

Habitat house built in memory of teen

JEREMY ERVIN
JERVIN@JCONLINE.COM

The pounding of hammers along Powder House Lane went silent a few minutes before 10 a.m. Cars filled up the narrow residential street and people gathered by the brown wooden beams of a partially constructed house.

A sign nearby read "Christian Burns" and "One More."

Community members gathered on Saturday to celebrate the construction of a Habitat for Humanity home in memory of Christian Burns. Christian died in a car accident on May 31, 2016 at the age of 17. The "One More" Habitat for Humanity build is named for a motivational phrase used by him.

The event represented a new chapter for a different family, that of Betsy, Doug and Lola Shaw. They will be moving into the home once it is completed.

"It's a blessing to be a part of, not only this 'One More' build, but Habitat in general," Doug said. "The speed of this build, we didn't anticipate it to move like this."

"I'm sure Christian is looking down on us and appreciative of all the love."

Marti Burns, Christian's mother, gifted a toolbox to the Shaws as part of the ceremony.

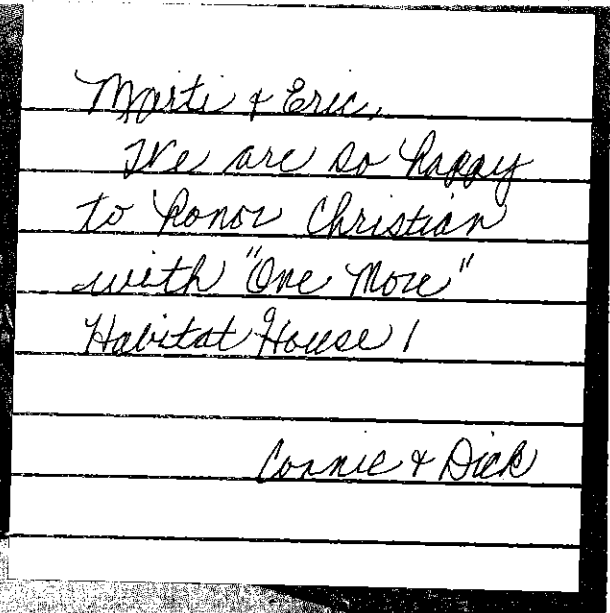
"When you use these tools, think of everybody who put that love in your house," Marti said. "I'm just excited for you guys and this house."

Doug Taylor, executive director of Habitat for Humanity of Lafayette, did not know Christian. At the ceremony's beginning, he referenced a sermon given by Tony Campolo called "Titles or Testimonies?"

"The gist of the sermon was: when we die, people don't give a rip about our titles," Taylor said. "They remember us by our testimonies. As I said, I didn't know Christian, but I've heard a lot of good testimonies about Christian."

Contact J&C city and county government reporter Jeremy Ervin at 765-420-5393. Follow him on Twitter @ErvinJeremy.

J&C 4/9/17



A crowd gathers outside the Habitat for Humanity of Lafayette "One More" build on Powder House Lane on Saturday. The construction of the house is in memory of Christian Burns, who died in a car accident last year at the age of 17. "One More" is a motivational phrase he used.



PHOTOS BY JEREMY ERVIN/JOURNAL & COURIER

Doug and Betsy Shaw speak before the crowd gathered at their future home currently under construction through Habitat for Humanity of Lafayette.