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City Lends Hands to Paint Habitat for Humanity Homes



A group of Perris volunteers takes a break from the heat during a painting day at a Habitat for Humanity construction project on South Street.

Perris elected officials and municipal workers from several departments picked up brushes and rollers to paint a pair of houses under construction by Habitat for Humanity, which builds homes for deserving families throughout the U.S.

Perris Mayor Michael Vargas and City Councilman Malcolm Corona dropped by the building site on South Street to show their support for Habitat and give a shout-out to the 20 volunteers from various departments who spent several hours painting in triple digit temperatures.

"What a fantastic program," Vargas said. "It builds up our community and allows hardworking people the chance to become good solid citizens. It's a huge asset to our City."

The mayor also commended City staff for their labor at the job site.

"It speaks volumes about how much our staff cares about giving back to the community," he said.

The ongoing construction project, expected to be completed in July, marks the third time the City has partnered with Habitat for Humanity to build homes in Perris. Previous homes were built on 2nd and 11th streets.



Perris Mayor Michael Vargas chats with Habitat for Humanity project manager Liz Bibb during a visit to the construction site on South Street in Perris, where two homes currently are under construction.

Corona spent much of the morning painting the exterior walls of one residence. Other Perris employees worked on the exterior and interior of the 1,088-square foot, three-bedroom, two-bathroom homes, which also include tankless water heaters and wiring for solar panels. One family of four includes two teenagers; the other includes three boys, two of whom are deaf. A next-door neighbor is learning sign language to communicate with the youngsters. The families currently are residing elsewhere in Perris.

"It's important the work together to help deserving people live in nice homes while at the same time beautifying our City," Corona said. "It's great to see all the hard work coming together and to know that progress is being made."



Perris City Councilman Malcolm Corona slaps a coat of paint on the exterior siding of a Habitat for Humanity home on South Street in Perris.

"Glad to be back"

Project manager Liz Bibb said Habitat is glad to be back in Perris, noting the agency has had a good relationship with the City for years.

"We are glad to be back in Perris," Bibb said. "There is a great need for housing in the City. We appreciate the efforts of your City workers to come out and volunteer on this project. We could not do it without you."

Bibb said Habitat receives hundreds of applications any time a construction project is announced.

To qualify, prospective owners must be able to meet the monthly mortgage payment, attend workshops emphasizing the benefits and responsibilities of home ownership and contribute 400 hours of "sweat equity" to Habitat projects.

Perris employees from the City administration, planning, public works, animal control and code enforcement departments took part in painting the homes. Public works crew leader Arturo Garcia called it a "good feeling" to help another family put down roots in a community.

"Having your own home is what it's all about," he said. "It's about having kids a place to call home. Stability is what every family needs."



Perris Recreation Coordinator Rachel Pinedo on the job for Habitat for Humanity: "I like that the City partners with Habitat for make Perris a better place."

Supporting the community

For animal control officer Danika Nelson, slapping on a coat of paint to exterior siding or an interior wall came naturally. She's a former commercial house painter.

"I like the work, I like the attention to detail," she said. "I believe it's important to not only work in a community but to be a support system of the community. It makes us more than just workers—it makes us part of the community. I believe it's important to build a good working relationship with the people of the community."

Recreation coordinator Rachel Pinedo lives in Perris. Volunteering at the Habitat for Humanity work site meant she was improving the City she calls home.

"I love volunteering for Habitat," she said. "I love giving back to our City. I like that the City partners with Habitat to make Perris a better place."

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