



RUSH HOMES

independence for people with disabilities

CONNECTION

Fall 2010

LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA

Full Steam Ahead! Victoria Ridge

All the loan, tax credit, and HOME funds applications were complete. All funds were committed. The contractor was under contract and the construction loan closed. Rush Homes' equity partner came on board. **16 months after conception, Victoria Ridge construction began on May 3.** Today, four of eight buildings are under roof and we anticipate a completion date of May 2, 2011.

Victoria Ridge, located at 840 Victoria Avenue in Lynchburg, is Rush Homes' largest project to date, offering 24 apartments for people with disabilities and low incomes. We are greatly excited about the many features of Victoria Ridge including high level accessibility and energy efficiency. Plus, the apartments are located within ¼ mile of the bus line. *Tenants will live affordably with low rents and energy costs; they will live in comfort with greater independence because their accessibility needs are met.* With over 135 people and families on our waiting list, Victoria Ridge will make a dent in the huge need in our community.

Rush Homes overcame many hurdles last year. We secured all the funding necessary for the \$4.45 million project including Low Income Housing Tax Credit,



Victoria Ridge Under Construction (September 13 photo)

its, Tax Credit Assistance Program funds, HOME funds from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development and the City of Lynchburg, and a low interest loan from VHDA. The Victoria Ridge site also underwent and passed a long environmental review.

(Continued on p. 6)

Adopt-A-Home: A Great Service Opportunity

Rush Homes has launched our new Adopt-A-Home program and we are looking for caring, committed groups to sign up! Adopt-A-Home groups volunteer at their assigned home a minimum of four times per year, performing important tasks such as spreading mulch, pulling weeds, painting, raking leaves, and cleaning out gutters...just to name a few. Volunteers may do as much or as little as they choose; the idea is that each of our homes will get a little extra, necessary attention in between our regular maintenance tasks. This is a big help because many of our residents are unable to perform basic maintenance on their home due to their disabilities. If you would like to help, please call 434-455-2120 or email allison@rushhomes.org and we will send you an Adopt-A-Home application.

Many thanks to the following groups who have already signed up!

- T. Allen Schlapman Family and Friends – Lansing Avenue home
- The Realty Group – Berkshire Place home
- Lynchburg Police Department, Crime Prevention Unit – Harrison Street duplex
- Anonymous group – Taylor Street home
- Nancy Wellons and friends – Adams Drive home





From the Director

Greetings! This is our first newsletter in a year and I apologize for taking so long to get another newsletter out. We've had a whirlwind of activity this year; here's some of what we have been doing:

- **Victoria Ridge** – This is our largest development to date and we are thrilled to be under construction. Getting to construction was quite intense, whew!
- **538 Victoria Avenue house sale** – A great house at a great price (see article in this newsletter). Call us!
- **Dream Builder's Luncheon** – An amazing turnout, amazing volunteers, fantastic table captains. You guys rock! Thanks to everyone who helped “build hope!”
- **Strategic Planning** – Christine Kennedy from the Lynchburg Chamber of Commerce led our planning. Three priorities are set over three years. Great job!
- **Friday Cheers** – Lynch's Landing called on Rush Homes two times this summer to sling beer and take admission. Volunteers, you were great!
- **Created Facebook Page for Rush Homes** – Check it out by visiting www.facebook.com/rushhomes (even if you are not a “facebooker”)
- **Adopt a Home** – I created this program in response to great interest (see article in this newsletter). Wow, it took off! Thanks so much to groups that signed up. Those in process, you'll make the next newsletter.
- **Website Makeover** – We're making over our web-

site. The new site will allow us to update more simply. I'll have it up and running soon. Stay tuned!

- **Homeless and Housing Coalition leadership** – I am now co-chair of the Homeless and Housing Coalition along with Laura Dupuy of LNDF. My goal is to reduce homelessness in our area especially people with disabilities.
- **Neighborhood Stabilization Program** – We purchased a duplex on 1608 Ruffner Place through NSP (see article in this newsletter). Two more apartments mean two more families will have a permanent place to call home.
- **Annual Campaign** – We will mail our annual campaign letters in early November. Over 135 people on our waiting list means we have more to do. Look for your letter soon. Thanks in advance for helping to *Build Hope!*
- **Rush Hour Tours** – We continue our monthly Rush Hour Tours. Please consider coming out and touring one of our accessible apartments and the Victoria Ridge site (see article in this newsletter).

Thank you for all the support you have provided this past year. We promise to do a better job of staying in touch. In the meantime, please sign up for our e-blasts. Simply send an email to me at allison@rushhomes.org and type “subscribe” in the subject line. Easy as pie! See you soon!

Allison Wingfield

Resident Spotlight: Andrew Hubbard

In November, 2004, **ANDREW HUBBARD** moved into 409 Taylor Street and, ever since, the pleasure has been all ours. Andrew is ever soft spoken, positive, and bright despite his physical problems, a real testament to courage.

Andrew is a long time Lynchburger, having attended Dunbar High School in his youth except for his stint in the Air Force. The early dawn is his favorite time of the day; “There is nothing moving but you. It is a treasured, honored moment” to see the sunrise. Loving children, Andrew is teaching his precious granddaughters, Alexis (7) and Asia (5) to play chess. Watching the sports he played most in his “earlier” days, Andrew follows the Los Angeles Lakers, the Dallas Cowboys (that's ok...we still love him) and the Williams sisters, Venus and Serena. His favorite “reads” are Robert Ludlum spy novels and the Bible. Miles Davis on trumpet makes Andrew smile.

It is Andrew's irrepressibility and care for others that most endears him to all. Andrew moved into his Taylor Street home with his long time partner, Shelley Smith, who had advanced multiple sclerosis serving as her main care taker until her passing. While in the hospital recovering from a major procedure, Andrew prompted one of his sisters to say, “We're hear to cheer him up and he's the one cheering us up.”

Andrew spoke about his gratitude for Rush Homes at our 4th Annual Dream Builder's Luncheon. It is our turn to say, we're grateful to serve you, Andrew.

"Building Hope": Dream Builder's Luncheon Great Success

What a great turnout for Rush Homes' fifth annual Dream Builder's Luncheon at Lynchburg College on June 16. Over 200 guests experienced Rush Homes' message and housing vision as well as stories from people whose lives were transformed by our affordable and accessible housing. We were "Building Hope" together.

Susan Dewey, Executive Director of Virginia Housing Development Authority, spoke on the importance of disabilities' housing and the difference Rush Homes makes by providing independence for people with disabilities. **Nick Pontius**, President of the Rush Homes' Board of Directors set forth an impassioned vision for disabilities' housing in the Greater Lynchburg area. **Chad Burdette**, a Rush Homes' Board member, told of

his family connections with disabilities and requested financial support for Rush Homes. And, most importantly, **Barbara Jacobs**, mother of **Bill Jackson**, Rush Homes Board member and resident, gave a riveting and emotional account of her experience as a mother of a person with disabilities, her worries, and gratitude for Rush Homes.

Our thank you list is long; it takes many hands to put on the Dream Builder's Luncheon. First, thank you to our sponsors **BB&T**, **Bank of the James**, **Day & Lovell**, **Dodson Brothers Exterminating Company**, **Electronic Design and Manufacturing**, **First National Bank**, **Scott Insurance**, and **Sun-Trust**. We also thank **VHDA**, our long and valued partner, for their fifth annual challenge gift.

More thank you's go to our table captains who created the amazing turnout. We could not do this without you. **Dane Peterson** led off the program with song and **Felicia Johnson** offered the Luncheon prayer. **DePaul Options Program**, for the fifth year, handed out favors to every guest. **Lynchburg College** again provided a great Dream Builder's Luncheon venue and meal. And, many volunteers at the Dream Builder's Luncheon coordinated a smoothly run event.

Finally, to donors who offered financial support to Rush Homes; you are "Building Hope" by making housing possible for people with disabilities and low incomes. We are so grateful for your support. Thank you.

Even More Needed Housing: 1608 Ruffner Place

Rush Homes has acquired and is renovating **1608 Ruffner Place** near Centenary United Methodist Church. This duplex is part of the Lynchburg Neighborhood Stabilization Program (LNSP) funded through the CDBG Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development.

In late 2009, LNSP, consisting of Rush Homes, Greater Lynchburg Habitat for Humanity, Lynchburg Neighborhood Development Foundation (LNUF) and Lynchburg Community Action Group, came together to seek funds from the new NSP initiative. NSP is designed to relieve the negative effects of foreclosed and abandoned homes on neighborhoods by funding purchases and renovations of those homes. In 2009, NSP awarded \$1 million in NSP funds to purchase, renovate, and sell or lease eleven units (houses and/or apartments). Region 2000 Local Government Initiative is administering the project.

David Gaines, Sr., of Favor of God Builders is renovating Ruffner Place and is scheduled to finish by November 1. Rush Homes is already seeking potential tenants who meet our income and other requirements. Neither apartment is accessible which means that people with disabili-

ties that do not include mobility impairments are best tenant candidates. We anticipate great interest as the Ruffner apartments are spacious with one bedroom each, and the duplex is in a nice neighborhood, only two blocks from Riverview Avenue and the bus line.



1608 Ruffner Place prior to the start of rehabilitation



Donor Appreciation



Dream Builder's Society

Our thanks to these generous donors who have pledged this level of support for each of five years.

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Thanks to our Donors! *(includes donations from September 1, 2009–August 31, 2010)*

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Continued next page

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*Thank you one and all. Your financial support,
 in-kind donations, pro bono services, and volunteer
 service make housing like Victoria Ridge available to
 people with disabilities and low incomes.*



**Progress
 Monitor**

Rush Homes Waiting List : 135

Housing under construction: 26 apartments

Housing currently available: 17 apts./houses

Holiday Rush!

It's hard to believe it but Christmas is just around the corner and we are planning our Holiday Rush program. Holiday Rush is very similar to the Angel Tree program where you select a gift tag that lists the likes and needs of one of our residents. Then...the fun part – shop, wrap, and return to us! Our residents are always grateful for these gifts which often help to stretch their incomes. Rush Homes is hopeful that even as we expand, we can continue to offer this special service.

For more information, stay tuned to our email updates. If you would like to reserve a gift tag early, please call 434-455-2120 or email allison@rushhomes.org. We will mail tags will be mailed out around Thanksgiving. We will also gladly accept gift cards and cash donations so that we can provide gifts to residents who were not selected. Be sure to write "Holiday Rush" on the memo line of your check.



Thank you in advance for providing a little extra holiday cheer to our residents with disabilities and low incomes.



538 Victoria Avenue For Sale

538 Victoria Avenue is for sale. Rush Homes became the owner of 538 Victoria Avenue as part of a "package" deal in our Victoria Ridge site acquisition. This beautiful 4 bedroom, 2 bath Victorian style home is in excellent condition and needs an owner (someone other than us!). It is priced to sell well below its \$125,000 appraised value at \$79,900.

If you are interested in this great opportunity, please contact Cindy Matheson of The Realty Group at 434-941-7839. Or, contact our office at 455-2120 or jeff@rushhomes.org.

Full Steam Ahead *(continued from p.1)*

Virginia Community Development Corporation and Rush Homes partnered to form Victoria Ridge, LLC, the actual owner of Victoria Ridge and necessary to access tax credit equity. C.L. Lewis & Company won the construction contract and is on the job. Community Design Studio of Christiansburg serves as the Victoria Ridge architectural firm, guiding us through the development of working drawings, construction bid proceedings, and now administering construction. BB&T provides the construction loan. Al Maddox is our construction manager, ensuring Victoria Ridge is built the way we intend. Finally, The Lynchburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority will provide housing choice vouchers to qualifying Victoria Ridge tenants as they become available.

What happens now? Rush Homes is currently attending training about tax credit requirements, leasing and property management. Within the next three months, we will hire a property manager for our 43 apartments and houses and will begin Victoria Ridge lease-up activities. Lease-up will include informing our waiting list, general marketing, reviewing tenant applications and income information and performing background checks. In May, 2011, tenants will begin moving in to Victoria Ridge and we project full occupancy no later than December, 2011. Rush Homes will then work with tenants to develop a tenants association where they will have the opportunity to participate in running Victoria Ridge. We will also work with the Lynchburg Police Department to start a Victoria Avenue Neighborhood Watch program. It is our intention to not only act as good neighbors but also help make the best possible community for the long haul.

So many people have helped to bring Victoria Ridge to construction. Thank you to all. Stay tuned for further Victoria Ridge developments.

Board Member Spotlight: Chad Burdette

Hi, I'm Chad Burdette and I am the newest board member of Rush Homes. I have lived and worked here in Lynchburg for the last six years. Originally from Georgia, I came to Lynchburg with my job, working for BB&T where I am Vice President of Private Financial Services serving the SW Virginia region. Moving with me six years ago was my wife Shea and our two daughters Arden (10) and Reagan (8). Since moving here we have added two sons to our family; Brooks (5) and Jon Baylor (1). We have enjoyed all of the wonderful things that Lynchburg and Virginia has to offer.

I was first introduced to Rush Homes through my involvement with the Leadership Lynchburg program. I was fortunate enough to witness a presentation made to the class by Rush Homes' volunteers and Allison Wingfield. I was genuinely moved by the mission and vision of Rush Homes. Initially, I was shocked by the need for affordable housing for the people with disabilities. I felt compelled to learn more and attended an-

other presentation where I volunteered to serve as a Table Captain for the 2008 Dream Builder's Luncheon. Since that time, I have worked to raise awareness in our community about the Rush Homes' mission.



Earlier this year, I was flattered to be asked to serve as a board member. I am looking forward to working with other board members and volunteers to raise awareness for Rush Homes, Inc. through the Lynchburg area and ultimately be a part of providing more accessible and affordable homes to individuals with mental and/or physical disabilities in Central Virginia.



We're Hiring!

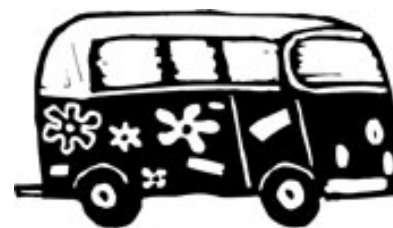
Rush Homes is seeking a full-time Program Manager to provide property management, bookkeeping, and general office support. Associates or Bachelor's degree required. QuickBooks and property management experience preferred. Must be highly organized and a self starter. Strong computer skills and excellent people skills are required. Please send resume with cover letter and salary requirements to jobs@rushhomes.org by October 15.

Get On The Bus! Rush Hour Tours

Tired of peanut butter and jelly lunch sandwiches? Want a different way to spend your noon hour? Rush Hour Tours are noon time, one hour tours of Rush Homes' apartments where guests learn about the need for housing for people with disabilities and low incomes and what Rush Homes is doing about it.

One hour you say? With a tour? Absolutely! You'll experience an accessible apartment, hear a tenant's story, and learn about Rush Homes with enough time left over to see our Victoria Ridge development site. We *promise** to have you back to our starting point in one hour.

Our Rush Hour Tours are scheduled for the second Tuesday of each month from noon until 1:00 p.m. We leave at and return to 1022 Commerce Street in front of the Renaissance Theater (thank you to Paula Howell, our driver, and Centenary United Methodist church who loan the bus). Give us a call and reserve your seat. Bring a friend, too. Call us at 455-2120 or email info@rushhomes.org.



* The fine print: This promise is good only if all vehicles operate normally, no keys are locked in cars and traffic and weather cooperate.

Newsletter Highlights

- We need you and your group! **Adopt-A-Home** program (front page) provides service opportunities.
- **We're hiring!** Yes, that's right, we need a **Program Manager** (p. 7)
- Thank you to all our **donors**. (pp. 3, 4)
- **Rush Hour Tours** for lunch. (p. 7)
- **Victoria Ridge** under construction (front page)
- **We're selling** 538 Victoria Avenue! (p 6)
- Meet our **Board** (p. 6) and **Andrew Hubbard** (p.3)

Rush Homes

Rush Homes is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing accessible homes to individuals with mental and/or physical disabilities in Central Virginia. Rush Homes is registered in Virginia as a 501(c)3, tax-exempt organization. All contributions are tax-deductible.

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Special thanks to AREVA for printing and DePaul Community Resources program in Madison Heights for folding and mailing this newsletter.



RUSH HOMES

independence for people with disabilities

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