



Habitat for Humanity of Merced County NEWSLETTER

Issue 40

October 2006



FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Lyle Allen

A farewell of sorts:

This will be my last column as President of the Merced County Habitat Affiliate. I have been president longer than I anticipated, but I have grown spiritually from this experience and I want to thank all of the

people I have worked with for their help in this journey. In the years that I have served; every person who I have worked with has helped us with our mission to build homes for deserving families. There are very few activities that have such positive community support. The result is a job that meets the requirements for personal spiritual growth in a very powerful way.

Partnering with families on five of the eleven projects that Habitat has completed in Merced County has been rewarding beyond my expectations, I feel more than ever that Habitat is helping deserving families and building good citizens with this ministry. Our families are proof that helping people to own their own home is one of the most significant ways to build a strong caring community.

I plan to continue working with Habitat as Chairman of our Construction Committee. Our first challenge in this area is to secure more building sites for Habitat homes. This is a challenge that several Board Members are already at work on. Your thoughts and prayers in support of this effort are greatly appreciated.

I thank you for your continuing support for our ministry. Please know that we accomplish this work because of your help. May God bless and keep us together in these efforts.



President Lyle Allen presents a Bible to Kathy Upson at the July 15th Home Dedication. Rochelle & Cory look on. Jennifer, working in Yosemite, missed the 'big day.'

Annual Dinner/Program set for Saturday, October 28 • 5 p.m.

The location will again be the Hoffmeister Center at 20th and Canal in Merced. The guest speaker will be Anita Hellam, Executive Director of our sister affiliate to the north, HFH Stanislaus, based in Modesto.

Outgoing president Lyle Allen will preside. Though his term doesn't expire until year's end, he will introduce his successor, president-elect Michelle Paloutzian. Some other new board members will be recognized.

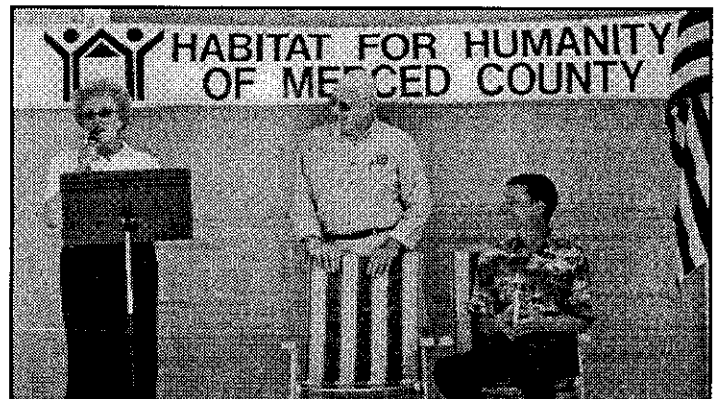
A raffle is planned. Anyone willing to contribute an item for the raffle is encouraged to do so. Thanks for helping with our fund raising in this way. Please direct any raffle-related questions to Diane Bair at 383-4006.

For the potluck, please bring a main dish and a dessert if your last name begins with letters A - M, and a salad and a dessert if your last name begins with letters N-Z. Other meal-related items will be provided.

The Kiwins from Merced High will again assist with set up and clean up. What a fine group they are and what an appreciated service they render!

It was a great day on W. 6th Street

What day was that? It was Saturday, July 15th. And it saw the dedication of Project 11, a new home for Kathy Upson and her children Jennifer, Rochelle and Cory. Merced mayor Ellie Wooten came and spoke. Kathy's pastor Rev. John Motz participated. And yes, there was 'open house' - and refreshments! Perhaps the accompanying photos will help tell the story.



Merced Mayor Ellie Wooten speaks, while Lyle Allen, and Rev. John G. Motz, Kathy's pastor, look on.

Getting it together: Merced & Somoto

Most readers of this newsletter are probably aware that we participate in Habitat International's tithe program by contributing to Habitat work in Mexico. Most readers may also know that Merced has a "sister city" in Nicaragua. It is Somoto in the district of Madriz.

Our Habitat board thought it would be a fine thing to re-direct our tithe to our sister city. And that is in the process of happening.

When we looked into the matter, this is what we found: Habitat began work in Nicaragua in 1984. This year (2006) it hoped to complete its 5,000th house. It has nine functioning affiliates in this country of about five million people. The "housing deficit" is estimated at over 500,000 houses. Typically, Habitat homeowners pay their mortgages at a rate of about \$18 per month for ten years.

Up to now, Habitat has not been at work in Somoto, That, however, is about to change. Plans are already far advanced for a project in Somoto. And we are committing to helping it along.

The mayor of Somoto, Marcio Rivas, will be visiting Merced from October 6 to 22. We expect to show him some of our local Habitat projects. Our contact with him should serve to strengthen "the tie that binds" our two communities in offering people simple, decent, secure dwellings in which families will enjoy better health and fuller lives.

Remembering another great day

That was the day the Monterroza's home at 635 Jonathan Ct. was dedicated. The date: November 13, 2004. Now, continuing our up-date series, we report on the changes in the family since they moved in two years ago. Not a lot of change for the parents, though we do want to especially credit Manuel for all the volunteer work he did on the Upson home. We commend both Manuel and his family for the wonderful care they have taken of both their house and yard. What



Patricia and Adriana flank Manuel with Sofia on her father's knee.

fine Habitat partners they are! The children have progressed so that Adriana is now a senior at Golden Valley High School and Sofia is in the fourth grade at Alicia Reyes.

Hi, ho, we went to the fairs

There were three actually:

- August 29 at UC Merced
- Sept. 10 the 2nd annual Helping Hands Fair at the Merced Mall
- Sept. 21 the 2nd annual Community Involvement Fair at UC Merced



On each occasion there was an opportunity to sign-up to receive this, our local Habitat Newsletter (three issues per year). To those who signed we say this: we hope this issue is reaching you all right. It was not clear in many cases if signers wanted to also receive the national magazine (six issues per year) Habitat World. So, please note: if you wish to receive Habitat World, kindly, by e-mail or phone, send your snail mail address to Bill Sanford wjsanford@sbcglobal.net or phone 357-0701. We'll forward your name to Habitat headquarters in Americus, Georgia.

A special thank you to those who provided a Habitat presence at our table at each fair.

A re-store in our service area?

"What's a re-store?" Isn't that a good beginning point? A re-store is a little bit like a thrift store. It accepts donations from individuals, from contractors, developers - anyone who has usable 'stuff' which either Habitat can use or can sell to the public at a substantially discounted price.

The first Habitat re-store was opened in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, in 1991; the first in the U.S. quickly followed in Austin, Texas. Soon they were popping up like mushrooms, so that today there are nearly 500. They have proven again and again to be wonderful generators of dollars for Habitat. For example, the re-store in Des Moines, Iowa, contributed during the last full fiscal year \$175,000 to affiliate operations.

There were collateral benefits. A significant amount of stuff was kept out of landfills. The public got good buys on things they needed. Volunteers, not prone to climb ladders or pound nails, found a venue in which they could support a good cause. Actually, in the Des Moines situation, six high school students played a major role in getting the re-store operational. What an accomplishment! What a feather in their caps!

One other example: the five-year-old store in Madison, Wisconsin, has been contributing to affiliate operations at least \$150,000 annually.

We end with an appeal: who knows of a place where our affiliate could open a re-store? If you have an idea, please communicate it to Lyle Allen at 723-2671.

Thanks To Our Contributors

The following have sent contributions to our affiliate since May 31, 2006. Cut-off date for this listing: received by September 15, 2006. If there are any errors or omissions, please call Bill Sanford at 357-0701.

Individuals/Families:

Lyle & Barbara Allen
Aunita Armstrong
Jackie Blevins
Ron & Mary Denault
Gary & Connie Derr
Mary Frances Ellis
Urla Garland
Arlene Gash
Ruby Gorden
Nelson Heisey
Patricia G. Houbein
W. Edward & Iris Jackson
Bob & Ruth Jantzen
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Cecilia Nichols
Vernon & Norma Parlier
Lori Phillips
Carol K. Silva
Mary W. Spaulding
Virginia Taylor
Kurt & Julie Wetzal
Marguerite Whitney

In honor of . . .

Lyle & Barbara Allen
Given by "The Pedro Group"
Paul & Barbara Dompe
Given by Cecilia Nichols
Bill & Jeanne Sanford
Given by Virginia S. McGraw
Given by Fr. Leslie Shenoy
Given by Donald & Dolores
Schwerdtfeger

In memory of . . .

Linda Bryan
Given by Melinda Cornwell
"Mom and Ed"
Given by Frank & Nancy Vergara
Hazel B. Pillsbury
Given by Fred T. Pillsbury
Carol Pitman
Given by Al Stewart
Elinor Rollston
Given by Jack & Phoebe Benjamin
Berniece Smith
Given by Marlea Rahilly Massey
"Two men named Bill"
Given by Nettie M. Descalso
Jack Weir
Given by Frances A. Arduengo
Given by M/M Leroy M. Harris
Duane Weller
Given by Frank & Nancy Vergara

Businesses:

Albertsons

Churches:

New Life Community Church

A thought: write a check now;
read your name here next issue

Habitat for Humanity of Merced County Newsletter

is published 3 - 4 times a year.

Editor: Bill Sanford 357-0701

Our Affiliate's phone number: 209/358-7280

Our meeting schedule:

Board of Directors meets the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Meeting place: Changes twice a year. July - December 2006 : New Life Community Church, Atwater.



Setting a good example

The United Methodist Church in Sebastopol is doing just that. It is pledging \$5,000 to its local Habitat affiliate in 2007. In doing this, it is participating with other local churches in raising \$60,000 for a "Faith House." The Methodist minister explained her congregation's involvement this way. "Many congregations decide, when they raise capital funds to add a tithe to the total to help others . . ." She said her congregation will raise \$35,000 for building renovation - and add \$5,000 for Habitat! Yeah, Sebastopol!

Yes, even in Paradise

It's kind of old news now; however, a local church newsletter dated May

2003 says this: "The first Paradise Habitat for Humanity house is now ready to be occupied by the new homeowner family of six!" If you haven't been to Paradise yet, know that you can easily access it from Chico or Oroville (Butte County) - and rejoice that Habitat is at work there already.

Global Village participants treasure experience

The June 2006 issue of Habitat Global Adventure carried comments by a number of people who have gone on Global Village missions to distant lands. A few 'for instances:'

Naluwoli, Uganda - "That village was incredible. I cannot think of anything better I could have done

with two weeks of my life!" said Heidi Cunningham

Rio Claro, Costa Rica - "The time ended all too soon. We had a very moving farewell dinner and said our goodbyes . . . There were smiles and tears. It was a heart-warming experience and I will anxiously await our next build as I hope to continue working with Habitat's Global Village for a long, long time." Lisa Harden

Solola, Guatemala - "This was my third Global Village mission to Guatemala and I intend to do it every year because it keeps me grounded in what is really important in life." Dick Mahoney.

So, who will be among the first to go from Merced County?

MISSION STATEMENT

Habitat for Humanity works in partnership with God and people everywhere, from all walks of life, to develop communities with God's people in need, by building and renovating houses, so that there are decent houses in decent communities in which God's people can live and grow into all that God intended.

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