



**Bemidji Noon Rotary  
PO Box 1321  
Bemidji, MN 56619**

**July 11, 2003**

**To: Rotary District 5580 Newsletter**

**From: Penny Echternach, Bemidji Noon Rotary Member**

**Re: Building, Bonding and Bringing in Bucks for Rotary**

It all started back in November of 2002. Planning to build a children's playhouse for a raffle of \$5 per ticket began at a Bemidji Noon Rotary member's garage with coffee and muffins at 7:30 a.m. Rotary member Mark Shough, agreed to share his tools and heated garage as a building site for what was to become our masterpiece and an extremely successful fundraiser.

A date was set to begin the building process in January and with little over three months to complete the project, soon the hammers and nails were flying. Volunteer Rotary members met each week for building sessions where fabulous treats or a meal of "soup of the day" was always served. Chatting with fellow members while you worked and getting to know each other a little better, having fun and being productive all at the same time was what it was all about. Many members, who had never even touched a power tool before soon learned skilled techniques and produced a product that Bob Vila would be proud of. The house had all the amenities anyone could want too. It was fully insulated, had 30 amp wiring, storm windows, 2x4 construction, interior sheet rocked walls with wood trim, a vaulted ceiling, 20 year shingles and no maintenance vinyl siding.

After the last nail was pounded, the last coat of paint had dried and the checkered curtains were hung in the windows with care, the playhouse was finally complete. It was a thrill to see it take shape. The only worry now was...would it fit out the garage door? With less than one inch to spare, the playhouse was soon out, up on a trailer and on its way to the unveiling at our community's Jaycee's Home, Sport and Travel Show on a weekend in early April. Rotary members sold tickets at the event and it seemed as if almost everyone who walked by bought a ticket. It was the talk of the town! Everyone wanted to win the Rotary playhouse. They also had many ideas of what it could be used for other than a playhouse. Ideas were shared about using it for anything from a husband's doghouse, a fish house, a sewing room to a garden shed.

From its debut, the playhouse traveled each week to a different business throughout the community for display and further ticket sales. Its final march was to be in the 4<sup>th</sup> of July Parade where afterward the lucky winner's name would be drawn.

Nine months after the first brainstorming session at the garage, anticipation was at its peak and things were wrapping up. Many of the materials to build the playhouse had been donated, ticket sales had reached \$14,031 and the proceeds would be used for local community projects but there was still a burning question. Who would the winner be? Then, finally the wait was over. Katie McDermott, a grandma who bought a ticket during the last weekend of ticket sales so she could have the playhouse at her house when her grandkids came to visit received a call, she had won!

With smiles on our faces from a job well done and the playhouse safely delivered to its new home, us Rotary members are looking forward to strapping on our tool belts again next year. It is certainly a project we had fun with and would recommend to other clubs. Watch out Mr. Vila...

**\*\*\*\*Please see photo attached\*\*\*\***

**From left to right:**

**Rotary members... Scott Turn, Michael Kelsey, Penny Echternach**

**Project Chair...Sue Doeden**

**Grandkids and winner Katie McDermott**

**Current Bemidji Noon Rotary President...Sue Kringen**

**Immediate Past President...Jeremy Fayette**