



Fall
2009
Newsletter

SPECIAL EDITION

Dear Habitat Partners,

We are pleased to announce that we will soon dedicate our 200th and 201st homes in the Jacksonville Beaches area! This accomplishment is even more special when you consider the size of Jacksonville Beaches. Having built 200 homes in a community of just 50,000 is a feat second to none among Habitat for Humanity affiliates in the United States. What a wonderful opportunity to celebrate and give thanks to all those who have helped us to provide simple, affordable housing over the years.

First we must thank our donors, volunteers and homeowners: without their support, the construction of these beautiful homes would not be possible. We would also like to thank our affiliate Board of Directors for their continuous support and guidance, and our affiliate staff for their dedication and hard work. Of course, we also depend on the support of Habitat for Humanity International who provides the necessary framework and coordination to make our programs a success.

As is the case with all Beaches Habitat homeowners, the owners of our 200th and 201st homes have contributed 300-plus sweat equity hours working alongside volunteers to build these houses. In addition to paying property taxes and impact fees upfront, the new homeowners must also pay a 30-year mortgage which will help fund the construction of additional Habitat housing. What a novel approach – A Hand Up, Not a Hand Out. Along these same lines, we developed our Education Program nearly 10 years ago, giving new meaning to the idea of “more than just homes.” Over the years, we’ve helped seven of our Habitat children graduate from college and more than 60 students dramatically improve their reading skills through our After School Tutoring Program. Not only that, our Prep Club has given numerous awards for academic excellence and perfect attendance. In fact, more than 60% of our students receive annual awards for perfect attendance.

With little more than one year’s worth of building sites left in our inventory, the Board has made a priority of allocating and purchasing more property. We’ve found several exciting and affordable prospects that could carry our program well into the next decade. I hope to have more news for our next newsletter so stay tuned.

On behalf of our Board of Directors, Executive Director Ralph Marcello and myself, we would like to extend an invitation for all of you to our annual Beach Bash event. This year’s Beach Bash will be held November 14th at 5 p.m. at the Selva Marina Country Club. Regency Centers is the Title Sponsor for the event and has donated the entire construction costs of our 200th home. Keeping with this celebratory theme, we will honor our newest homeowners and also give special recognition to Nancy and Larry Huang whose continued financial support has been instrumental in furthering the objectives of our affiliate.

Finally, I extend to you my deepest gratitude for the part each and every one of you has had in **Building Homes, Building Communities and Building Futures**. Our goal is to serve God in serving our neighbor. This past year has been a year of abundant blessings for which we give Him thanks. 300 is just down the road.

God Bless,
Dale Wappes, Board President

Building Community

LOOKING BACK: A BRIEF HISTORY OF BEACHES HABITAT

- 1991** Beaches Habitat is founded by Habijax volunteers with the mission of building simple decent affordable housing in the Jacksonville Beaches.
- 1992** Our first Beaches Habitat home is completed for new homeowners Brandon and Phyllis Terrell.
- 1994** Beaches Habitat's 10th home (for Elsie Thomas) is completed on Francis Avenue in Atlantic Beach.
- 1998** The first "House That Congress Built," sponsored by Congresswoman Tillie Fowler, is completed. This home was the first of five homes completed with the help of Congress, including Congressman Ander Crenshaw. Celebration for the event is held at the home of Herb & Miyuki Scheidel who announce at the celebration that they will fund a scholarship for the children of Beaches Habitat at the University of North Florida (UNF).
- 2000** \$2 million scholarship endowment is established at UNF to support fully paid scholarships for our homeowner's children. Education program begins, including a Prep Club with awards for academic excellence and perfect attendance as well as an After School Tutoring program for the younger children. Beaches wins the Southeast region "Jimmy Carter Award" from HFHI.
- 2004** The completion of Beaches Habitat's 100th home is celebrated with a Building on a Dream theme, honoring Martin Luther King Jr. and encouraging persons of all life stations, races and ages to come together. Beaches Habitat is named Affiliate of the Year.
- 2006** Our new education building is dedicated.
- 2009** Beaches Habitat's 200th and 201st homes will be dedicated on November 14th, to be immediately followed by our annual event, Beach Bash 2009: History in the Making.



Our 200th and 201st homes in Haywood Estates.

SPECIAL THANKS TO NANCY & LARRY HUANG

We are deeply grateful to our benefactors Nancy and Larry Huang for their dedication and commitment to Beaches Habitat over the years. The Huangs' generous gift of \$300,000 has been significant in fulfilling our mission of providing a hand up to those in need.



Generous in both their money and time, our partnership with the Huangs extends to the worksite where Nancy serves as an invaluable member of the Women Build. Not only does she volunteer every year, Nancy is also present without fail from each home's wall-raising to dedication day and lots in between.

We thank Nancy and Larry for their support and may God bless the Huang family.

HISTORY IN THE MAKING

As 2009 comes to a close, Beaches Habitat for Humanity will celebrate a monumental event - the completion of our 200th and 201st homes in the Jacksonville Beaches area. In honor of this historic event, we've profiled our two newest home owners below.

MOTHER OF TWO GAINS NEW HOME, OUTLOOK ON LIFE

Jessica Borges has always dreamed of home ownership, but thought it was out of reach. That was before she heard about Beaches Habitat for Humanity. A mother of two, Jessica and her family will soon move into Beaches Habitat's 200th home: a duplex in Haywood Estates. "When I got the message that I would be a homeowner, my family and I were ecstatic," said Borges. "My daughter in particular cannot wait to have her own room."

Recipients of Beaches Habitat receive more than a new house. They must also go through lessons in finance and home ownership. In the current economic environment, understanding credit and budgeting is more important than ever, lessons that Borges has taken to heart.

"Learning about credit has been great. I never really thought about it before I started going to the meetings," said Borges. "I appreciate being taught home ownership, as well as important financial lessons that will help me the rest of my life."

Borges has also welcomed the challenge of the mandatory 300-plus sweat hours, saying that she feels the experience has made her a better person. "My sweat hours gave me new respect for the construction workers and made me better appreciate all the work that goes into building a new home," said Borges.

KATRINA SURVIVOR FINDS NEW HOMETOWN, NEW HOME

Mira Wilson and her two children came to Jacksonville after her home was damaged in Hurricane Katrina. After just a month of staying with her sister here, Mira decided to make Jacksonville her home. Shortly after, however, her sister moved to Texas, leaving Mira and her children alone in a town they barely knew.

Mira found work as a medical record analyst at Baptist Beaches, a position she has now held for more than four years. The job allowed Mira and her children to move into a small apartment, but they were still struggling to make ends meet. Then fate intervened.



"My co-worker told me about Beaches Habitat and recommended I come to an information session. After I attended the meeting, it sounded like a great program. I knew this program was not only something I wanted to do, but something I needed."

Wilson says she has been pleasantly surprised by the whole process. "The Beaches Habitat staff and volunteers are amazing people," Wilson said. "I have had so many great experiences and everyone has been so pleasant to work with."

Beaches Habitat gave Mira a sense of stability. "I always knew I would be a homeowner because I knew I had the ability to succeed, but the Beaches Habitat program has made it easier to accomplish my goals and live the life I have always wanted. I would recommend the program to anyone."





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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Help us sponsor our 201st home!

Yes! I would like to sponsor _____ feet at \$100 per square foot, totaling \$_____.

Name as I would like it to appear in program recognition:

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Credit Card type: _____ # _____ Exp. date: _____ Security code: _____

Enclosed is a general donation in the amount of \$_____

Beaches Habitat thanks
***regency*centers**
Proud sponsor of our 200th home!

For more sponsorship opportunities, please contact our Director of Development, Mary Anne, at (904)241-1222 or MaryAnne@BeachesHabitat.org.

Please make checks payable to Beaches Habitat. You may also sponsor square footage and purchase tickets for our upcoming Beach Bash event at beacheshabitat.org.