

mend. To learn more about Habitat for Humanity, or about volunteering, visit www.sbhabitat.org. You can volunteer as an individual, or sign up with a group as I did.

Volunteers provide most of the labor, with individuals, foundations, churches, and corporate donors providing the money and materials to build Habitat houses.

Habitat for Humanity of SSBC is an independent, locally run affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International, a non-profit, nondenominational Christian housing organization dedicated to the elimination of poverty housing. Habitat for Humanity International and its affiliates around the world have built and repaired more than 800,000 homes for qualified partner families.

Another way to help Habitat is by donation of cars, boats, motorcycles, and RVs. To help in this way call 877-277-4344, or see www.carsforhomes.org.

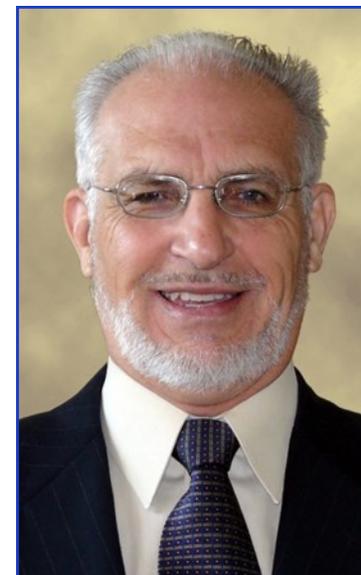
And yet another way to help is to make purchases or volunteer at Habitat's ReStore at 6860 Cortona Drive, where all kinds of building materials are available. The next volunteer orientation is on February 22 at 10 a.m.



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Cell 805 451-9300
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HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Good News, Affordable Housing

I've got some good news in the area of affordable housing in Santa Barbara. Recently I had the opportunity to work with 32 other volunteers from my church, in helping with construction of Habitat for Humanity's 12-unit affordable housing development at 822 East Canyon Perdido. This coming summer, 43 low-income people will be housed in these units, including 20 children.

It was an exciting and inspiring day, and the excitement was bolstered by the fact that most of the homeowners who will inhabit the town homes were also there working on the buildings. Habitat requires that each adult contribute at least 250 sweat equity hours in constructing

the homes – and they don't know which one they will inhabit until the dust settles.

With this project, the architects, Ed deVicente and Ryan Mills of DMHA, and local energy experts, are attempting to meet Habitat's goal of building the most energy efficient, affordable, multi-family housing project in Southern California. The goal is the achievement of the rigorous Passive House U.S. certification. Homes certified to this standard have a low environmental impact and use very small amounts of energy for heating and cooling. Achieving this standard is very challenging and requires building design and construction techniques that go far beyond current California energy standards.

In keeping with the energy standards of the project, the new homeowners will have only one car. Each family will each be assigned one parking space, and there is no street parking.

The 12 low-income families were chosen from 500 applications in 2012. In addition to a new home, these families are receiving much

more help from Habitat. They are taking a 16-month homeownership readiness curriculum that covers all aspects of financial literacy including setting up wills and retirement plans. Another key aspect is that each family is being mentored by another family that owns a home. And these mentors take the classes along with the new homeowners.

"We want to provide everything that it will take to be successful long-term homeowners," said Alexandra Hamill, Development Manager for Habitat.



As I said, volunteering for Habitat can be a very rewarding experience, which I heartily recom-