

PRESS RELEASE

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photo attached



“Wall Signing is Good News for Affordable Housing in Washington County”

118 volunteers build a house where a hole once was

Hillsboro, OR (May 2009) - Times are tough and the construction of new homes has slowed considerably across the country. But here in Washington County, the Salcedo Hernandez family have marked an important milestone in the construction of their new home located in Willamette West Habitat’s newest neighborhood, Vance Place.

An old fashion, ‘barn-raising’ blitz week was held recently and nearly 120 volunteers from several Lutheran congregations showed up to help build. Over a week, they collectively put in 788 volunteer hours, turning a hole-in-the-ground into a framed, 2-story house complete with the roof trusses and sheathing on. Then, the following week, an all-female contingent representing seven different congregations joined forces to help move the project forward. They had the opportunity to learn some new skills as they worked on installing the siding and installing windows.

With the interior framing complete, the group is getting a small respite while the rough plumbing and electrical work is done by contractors. After the inspections are complete, volunteers and partner families will come back to do the insulation and drywall.

In the meantime, not wanting to be idle, the group held a wall signing this past weekend. Members of the community were encouraged to come by the home, meet the family and sign the interior studs. There were all manner of good wishes, blessings, even a few tic-tac-toe games, but the most compelling was the drawing done by 10-year-old Antonio Salcedo of his new house and all his family members, right next to the stud that said “Yo, this is my house.”

This new home, which will be purchased by the Salcedo Hernandez family later in the year, is a result of an alliance between Willamette West Habitat for Humanity International and Thrivent Financial for Lutherans. Called Thrivent Builds with Habitat for Humanity, this alliance has resulted in thousands of decent, affordable homes across the country since 2005. Thanks to its 2.6 million members who own financial products with the organization, Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is able to contribute to the improvement of communities like Aloha where new home is located. The Thrivent Builds alliance also engages volunteers—members of Thrivent Financial, members of area Lutheran churches and members of the community at large—to work alongside the partner families to build these homes.

About Willamette West Habitat for Humanity

Willamette West Habitat for Humanity is dedicated to generating homeownership and benefiting our community by building simple, decent, affordable housing with an emphasis on building neighborhoods. Since 1988, we have built 51 homes in Washington County, and look to complete five more in 2009. Habitat works in partnership with low-income families, volunteers, donors, and organizations to receive donated materials, volunteer labor and generous financial gifts. Qualifying families receive a zero-percent interest rate and monthly payments structured to their income. Mortgage payments go into a fund which is then recycled back in to the community to build additional houses. For more information, visit us at wwhfh.org

About Thrivent Financial for Lutherans

Thrivent Financial for Lutherans is a not-for-profit membership organization helping approximately 2.6 million members achieve their financial goals and give back to their communities. As a not-for-profit fraternal benefit society, Thrivent Financial sponsors national outreach programs and activities that support congregations, schools, charitable organizations and individuals in need. Thrivent Financial has main offices in Minneapolis, Minn., and Appleton, Wis. For more information, visit www.thrivent.com.

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