

NEIGHBORHOOD Minute

THE NEWSLETTER FOR NEIGHBORWORKS® SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE

Finding a Place of Comfort at Silver Mill Apartments

Dolores and Domingo Soto, brother and sister, came to the United States in 1998 from Saint Croix, the U.S. Virgin Islands, to be near Dolores' daughter who lived in New Hampshire. Assimilating quickly to life in Manchester, Dolores worked on the custodial staff in the Manchester Public Schools while supplementing her income working as a seamstress to support herself and Domingo. Dolores is 79 years old, and Domingo is 87 years old.



Dolores and Domingo Soto in their Silver Mill Apartment

Life took a turn for the worse, however, in 2009 when Dolores was laid off from her primary job and Domingo's health began to falter. As a result, living in her daughter's two-story house became increasingly difficult because Domingo's condition necessitated use of a wheelchair and he could not maneuver between the two floors.

"It was a really dark time in our lives," says Dolores. "I knew we needed to relocate to a living environment that offered more accessibility for my brother, but cost was an issue because I did not

have steady employment and am now in my senior years as well," she continues.

Searching for weeks and finding apartments that were either unaffordable or lacked handicapped accessibility, Dolores learned about NeighborWorks® Southern New Hampshire's rental properties after being introduced to Lissette Feliciano who works for Stewart Property Management. "The rest fell into place," says Dolores.

The Sotos submitted an application for a rental unit, and a suitable first floor unit at Silver Mill Apartments became available after a few weeks. In addition, Lissette provided information about resources available that would help them live independently.

"We've never been happier," says Dolores. "I've made so many friends with nearly everyone in the building, even the children come up and say hello."

Dolores did not expect this change of course in her or her brother's lives, as she now cares for him on a daily basis. Yet she recognizes that their quality of life and overall health have improved because they live in a positive living environment that they can afford. Despite Domingo's health challenges, they enjoy attending a senior center where they partake in positive activities, such as painting, dominoes, and bingo. Dolores also enjoys being able to volunteer her skills to teach others how to sew.

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We are in the midst of our 25th year of providing services as an organization. We have grown and matured during this time, but have been deliberate in how we approach our community development activities, balancing our real estate development, housing education, and community organizing focus to maximize impact and needs of the communities we serve. Stay tuned about our activities in 2017 as we will recognize this special milestone in our history in a number of ways!

At the same time that we are reinvesting in almost a quarter of our rental portfolio to address maintenance needs in our Manchester units, we are working with community leaders and residents to help address some of the adverse issues that have resurfaced in our core neighborhood in a significant way. Our involvement in the Community Schools Project is one manifestation of our commitment to being present in neighborhoods of greatest need. The community impact surveys we have conducted in Nashua's Tree Streets area are helping to inform our impact approach in that neighborhood.

It was wonderful to see so many of our supporters and partners at this year's David P. Goodwin Outstanding Neighbor Award event this past September. We know that the positive changes we achieve in our communities are the result of those who support what we do in any number of ways.

On behalf of NeighborWorks® Southern New Hampshire's staff and the many individuals and families helped by this organization, thank you for your ongoing support. I wish you a wonderful holiday season.

*Robert Tourigny
Executive Director*

Home Ownership Acknowledgments

NeighborWorks® Southern New Hampshire is pleased to announce we are now officially packaging loans for the USDA Rural Development 502 Direct mortgage program. The program is for low and very low-income families purchasing homes in designated rural towns throughout New Hampshire and will be an excellent resource for HOMEteam's homebuyer education and counseling participants. Additionally, Debbie Wheeler, Home Ownership Counselor, recently received the Gold Star Award for her outstanding work with USDA Rural Development.

At their Annual Dinner this past spring, the Mortgage Bankers and Brokers Association of New Hampshire recognized Paul McLaughlin, Home Ownership Manager, for his work as a presenter at the "Principles of Mortgage Banking" twelve week course. And Debbie Wheeler earned the Certified Mortgage Professional Designation from MBBA-NH!



Debbie Wheeler, with Michael Urban and Beverly Mason of USDA Rural Development, receiving Gold Star Award.



Paul McLaughlin teaching 25 participants partaking in the Mortgage Bankers and Brokers Association of New Hampshire's "Principles of Mortgage Banking" twelve week course.

HOMEdteam recently achieved our 100th homeowner in a 12-month period!



Ann Dow, Vice President and Residential Loan Officer, and Marcie Gowen, Residential Loan Originator, at Woodsville Guaranty Savings Bank present Ryan Tufts, HOMEteam Home Ownership Counselor, with contribution.



Thomas Garner, Vice President at Bank of America and member of NeighborWorks® Southern New Hampshire's Board of Directors, and Kenneth Sheldon, New Hampshire State President of Bank of America, present Ryan Tufts and Robert Tourigny with a \$30,000 grant award.



HOMETeam now offers Home Buyer and Financial Literacy education classes and one-on-one counseling in the Lakes Region at River's Edge, a new 32-unit affordable housing development created by Laconia Area Community Land Trust.

HOMETeam Community Partners



New Hampshire Housing
Bringing You Home



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U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
NeighborWorks® America
Northway Bank
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Barry Brensinger

2016 David P. Goodwin Outstanding Neighbor Award Recipient



Robert Tourigny and Sylvio Dupuis presenting plaque to Barry Brensinger

With the Straw Mansion in the background, more than 160 guests gathered for an outdoor reception on September 21, 2016 in support of NeighborWorks® Southern New Hampshire's mission of providing safe, quality housing options for individuals and families, and the opportunity to celebrate Barry Brensinger as the recipient of this year's David P. Goodwin Outstanding Neighbor Award.

Surrounded by family and friends, Barry accepted the award as a measure of our thanks for his long-standing support and involvement with our organization. Speakers at the event included Mayor Ted Gatsas, as well as members of the organization's volunteer leadership, including Joseph B. Reilly and Sylvio Dupuis, Trustees of NeighborWorks® Southern New Hampshire, and Kerrie Diers, Vice Chair of the Board of Directors.

Mayor Ted Gatsas presented a proclamation to Barry, a resident of Manchester for thirty-seven years.

We are very grateful for all who attended or otherwise supported the event, including members of the Goodwin family, in affirmation of the important role NeighborWorks® Southern New Hampshire has in providing safe, quality housing options for individuals and families in our state.

Our thanks to People's United Bank and Craig, Deachman & Amann for their leadership sponsorship of the event, as well as all supporting sponsors which include:

Otis Atwell, Northern New England Housing Investment Fund, Bank of New Hampshire, Lavallee Brensinger Architects, John S. Jordan Design, Brady Sullivan Properties, TD Bank, Eversource Energy, Citizens Bank, New Hampshire Housing, Central Paper, Federal Home Loan Bank of Boston, Sheehan Phinney, Secured Network Services, St. Mary's Bank, Gary Chicoine Construction Corporation, Bank of America, BerryDunn, Bellwether Community Credit Union, and Mutual of America.

Our thanks as well to Aissa Sweets, Cross Photography, RAM Printing, Scott Silberfeld, Tidewater Catering, Weber Stave Design, and Granite State Credit Union for their donation of product or services for this event.



Barry with members of the Goodwin and NeighborWorks® Southern New Hampshire family. Left to right: Carolyn Leary, Charles Goodwin, Jaye Goodwin, Marilyn Soper, Barry Brensinger, Ellie Cochran, Sarah Cochran, Kerrie Diers, Robert Tourigny



Dianne Mercier of People's United Bank



Mayor Gatsas, Arthur Sullivan, and Robert Tourigny



*John Deachman, Dean Christon,
Pat McDermott*



Colleen Lyons, Ron Boufford, Justin Boufford



Dylan Cruess and Elizabeth LaRocca



*Joseph Reilly and
Ron Boufford*



Marilyn Goodwin Soper and Ray Wiczorek



Michael L'Ecuyer, Cecile and Sylvio Dupuis



*Mike Reed, Carolyn Leary, and
Jaye Goodwin*



Jen Miller and Cindy Weber Stave



*Jeffrey Crocker, Thomas Garner,
Debbie Wheeler, Lynne Paul*



*Pat Donahue, Dave Sargent, and
George Reagan*



Richard Ober and Barry Brensinger



*David and Jafreysi Shulterbrondt,
Ryan Tufts, Deb Drake*

Tenant Corner – Highlights from Recent Activities

Tenant Barbecue

Our annual tenant barbecue was held on August 20, 2016 at Straw Mansion Apartments, providing an afternoon filled with food, music, and games on a glorious summer day. Tenant families enjoyed many fun activities, such as spaghetti hair, water balloons, relay races, tie-dye shirt making, and caricature drawings. We appreciate the involvement of Cindy Audesse, and also S. Liane Brown who drew caricatures. Our thanks as well to Goldrenrod Restaurant of Manchester for their food donation.



Cindy Audesse, tenant, showing children how to make tie-dye t-shirts.

Summer Camps

Thanks to the generous support of the Queen City Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club of Manchester, Ella F. Anderson Trust, and Bob's Discount Furniture Charitable Foundation, a total of 15 children living in our affordable rental units were able to experience a week-long camp of their choosing this past summer. Kids submitted a short essay explaining why they want to attend camp and their camp of choice, providing an opportunity not readily available to them. Camps attended were: The Boys & Girls Club Day Camp at Camp Foster, Adventure Camp in Wilton, NH, Camp Doucet of the Boys & Girls Club of Greater Nashua, and Camp Souhegan of the Boys and Girls Club of Souhegan Valley.



Children enjoying martial arts at one of the summer camp programs.

Back To School Drive

The footsteps of school-aged kids were heard throughout our hallways at the end of August as parents and children stopped in to pick up new backpacks filled with school supplies. Employees of Merrimack Mortgage Company donated 30 new backpacks chock full of notebooks, crayons, pencils, and folders, and NBT Bank donated 5 new backpacks filled with a similar assortment of school supplies. We are grateful for these donations, which helped to ease the expense of going back to school for families living in our apartments.



Cynthia Timmons, Tenant Services Coordinator, and Anita Wolcott of Merrimack Mortgage, with the Rodriguez family picking up their new backpacks.



Diane Brewster, Chief Operating Officer, with Marilyn Charbonneau and Brittany Negron of NBT Bank.



Jhoskaty and Drissel, sisters, with their brand new backpacks!



NeighborWorks® Southern New Hampshire Participating in Manchester’s Community Schools Project

NeighborWorks® Southern New Hampshire is participating in the Community Schools Project, a collaborative, multi-year effort rolled out by the City of Manchester’s Health Department as part of its Neighborhood Health Improvement Strategy. Funded through Granite United Way, the Community School’s Project focuses on neighborhoods of greatest risk in Manchester, utilizing elementary schools in these areas as points of location for the delivery of resources and supports for residents.

From October through May, NeighborWorks® Southern New Hampshire will provide free financial literacy workshops at Gossler Park and Beech Street Schools. Each one-hour session will address specific financial and money-management topics, such as creating a spending and savings plan, establishing financial goals, building and improving credit, and protecting and enhancing income. Additional services to be provided include free tax preparation for qualified families and one-on-one financial coaching.

NeighborWorks® Southern New Hampshire will also deliver resident leadership training workshops at both Gossler Park and Beech Street Schools over the next six months. These leadership workshops will educate residents about effective strategies and tools for positive involvement in their neighborhood. Our goal is to facilitate leadership development leading to the creation of neighborhood watch groups, beautification projects, and graffiti prevention programs, creating a neighborhood of pride rather than a neighborhood of last resort.

In recognition of its innovative approach to addressing a multitude of issues in its neediest residents, the City of Manchester was one of seven recipients in the country to be awarded a Culture of Health prize by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. NeighborWorks® Southern New Hampshire is pleased to be part of this effort.

Community Impact Measurement Surveys Conducted in Nashua

In August, nearly thirty volunteers and staff spent a Saturday afternoon in Nashua, asking residents of the Tree Streets neighborhood to complete a survey as part of our participation in NeighborWorks® America’s Community Impact Measurement initiative. Residents were asked to fill out a survey that allows them to reflect on common issues that affect quality of life in the neighborhood, commenting on their perceptions of neighborhood living conditions, services, and related matters. A total of 200 surveys were collected in this process, which also provided an opportunity for residents to come together to enjoy an afternoon of music, games, and ice cream.

Special thanks to Positive Street Art, Nashua PAL, James Vayo from our Board of Directors, and Tom Lopez, Nashua Ward Four Alderman, for their involvement in this important project! The information collected will help to inform our continued efforts to address neighborhood issues and needs. Thank you to everyone who participated!



Tanya Hannigan from HOMEteam assisting a resident with his survey.



Tree Street residents partaking in our Community Impact Measurement Survey.



James Vayo enjoying the afternoon.

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Please Support our Annual Fund!

Gifts to NeighborWorks® Southern New Hampshire provide financial resources for the delivery of our community development programs, including homeownership and financial literacy education and counseling, affordable rental housing development, and resident/tenant services.

Over half of our operating budget comes from charitable giving. You may use the enclosed envelope to make your tax-deductible contribution.

Or, we encourage you to make a gift on November 29, 2016 as part of

#GI[♥]INGTUESDAY™

which is a day encouraging giving to non-profit organizations across the country.

Please go to donate.nwsnh.org and contribute through our secure website.

Thank You!

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