



Mesilla Valley
Habitat
for Humanity®

March 2008

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Under Construction

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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 divers partnerships.
- Promote dignity through full partnership with Habitat homeowners and future home partners.
- Promote transformational and sustainable community development

From The President

By Scotty Hendricks

Mesilla Valley Habitat for Humanity has successfully assisted 67 families in improving their housing, to date. That is primarily to the credit of the previous board of directors and the coordination of many contributors and volunteers. It requires an endless search for funding sources as well as a search for hands on volunteers to drive the nails and paint the walls.

Having served on the Mesilla Valley board of directors for 9 years, I fully appreciate the obstacles that have had to be overcome. I have watched in awe as the previous presidents of the board have orchestrated all of the board

members, executive director and individual volunteers that have played various roles to accomplish Habitat's mission. Stepping into the shoes of the previous presidents leaves me feeling somewhat inadequate but challenged.

In 2007 we successfully opened our Re-store. It was an undertaking that carried financial risks with it. Money was borrowed on faith that the Re-store would be successful and be able to repay the debt and then begin providing a source of funding to build additional homes. The Re-store became an instant hit. The debt has been

completely liquidated and the Re-store is providing a source of funds that has not previously existed. It certainly can not provide the funding to build a complete home by itself yet but it will be a contributor.

The 2008 - 2009 building year will be one of transition. We are attempting to grow out of being a very

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Remembering Evelyn Flowers

Pictured here is long time volunteer Evelyn Flowers as she presents a needlework plaque commemorating the dedication of a Habitat-built home to one of our partner owners. Over the years Evelyn prepared and presented 58 such plaques. In recognition of her many years of devoted service to Mesilla Valley Habitat the Board of Directors on December 19th unanimously passed the following resolution:

Whereas - Evelyn Flowers has shown continued devo-

tion to the cause of providing affordable housing for the less fortunate in the Las Cruces area; and

Whereas - Evelyn Flowers has spent countless hours in the preparation of needlework homeowner plaques; and

Whereas - Evelyn Flowers has contributed materially through her service over the years to the efficient operation of office functions of Mesilla Valley Habitat for Humanity; and

Whereas - Evelyn Flowers



Evelyn Flowers presenting a Plaque

is a thoroughly delightful person with whom to work because of her cooperative nature, ready wit and pleasing personality; therefore

Be It Resolved - Mesilla Valley Habitat for Humanity owes a debt of gratitude to Evelyn Flowers far beyond any ability to repay.

Evelyn died February 14th at the age of 88. She will be long remembered.

From the President

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good organization to being a great organization. The board of directors has very lofty goals. How do we expect to accomplish them is a question to be asked.

The nominating committee, for the elections held in January, 2008, provided a slate of board of director nominees that are new to our organization's board. Some of them have been serving as volunteers at the Re-store or on the construction sites but have not been tapped as a resource for the Board of Directors. The newly elected board members include Dean Ayres, Chuck Franco, Warren Chilton, Don Brown, Clay Doyle and Curtis Rosemond. I personally am impressed by the newly

elected directors' knowledge of our community and of the new contacts they will provide to our organization. I am pleased with the way they each have been willing to take on responsibilities and serve on the standing committees. This board of directors will serve the community well and strive to make the Mesilla Valley Chapter of Habitat for Humanity a standout Chapter for Habitat International. Their ideas are sound and I predict their follow through will bring those ideas to fruition. The success of the 2008 - 2009 year rests on their shoulders. They must direct the chapter to build on its previous successes. I will do my best to stay out of their way.

I feel compelled to mention that we are still short on funding to complete the homes that are currently under construction. Donations of cash, materials, labor or even good condition furniture to be sold at the Re-store are needed to work our mission.

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter. It shows you care about the success of our chapter. I encourage you to offer your assistance wherever you feel comfortable. This is a volunteer organization and without quality volunteers it is impossible for even a very talented board of directors to make it a success.

"...we are still short on funding to complete the homes that are currently under construction."



You're invited to a party for our 20th anniversary! See details on page 4!

Meet the New Board of Directors

Mesilla Valley Habitat for Humanity elected 6 new individuals to our Board of Directors at the annual meeting held in January. Pictured above are Dean Ayres; Secretary, Don Brown, Warren Chilton, and Chuck Franco. Not pictured are Clay Doyle and Curtis Roseman, who were also elected. Leaving us after many years of service are Jane Carter, Mark Hammersmith, Fred Hyde, Judy James, and Sue Schibel. Their contributions to the Board will be greatly missed and we thoroughly appreciate their dedication to Habitat over the years.



Construction Update

By Becca Winship

As you know, we started framing on Dodie Gallegos' house at 5422 Genesis Lane on December 10. In just 3 short months, we have her house completely under roof, and completely painted! Construction began on Alma and Benito Balderrama's house at 4695 Benavidez Road on February 4, and due to the great efforts of two groups of Care-a-Vanners, as well as a team of 15 students who came to us through their InterVarsity group at the Colorado School of Mines, that house is under roof and the sheetrocking is completed! Many thanks to all the volunteers who have come out and helped us in the framing of these two houses, it couldn't have been done without you! These are the two houses



Alma Balderrama and her mother-in-law take their turn with the saw.

that Mesilla Valley Habitat for Humanity will be building this building season. Plans are underway for next year, and the hope is

to build one house on a homeowner's property and four more in a subdivision on the East Mesa. Stay tuned for more updates!

An Interview with One of Habitat's Owner-Partners

By Maria Chavez

Dodie Gallegos (49) and her son Stephan (19) are the first family to receive a home built in the 2007/2008 season. One of Habitat's volunteers recently met with Dodie to talk about her experiences and what Habitat has done for her.

When I arrived at the Gallegos home, I was greeted by their two dogs; Mocha, a Chihuahua mix, and a beautiful, but shy, Siberian husky named Maya. Dodie showed me her in-progress 3-bedroom home which sits right behind her 20-year old trailer

home. She was beaming with happiness as she explained each room of the new house. Stephan has already picked his room, which has a wonderful view of the Organ Mountains. They have a tentative date in May to move in if everything goes as planned. Still, Dodie can't believe that is all true. "I have to check the house every so often to make sure it is all real, that it hasn't gone away," she admits. It seems that the Gallegos' are coming close to accomplishing the American dream. However, it has not been easy for this family to get to this point.

Three years ago, their lives changed when Dodie went through a divorce leaving her as the main provider for herself and her son. She had to get a second job to keep her family afloat and start gaining control of her new life. For years she had been watching the Reba McIntyre commercial for Habitat For Humanity but she had never made an attempt to apply for the program. Habitat for Humanity came to mind, as she said, "My current home was falling apart and I had to do something." From her church, she heard that applications were going to

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"I have to check the house every so often to make sure it is all real"

An Interview with One of Habitat's Owner-Partners (cont. from pg. 3)

"It is going to be a whole new beginning for us."



Dodie and Stephan Gallegos

be handed out and other church members encourage her to apply. She couldn't believe their application had been accepted. "I could have never been able to afford to build a house on my own but with the help of Habitat, it was all possible."

Besides building her first home she had to also focus on the upbringing of her son. "I'm so glad to have

my son in my life," she says proudly. During high school he played football for four years and basketball for two and also played the saxophone for the marching band. As his mom says, he's a very talented young man. Dodie has always worked for hourly wages and has lived through the hardships of being on a limited income. She wants better for her son. "Stephan understands this harsh reality," she says, and that has

led him to become the first in his family to attend college. Currently a freshman at NMSU, he is taking Wild Life Studies mainly because of his love for animals and the impact they have in the natural world.

Habitat for Humanity also had a big role in the strong bond Dodie and Stephan developed. Last year they helped build other peoples homes, and working to-

gether on these projects furthered their trust in each other. "I think all families should spend time together like this. We were working together...making something happen for other people...and that felt great!" Her eyes go wide as she says this, "At the end of the day together, we felt that we accomplished something good." Her heart also opened to the many volunteers that came to help out. "It was an amazing experience to see so many people work so hard out of the goodness of their hearts. Habitat is such an amazing program," she finishes.

When I ask Dodie how Habitat for Humanity is going to change her life, she says that she "can't even begin to imagine it." She has worked so hard throughout her life that now she is starting to see the fruits of her determination. Once they move to their new home, she expects, "It is going to be so different, and it is just hard to imagine. It is going to be a whole new beginning for us."



You're invited to a party for our 20th anniversary!

Mesilla Valley Habitat for Humanity is celebrating 20 years of building this spring! We have helped 67 families build an affordable house and are in the process of building two more this year. Our efforts would not have been possible without you, our volunteers, donors, friends, and

family! We want to celebrate you and invite you to a 20th Anniversary Celebration and Volunteer Appreciation Dinner to be held on April 9th at 6 p.m. at Peace Lutheran. Please R.S.V.P. to Becca at the office if you are able to attend. Thank you again for all your dedicated hard

work and we hope to see you there!



1995—The Miracle Year

Continuing Stories of MVHFH's 20 Year History By Malcolm Fell

It is 7 years later, and we have helped 15 needy families become partner/homeowners in good, decent houses. And 1995 is shaping up to be a very special year for Mesilla Valley Habitat for Humanity. Jane Carter was the president then, and she tells the story:

“Three things happened in the summer and fall of 1994: #1) We had 6 lots on Organ Street ready to go and no other property; #2) The bank needed to invest money in non-profit activities to keep their borrowing power; #3) A big article appeared about Care-A-Vanners (then they were Habitat Gypsies) in Trailer Life“.

“I called the head of the Gypsies and he was really encouraging about sending a full caravan in February 1995. The RV-ers out west were pushing for a build out here. I pushed the board very hard to get them to agree to build 6 houses. The bank agreed

to fund all 6 using the 6 mortgages as collateral.”

“We set it up to just frame the 6 houses in the 2 weeks the Gypsies were here, finishing them as we had people and time. 4 of the house leaders were Gypsies, and two were our own people (One a lady named Ann Meyer.). Don Carter drew all the plans and ran the whole show.”

“We had noon lunches at various churches and the Wesley Center. One Saturday we had over 150 people on the site at one time.”

They did, indeed, frame, enclose and shingle the 6 houses in 2 weeks and we had them finished by July. One of them was featured in the Parade of Homes that fall.

1995 was also the year our volunteer crew built the office/warehouse at 720 Santa Fe Street, and also the year we hired our first Executive Director, Rebecca Boston.

Pictures from Today



Drywalling at the Gallegos house



View of the soffit on the Balderrama's house

Gift Wrapping a Success!

By Becca Winship

Each Christmas season, Mesilla Valley Habitat for Humanity partners with Barnes & Noble at the Mesilla Valley Mall to bring 'free' gift-wrapping services to customers. We do not charge for gift-wrapping, but hope for a donation in exchange for the service! We staff a table with volunteers each day between Thanksgiving and

Christmas, and these volunteers serve 4 hour shifts. Due to the great effort of almost 100 different volunteers, we were able to raise \$4,117.33! That money went straight into the building fund so that we can help more people become homeowners and continue efforts to eliminate poverty housing here in Las Cruces! Because of our great ef-

orts, we were asked to partner with Barnes and Noble again for Christmas 2008, so look for us there! Thank you to all volunteers who helped during the holiday season, you are a blessing to this organization, and we couldn't have done it without you!





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Check out
the 20th
anniversary
party on
page 4!

Mesilla Valley Habitat ReStore Reporter

By Judy James



A View from Inside the ReStore

WELL DONE to all our donors and customers! The ReStore became debt-free as of December 31, 2007. What a great way to start a new year. Our operating

costs continue to stay low so more and more of your donations and purchases are funding the building of homes for low income families in the Mesilla Valley. Once again, **WELL DONE!**

Are you one of our "average" customers? Our talented book-keeper has analyzed our cash register data and come up with some figures for the sales in January 2008.

The majority of our customers (81%) paid cash for their treasures. The average shopper bought 3.84 items at \$4.00 each for a total "average" sale of \$15.36. Friday the 11th was the big sales (\$1,767.05) day in January. Over 6500 items were

sold in January.

As you can see, sales at the ReStore are going great and now the challenge is to keep our shelves stocked. All items donated are tax deductible and you will receive a receipt for your records. Building materials, gently used appliances, furniture and all types of household items sell well.

Create some space in your life by donating your excess items to the ReStore. Come to the ReStore to shop. You may find just the treasure you have been looking for.

Visit the ReStore!

2301 South Main Street

Las Cruces, NM

(575)523-5019

10:00 AM till 5:00 PM Tuesday thru Saturday