

# Habitat Happenings

A monthly newsletter for our volunteers, families, donors and friends

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April 7, 2006

## Affiliate News

### Celebrating National Volunteer Week

The week of April 23<sup>rd</sup> – 29<sup>th</sup> marks the celebration of National Volunteer Week and in honor of this special week all of us at Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to the wonderful people who have dedicated their time to helping eliminate poverty housing.

We want to recognize the over 5,500 volunteers who served with us in 2005 and thank you each for serving over 36,000 hours in the Home Improvement Store, in the office, on a committee and on our many construction sites. Through all of your hard work you've helped make the dreams of home-ownership a reality for many deserving families.

The celebration of National Volunteer Week gives our affiliate the chance to reflect on volunteering. HFH GLA President and CEO, Erin Rank, comments, "Engaging volunteers in meaningful ways to support our mission is one of Habitat for Humanity's core values. On a practical

side volunteers help us conserve financial resources and build more homes. Perhaps what is most inspiring though is seeing volunteers give their time to help families they have never met before to have a better life. This gives our families the priceless gift of a renewed sense of faith and hope. There is no doubt in my mind that the simple act of giving time has an everlasting impact not only on the spirit

of the person you are helping but on your soul as well. "

Dictionary definitions of volunteering adequately describe it as "to perform a service of one's own free will," or "to do charitable or helpful work without pay," but they do not seem to fully encompass all that volunteers mean to our partner families and our affiliate. These definitions  
*(cont. on pg. 4)*



## Mark Your Calendar

### Dates to Remember and Upcoming Events

**April 22—Earth Day**

**April 23rd—29th—  
National Volunteer Week**

Thanks to all of our volunteers!

**April 26th—Operation Home Delivery**

Build on Beach Cities Health District lot in Redondo Beach

**April 29th—Charity Golf Event**

Anastasi Development Company, the largest homebuilder in the Los Angeles South Bay area, is hosting a golf tournament at Strawberry Farms Golf Course in Irvine. Fifty percent of the proceeds will benefit Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles. For more information or sponsorship opportunities, please contact Patty Lee at (310) 323-4663 x106.

Interested in volunteering with our affiliate? Attend one of the following **Volunteer Orientations**:

**Friday, April 21 at 12pm**

HFH GLA Headquarters  
 17700 S. Figueroa Street  
 Gardena, CA 90248

**Tuesday, May 2 at 6:30pm**

Rolling Hills Covenant Church  
 2222 Palos Verdes Drive North  
 Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274



**The Gonzalez Family Home, dedicated on March 3, 2006.**

Inside this Issue



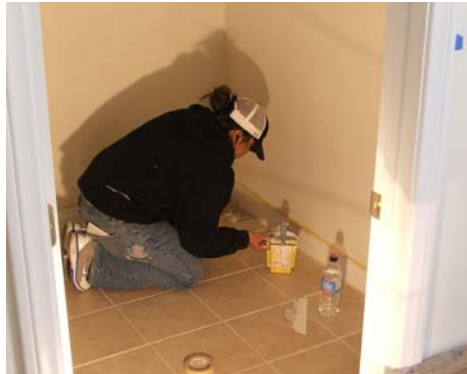
**Around the Site:** what we've been up to at our sites  
**Off the Site:** what some of our people are up to  
**Supporting the Cause:** partnerships that build homes  
**Opportunities for Giving:** the difference is you  
**Lending a Hand:** with or without your tool belt  
**The Finishing Touches:** the Gonzalez family

## Around the Site

### Some Site Gossip from the Peanut Gallery

Well it is the rainy season, and while most people outside of California probably wouldn't believe we have a rainy season, this time of year always slows things down a little on the sites when exterior work is happening.

Despite the rain and the havoc it causes for landscaping and other outdoor tasks, work has still proceeded at the Plaza del Amo site during the month of March. Fencing has gone up, finish concrete has been completed, the homes nearing their move-in date have been thoroughly cleaned, and in-between the



**A volunteer touches up paint at 105th Street—Photo courtesy of Marty Greenberger**

downpours, landscaping has occurred. And as April begins, excitement is building at the site as drywall is expected to start!

Of course let's not forget the 105th Street site. Thanks to most of the work still being indoors the rain has had little affect on this site. The cabinets, generously donated by IKEA, have been assembled and installation has begun. The tile the families proudly decided to have installed has been completed and as the painting

has nearly been finished the houses are really starting to look like homes.

In addition, thanks to the hard work of AmeriCorps members Melanie, Yakeen, Anna and Barry, and some of their favorite regular volunteers, the 105th Street site has been able to handle some of the overflow of volunteers when the other sites have been closed due to rain. They've kept progress moving steadily along while also making sure that the volunteers are both busy and happy.

In other news, the month of April marks the beginning of rehab work on the Juarez-Alcantara family home. This site in Los Angeles is a Thrivent Build and is happening thanks to the partnership with Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and area Lutheran churches. All of the volunteer labor will be provided by area churches who are helping to fund the project. On April 1st a kick-off event was held to celebrate the beginning of the project.

The Juarez-Alcantara family attended the event and discussed their excitement about working with the volunteers and

*(cont. on pg. 4)*



### The Tasks Ahead . . .

There is still work to be done on the Jacobo, Ledezma and Monarez Family homes in Torrance and the Hernandez, Vargas-Rubalcave and Juarez-Alcantara homes in LA! In the coming months we will hang drywall, roof, install cabinets, paint and plant. To help please see Lending a Hand or attend one of the Volunteer Orientations!

## Off the Site

### What some of our Habitat people are up to

For many Habitat employees, charity doesn't stop when they leave the office. In the case of **DAVE MCKECHNIE**, Director of the Home Improvement Store, it didn't stop when he left the city, county, or even state! On February 10<sup>th</sup> Dave drove to Louisiana, pulling a 10,000 lb trailer 2000 miles into the post-Katrina Deep South! And the city of Buras in Plaquemines Parish is as Deep South as it gets! Dave went with his church, First Christian of Huntington Beach, in cooperation with Operation Feed My Sheep (a Christian initiative to help rebuild the ravished coastline, led by Garry Jones).

While there, Dave and 35 volunteers did a variety of tasks: stripping houses of rotting drywall, carpet, and installation to help prepare them to be reinsulated, along with drywall and plumbing repair.

In the 10 days he was there, one story



**Devastation in Buras, LA**

stands out in particular: the local sheriff, known affectionately as Pappy, and his wife, Jane, asked Dave if he might help them get the water going at a VFW Hall. The hall was an important community center and they needed a water source to help wash it clean.

"After a little digging to find the water main and a few hours spent tracing and repairing lines I turned on the water at the main valve ...and out came a rush of water... As I said 'There you go!' and turned towards them they both had a tear welling up in their eyes...I felt so blessed that God had put me in that place at that moment to help... What seemed like such a small insignificant thing to me...had brought a grown man, not to mention a police officer, to weeping.

I think for the rest of my life, every time I turn the tap to get a glass of water I'll think of that moment and thank God for it."  
- by AC VISTA member, Josh Johnsen

**HABITAT UCLA** is a group of dedicated students who work together to build, fundraise and teach others about HFH and this spring they are very busy. From March 28<sup>th</sup> to April 1<sup>st</sup> Habitat UCLA members participated in the alternative spring break program known as Collegiate Challenge.



**Habitat UCLA students participate in Act! Speak! Build Week**

The group spent the week in FL building homes alongside local volunteers and future homeowners. Habitat UCLA is also hosting, from April 3<sup>rd</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup>, the photo exhibit "Rebuilding Homes, Renewing Spirits," a collection portraying the loss, emergency relief efforts and reconstruction after the destructive December 2004 tsunami, which can be viewed at the Northern Lights Coffeehouse. Finally, the students are organizing events for Act! Speak! Build! Week, which is a student-initiated week of advocacy to educate communities and move them to social action. Habitat UCLA will be hosting events April 10<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> including building a mini-house on Bruin Plaza with students from CSULB and the Venice YouthBuild program. For more information on the Habitat UCLA campus chapter please visit [www.habitat.ucla.edu](http://www.habitat.ucla.edu).

## **Supporting the Cause**

### **Partnerships with Audi and Smith Barney Manhattan Beach**

#### **Audi of Downtown Kick Off event was spectacular!**

Many thanks to our friends at Audi who made the event memorable and donated \$5,000 towards building a home for the Reyes family on 21<sup>st</sup> Street near downtown Los Angeles!

Through April 23<sup>rd</sup>, Audi of Downtown Los Angeles is accepting used car donations through Cars for Homes, Habitat for Humanity's car donation program. The dealership is also donating cash to Habitat for Humanity for each car purchased.



**Audi Executives, Erin Rank, and Darryl Holter, President & CEO of the Shammas Group pose with Shammas family matriarch Jeanette Shammas during the Audi of Downtown Los Angeles grand opening soiree.**

#### **Art/House Event Raises over \$42,000!**

The Smith Barney Manhattan Beach sponsored art auction held at Gallery C in Hermosa Beach on March 30 gave special guests the opportunity to bid on artwork donated by over 60 generous artists.



Thanks to the hard work of organizers, HFH GLA Board member David Lin of Smith Barney, HFH GLA Board member Cheryl Perky of Cheryl Perky Fine Arts and Nancy Silverman of Gallery C, 100% of the auction's sales benefited Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles.

The event was highlighted by speakers Cheryl Perky, Michael Napoliello, owner of Gallery C, and Habitat homeowner Daniel Perez, an aspiring

artist who donated his own artwork to help support the organization that helped him realize his dream of owning a home.

Artwork is still available for purchase with 100% of proceeds going to Habitat for Humanity GLA. Pieces can be viewed at [www.arthouse2006.com](http://www.arthouse2006.com).

**Home Improvement Store  
17700 S. Figueroa St  
Gardena, CA 90248**

Hours: Tuesday—Saturday

9am-6pm

Phone: 310-323-5665

Website: [www.shophabitat.org](http://www.shophabitat.org)

#### **Want to Make Some News?**

We welcome your contributions—articles, creative work, photographs, news items, profiles of interesting people you know in the Habitat family.

And of course we welcome your comments, questions, and suggestions to build a better newsletter.

Lindsay Randall ([lrاندall@habitatla.org](mailto:lrاندall@habitatla.org))

#### **Join the Staff**

##### **Positions Available:**

- AmeriCorps VISTA Faith Relations Coordinator

**For more information click on the "News/Events" tab of the website.**

## **Opportunities for Giving**

### **Help Build More Homes and Eliminate Poverty Housing**

#### **Register your Ralphs Club Card and help support Habitat for Humanity!**

If you are a Ralphs Club shopper, call or email us today with your club card number and every time use your card at Ralphs, 4% will come back to our affiliate! In order to register your card contact Lydia Lujan at ext. 110 or [llujan@habitatla.org](mailto:llujan@habitatla.org) with the following information:

Ralphs Club Card number  
First and Last name  
Address  
City, State Zip code  
Telephone number

#### **Enter to Win a New Car and support Habitat's building efforts!**

**Audi of Downtown Los Angeles has generously donated an Audi A3 that will raise close to \$100,000 for five Southern California Habitat for Humanity affiliates!** Purchase tickets for only \$100 each and receive your chance to win. Tickets are on sale **now**. The winner will be selected on August 31<sup>st</sup> at Fannie Mae's Laguna Niguel golf tournament. You do not need to be present to win. To purchase tickets, please contact Lydia Lujan at (310) 323-4663 x 110.

#### **Make a Donation**

Your generous gift will provide materials and resources to help us in our mission to eliminate poverty housing. Just click on the "Donors" tab of our website.



**Erin Rank, President and CEO of Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles and Shannon Valencia, Vice President of Development & Marketing, consider taking the Audi A3 for a test drive.**

## Lending a Hand

### With or Without Your Tool Belt—There Are So Many Ways to Help

**Be a construction worker for a day, or help out at the office or Home Improvement Store.** No experience is necessary to volunteer, just a willingness to learn, work hard, and enjoy a sense of accomplishment. To get started, contact Sarah Weiss at ext. 113 or [sweiss@habitatla.org](mailto:sweiss@habitatla.org).

**Make a group outing of it.** Working on a Habitat for Humanity build site is a great way to get your company involved in the

community, and to bond with your work colleagues. Or you may wish to volunteer with your school, church, or service organization. To learn more about our Company Build Day Program and other group volunteer opportunities, contact Lindsay Randall at ext. 119 or by email at [lrandall@habitatla.org](mailto:lrandall@habitatla.org).

Please understand that at this time we are unable to schedule construction build

days, so we are putting interested individuals and groups on a waitlist. Available waitlist dates for Wednesdays and Thursdays begin in May and available waitlist dates for Saturdays begin in July.

**Join a committee.** Participate in meetings and support our many operations. Visit the "Volunteers" page of the website for more information.

#### Our Wish List



If you can help to supply any of the materials and services listed below, please contact the person whose name immediately follows the description. And thank you!

- Heavy duty radios for use at the construction sites. Amy Taylor ([ataylor@habitatla.org](mailto:ataylor@habitatla.org)).
- Volunteers interested in assisting with pre-demolition work, i.e. removing reusable items from homes, such as appliances, doors, windows, etc. that will be sold in the Home Improvement Store. Sarah Weiss ([sweiss@habitatla.org](mailto:sweiss@habitatla.org)).
- Portable Generator - Any size, for use on jobsites, events, etc. Gas or diesel. Kimball Diamond ([kdiamond@habitatla.org](mailto:kdiamond@habitatla.org)).
- Portable staging - Commercial grade for kick-offs, dedications, etc. Kimball Diamond ([kdiamond@habitatla.org](mailto:kdiamond@habitatla.org)).
- Digital video camera - For documenting work in progress, scouting sites, etc. Kimball Diamond ([kdiamond@habitatla.org](mailto:kdiamond@habitatla.org)).
- Photography lighting, back drops, etc. - Commercial grade for documenting work in progress, events, etc. Kimball Diamond
- Video Post Production Services - Editing video, titling, captioning, after effects, etc. (In kind donation) Kimball Diamond
- Gift certificates - For work boots, tool belts, safety equipment, etc., for our hard working AmeriCorps members. Kimball Diamond
- Gift certificates - For refreshments, coffee, juice, baked goods, etc., for everyone that is kind enough to help us. Kimball Diamond

### Volunteer Week (cont. from pg. 1)

do not touch on the dedication of our volunteers; their commitment, and their ability to go above and beyond everyone's expectations.

The definition of a HFH GLA volunteer is better summed up by describing them as, "a person who believes that people can make a difference – and is willing to prove it." Habitat volunteers prove they can make a difference not only by assisting on the construction site, in the Home Improvement Store or in an administrative capacity, but also by teaching others about Habitat and recruiting more people

for the cause.

And our partner families are the ones who truly benefit because they are given the opportunity to make their dreams come true. Emily Cruz, who will be moving into a home with her family on the Plaza del Amo site writes, "I would like to thank you (Habitat) and all the people that helped build our house...I am excited to move into my house and finally have all the things that I wanted like my own room, closet space, my own bed and a house." Another partner family child, Rosa Ochoa, writes, "My family and I are really glad and thankful for everything everyone has done

for us. We have always wished for a house, at least a tiny house, but thanks to Habitat for Humanity, we're getting a 2-story house...I am glad our dreams have finally started."

The impact volunteers make on the lives of these families is immeasurable and the fact that they donate their free time makes their impact that much more incredible. It is obvious that, "Volunteers don't necessarily have the time; they just have the heart," and everyone from the Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles family would like to thank all of our volunteers for their generous hearts.

### Around the Site (cont. from pg. 2)

moving into their home. Tom Edelen of Thrivent Builds and Rev. Lawrence Becker of Trinity Lutheran Church of Hawthorne also attended and spoke of their delight to meet the family and be part of building their dream. The celebration was brought to a close by the fabulous children's choirs of Ascension Lutheran Church of Los Angeles and Holy Trinity Lutheran Church of Inglewood. Their joyous songs, hand clapping and feet stomping, directed by Mark Coates, were certainly the highlight of the event.

### The Finishing Touches

On March 3, 2006 the Gonzalez family celebrated the dedication of their home in Lynwood with sponsors, volunteers and the HFH GLA staff. The entire family invited the many attendees on a tour of the home they recently moved into. Miguel and Arsenia and their daughters Gissel and Chelsea were grateful to all of those that helped them attain their dream of owning a home. They thanked those who helped build with them and also the sponsors: An Anonymous Donor, Kevin Gerrity—Youth United, Northrop Grumman Corp., Discovery Channel, Entertainment Industry Foundation, Rotary Club of LA, and supporters: First Federal Bank of California, The David Geffen Foundation, Habitat UCLA Campus Chapter, Wells Fargo and Westwood United Methodist Church.

