



Perris Press Release

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Perris City Workers Put Finishing Touches on Habitat Home

Perris City workers traded in their computers and iPads Thursday for paint brushes, saws, drills and caulking guns as they went to work on the final phase of a Habitat for Humanity Home in the City's historic Downtown.

Perris Mayor Daryl Busch, City Manager Richard Belmudez and Deputy City Manager Darren Madkin led a contingent of nearly a dozen municipal workers who spent the day at the residence at D and Second streets.

When completed—hopefully before Christmas—the three-bedroom, 1,088-square-foot home with a magnificent wooden porch will be turned over to Perris resident Yolanda Arenas and her three children. The family was one of more than 150 applicants for the new home and was chosen at the conclusion of a lengthy selection process.

The Arenas family put in hundreds of hours of “sweat equity” building their home and also qualified financially to make the monthly mortgage payments.

Construction on the home began in October during a celebration of the City's Centennial at the Southern California Fair. Mayor Busch dropped by the worksite to review plans for Thursday's construction schedule, which included painting, interior caulking and carpentry and installing drywall and baseboards.

“This is one marvelous project,” Busch said. “To think this project started during our Centennial is truly amazing. Our City staff needs to be commended in so many ways for the work they do within the community. We appreciate their work and their giving.”

Busch strolled along the redwood porch, which extends from the front to the side of the residence.

“This porch is really nice,” he said. “It really dresses up the house. You could hold a party on it.”

Belmudez spent Thursday painting the garage and caulking inside the residence. He said staff members from all Perris City departments contributed construction time.

“I am inspired by the turnout of all the staff who are motivated to participate in this community project,” he said. “It's nice to see staff members from different departments working together.”

Housing Manager Sabrina Chavez, who also painted Thursday, said the Habitat for Humanity home provides three major benefits for the City of Perris.

The project strengthens the immediate vicinity with a quality home that hopefully will motivate nearby property owners to upgrade their residences. It reinforces the City's commitment to provide quality housing to deserving families. And it continues Perris' renovation of its Downtown, which also includes new facades on buildings along D Street, new businesses and a new park and new apartment complex.

Chavez calls the Habitat for Humanity project “seeding a community.” She said City staff recognize its importance and want to get on board.

“It's a project everyone wants to get involved with,” she said.

Community Services Manager Walt Carter and Recreation Leader Cynthia Quintero were among other Perris staff members-turned-one-day-construction workers who lent a hand Thursday. While shorter colleagues needed step-ladders to reach ceilings for caulking, the 6-foot 6-inch tall Carter, a standout collegiate basketball player, simply reached up to finish the work.

“This is really enjoyable,” Carter said. “I am having a good time. It's fun.”

Quintero said she is proud to make Perris a better place to live.

“It's a great



Administrative Services Manager Isabel Carlos gets ready to install drywall Thursday afternoon.

feeling to know that you're part of something good,” she said. “When I drive down the street and look at this house, I can say I was part of it. That's a nice feeling.”

Craig Evans, president of the board of directors of Habitat for Humanity Inland Valley, praised the City for “going above and beyond” in supporting the project. He said Perris staffers worked with Habitat for Humanity to build “not just a home, but a really nice home” that will upgrade the surrounding neighborhood and the whole City.

The work Thursday was just the latest contribution from the City. City elected officials and staff members worked on the residence while it was at the fairgrounds and were present when it was moved to its permanent location on East Second Street.

“It is just amazing the City of Perris has come out and has given us this amount of support,” Evans said. “Habitat for Humanity is truly grateful. Perris is a caring community.”

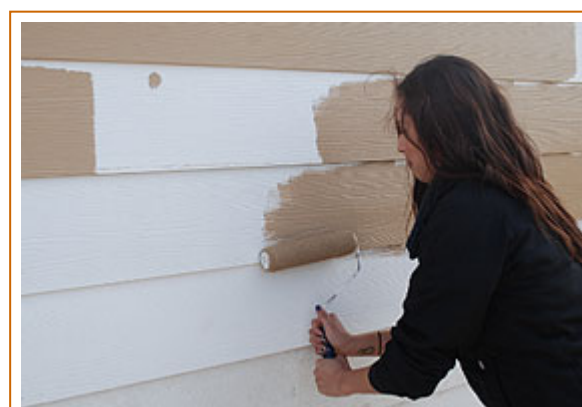
Other City workers who pitched in Thursday included Rene Avila, Assistant Director of Development Services; Construction Manager Luis Natera, Recreation Leader Sarina Brannon, Planning Manager Clara Miramontes, Interim Finance Director Misty Cheng, Administrative Services Manager Isabel Carlos and Recreation Supervisor Spencer Campbell. City Attorney Eric Dunn and consultant Anthony Perez, who wrote the grant that secured federal funds for the Habitat for Humanity house, also volunteered their time Thursday.



Perris Mayor Daryl Busch, Habitat for Humanity's Liz Bibb, Housing Manager Sabrina Chavez and Deputy City Manager Darren Madkin survey plans for Thursday's work at the home at D and Second streets.



Perris City Manager Richard Belmudez caulks a ceiling at the Habitat for Humanity house.



Cynthia Quintero, a Perris City recreation leader, applies a coat of paint to the residence.



Rene Avila, Assistant Director of Development Services for the City, measures a piece of drywall before cutting it and installing it inside the garage at the Second Street home.



Misty Cheng, Perris' Interim Finance Director, installs a section of drywall.