

Recent Acquisitions	3
Pipeline: What's Ahead	3
Rehabilitation Projects	4
New Staff Intro's	4
Acknowledgments	6
WE ARE MOVING!!!	6

CORNERSTONES
 THE NATIONAL FARM WORKER SERVICE CENTER HOUSING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NEWSLETTER

Mixtec Farm Workers Relocated From Toxic Site

When public agencies, private enterprise, and nonprofits put their resources, knowledge and commitment to serving the disenfranchised, amazing solutions can be wrought. And the National Farm Workers Service Center (NFWSC) is proud to be a part of this feat. About 58 families were living next to a toxic dump and are now either going to be living in brand new homes or have opted to start a new life far from danger.

Their story starts off in Malaga, a heavily industrialized unincorporated area in Fresno County, California, in a shabby, dilapidated trailer park. Located adjacent to not only a noisy, unsightly metal recycling plant, but also an EPA-designated Superfund site, one of 106 in the state and over 1500 in the US. The Superfund site was once an oil-recycling dump, where for many years used petroleum oil was improperly stored so that oil and other toxins would seep into and out of the earth. Children from the trailer park often crawled through holes of the perimeter fence and played on what appeared to be a green meadow, something uncommon in this industrial area. Within the trailer park, rainwater contaminated with hazardous chemicals would drain from the adjacent site, into common areas of the park where children often played not knowing the dangers. Carcinogenic and/or toxic substances such as benzene, PCBs, xylenes, lead, and arsenic

have been found at this site.

With such a lack of affordable housing in Fresno County this trailer park, the Tall Trees Mobile Home Park, was home to more than fifty families for many years. The majority of the families are Mixtecs, indigenous Oaxaquenos that have come to the area in search of work in the vast fields of the San Joaquin Valley. Without the strength and commitment to community that is so prevalent in the Mixtec culture, a viable solution for these dangers might not have been reached. Over two years of negotiations have resulted in a resolution plan acceptable to all the major parties, including the Mixtec families to be relocated. The plan offered all residents of the Tall Trees Mobile Home Park three options. (1) a cash payment of \$30,000, (2) an existing home of \$70,000 or less value, or (3) a home in a yet to be built subdivision. For the latter two options, restrictive and resale covenants will be placed on title to safe-guard long-term affordability. All residents chose an option by the end of September of 2000

The first major task was to immediately relocate all 58 families away from the toxic and dangerous environment. The families that chose the up-front payment were given the funds immediately so that they could relocate as they wished and continue their lives. The five families that

(Continued on page 2)

Letter from the Vice President:

Over the last 17 years, the NFWSC demonstrated a growing commitment to providing housing for low-income families. Our record of accomplishments evidences this commitment. Focusing in the central San Joaquin Valley in California, the NFWSC has constructed over 500 single-family homes and completed 10 acquisition/rehabilitation and new construction projects consisting of approximately 1,600 multi-family units. In addition to developing housing, the NFWSC has also developed and currently operates two small shopping centers. Combined, these two development

activities provide badly needed housing and retail services within a community redevelopment context.

Two years ago, as part of its long-term visioning, the directors and friends of the Farm Workers Movement reassessed its history of affordable housing development. While proud of the NFWSC's accomplishments thus far, they were far from satisfied. Recognizing the almost unequal level of capacity, the directors challenged staff to do more. Specifically, with its wealth of political resources and access to capital, why cannot the NFWSC

(Continued on page 2)

Tall Trees (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

chose to move into an existing home moved into a private temporary housing while a home to their liking was found. The 32 mainly Mixtec families that chose to move together into a new subdivision were moved into apartment units owned and managed by the NFWSC while the subdivision is being developed. The families that chose the latter two choices are being assisted with their living expenses during this temporary period. The NFWSC completed the relocation in roughly two weeks, allowing the environmental remediation of the Superfund site to begin.

The resolution plan and its implementation could not have been possible without the unique collaboration of a very diverse coalition of local, state and federal public and private agencies. Among the key agencies in the coalition are the Office of County Supervisor Juan Arambula, California Rural Legal Assistance, Chevron Corporation, the Environmental Protection Agency, IT Corporation, the Rios Company, City of Fresno Redevelopment Agency, Fresno Housing Authority, and many local elected officials. The success of the resolution plan is a direct result of the commitment and know-how of the many agencies involved in the project.

Construction Plans

Letter from the Vice President (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

positively affect the lives of 100,000 low-income families? Needless to say, it is an ambitious proposition, which most organizations would not come close to contemplating.

It was the implementation of this vision that brought me to the NFWSC. During this past year, the NFWSC has taken aggressive steps towards implementing the vision. Those steps focused on building the internal infrastructure necessary to increase the production of housing units and improve the quality of management. Not only was experienced staff added at the executive and program management levels of both the property management and affordable housing divisions, but also crucial accounting and human resources personnel were hired to support our growing activities.

The benefits of our growing commitment to the provision of affordable housing have begun to show. In this newsletter, you will read about the completion of two major acquisition and rehabilitation projects: Hollister Plaza and Mountain View Apartments. In addition, in December we completed the acquisition of two other multi-family properties: Vista Del Monte and Casa De Amigos. Finally, we are finalizing the predevelopment stages for two single-family projects in Fresno, which will facilitate 92 homeowner-

ship opportunities for low-income farm worker families. However, the scope of the project is not yet complete. While options one and two have been completed, the third option remains to be completed. Specifically, the 32 homes in a new subdivision remain to be built. The NFWSC and the rest of the coalition are diligently working to have 100% of the financing in place by March 2001. The site has been identified. The homes will be built at the Lincoln Heights subdivision at the corner of California and B streets in the City of Fresno. Lincoln Heights is an approved PUD with lots averaging 4,000 square feet. The approved PUD includes completed (and previously Building and Safety approved) plans. Because of their age (two years) the plans will have to be re-submitted for Building and Safety approval.

The homes will consist of three bedrooms and two full baths within approximately 1,400 square feet. In addition, the homes will include a two-car garage. In terms of appliances, the project will attempt to include in the budget sufficient funds for a new refrigerator, stove, garbage disposal, and a washer and dryer.

Community Center

Due to the history of toxic exposure and lack of access to health services to farm workers, the project also intends to build a community center. The community center would accommodate health

(Continued on page 7)

ship opportunities for low-income farm worker families.

Over the next year, the NFWSC will continue to seek more development projects that improve the lives of low-income families. At the same time, we will strengthen our external infrastructure, which includes expanding our network of relationships with lenders, investors, consultants, architects, contractors, government staff and elected officials. Thank you very much for your support of our endeavors and we look forward to working with you on the journey ahead.

Sincerely,



Manuel Bernal, Vice President
Housing and Economic Development

Service Center Closes on Two Properties in CA and AZ

The NFWSC recently acquired two multi-family projects. The Vista Del Monte Apartments in San Francisco overlooks a beautiful scene of the city. In light of San Francisco's skyrocketing real estate, including its rental market, Vista Del Monte's low-income tenants were at risk of losing their homes. With the owner having the right to pre-pay the outstanding 236 mortgage, the property was at risk of being converted to market. In addition, the property had deteriorated significantly over the last 10 years, mainly due to lack of attention from the previous owner. Under the ownership of the NFWSC, affordability will be preserved and the property will undergo major rehabilitation in the coming months. New roofs on all of the buildings, balcony repairs, and siding repairs

are just some of the work we are taking on to make Vista a more pleasant place to live. Rehabilitation is expected to begin in the spring, with Citigroup providing the financing. With the well-organized tenants association partnered with the NFWSC, affordability is ensured for a long time to come. This partnership will also facilitate the long-term maintenance of the property. In addition, the tenants association and the NFWSC will work together to sponsor social, recreational and educational activities for the residents of the property.

The purchase was made possible through California Housing Finance Agency tax-exempt financing to the NFWSC in the amount of \$11.4 million and a second mortgage of just over

(Continued on page 4)



A view of the Vista Del Monte Apartments



Beautiful view of San Francisco for the Vista Del Monte

PIPELINE: NFWSC Expansion Plans

The NFWSC is reviewing many new project opportunities throughout California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. Further diversifying and expanding to new areas will ensure our ability to change the lives of farm workers and low-income residents of the Southwest. We are currently evaluating potential projects in various small communities within the Central Valley (e.g. Shafter and Selma), as well as in small cities in Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. Affordable housing is a rare commodity throughout the Southwest

and we hope to change that. Maintaining growth in the Central San Joaquin Valley is a focus, but growth into Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas is in our sights.

Multi-family rehab and multi-family new construction in Arizona, single-family new construction and multi-family rehab in New Mexico, and multi-family rehab in Texas are major opportunities for us to expand in both service area and product line.

Recently Completed Projects in Hollister, California and Albuquerque, New Mexico

Hollister Plaza Apartments is a 116 unit multifamily apartment complex located in Hollister, California. The NFWSC became the owner of the property through the last HUD awarded Preservation Grant in 1996. The grant awarded was for \$4,162,723.00, which was used to acquire the property, and out of that \$1,153,841.00 was used to rehabilitate the property. This property was built in the 1970's and needed extensive work. The rehabilitation consisted of replacing the roofs off all thirty-three buildings, remodeling three laundry buildings, an administration building and maintenance building. Extensive site work was completed on the grounds which included replacement of the concrete sidewalks, ramping the curbs for ADA accessibility, trimming or removing trees, installing trash gates, new parking lot wheel stops, repair of site wood benches, replacing of exterior water heater doors, improved site lighting, and improving the tot lots. The unit interiors are in the process of being refurbished with new cabinets, flooring, and paint. Two units were completely remodeled to accommodate the handicapped per ADA guidelines. The project is scheduled for completion on 1/20/01. Serving farm workers in one of the California coastline's strongest farm worker communities, this property is a great asset to the city and the NFWSC.

Mountain View Apartments, Phase I consists of 316 multi family apartments in Albuquerque New Mexico. We collaborated with Boston Capital and got funding through New Mexico's bond and 4% tax credit programs. The apartments were all rehabbed with new cabinets, exterior windows, exterior doors, new light fixtures, smoke detectors, vct flooring, carpet; toilets, shower heads and paint. In addition, the administration building was remodeled to include modern management offices, a day care center, computer

(Continued on page 5)



The completed Hollister Plaza Apartments

Closing (cont.)

(Continued from page 3)

\$1.1 million. This project is also eligible for Mark-to-Market rents from HUD, which will preserve Section 8 subsidies to the project for the next 20 years.

In Arizona, Casa De Amigos Apartments was also recently acquired. Located in the City of Scottsdale just outside of Phoenix, Casa De Amigos Apartments are possibly the only affordable units in the area. The area is going through significant gentrification, which puts low-income residents at risk of being dislocated. The NFWSC acquired the property with the specific task of preserving the affordability. The 236 mortgage will be eligible for pre-payment in early 2002, thus putting the current residents at risk of losing their homes. The property was acquired by assuming the current HUD insured loan, plus an infusion of equity from the NFWSC. This project was also recently awarded a predevelopment grant from the Low Income Housing Fund which help finance due diligence studies and reports.



The Casa De Amigos Apartments in Scottsdale, AZ, are being preserved as low-income units.

Hollister and Mountain View (cont)



Cutting curbs was part of making property completely accessible to disabled persons.

(Continued from page 4)

lab for the residents, a picnic pavilion with access to a community room and kitchen. A long needed new maintenance building for storage was also built. The rehab was completed in July 2000.

We are working with Youth Development INC. (YDI) to provide a Head Start program for the low -income families of Mountain View Apartments. The children receive educational, social, medical, dental, and nutritional services as part of their participation in Head Start. YDI has provided services in Bernalillo County, New Mexico since 1971 and has grown into one of the largest and respected non-profits in the State. The NFWSC is proud to partner with YDI, ensuring a more healthy and secure community Mountain View Apartments.

This property is rather significant because it stands as our first entry into the New Mexico market. Considering its unit size, it is a good foundation for us and we intend to intensify and increase our activity in New Mexico, as the need for low -income housing is great.

Staff Additions....

The NFWSC's Housing and Economic Development Department staff has grown significantly over the last 12 months. The increase in staff is a reflection of our commitment to affect the lives of low -income families throughout the Southwest. The four most recent additions to our staff are Heriberto Barrios, Alex Smith, Bob Joy, and Jessica Lepe.

Heriberto Barrios—Project Manager

Mr. Barrios joined the NFWSC in May 2000, and is responsible for overseeing and coordinating all phases of project development. Specifically, Mr. Barrios' duties include, but are not limited to, identifying potential projects, coordinating initial feasibility, assessing and securing community, political and financial support, assembling the development team, submitting financing applications, closing loans and investments, supervising the project during construction and coordinating the transfer of



You can call him Heri or Beto.

all projects from the development team to the property management team. Prior to joining the NFWSC, Mr. Barrios was a Jr. Designer for Hatch Colasuonno Studio of Architecture in Marina del Rey, California and was responsible for representing the firm at client, consultant, community and pre-construction meetings; he also coordinated construction documents along with structural, mechanical, plumbing and electrical trades, researching building codes and life & safety requirements for projects, and assisting in design. Mr. Barrios holds a Bachelors degree in Architecture from Woodbury University, School of Architecture.

Alex Smith—Grants and Communications Manager

While Mr. Smith is not a new staff member, his position is new for the NFWSC. Mr. Smith joined the NFWSC

(Continued on page 6)

Hollister and Mountain View (cont)



The new manager space at Mountain View



Totally refurbished kitchens were part of the rehab work

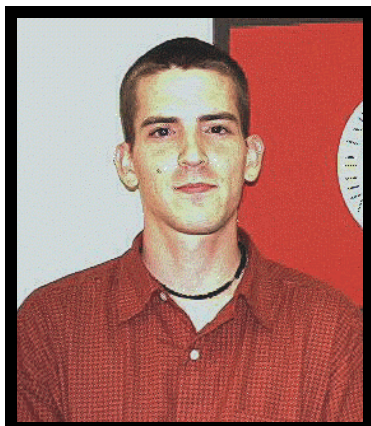


New tot-lot and picnic patio.

Staff Additions....

(Continued from page 5)

in September 1999 and is responsible for identifying and securing the resources necessary to develop affordable housing and community development activities. He coordinates special events and produces organizational materials. In addition, Mr. Smith provides research support for the Housing and Economic Development team, including, but not limited to, research on community



Will work for money

development resources, community needs, political supporters, union activity, support services for future tenants and home owners, and preliminary review of potential projects. Prior to joining the NFWSC, Mr. Smith maintained a high level of activity within diverse organizing groups in Los Angeles, with all activity focused on

helping low income people achieve greater economic and social justice. Mr. Smith is a graduate of Pitzer College in Claremont CA. Mr. Smith comes to the NFWSC through Public Allies, a national organization that facilitates leadership development and meaningful first-job experiences. Mr. Smith grew up in the East Coast, but currently lives in Los Angeles with his three cats.

Robert (Bob) Joy—Controller on Special Assignment

Mr. Joy joined the NFWSC Housing and Economic Development team in October 2000 and is responsible for overseeing and coordinating all phases of project development in Texas



Texas Bob as we like to call him

(Continued on page 7)

Tall Trees (cont.)

(Continued from page 2)

examination rooms, a child care center and office space for local service providers. Sequoia Community Health Foundation would coordinate culturally and linguistically appropriate low-cost primary healthcare services.

The project was recently awarded a grant through the Fresno County Commission on Children and Families' Proposition 10 Grant program. This money will allow for the assessment of community needs in regards to childcare and/or parental education. It will also get the community more aware and involved in the development of this community center.

Financial Backing

With a project budget of 7.5 million, including relocation expenses, the project has received (and continues to seek) the support of various agencies. Chevron Corporation was the first agency to commit to, and fund, the project. Chevron Corporation contributed \$1.0 million. The Environmental Protection Agency has committed \$1.5 million. The Rural Community Assistance Corporation (RCAC) recently awarded the project a grant for over \$170,000 for the operation of the health component within the community

center. RCAC is also considering a \$1.5 million loan for the housing component. RCAC's funding comes through their innovative Agricultural Worker Health and Housing Program supported by the California Endowment. Also under consideration is a loan from the State of California's Farm Worker Housing Grant Program.

Despite this support, the project still has a funding gap of approximately \$1.5 million. The NFWSC will continue to work with the agencies in the coalition in order to close the gap and begin construction by March 2001. In recognition of the very very low income of this population, all attempts are being made to eliminate the option of debt payments to the new home owners. Our projections show that the few funds the families have available for housing expenses will be needed to pay for taxes, insurance, utilities and routine maintenance.

Staff Additions....

(Continued from page 6)

and Oklahoma. Specifically, Mr. Joy's duties include, but are not limited to, identifying potential projects, coordinating initial feasibility, assessing and securing community, political and financial support, assembling the development team, submitting financing applications, closing loans and investments, supervising the project during construction and coordinating the transfer of all projects from the development team to the property management team. Prior to joining the Housing and Development team, Mr. Joy was Controller for NFWSC. Prior to his one-year tenure as Controller Mr. Joy was Controller at Paramount Farming Company, Ventura County Star and The Bakersfield Californian. Mr. Joy brought twenty-four years of Accounting and Finance experience to the Housing and Economic Development team.

Jessica Lepe—Office Administrator

Ms. Lepe joined the NFWSC in October 2000 and is responsible for establishing and maintaining a

highly efficient and effective level of communication both among the Housing and Economic Development team and between the team and all the individuals and agencies we do business with. Specifically, Ms. Lepe processes all correspondence, maintains databases, coordinates servicing for all office equipment, develops and implements systematic operating and document-storage

procedures, and negotiates and monitors all external support services. Prior to joining the NFWSC Ms. Lepe worked for the Southern California Association of Non-Profit Housing in Los Angeles, as an Office Assistant. Ms. Lepe is a graduate of Sacred Heart of Jesus High School and a current student at Pasadena City College where she is taking her general education classes.



The Glue of the organization



National Farm Workers Service Center, Inc.

Paul Chavez, President
Emilio Huerta, Secretary
Eva Vasquez-Camacho, Treasurer
Anthony Chavez
MikeYbarra
Roberto De La Rosa
Irv Hershenbaum
Tanis Ybarra
Leticia Stamos
David Villarino
Luis Conde

Staff

Manuel Bernal, Vice President
Cesar Marengo, Project Manager
Jackie Monterrosas, Assistant Project Manager
Heriberto Barrios, Project Manager
Janette Palacios, Assistant Project Manager
Ernesto Espinoza, Construction Manager
Robert Joy, Controller
Jessica Lepe, Office Administrator
Alex Smith, Grants and Communications Manager

Special Acknowledgements

The Service Center has taken off in a new direction and have accomplished a great deal in our first year in Los Angeles. However none of these achievements could have happened without the assistance of the following organizations:

- Rural LISC
- Low Income Housing Fund
- Rural Community Assistance Corporation
- Wells Fargo Foundation
- Bank of America
- Washington Mutual
- California Housing and Community Development Department

WE ARE MOVING!!! Our office is moving two floors down in the same building so the suite number will now be #719. Please make note of it.

Please let us know if your address has changed or will change by emailing our office at:

nfwsched@ufwmail.com

