

Habitat for Humanity of Kitsap helps national organization achieve No. 8 on the 'Builder 100' list

Habitat for Humanity of Kitsap County helped the national Habitat for Humanity organization achieve the rank of No. 8 on the Builder 100 list, marking the first time the nonprofit has been among the top 10 biggest builders in the United States. The list also shows Habitat, with 5,294 closings last year, moved up three spots in 2009 from its 2008 ranking of No. 11.

Habitat for Humanity of Kitsap County has completed three homes at the organization's Cornerstone Project located in East Bremerton this year and a fourth in Suquamish. They have three more underway which they expect to complete the end of this year. Permits are in hand for five more homes and they expect to start one additional unit any time now.

"At Kitsap Habitat we have seen a substantial decrease in financial contributions over the past two years which has slowed our building schedule," said Lori Oberlander, executive director. "With over 350 low-income Kitsap families voicing interest in a Habitat homes, we feel blessed to be building homes through the most difficult of economic times. Our volunteer work crews are able to build as quickly as we are able to purchase construction supplies. As we see improvements in key economic factors, we hope to see key contributors return to support our local building program."

In 2009, Habitat affiliates repaired 710 homes nationwide, up from 621 homes in 2008. Around the world, Habitat for Humanity helped 61,005 low-income families by building 23,657 new houses and rehabilitating or repairing 37,348 houses.

"Habitat for Humanity affiliates have been working in more than 1,500 communities in the U.S. to ensure that more than 5,200

families had a new or renovated affordable home to live in last year," said Mark Andrews, senior director of U.S. Operations for Habitat for Humanity International. "We could not have accomplished this work without the sustained support of local leaders, volunteers and donors."