

Bird family home for holidays



Six days before Christmas, Dan and Kelly Bird and their family are back in their new Ormsby home following the complete loss of their Coe Hill home and all their possessions to a fire on Nov 2. JIM EADIE Special to This Week

By Jim Eadie

I'll be Home for Christmas, the 1943 Bing Crosby hit song, has a resonant ring for one family this year.

After one month to the day of living in a motor home, Dan and Kelly Bird and their four children are moved into their new home in Ormsby, just in time for Christmas. Moving into such a new home would usually be a big task, one that a moving company (like [AHM](#), for instance) would be needed to help with. In this case, however, there wasn't much to move.

On Nov. 2, the family home in Coe Hill burned to the ground, and everything they owned was lost to the fire. The family had just purchased another home near Ormsby, which had been gutted due to disrepair, with the intention of renovating the structure in 2016. Those plans changed rather quickly as the family needed a home before winter.

Work bees were organized, and people stepped up to help and contributed. The home needed new floors and kitchen, water, and a new furnace. After this was completed the family could then look at designing their new home the way they wanted it, from pictures on the walls to cool wallpapers in the kid's bedrooms, there was much to look forward to as they started over in their new home.

Living in a trailer was filled with its complications as well, but the family was committed to staying near home so the children could attend their regular school.

"Angie Bird-Post still picks up bags of laundry, and a few days later comes back and drops them off cleaned," said Kelly Bird.

"Then she takes another bag of laundry with her."

Other people dropped off cooked meals, as cooking was difficult.

Six days before Christmas, and the house is looking comfortable and warm, but major appliances are next on the list.

"I look forward to cooking us a Christmas turkey," she confided. "I cannot wait to cook meals again, do the cleaning, and do the

laundry."

How are the children doing?

"For a kid, your room is your world ... and they lost everything," said Bird.

"They lost their stuffed animals they have had since they were born. They wake up sometimes with bad dreams ... about their pets that died. There is tremendous loss and grief. They attend to us closer now ... I guess if you have lost so much in a fire, you hang tightly onto what you have."

Bird also noted that the adults are deeply affected as well.

"For example, I find myself twice a day now, running around the house," she said. "I keep smelling smoke."

The family was also overwhelmed by the fundraising supper held by the community on Nov. 21, where more than \$5,000 was raised to assist them.

"It was unbelievable and overwhelming," said Bird. "We met so many people that we didn't know before. We have a whole lot of new friends now and we are thankful."

"Now, I am itching to go get a Christmas tree," she said. "As soon as we get a chance, we will go back in the bush and get one. The kids have already decided which one will be cut for this year, and which one for next year, and the next year."

Bird is also quick to think of the Mace family in Coe Hill at this time. Their son Corey was involved in a very bad car accident several weeks ago, and remains seriously injured in a Kingston hospital.

"You know, they always say home is where your heart is," said Bird. "We lived in a big house in Coe Hill, we have lived in a trailer, now we have this place ... but as long as we are all together, I am grateful."