



# Habitat happenings

Get Involved. Learn How.

## WINTER 2010



### Stella's Story

Life hasn't been easy for Stella. Growing up, she had a chaotic home life, and at 16, became a teen mother. She and her son moved around a lot, eventually ending up at a homeless shelter in Vacaville. That's when she began to turn her life around. Taking a hard look at herself, she changed her outlook, picked a new path, chose a better direction.

Staff at the shelter helped her move into her first apartment. For the first time, she and her son had their own home. Then she met someone, fell in love and had two more children. For awhile, it seemed that her life was settling down. But that relationship ended and she was on her own again. However, Stella didn't lose focus on staying on that new path and improving her family's life.

A new job with Solano County improved her economic stability but also presented a challenge – how to find safe affordable housing now that she no longer qualified for low income assistance. An ad for a Family Orientation Session at Solano Napa Habitat for Humanity caught Stella's eye. The meeting room was filled with people with needs just like hers. Despite the odds,

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### There's No Place Like Home


Such a simple, yet profound, statement. Those of us who have been so fortunate know home as a place to raise our families; to live, laugh, cry, grow, heal, and celebrate together in safety and comfort.

There IS no place like it, if you have one.

Habitat for Humanity's mission is based on the conviction that every man, woman, and child should have a home, a decent and affordable place to live in dignity and safety.

It is this deep and abiding emotional connection we have to the idea of "home" that makes the work of Habitat so personal for everyone involved. We know that providing a secure home for families who otherwise would have none may be the single most important thing we can do for others.

By supporting Habitat, you become part of an extraordinary partnership that builds homes for families in need of a helping hand. Please volunteer your time and skills—and/or give financial support to Habitat.

While boards and nails frame a house, it is your help that makes that house into a Habitat for Humanity home. 



# A Message From Our President Roddy Feldman

On occasion it is beneficial to take a look back to better comprehend the present and the future of any organization. I first joined the Solano Napa Habitat for Humanity affiliate in January of 2009 at the bidding of then President Steve Brothers at an infamous luncheon meeting at Chardonnay Golf Club in Napa County. Neither Steve nor I knew much about one another, but the food was good and the company even better. I learned that the affiliate was small, occupying a small office and warehouse space in Suisun City, with a small number of directors and a small staff. Steve asked me to join the group and I contemplated an answer



while trying desperately to spot the quickest way out of the restaurant. Unable to find that solution, we began to discuss Steve's vision for Habitat and ways that I might help him accomplish that vision.

Fast forward some 18 months to today. We have a full Board of Directors comprised of 11 bright and accomplished men and women, each

bringing a specific skill set to the organization. We have moved into much larger accommodations for our administrative offices and warehouse. We now have a wonderful staff with Steve as our Executive Director, Andi Bosco as Resource Development Director, Leslie Boles as our Office Manager and Al Maddalena as Construction Coordinator. And we have one VISTA volunteer, Jamie Calderwood. For the most part our committees are well staffed with effective leadership and terrific volunteers. We have even acquired a rather large truck to aid in our building efforts.

Work is progressing in Vallejo with the Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), which now has four homes in various stages of rehabilitation.

New federal NSP funding is on the horizon for Vallejo and other cities in Solano County. Contacts are being actively pursued in Napa County to begin projects there and ground has been broken in Fairfield and construction begun on the Habitat Corner project for three new homes. These are but a few of the items on the drawing board.

Thus, I hope you can see the magical transformation of a small Habitat for Humanity affiliate into a major component for the mission of supplying homes for low to middle income families in our neighborhoods in a relatively short period of time. I am very proud to be a part of an organization that has such wonderful people involved and our future appears very bright indeed. 🏡

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Officers

Roddy Feldman: President  
Andrew Killeen: Vice President  
Nate Dwyer: Treasurer  
Gerry Raycraft: Secretary

### Directors

Kathy Beistel  
Ann Cousineau  
Jack Kane  
Cliff Lawrence  
Nancy Nelson, AIA  
Kenneth Niewald  
Chris Ronco

### Staff

Steve Brothers: Exec. Director  
Andi Bosco: Resource Develop. Dir.  
Al Maddalena: Construction Coord.  
Leslie Boles: Office Manager  
Newsletter Editor: Ann Cousineau

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she filled out the application and crossed her fingers. According to one member of the Selection Committee, "When we interviewed her, it was obvious that Stella is a dedicated parent and was ready to combine her own determination with the Habitat philosophy of 'a hand up, not a hand out.' That determination to turn her vision of owning her own home into a reality for her family, really convinced us that she was the right person." The impact of owning her home through Habitat has been monumental and life-changing. With-

out the worry of a roof over her family's head, Stella felt a huge weight had been lifted from her shoulders. She realized that she could do more, be more and decided to go back to school.

Today, Stella is in her final year at Solano Community College (SCC), works full time and raises her three children as a single mom. She's on the Dean's List and recently received a scholarship award. Looking ahead, Stella has applied to Sacramento and Sonoma State Universities with a goal of getting a Bachelor's and then a Mas-

ter's degree in Business Administration.

She is an inspiration to her family. Her son, who is completing his senior year in high school plans to attend SCC next year. Stella is raising her family with the assumption and encouragement that they will all go to college, a goal she never had growing up.

For Stella, it's been a long journey but today she's the happiest she has ever been. "I have the confidence to do whatever I want as long as I put my mind to it and work hard." 🏡

## Wells Fargo Grant

**S**NHFFH recently received a grant for \$15,000 from Wells Fargo towards the construction of Habitat Corner in Fairfield. The check was presented by Natalie Schultz, AVP/Technology Manager who received a Golden Hammer award for all her work and dedication. This generous grant funding brings us much closer to the start of construction for this 3-home project. We



appreciate and value the support of businesses like Wells Fargo who believe in our mission of providing safe, affordable homes for low or middle income residents.

## International Day of Prayer

**E**very year on the third Sunday in September, the International Day of Prayer for Human Habitat is observed. It is a time when the entire Habitat for Humanity community is urged to come together in prayer for those in need of shelter. Co-chairs of the SNHFFH Church Relations Committee, Don and Beverly Dupree, held our celebration at the open lot for Habitat Corner at Acacia and Clay streets in Fairfield. Their well-organized

event was attended by about 60 people. Don led the program with prayers by local clergy members. An eloquent talk by Beverly about the work of Habitat and an expression of gratitude to the Habitat organization by Nigel the first homeowner selected for Habitat Corner were highlights. Beverly and Don are enthusiastic and dedicated volunteers who work tirelessly on behalf of SNHFFH. We thank them for all their efforts!

## Did You Know?

- Every 24 minutes, a family somewhere in the world receives keys to their new Habitat home.
- Habitat for Humanity is ranked as the 5th most valuable non-profit brand among charities.
- Habitat for Humanity ranked No. 8 on the Builder's 100 list of homebuilders.



## Nalistry House

**T**he construction crew puts the finishing touches on SNHFFH's second house that is being remodeled in Vallejo as part of the City's Neighborhood Stabilization Program. Federal dollars are used to purchase foreclosed homes, rehab them and sell them to qualified families. Many individual volunteers helped at the site along with groups from Travis Air Force Base, Six Flags Discovery Kingdom and Mt. Calvary Baptist Church. A number of vendors provided product at no or minimal cost for the renovations, both inside and out. Work has started at a third home on Cortland.



## A Truck for SNHFFH!

**S**olano Napa Habitat for Humanity is the proud owner of a stake truck! Donated by Board member, Chris Ronco, President of Underground Construction Co., Inc., the truck will be used for many purposes such as transporting materials to and from our build sites. It is due to the generosity of wonderful volunteers like Chris that SNHFFH is able to continue our important work in the community. Thanks Chris!

## Thanks 2010 Volunteers & Donors!

This year we have been blessed with donations from organizations, businesses, groups and individuals. We couldn't do the work we do without the contributions of time, energy, materials and money that so many people provide. It is through these dedicated efforts that we have been able to renovate two homes in Vallejo, with the

promise to renovate at least two more next year. We are also building the fund to begin Habitat Corner in Fairfield. More exciting projects are on the horizon for 2011. In this season of thanksgiving, the Board would like to thank our wonderful volunteers and donors and wish all a safe and healthy holiday season.

### Do We Have Your Email Address?

Like many organizations, we are moving to an electronic newsletter as it's expensive to print and mail a paper version. We want to spend that money on the homes we build and remodel. But we don't want you to miss out

on all the exciting news about our various projects. If you haven't given us your email or have a new one, please fill out the donor envelope with your contact information and mail it to us.

## MEETING INFORMATION

### Board of Directors

*3rd Monday of each month, 5:30 pm*

### Construction Committee

*1st Tuesday of each month, 5 pm*

### Development Committee & Public Relations Committee

*2nd Tuesday of each month,  
6 pm – joint meeting*

### Faith Relations Committee

*3rd Thursday of each month, 6 pm*

### Family Services Committee

*4th Wednesday of each month, 6 pm*

### Finance Committee

*1st Thursday of each month, 11 am*

### HabiTalk

*4th Saturday of every other month,  
10 am*

### Volunteer Relations Committee

*3rd Tuesday of each month, 6:30 pm*



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