

Nashville Area Habitat for Humanity

1006 Eighth Avenue South ♦ Nashville, TN 37203

Building Homes in Partnership with God's People in Need

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Ashley Webster, 599-2575 or 969-2373

SIX FAMILIES TO CROSS THRESHOLDS FOR THE FIRST TIME AS HOMEOWNERS

Nashville Predators, music industry donors helped build these new homes

[Nashville, Tenn. – Oct. 20, 2006] – At 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, October 22, Nashville Area Habitat for Humanity will host dedication ceremonies for six more houses in Providence Park, built over four consecutive weekends by six hard-working families and hundreds of volunteers. At the ceremonies, the families receive framed copies of their mortgage agreements and keys to their new homes. Providence Park is Nashville Habitat's first contiguous all-Habitat community and the largest in the U.S. built by volunteers.

These are the last six dedications before Whirlpool Building Blocks, a homebuilding blitz to construct 10 homes in five days in Providence Park in November:

The Nashville Predators Build: A House of Hope – This home has been built for a family affected by recent hurricanes that has chosen to relocate to Nashville. At press time, a family had not yet been selected. However, Betty Toussaint, whose home was built by Nashville Area Christian Churches (NACC) in Providence Park in June, completed her sweat equity by volunteering on the Predators Build. Betty Toussaint and her mother, Edwina, survived both Hurricane Katrina and Rita in fall 2005. They settled in Nashville with Catina, Betty's niece, to support their church ministry and their pastor, Apostle Mason, who was already settled here. Betty, Edwina, and Catina left their New Orleans home with only two changes of clothes one day before Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast and went to Houston where they lived for one month. Among the generous donations they received was a pair of white sneakers, which Betty felt compelled to select, even though she typically does not wear white shoes. [When Betty got a job as a Nurse Assistant for NHC Healthcare in May 2006, she knew then why she had gotten the white sneakers. "God provides for all our needs," she says.] When Betty learned that Hurricane Rita was heading straight for Texas, she knew they would have to leave Houston. Fortunately, they were able to arrange an Angel Flight to Nashville, where they have lived ever since. They are grateful to NACC and to Habitat for building a stable environment where they can put down some roots in "beautiful Tennessee."

About the sponsor: Through a national partnership among the National Hockey League (NHL), National Hockey League Players' Association (NHLPA), and Habitat for Humanity International, the NHL and NHLPA contributed \$500,000 to launch hurricane-rebuilding efforts throughout the Southeast and Gulf Coast regions, called "Operation Home Delivery." In May 2006, leaders kicked off this national initiative in Nashville when NAHFH and the Nashville Predators Foundation framed a Habitat home on the plaza of the Gaylord Entertainment Center. Members of the Predators team and staff worked together to begin construction of a three-bedroom house, which was completed in Providence Park this month to become the permanent home of a family that was displaced by hurricanes and has chosen to relocate in Nashville. "We remain committed to those who are facing difficulty in the wake of last year's hurricanes," said Gerry Helper, senior vice president, communications & development, for the Nashville Predators. "This effort not only provides a home for a deserving family, but also extends an opportunity for our team and its supporters to get involved with Habitat and give back to the community."

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Volunteers from the following groups built this home:

Predators fans
Mt. Zion Church
Team Green
Square D
Country Music Hall of Fame
Whites Creek High
Temple Church

Girl Scout Troup 676
Riverside Chapel
Beneficial
Village Chapel
Alpha Phi Omega – Tennessee State
University

The Music Row Build for David and Hong Vo – David and Hong Vo are originally from South Vietnam, though they grew up in different towns. David and his family immigrated to the United States 15 years ago as refugees after the end of the Vietnam War. Hong has been in the United States almost five years now. In 2002, they had a daughter, Linda, who has serious medical and developmental issues. Currently, both David and Hong work as manicurists at Spring Nail Salon, which is owned by David's father. David studied technology in Vietnam before moving to America. Hong, who studied economics at a Vietnamese university, is now studying English as a second language at Nashville Tech. She hopes to attend nursing school. Hong remembers a hard childhood. Her father, trained as a nurse practitioner, was imprisoned twice – once for aiding soldiers during the war and once for trying to escape to freedom with Hong's sister and brother in an open boat. Hong's sister and brother were quickly released, but the authorities kept her father for two more years. Hong's mother and father placed great emphasis on education and worked as hard as they could to give their children college educations. Hong says, "My father always said that education would give us a better life." David and Hong are moving to Providence Park from the small basement apartment of David's father's house, where conditions are not ideal for Linda. They were referred to Habitat through a nurse that was helping care for their daughter, but at first, Hong thought Habitat was only for people who had lost a home in a natural disaster such as Hurricane Katrina. She persisted in her search for homeownership, and now they are both looking forward to having a home of their own. "A Habitat home means everything to me and my family – especially a healthy place for Linda," Hong says.

About the sponsor: The Music Row Build was born in 2003 as a part of "Nine for Nashville," the blitz build that launched NAHFH's Providence Park community. Participants had such a rewarding experience that a broad range of artists, songwriters, labels, publishers, talent agencies, marketing firms, and trade-specific professional organizations entered the Nashville Area Habitat for Humanity fold. Ree Guyer Buchanan, president/owner of Wrensong Publishing, chaired the 2006 Music Row Build. Funding for the annual build comes from diverse businesses engaged in the entertainment industry and individual music executives, artists, and songwriters. Nearly all volunteers from the Music Row build work in Nashville's music industry.

Volunteers are from the following businesses and organizations:

Echo Music
Great American Country
Sony BMG Music Entertainment
Disney Music Publishing-Nashville
BMG Publishing
Country Music Hall of Fame and
Museums
Sony Tree Publishing

Lyric Street Records
Universal Publishing
Universal Music Group
SOLID
William Morris Agency
Chicks with Hits
Cal IV Entertainment
Kraft CPAs

The Unity Build for Antoinette Crowell – Crowell is the strong single mother of a 17-year-old daughter and legal guardian of her niece and nephew, ages 11 and 14, for almost seven years.

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Originally from Nashville, she attended Maplewood High School and then studied to become a certified nurse assistant. Crowell remembers her childhood as a tough time, and she lived with her aunt for a while. Having a child at 15 was also an experience that taught her a great deal. Crowell has worked for Green Hills Health and Rehabilitation since 2004. She began as a certified nurse assistant but was promoted to restorative technician, helping people in physical rehabilitation with daily life activities such as walking and dining. She hopes to return to school and study to become a physical therapist. The Crowell family is moving to Providence Park from an area of East Nashville where drugs and prostitution are common. Crowell only let her children go outside to play when they were under supervision. She says she has known she has wanted a house “forever.” She considered different types of homeownership programs, but when she heard about Habitat through a Section 8 worker, she knew it was for her. “Having to build your own home – that’s what got me,” she said. With a quiet dignity, she went on to say, “Without Habitat and the sponsors, I don’t know where I’d be.”

About the sponsor: The first Unity Build for NAHFH was organized in 1993. This year marks the eighth Unity Build, comprised of members from many religious congregations and organizations. Howard Malcolm and Gladys Wolfe from Calvary United Methodist Church led this year’s build.

Churches and organizations that participated this year are:

Belle Meade United Methodist Church
(UMC)
Bellevue Presbyterian Church
Bellevue UMC
(Men's Fellowship)
Calvary UMC
Christ UMC
Church Women United
Criewood UMC
East End UMC
Family of God at Woodmont Hills
(Singles)

Forest Hills UMC
Glendale UMC
Gordon Memorial UMC
Hillcrest UMC
Hillsboro Presbyterian Church
Holy Trinity Lutheran Church
Monroe Street/Jordonia UMC
GB Higher Education Ministry
United Methodist Communications
GB of Discipleship

Fall Community Build for Fannie Singleton James -- James, a single mother of two boys, ages 15 and 7, grew up in Independence, La., 45 miles north of New Orleans. With her usual air of calm and peace, she explains that family is extremely important and her own family is very close. Her mother, brothers and sisters still live in Louisiana, though James moved to Nashville in early 2005 to make a different life for her sons and to be close to her best friend of 30 years, Arnetha. Named for her maternal grandmother, James remembers her Grandmother Fannie selling Dixie cups every summer just to earn money for her grandchildren's school clothes and supplies. After her older son was born, James studied to become a phlebotomist. Before that, she worked in sales. Currently, she works for LabCorp as a phlebotomist for an endocrinologist. She is moving to Providence Park from Antioch. James says she has wanted to experience homeownership ever since she was 18 and had her first job. At one time, she was on housing assistance, but she knew in her heart that it was temporary. She wanted to break the cycle of renting homes and provide something she could leave her kids. James first heard about Habitat through an ad in the *Nashville City Paper* that she clipped, put in her "big giant" purse, and forgot all about for several weeks. As she was cleaning out her purse, she found the ad again and decided to take the first step. A couple of months later, she got the phone call that she was approved. "This home means security for me and my family," said James.

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About the sponsor: The Fall Community Build has always been a great combination of new friends and old friends. This year is no exception. NAHFH is always happy to have First Baptist Church, Hermitage United Methodist Church, and US Bank join this build. The Village Chapel and MAPCO volunteered for NAHFH for the first time.

First Baptist Church returned to sponsor and build its third Habitat house. The church's previous involvement was in the mid '90s, led by Larry Swift. Swift told Pastor Rus Roach that he would be happy to lead another build when the money could be raised. Nearly 10 years later, Pastor Roach remembered Larry's "offer" and came calling. Larry and his wife, Pam, were happy to accept the responsibility of coordinating the volunteers from First Baptist Church for this build.

Hermitage United Methodist Church has been partnering with NAHFH since 2001. They have been involved with many different builds, including the InterFaith Build, Donelson/Hermitage Build, and the Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati American Dream Build.

U.S. Bank first became involved with Habitat a few years ago by coming out and building floor systems. NAHFH is thrilled that U.S. Bank sent out a team of volunteers for the 2006 Fall Community Build.

Village Chapel exists to glorify God through the teaching of His work, through heartfelt worship, and by connecting with people with opportunities to live lives of real significance, serving God and their neighbors as a local community of faith. Reverend Jim Thomas heard about this build through a member of First Baptist Church and wanted to get his congregation involved.

This was MAPCO's first experience sponsoring and volunteering with Habitat. A team of six MAPCO representatives came out this summer to visit the build site and were very enthusiastic about supporting NAHFH's mission.

The House that Vander-BUILT for Kristy Williams -- Kristy Williams is a hard-working single mother of four teenagers – ages 19, 17, 14 and 13. A Nashville native, Williams attended Whites Creek High School. She has two brothers and a sister who live in Nashville, along with her father, who owns a construction firm. She has good childhood memories of outdoor barbecues and lots of laughter, even though her parents were strict. "Don't let the streetlight catch you!" was one of her father's favorite phrases. Williams grew up helping her father build houses. Her father built two of the homes they lived in growing up. He was the first to say to her, "There's nothing like owning your own home." To meet her goal, Williams is working two jobs now – she's been at Dillard's for four months in the packing area and also works part-time in a retail shoe store. Previously, she was with Vanderbilt University in housekeeping. Her employers are very excited and supportive about her opportunity to purchase a home. Williams and her children are moving to Providence Park from an area of North Nashville where there is a lot of crime and gang activity. She wants and needs a better life for her children. She encourages others to consider the Habitat program, saying, "It's a good program – a lot of hard work, but worth it in the end."

About the sponsor: Vanderbilt Habitat, affectionately known as "Vandy Habitat," began in the early '90s as a small, student-run organization. Since then the organization has grown in size and volunteer opportunities. Vandy Habitat is operated out of the university's office of active citizenship and service and is comprised of 12 board members and a volunteer base of 1,500+ students who serve actively throughout the year. What makes this chapter unique is that it not only builds homes but also works with the Nashville homeless population. Vandy Habitat sponsored its first house as an organization in 1996; now, 10 years later, they have sponsored their second. It took students two years to raise the money to sponsor this Nashville Habitat home. The decision came up during a 2004-2005 Vanderbilt Habitat board retreat. While listing the chapter goals for the semester, board members said they "thought that sponsoring a house would bring us closer to our affiliate and the greater Nashville community." Vandy Habitat

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Chapter is teaming up with other student organizations and students in the Vanderbilt community to make this build a success. "We are glad to sponsor a home because we know the importance of having secured housing," said Courtney Wright, president of Vandy Habitat. "We're happy that we will be able to provide this opportunity for a hard-working family that needs it. Our volunteers are excited and happy to be a part of this event."

The Stirton Oman/Presbyterian Community Build for Clarice Wilson – Clarice Wilson is the single mother of two sons, ages 12 and 6. She remembers growing up as one of six siblings in a decent house and having fun even though they didn't have a lot. Her mother worked very hard to provide for her children and was a great role model for her. "My mother always told me that I can do anything I want," said Wilson. "She is my anchor." Wilson has been employed with Scholastic Book Fairs since 2004. She also works on-call at Centennial Adult Care and Dillard's warehouse in production. In addition to working three jobs, she studies nursing at Southeastern Career College with plans to become a registered nurse. With her busy schedule, she still finds time to attend her sons' sporting events. "My sons are top priority," said Wilson. "They drive me. I want to teach them that they can have nice things without doing bad things." Homeownership has been a dream for Wilson ever since she gave birth to her older son at age 16. This dream has made her work harder to make it come true. Wilson wants a yard for her sons in a neighborhood where there's no negative peer pressure. She wants them to be good examples to other kids – to be the same wherever they go.

About the sponsor: Stirton Oman was a big man with a big heart, and his company was a builder of great big projects, including the Trans-Alaskan Pipeline, the largest privately funded construction effort in history, and the Trans-Asian Highway in Afghanistan. But he would also have been very pleased with the very small project that he made possible for Nashville Area Habitat for Humanity. When Oman was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, a friend suggested that he and his wife, Linda, begin attending Westminster Presbyterian Church. Although he had been a lifelong Baptist, they liked Westminster and became members. Through their membership at Westminster they became close to Carson Salyer, the associate pastor who had for years led the church's effort to build an annual Habitat house. The whole Habitat story appealed to Oman, and he wanted to support both Westminster and Habitat in his will. He did this by donating to the Habitat fund at the church. Oman's gift, in combination with those of nine other local Presbyterian churches, has provided a home for a hard-working family in need.

Churches that participated in this build are:

Emmanuel Presbyterian
Hermitage Presbyterian
Hillsboro Presbyterian
Hillwood Presbyterian
Second Presbyterian
Southminster Presbyterian
Trinity Presbyterian
West End Presbyterian
Westminster Presbyterian

Nashville Area Habitat for Humanity (NAHFH) is a non-profit, ecumenical, housing ministry that provides low-income families with life-changing educational opportunities and the chance to build and purchase decent, affordable homes. The agency, which has quadrupled in size since 2002, is building a record 50 homes in 2006 – 38 locally and 12 abroad. Families qualifying for NAFH's program purchase their homes at cost (usually \$75,000-85,000) and repay the mortgage with no interest over a 20-30 year period. Additionally, families are required to accumulate "sweat equity" hours, earned through HomeWORKS classes, build site time and community service. NAFH's HomeWORKS program

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provides more than 700 hours of classes for partner families on budgeting, credit management, mortgage finance and home maintenance. . These classes build each individual's leadership, citizenship and life skills. Major funding for Nashville Area Habitat for Humanity is provided by the Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati, The Memorial Foundation, The HCA Foundation, The David Ingram Advised Fund, The Melkus Family Foundation, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Habitat for Humanity International, Whirlpool Corporation and the LP Foundation. To request an application or to receive more information about NAHFH, call 615-254-HOME or visit www.habitatnashville.org.

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