simply not healthy.

“And this isn’t on the other side of world. This is on our continent, and we can help. The only thing these people ask of us when we get there is that we don’t forget about them when we leave.”

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