

# GARDEN OF MT. EDEN

Children building,  
decorating  
birdhouses for  
Habitat

By **LISA KING**

Sentinel-News Staff Writer

[lisa@sentinelnews.com](mailto:lisa@sentinelnews.com)

Following their father's lead, four girls from Mount Eden decided to get into the business of helping others.

Sisters Polly, Freda Ellie, Daisy and Millie Sowder, daughters of Mandy and Brandon Sowder, set out with a goal of raising \$100 for Shelby County Habitat for Humanity, where Brandon Sowder is a board member.

"They ended up smashing their self-set goal of one-hundred dollars and raising three-hundred and sixty dollars so far," said Mandy Sowder.

And all it took for to reach this lofty goal was a little seed money.

The girls have been growing gourds and then turning them into birdhouses.

"All this was their own idea," Mandy Sowder said. "They still have some plants left if you want to buy."

Millie, 7, said she and her sisters were



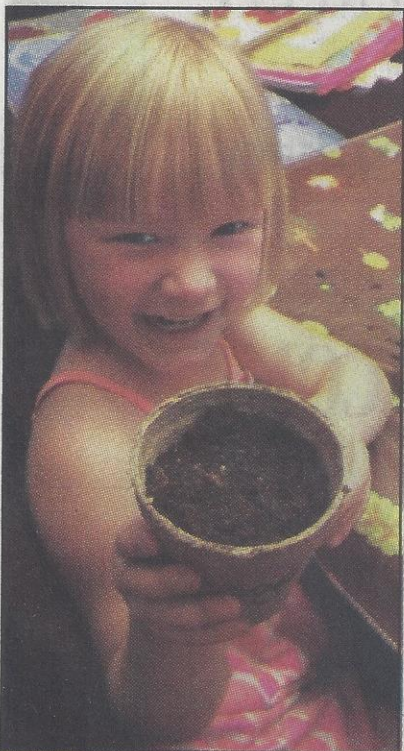
Photos submitted

**The Sowder sisters (from left) Millie, Daisy, Polly and Ellie work on making bird houses to raise money for Habitat for Humanity.**

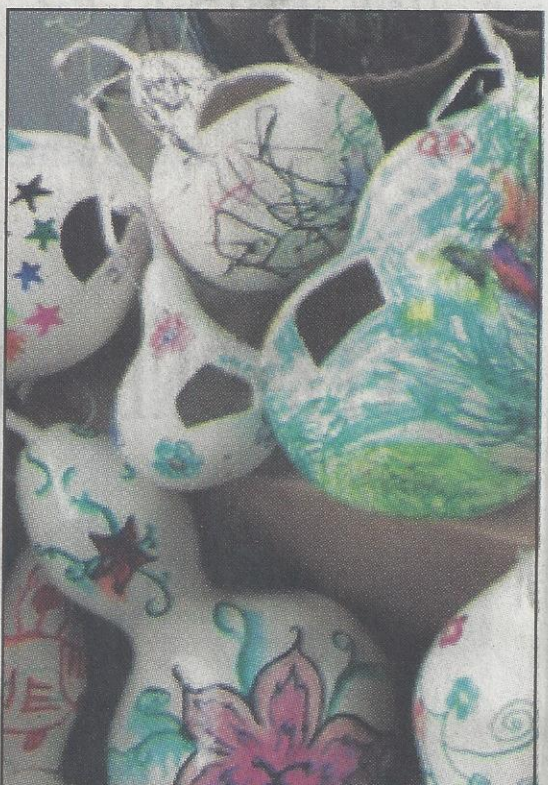
inspired by their father's involvement with the local organization.

"We thought it would be fun to help others and our dad is helping Habitat for Humanity, so we thought we would raise money for them," she said.

**PLEASE see GOURDS  
on Page A10**



Polly Sowder shows off



# GOURDS: Sisters are growing funds for Habitat

continued from Page A1

Daisy, 5, echoed her sister's sentiments.

"It is fun to help others that don't have what we have," she said. "Instead of climbing trees and playing all day, we are doing something better. So we can help people get a home so they can be safe."

And all this effort came from something they also enjoy doing.

"I liked planting all the pretty flowers and love painting all the gourds," said Polly, 4. "Other people loved them because they are pretty and bought them."

And the girls even found a way for their 2-year-old sister, Freda Ellie, who loves planting the seeds and painting, to help.

"I am so proud of my girls and how kind and selfless they are," Mandy Sowder said. "Not only did they give that time from growing the gourds, painting them and planting new flowers and plants to sell, they volunteered on their own to give all proceeds to other people."

Brandon Sowder said that the girls have truly embraced Habitat's vision of a world where everyone has a decent place to live — even the birds who call their gourds home.

"At the Sowder home this is something we feel is important to everyone," he said.

"As a parent, it makes me proud to see that our girls have caught the bug ever since they first helped out at a Habitat for Humanity repair event last fall. This fundraising project was their idea and put into action by my wife Mandy who happens to have the biggest heart in the world. Not only do they look like little carbon copies of their mother, but it's great to see they inherited her giving nature."

And the community turned out to help, too.

"As a Habitat board member, I was grateful and proud of our community. This could have easily been treated as cute little event put on by some kids but folks showed up in a big way to support



Photo submitted

**The Sowder sisters used these seeds and other garden startings to grow gourds and flowers to raise money for Habitat for Humanity.**

the cause," Brandon Sowder said. "People bought plants with the biggest smiles on their faces because they loved the reason behind the transaction. Thank you. The world is changed by your example, not by your opinion."

To donate to Habitat, go to the

Habitat for Humanity - Shelby County, KY Facebook page or e-mail [Events@HabitatShelbyKY.org](mailto:Events@HabitatShelbyKY.org) to join its mailing list for upcoming events including an upcoming build of a new home for the Powell family.