



NEW ADDRESS: 215 MATTHEWS AVENUE NEW BRITAIN, PA 18901

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: 15 January 2005

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

Mikaela D. Martin, Marketing & Public Relations Director | 215.348.2204, extension 306; m.martin@habitatbucks.org

ONCE STRANGERS, NOW NEIGHBORS AT EMERALD HOLLOW

Trumbauersville, PA—(12 February)— At this weekend’s Habitat for Humanity of Bucks County home dedication, the Dallison-Gearhart, Johnson, Kelsh and Schwartz families—once strangers, now neighbors—were each given a gift so special, no paper could wrap it. On the chilly afternoon of February 12, each family received the keys to their new homes.

“I feel like a princess,” said Angela Schwartz who, with husband Brian, welcomed visitors into her family’s home after the dedication ceremony. “I thought I’d be a renter my entire life.” Angela’s two boys, ages 8 and 12, had already determined “whose room was whose” and were busy showing them off to new found neighborhood friends.

The dedication represents the last of Phase I of the Emerald Hollow community, completing three years of constructing 37 townhomes. The second phase is scheduled to begin this winter and will add 36 homes, walking trails and 15 acres of open space to the community.

During the dedication ceremony, each family was presented with the key to their home and a package from Habitat Bucks’ Faith Relations Committee. Key presenters of this dedication included home sponsor representatives Todd Hendricks of T.H. Properties and Sean Dempsey of H&R Block Mortgage as well as Habitat Advisory Board Member, Peter Thompson and staff member, Melissa Trainor. Recognition awards were presented to T.H. Properties for their \$625,000 commitment to the Emerald Hollow community and to the construction volunteers warmly referred to as the “Wednesday Boys” (Manual Alfonso, Dan Baird, Wayne Bishop, Ray Fluck, Nick Grant, Norman Hoffman, Ed Hotham, Monroe Hunsberger, Ed Neff, John “Jack” Richards, Tom Vogeley) for their tireless efforts at the site.

Following dedication, guests enjoyed refreshments provided by Saint Paul’s United Church of Christ in Sellersville and toured the new homes. Visitors were encouraged to write a message in each of the journals placed in the kitchens of the new homes.

Single mom and new Habitat family member, Sarah Kelsh, talked to visiting guests about decorating her seven-year-old son’s new room the following weekend. “We’re painting Tyler’s room orange. If that’s what he wants, then that’s what he’ll get!”

Additional sponsors of the dedication included Ed Neff (frakturs), Provident Bookstore in Souderton (bibles), Applebee's in Quakertown (gift baskets), Doylestown United Methodist Church (house blessings) and Evelyn Taylor (professional photography services).

Habitat for Humanity of Bucks County brings individuals, families and communities together to build affordable homes with those in need. We are a Christian ministry that calls on all people regardless of religious preference or cultural background to make safe, simple, affordable housing a matter of conscience and action in Bucks County. Habitat for Humanity homes are sold at cost through no-interest loans held by Habitat. The homes are sold with no profit made. Homeowners contribute "sweat equity" and house payments are recycled to build additional houses. For more information about Habitat Bucks, please call 215.348.2204 or visit habitatbucks.org.

ADDITIONAL QUOTES:

- *Habitat Partner Family, Monica Johnson, on the support she has experienced surrounding the upcoming closing of her new Emerald Hollow home, "The support in my life is ever-growing. I just feel so blessed...to have the support of the community and community organizations."*
- *Habitat Partner Family, Sarah Kelsh on how owning a Habitat home will change her life, "[Owning a Habitat home] will change my life for the better... it will be a complete blessing! My son will be able to play outside and have friends over; my apartment was too small for that."*

PHOTOGRAPHS:

- Wednesday Boys (*pictured, from left to right: Ed Hotham, Nick Grant, Monroe Hunsberger, Ed Neff, Ray Fluck, Jack Richards, Dan Baird, Wayne Bishop; not pictured: Manual Alfonso*) received customized thermoses in recognition of their dedication to Emerald Hollow.
- Sarah and Tyler Kelsh stand in front of the completed homes before being presented with their key.
- A teary Monica Johnson holds four-year-old daughter, Lily, after receiving the key to their home.
- Trish Kriger, executive director of Habitat Bucks, Steve Bauman, president of Habitat Bucks, and Todd Hendricks, co-founder of T.H. Properties, stand in front of the final Phase I homes of the Emerald Hollow community.

###
