



Habitat for Humanity Home Nearly Complete

Volunteers by the dozens combined with skilled building contractors to complete about two-thirds of a Habitat for Humanity home for a Perris mother and her three children.

A portion of the Southern California Fairgrounds became a construction site as workers put up most of the exterior and much of the interior of a 1,088-square-foot home that will be turned over to Yolanda Arenas upon completion. Arenas and her family were selected from among 150 applicants who applied for the home.

The City, working with Habitat for Humanity of the Inland Valley, will supervise the move from the fairgrounds to its permanent location on East Second Street in Downtown Perris. The home will be loaded onto a trailer and travel down Ramona Expressway to Perris Boulevard en route to Second Street.

The move is scheduled to take place Oct. 28 at 12:01 a.m.

Tammy Marine, executive director of Habitat for Humanity Inland Valley, said volunteers from various schools, businesses and civic groups hit the ground running once construction began.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch, Mayor Pro-Tem Joanne Evans and City Councilmembers Rita Rogers and Mark Yarbrough took part in the ceremonial kick off of the home-building effort.

Yarbrough later returned with members of the Perris Optimists Club to paint siding for the residence.

"If everybody chips in just a little bit, you get so much done," Yarbrough said. "In a little more than a week, a house has been built from the ground up."

Workers put up the frame, installed windows, put on the roof, hung drywall and siding, installed heating ducts, electrical fixtures and bathroom amenities. Work on the foundation, walls and other interior portions of the home will take place after this month's early-morning move.

Arenas and her family—sons Raymond Samano, 16, David Samano, 10, and daughter, Jessica Samano, 17—appeared at the job site throughout the Southern California Fair. The older siblings and their mom worked throughout the Fair, carrying lumber, putting up the frame and painting the siding. Part of the process of obtaining a residence through Habitat for Humanity requires that a family put in hours of "sweat equity" on their home or another residence. Arenas said that is a price her family gladly will pay.

"It's surreal," Arenas said. "I want to give a tremendous shout out to the City of Perris for making this dream become possible. To see your home go up day-by-day is an overwhelming experience."

Arenas said she and her family will be watching when their home begins its journey from the fairgrounds to its permanent location.

Members of the Rotary Club of Perris came out the first day of the build. Volunteer Vince Agnifili called the Habitat for Humanity project a "great opportunity to come together for a great cause."

"It's good for the City, it's good for the fair, it's good for Habitat for Humanity and it's good for our community," he said. "This is something we can all be proud of."

Temecula resident Jennifer Robinson said she recently graduated with a degree in international studies from UC Irvine.

She said the work for Habitat is something she'd like to pursue in her professional career.

"I want to work in poverty alleviation programs overseas," Robinson said. "I can start by practicing it here."

A group of six Temecula Valley High School students spent time at the job site painting. They included Jake Anderson, 16; David Yassai, 17; Elias Cruz-Zamora, 17; Devin Jones, 17; Michelle Zia, 17; and Kayla Richardson, 16. Advisor Diane Anderson and her husband, Nick, also worked on the house.

"I'm proud of these kids," Diane Anderson said. "They've given up some of their free time to help other people."

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch also stopped by the work site as the building began. He thanked the volunteers who pitched in to make the first-phase of the project a success.

"Things are really progressing rapidly," Busch said. "It's a really marvelous project, the type of project you want to do on an annual basis. It's heartwarming to see people come together for such a wonderful project."



Habitat for Humanity recipient Yolanda Arenas, with two of her children, Raymond Samano, 16, and Jessica Samano, 17, during a break from painting at the Southern California Fair construction site.



Perris City Councilman Mark Yarbrough rolls a coat of paint on exterior siding during a work shift at the site.



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch stopped by the job site to wish volunteers well. The Mayor called the Habitat for Humanity home a "really marvelous project."



Volunteer Jennifer Robinson, 29, read about the project on the Internet.



The crew from Temecula Valley High School spent part of a day working on the Habitat for Humanity home.

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