



LEFT: The Alvarez Family—Carlos and Carmen with Carlos Jr. (20) and Irving (14). Isamar (10) is not pictured.



RIGHT: The Escobar Family—Irene with Juan (6) and Seriena (4)



ABOVE: The Melendez family—Yolanda with Paola (12) and Yolanda (13).



Christmas, 2005

Dear Santa,

This Christmas, all we're asking you for is \$140,000 — the amount of money we need to complete this season's homes for the five families pictured on this page.

These wonderful people look forward to moving into their new homes in May, especially after they've done so much hard work to earn their sweat equity hours.

You can probably get some help from all our friends who are always willing to work with the families so they can complete their homes every year. In this season of giving, we especially appreciate all the gifts we receive from them.

Thank you,
Mesilla Valley Habitat for Humanity



LEFT: The Sedillos Family—Vanessa with Alexandra (9), Joseph (10), Michael (8), Johnny (3), Peter (2)



RIGHT: The Armendariz Family—Elsa with Jesus (11) and Cecilia (5)

FOCUS ON VOLUNTEERS

Fall construction volunteers

THANK YOU for your help and support! We look forward to building with you again.

We started building the first wall of the first home this season on Oct. 17. Today three homes are already "dried in" because so many volunteers have donated their time this year.

A group of Care-A-Vanners came for a two-week build to kick off our building season. The group included fifteen people from all across the country who came here specifically to build homes with Mesilla Valley Habitat for Humanity.

This was the first Habitat build for some, but others had spent time building Habitat homes across the country. Having them here was a great start to the season and we are grateful for the time they spent here.

Not only have we had great Care-A-Vanners come to the area to build, we have also had a terrific faithful crew of local volunteers. With the help of these volunteers we have been able to put up and dry in two more homes.

The volunteer crews include skilled workers who work with others who have little experience swinging a hammer. All have been needed and appreciated.

The atmosphere on the job site is always positive, with people from all walks of life coming together for a common purpose. Thank you. We cannot do the work without you.

If you weren't able to volunteer this fall and would like to help us build after the New Year, call the Habitat office. We love our volunteers!



Snowbirds come home to roost

Care-A-Vanners Mary Lou and Homer Brown, as well as Paul and Stephanie Bernhagen, have decided to park their RVs and live in Las Cruces.

Mary Lou and Homer spent their time on the road traveling through 40 states (over 20,000 miles) and built houses for Habitat all across the country. Before retiring, Mary Lou taught elementary grades and spent most of her life in Cheyenne, WY; Homer was a machinist who worked in hotel and bank construction in Colorado. Paul and Stephanie were Care-A-Vanners for twelve years and spent most of their years before that as engineers in Colorado.

When asked why they decided to move to Las Cruces, Mary Lou said, "It always felt like coming home when we'd arrive. We had first worked with Habitat in Cheyenne, WY, and our work took us to many states, but the Mesilla Valley Habitat for Humanity was our favorite."

Mary Lou is involved in volunteer recruitment, church relations, and hospitality on-site, where you will always be greeted with a hug and a smile. Homer has dedicated countless hours to Mesilla Valley Habitat homes and is always willing to do what needs to be done. His positive attitude encourages all who work with him. We are blessed to have them all year round with Mesilla Valley Habitat and appreciate all they do.

Paul and Steph are always willing to help out where they are needed and have contributed many hours of volunteer service. They were a huge part of getting us up and running this fall and Stephanie took on the big task of updating our web page. We are lucky to have such great people involved in our organization!



Renee with Paul and Stephanie

New Border Servant

Hola, everyone! My name is Renee Splichal and I hail from Garrison, ND. I attended Concordia College in Moorhead, MN and spent last year as a full-time volunteer with the Urban Servant Corps at Girls Incorporated in Denver, CO.

After working with youth my whole life I decided it was time to build homes. I am part of the Border Servant Corps program and I am so excited to be living in Las Cruces! I will be working full-time for Habitat for one year.

I have had a fantastic time so far working with all of the volunteers and the families who come together to build homes. I consider myself fortunate to be part of a rare community of people from different

backgrounds who work together daily for a common purpose.

Please contact me at the office if you are interested in volunteering or if you have donations of any kind; I will be happy to meet and work with you. God's blessings to you this holiday season!

Landscape volunteers needed

We need volunteers for a landscaping committee and planning team, as well as installers (some with basic landscape experience plus others who would like to learn).

We planned to have landscaping work during the late summer and fall. However with the push to get ready for construction, we had to defer landscaping last year's homes. We would like to regroup and complete them and this year's homes before the end of the construction season. The projects will take 2-3 weeks. Please call the office so we can schedule a planning meeting.

Fall 2005 Care-A-Vanners

Resource Development Committee



Our resources development committee now being organized will serve as the wheels behind our affiliate's operations. This means finding new, innovative ways to locate funds that will make it possible for to us to continue providing affordable housing for Las Cruces in need.

If you are interested in serving on this committee, we would welcome your participation and appreciate it greatly!

Please call the office and speak with Renee if you'd like to volunteer or to learn more about plans for the committee.

Construction tours offered: Come watch us build!

We think the best way to feel the excitement of Habitat is to tour the site with us — see the buildings grow, view the framing, see how the drywall closes in the rooms, see the families working to help build their own homes!

With three houses already closed in and a fourth ready to start, we have a lot to show you, and we'd love to have you stop by any time to watch. It's always fun to be a "Sidewalk Superintendent." The best way for you to do this is to tell us when you can come so we can provide you a guided tour to show what's happening and explain the details involved.

You'll enjoy seeing how many great volunteers we have, how well-built the buildings are, and how the homeowners put in their sweat equity hours. And if you are one of our donor-partners, you can appreciate where your dollars are going.

We often give lunchtime tours, timed so you can be back at work when you need to be. Please call the office (525-0475), Mac Fell (525-0838), or Renee (if not at the office) on her cell (993-0048) to confirm when we will be at the site. We then can arrange a tour that will fit your schedule.



ANNUAL VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION BANQUET/ POTLUCK

JANUARY 26

Peace Lutheran Church
1701 Missouri (corner of Locust & Missouri)

All are invited to attend and celebrate the work we've done together



A HAND UP for our families

Helping people help themselves was Millard Fuller's goal in 1976 when he founded Habitat for Humanity, and it is our mission here in Las Cruces today.

The 56 Habitat homes now in our city are the result of a wonderful partnership, built with the families who will own them. They are not a gift — the families earn them and pay a mortgage for them. The volunteer-partners who helped build them and those who donated money and materials have made this happen.

Our motto "A HAND UP — NOT A HANDOUT" makes the point. As we work on five new houses, with five great family-partners we thank all of you for your 'hand up.'

New applications

will be taken sometime next spring. Watch your newspapers for the dates and times.

under construction

Remembering two wonderful people

Two of Habitat's long-time supporters died this fall: Richard McCowen on Oct. 21, and Maryellen Triviz on Nov. 7. We extend our sympathies to their families and friends.

We will miss them and all their wonderful work for Habitat as well as other places within our the community.

Some of you may remember Richard's fearless quest for construction money, not allowing anyone—doctors, nurses or visitors—to leave his hospital room after his first heart attack until they had contributed to his Habitat box.

We are honored to have shared these two people's lives.



Pay us a visit at www.lascruceshabitat.org (note new address). The site contains all the information you'll need about our affiliate and will help keep you up to date on our activities and needs.

A special thank you to Stephanie Bernhagen for spending so much time creating this valuable resource and a huge thank you to Best Buy for donating the software necessary for this vital update.



**MESILLA VALLEY HABITAT FOR
HUMANITY**

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**HABITAT FOR HUMANITY'S
MISSION PRINCIPLES**

In all that we do in pursuing the mission of Habitat for Humanity, we pledge to:

- *Demonstrate the love and teachings of Jesus.*
- *Advocate on behalf of those in need of decent shelter.*
- *Focus on shelter by building and renovating simple decent, affordable houses.*
- *Engage broader community through inclusive leadership and diverse partnerships.*
- *Promote dignity through full partnership with Habitat homeowners and future home partners.*
- *Promote transformational and sustainable community development*

**Big
Thank
You!**

**... to local businesses who have supported us through the years
by donating their services —**

**Potty Time Moy Surveying Trego Real Estate Appraisals
Mountain States Escrow Dona Ana Title Co. Lights de Las Cruces
Lowe's Buildibng Supply Center**

**... to Albertson's, not only for the Community Partners Program, but
also for donating baked goods for our breaks at the work site every day.
We are extremely grateful for the food donations and your support.**

**... to all of you who to support us so faithfully
with your donations, your time, your encouragement,
and your prayers.**

building homes ... building lives ... building Las Cruces