

# The RPJ Housing Express

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Robert Pierre Johnson Housing Development Corporation of the National Capital Area

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## Rebuilding Together Spreads Sunshine in April

This was another exceptional year for RPJ Housing's Rebuilding Together program. Nearly 1,800 area volunteers donated 15,000 hours (approximately \$500,000 in donated labor alone) to help their neighbors during the last weekend of April to repair 55 homes in Arlington and Fairfax Counties and in the City of Falls Church. They rebuilt porches, replaced sidewalks, installed siding, caulked windows, restored electricity, painted houses, built wheelchair ramps, and forged friendships. As one homeowner put it, "It was a very happy experience which I will never forget."

The planning, preparation and organization began in February when team leaders attended several training sessions to learn the art of managing a volunteer home repair project. Team leaders collaborated with the recipients and RPJ Housing to finalize the work scope for each home and the materials needed to complete those tasks. Donated dumpsters from **Sites Works, Inc.** and port-a-potty units from **John Boy, Inc.** were placed at work sites. **MY Plumber, Walsh Electric** and **Walker Roofing** tackled challenging projects prior to the workday and made generous donations. Paint, lumber and other materials were delivered the Thursday before project day to RPJ Housing's parking lot. Volunteers and employees of **McCormick Paints** separated everything for the teams so each had a pile of materials ready for pick up on Friday. Thousands of volunteer hours went into organizing Rebuilding Together projects prior to the actual work day to guarantee its success. The amount of time, labor, sweat and care that went into each and every project is truly amazing.

Michael Curreri led the team from **DPR Construction** and their many sub-contractors to transform the home of Dorothy Smith and her four children, one of whom has recently been battling cancer. Even before the work had begun, her gratitude and appreciation were expressed in countless e-mails, letters and phone calls. Ms. Smith described her children as absolutely wonderful individuals, and they lived up to her words on project day as they worked along side the volunteers. The DPR team completely remodeled the kitchen, built a fence, replaced three exterior doors, painted many rooms,

made plumbing and electrical repairs and landscaped the yard. The best part of the day was when one of Ms. Smith's sons came up to the team leader and said, "Hey Mike, thanks for giving me a ceiling in my bedroom, that's really cool." Thanks to the efforts of DPR and its team members, this family now feels comfortable inviting friends into their home.



There are as many stories of kindness and great deeds as there are teams and homeowners involved in this year's program. A 91 year-old woman's home in Arlington went from being cited by the County as cluttered and a fire hazard to being clean, organized and safe thanks to the efforts of **Resurrection Evangelical Lutheran Church**. A family's pride in their 672 square foot home, surrounded by newly built multi-million dollar houses, was returned after **Centerville United Methodist Church** spent more than 500 hours renovating and beautifying their home. **Congregation Beth Emeth** skillfully built an indoor ramp for a 76-year old woman so that she could successfully navigate her scooter inside her home instead of relying on a walker she felt uncomfortable using. **OMNIPLEX World Services** and **Ox Hill Baptist Church** worked together to build a deck on a group home for persons with developmental and physical disabilities so residents who use wheelchairs could enjoy the great outdoors.

RPJ Housing's Rebuilding Together program continues to improve the homes and lives of low and moderate income homeowners and group homes operated by non-profits thanks to our volunteers, sponsors, funders and vendors. Our sincere appreciation goes out to all those involved. Please see page 2 for a list of the sponsoring volunteer groups that worked on Rebuilding Together projects this year.

## Mark your calendars!

**WHAT:** The eighth annual ESSI Golf Classic benefiting RPJ Housing's Rebuilding Together and Hearts and Hammers Programs.

**WHEN:** Monday September 24<sup>th</sup>

**WHERE:** The Reston National Golf Course.

Enjoy this popular Northern Virginia course designed by the legendary Ed Ault and managed by Virginia-based Billy Casper Golf. Just spend a day on the golf course or sponsor this event and you will provide RPJ Housing the funds needed to repair the homes of low-income seniors, persons with disabilities and families with children.

**WHY:** Thanks to everyone's support, a portion of the funds from last year's Golf Classic paid for a ramp for 3 year-old Lauren who has a rare degenerative neuromuscular disease. Lauren now proudly zips in and out of the house in her powered wheelchair!

**HOW MUCH:** Golfing fees are \$125 per player or \$500 for a foursome. Green fees, carts, breakfast, beverages, lunch, golf shirts, golf balls, prizes and awards are included. To learn more about becoming a sponsor or participant, contact Patti Dennis at (703) 528-5606 x16 or [pattid@rpjhousing.org](mailto:pattid@rpjhousing.org), or go to our website, [www.rpjhousing.org](http://www.rpjhousing.org) for a sponsor brochure.



## Ramping Up a New Home Mods Grant

The Fairfax Area Disability Services Board awarded RPJ Housing \$15,000 from the State Department of Rehabilitative Services' Rehabilitative Services Incentive Fund to provide home modifications to low and moderate income homeowners that have physical and sensory disabilities. An emphasis will also be placed on reaching out to underserved ethnic and cultural populations. "We are excited to forge new connections to homeowners that have had limited avenues to obtain needed adaptations to their homes," remarked Patti Dennis, Director of Volunteer Home Repairs.

RPJ Housing will utilize volunteer teams to perform substantial home modifications such as wheelchair ramps, widened doorways, roll-under sinks and countertops, and roll-in showers. These modifications will increase ease of use, safety, security and independence in the home environment. The grant will help pay for building materials and devices that increase accessibility, contracting services with engineers and therapists, and developing program literature in different languages. The goal is to serve twenty individuals through RPJ Housing's volunteer home repair programs in fiscal year 2008.

## Goodbyes and Hellos

RPJ Housing thanks Rayshone Baskerville for her outstanding service in property management and wishes her well as she pursues a job closer to home. We welcome Kisha Williams, who will take her place, and Marilyn Adams, who has joined the staff as a construction manager for our renovation projects. Finally, we would like to introduce Otto Matas, our new maintenance assistant.

We would also like to recognize Lyman "Jug" Harbottle, who recently retired from the Board of Directors after 17 years of service on RPJ Housing's Board. Jug has been a faithful volunteer for our Rebuilding Together Supply Pickup Days, Golf Tournaments, and other events. Moreover, we salute the Reverend Bill Hoffman, who is retiring from the Church of the Covenant, RPJ Housing's office "home." Reverend Hoffman has been a strong advocate for RPJ Housing's programs and affordable housing. We will miss them both dearly!

## Here's to Our Rebuilding Together Teams:

Association Builders and Contractors, Inc.  
Annandale Christian Community For Action, Inc.

Annandale United Methodist Church  
John Calvin Presbyterian Church  
INOVA Health  
Peace Lutheran Church  
Ravensworth Baptist Church  
St. Barnabas Episcopal Church  
Bethany Lutheran Church  
Booz Allen Hamilton, Inc.  
Burke United Methodist Church  
Springfield Christian Church  
Bush Hill Presbyterian Church  
Caldwell Chapel  
Capital One  
Centreville Presbyterian Church  
Centreville United Methodist Church  
Cherrydale United Methodist Church  
Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Christ the King Lutheran Church  
Church of the Covenant  
Church of the Epiphany  
Church of the Good Shepherd  
DPR Construction, Inc.  
Fairfax Presbyterian Church  
Fairfax United Methodist Church  
Floris United Methodist Church  
Freddie Mac  
General Dynamics - AIS  
Heritage Presbyterian Church  
IBM  
Immanuel Presbyterian Church

King of Kings Lutheran Church  
Lewinsville Presbyterian Church  
Little Falls Presbyterian Church  
Mount Olive United Methodist Church  
Mount Vernon Presbyterian Church  
Navy Federal Credit Union  
Oakton United Methodist Church  
Omega Psi Phi Fraternity - Psi Alpha Alpha Chapter  
OMNIPLEX World Services Corporation  
Our Lady Queen of Peace  
Ox Hill Baptist Church  
Pender United Methodist Church  
PENREN Joint Venture  
Resurrection Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Serco  
SI International  
St. Mary's Episcopal Church  
St. Michael's Episcopal Church  
St. Peter's Episcopal Church  
St. Timothy's Episcopal Church  
Trinity Presbyterian Church - Arlington  
Trinity Presbyterian Church - Herndon  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington  
United Christian Parish  
Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.  
Wesley United Methodist Church  
Yachad, Inc.  
Congregation Beth Emeth  
Congregation Etz Hayim  
Congregation Olam Tikvah  
Kol Ami  
Temple Rodef Shalom

## RPJ Housing Thanks the Following Monte Carlo Night 2007 Sponsors & Contributors Who Placed Their Bets on Affordable Housing:

### Royal Sponsor (\$5,000+)

The Christopher Companies  
Virginia Housing Development Authority

### Full House Sponsors (\$2,500 - \$4,999)

BB&T  
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Get Up & Go  
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of the Community Foundation for the Nat'l Capital Region  
Virginia Community Development Corp.

### Straight Sponsors (\$1,000 - \$2,999)

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### Ace Sponsors (\$500 - \$999)

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### Raffle/Silent Auction Donors:

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Dorothy Eisenhour  
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Lynn Eisenhour  
Focus Music  
Great Harvest Bread Company  
Hard Times Café Arlington  
Hair by Diane  
Leandra Finder  
Beverly & Melchi Matthews  
Odin, Feldman & Pittleman  
Osprey Golf Club at Belmont Bay  
RPJ Housing Board of Directors  
Martha Paschal  
Amy Smith  
Starbucks at Lyon Village  
The Teal Center  
Washington Redskins Charitable Foundation

## RPJ Housing Eyes the Future

The Board of Directors will make their way to Union Street Pub in Alexandria on June 23<sup>rd</sup> to begin crafting a vision of the "once and future RPJ Housing." This strategic planning initiative is aimed at marshalling the board's resources to take the next giant step in RPJ Housing's service to the community.

## Did You Know?

The average cost of a one bedroom apartment in Northern Virginia is \$1,046 a month -- \$12,552 a year. To afford that level of rent and utilities, without paying more than the federally recommended ratio of 30% of income on housing, a household must make \$41,840 a year. That is 64% of the average salary for an ambulance driver. It is 72% of the average salary for a child care worker. And that is only the cost of their housing, they still have all of the other expenses people deal with every day — telephone bills, child care, medical expenses, and transportation. Even families with two people working full time may find themselves with insufficient income to afford that one bedroom apartment. You can help make a difference for your community by supporting affordable housing. Make your city or county one where everyone can find a place to live.

## Classifieds

**WANTED:** volunteers to assist with mailings, data entry & other clerical tasks. Work can be done at home or RPJ Housing's office. Contact Amy at [amym@rpjhousing.org](mailto:amym@rpjhousing.org) or (703) 528-5606 x10.

**WANTED:** volunteers to help organize and coordinate an on-line silent auction to benefit RPJ Housing's affordable rental programs. Work can be done at home or at the RPJ Housing office. Contact Amy at [amym@rpjhousing.org](mailto:amym@rpjhousing.org) or (703) 528-5606 x10.

**WANTED:** looking for a rewarding and challenging career opportunity? Come join the RPJ Housing team as a Home Repair Project Coordinator. Meet prospective clients, inspect homes, organize and lead volunteer work groups, determine material needs, train team leaders and make minor home repairs. For more info on this full-time position, contact Patti at (703) 528-5606 x16 or visit our website at [www.rpjhousing.org](http://www.rpjhousing.org).

**WANTED:** Community Housing Partners Corporation is preparing to carry out the Fairfield and Lynn D Apartments Renovation in part using Federal HOME Funds. To implement this project, CHPC will issue contracts and procurements for: Demolition, HVAC, Electrical, Framing, Drywall, Painting, Floor Coverings and Roofing. CHPC is soliciting the participation of Section 3 residents and businesses, minority and female owned businesses, contractors and suppliers. Such businesses may be included on appropriate bid and procurement lists by submitting a written request within ten (10) days of notice. Requests for bids should state the name, address, product or service and documentation showing qualifications as a minority or female owned business concern. Section 3 residents and businesses must produce documentation of status. Address requests to: CHPC – Construction Division, 930 Cambria Street, NE, Christiansburg, VA 24073. Phone: (540) 382-2002. Fax: (540) 381-8270. **All above referenced procurements will be made on a competitive basis.** CHPC is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

**Count me in!** I want to help RPJ Housing continue serving families like Dorothy and her four children. Here is my tax-deductible contribution to support *RPJ Housing's* efforts to develop and preserve affordable housing in the Washington metropolitan area.

\$25.00     \$50.00     \$75.00     \$100.00     Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Or, go to [www.rpjhousing.org](http://www.rpjhousing.org) to donate online through the Network for Good on our Home Page.

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