

On a sunny September afternoon, One Roof staff, board members, and supporters gathered in Cloquet at the recently completed **300th Community Land Trust home**.

Attendees toured the home and admired the transformative renovations that had been made. We were feeling grateful, thinking of the decades of work and all of the helpful and caring people it has taken to create these 300 homes spread throughout Carlton, St. Louis, Lake, and Cook counties.

As we planned this particular open house, we knew we would be a gathering with compassionate community members to celebrate this important milestone. We did not know, however, that our supporters would get to interact with the buyer of the home – who stopped by to say hello and look at the home he would be purchasing the following morning – and **he stole the show**.

Bill is a single father to two teenage daughters and works for the Human Development Center as a youth counselor. Bill had been renting a very small apartment that made it hard for his daughters to stay with him. As he was introduced to those of us celebrating in the home he would be moving into the next day, his kindness, honesty, and hardworking nature were evident. He is a proud father who cares about the work he does in his community. If you were at the open house that day you likely heard Bill say "*I keep pinching myself – I just can't believe this is really going to be my house.*"

You might also have heard Bill share the story of bringing his daughters along as he was house shopping and finding that the only homes in his price range were in very poor condition. He spoke of how discouraging that was for all of them. Later, after learning about the CLT program, Bill brought his daughters to tour what happened to be our 300th home—a modest home with two bedrooms, one bathroom, and a 1 car garage. The home was priced at \$115,000 (*\$30,000 below market value*). Bill told of how when he asked his daughters to rate the home on a scale of 1–10, **they both gave it a 10**.

Those of us who had the pleasure of spending time with Bill that day were deeply touched by the gratitude he expressed. Bill's enthusiasm was a powerful display of the importance of home.