



Robert Pierre Johnson
Housing Development
Corporation

E-News & Notes

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**Hearts and
Hammers**



*Seasons Greetings from the RPJ Housing
Board of Directors and Staff!*



Inside this edition:

1. [November's Program Highlights](#) –
2. [Want Ads](#)
3. [Hats Off to Our Supporters](#)
4. [Did You Know?](#)

1. November's Program Highlights

Autumn has arrived in all its splendor, and our Katrina families are starting to find their way around their new communities and adjust to the cool fall nights and the fast pace of life here in Northern Virginia. They are establishing connections to physicians, specialists and banks with help from **Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church**, which has also paid the annual condominium fee and three months of utilities at an RPJ Housing unit where one family lives rent-free. **Heritage Presbyterian Church** is working with another family whose lease RPJ Housing has guaranteed as the family transitions to life here (see the photo above). Recognizing that folks from New Orleans have never experienced a Virginia winter, **Kol Ami** (the Northern Virginia Reconstructionist Community) has begun raising money to buy coats and the **Falls Church Rotary Club** is securing warm blankets. While our partners have been supporting these families, RPJ Housing has brought a fifth family into the fold by co-signing its third apartment lease (see the photo above).



After co-signing their lease, RPJ Housing executive director Herb Cooper-Levy welcomes the Natividad family to their new home.

This outpouring of support has touched the families deeply, and in the spirit of the Thanksgiving season, several families have offered personal expressions of gratitude to RPJ Housing and our partners. Next week, the **Elks Lodge #578** will make sure there is a turkey at the table of each family in need, complete with trimmings. Thanks to many helping hands, we have set a bountiful harvest table to honor our pilgrims.

2. Want Ads

Looking for a rewarding and challenging career opportunity? Come join the RPJ Housing team as a Home Repair Project Coordinator. In this position you will meet with prospective clients, inspect homes, organize and lead volunteer work groups, determine material needs, train team leaders and make minor home repairs. For more information on this full-time position contact Patti at (703) 528-5606 ext 16 or visit our website at www.rpjhousing.org.

Wanted: Do you have a neighbor, friend or family member who needs home repairs and can't afford them? RPJ Housing's Rebuilding Together and Hearts and Hammers programs provide free home repair services to homeowners with limited incomes. Repairs can vary from fixing a light switch, installing a grab bar to painting an entire house. To learn more about how to apply contact Patti at (703) 528-5606 ext 16 or visit our website at www.rpjhousing.org/program to download an application.

Wanted: New or gently used dressers for our Hurricane Katrina families. Contact Michele at (703) 528-5606 ext 10 or mpalmer@rpjhousing.org.

Wanted: Your frequent flyer miles or credit card points! We can turn these into silent auction and raffle items for Monte Carlo Night on May 12th, 2006 and it doesn't cost a thing. Talk to Jeannie at 703-528-5606 x18 for more information.

3. Hats Off To...

... the Ballard family of Herndon (VA), who replaced the refrigerator and stove in the home of an 83-year old widow with like-new appliances that were recovered from their own kitchen during a remodeling project.

... Amy Leidheiser, together with other James Madison University Alumni participating in Fairfax VolunteerFest 2005, who helped paint a patio and three rooms inside the WW II era home of a 91-year old widow with heart problems. While there, volunteer Jim Dillon noticed a window had rotted out, so he returned later in the week to replace it.



... Barry Dysart with the Knights of Columbus Father Sikora Council #7992, who put in handrails and a ramp for a 50-year old woman with arthritis undergoing intensive chemotherapy.

... Norm Beattie, who completed several small safety improvements at a local safehouse, and repaired kitchen cabinets and doors for a 70-year old single woman in Arlington.

... MyPlumber, which repaired leaky pipes at the home of an 83-year old widow in McLean (VA). The repairs allowed her to leave her main water valve turned on full time, instead of having to turn it on/off when she needed to draw water.

RPJ Housing's Handyman Program also installed a replacement clothes dryer in the home of a single mother of three young children in Springfield (VA) and repaired wall tile and baseboards in the kitchen of a 74-year old widow in Washington (DC) who is caring for a 2-year old granddaughter.

4. Did You Know?

In their report *Something's Gotta Give: Working Families and the Cost of Housing*, the Center for Housing Policy found that, on average, for every \$1,000 working families save on their housing costs, their transportation costs increase by \$775. Check out the housing-transportation trade-off at <http://www.nhc.org/housing/pubs-descriptions>.