

## **New Orleans Updates** from Sr. Maureen and her elves *Thursday, February 21, 2008—Part 2*



### **The Home of Alvin and Kathleen Lee**

Most of us will never know the grief of losing all of our possessions, of not knowing where our children or parents are for days and weeks, of leaving pets behind for 2 or 3 days and not being able to return to them for weeks or months. The people we have met have endured these things and yet they are hopeful and prayerful and grateful for God's blessings.

Alvin and Kathleen left their Labrador Retriever with food and water while they evacuated for a few days until Katrina passed. It was eleven months before they returned to the home. Amazingly, the dog

had survived but was in such poor health that they turned him over to the Humane Society. As difficult as that was, they had to take care of themselves and their children.

The STM team helped the Lees in 2007 by gutting and re-framing the inside. Since that time, it has been re-plumbed and re-wired. They await approval from the city.

While the STM team was organizing their tools and packing their suitcases, the Lees suffered another trauma. A tornado blew through New Orleans on February 12<sup>th</sup> and toppled a huge sycamore tree. One branch of the tree crashed into their FEMA trailer and three more made huge indentations in the roof line of the second story. FEMA fixed the trailer the next day but the house was another story.

Our team was scheduled to put drywall up when we arrived but the tree damage was the major problem. Assessing the roof and interior was a fresh challenge for Jim and Dan Treat, Jeff Gibbons, Ashlye Fletes, and Sam Haro. They rented scaffolding to remove the damaged roof, fascia board and 2 by 4s. Jeff was hanging over the edge, held at the ankles by Jim, when he discovered the piece he was cutting had a wasp's nest. They were hoisting 4 by 8 foot plywood sheets when the rain came. They were able to get the tar paper on in time and will replace the shingles. As soon as the city gives the go-ahead, the interior will be drywalled. There will be plenty to do for the STM team in week #2.