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Jim and Helen Nicholson were on the Family Selection Committee at that time and made the home visit that led to the Ledesmas’ selection to the Habitat program.

Jim and Helen found the same kind of issues in the living arrangements of this applicant that we still find too often in low-income rental property. The foundation was deteriorating; the floors were rotting through; the roof was sagging and leaking; some of the windows would not open, but air came in around the doors and windows. Some electrical outlets did not work or had no covers, and the family said they were afraid to drink anything but bottled water because of plumbing issues.

What a contrast to the 3-bedroom house in Harmony Heights that the Ledesma family has made into a beautiful home.

Having been so young at the time her Habitat house was completed, Alicia doesn’t remember much about the build or her family moving into Harmony Heights. She does remember that there was much more room and that it was really nice.

Alicia, now 18, graduated from Lenoir City High School in May and spent her summer getting ready for the adventure of her life—an adventure that she has spent the past 12 years preparing for.

She worked really hard all through school and this past November, after a number of months submitting information and waiting for an answer, she learned that she had been awarded a full, four-year scholarship to Grinnell College in Grinnell, Iowa.

She received this impressive award through QuestBridge, a nonprofit organization that connects high achieving, low-income students to very prestigious schools. Through a rigorous and lengthy process, she became a finalist and some time later found she had been selected.

Alicia’s is truly a success story in the making—a success story that the whole Habitat family can be proud to hear. While she nor her parents can attribute her scholastic success wholly to Habitat or being in a Habitat home, there is certainly something to be said about having your own room, living in a safe neighborhood and knowing that there is a nurturing environment waiting at home each evening.

Highways for Habitat

When Pastor Charlie Barnard and his wife Teresa boarded their motorcycle and drove out of the parking lot of First Baptist Church of Tellico Village on August 3rd, there was a large crowd of people to send them off and an entourage of fellow motorcyclists riding with them.

The “extra” motorcycles stayed with them for only a few miles, but the Barnards, along with Jack and Sherry Green, were kicking off a 6,500 mile ride to Nova Scotia and back—all for Habitat!

With almost $28,000 in per-mile sponsorships and over $15,000 raised through The WannaBeatles concert last April, Highways for Habitat was already a success before the first mile was ridden. The dinner held to see them off will be repeated on August 24th when they ride back into town at the end of their trip.

And before fall is over another Habitat house will begin, sponsored by this ride and all those who have participated in making it so successful.

“Save the Date”

Third Annual Celebration and Fundraising Event

Tuesday September 27, 2016
8:30-10:00AM
Central United Methodist Church
301 Hickory Creek Rd., Lenoir City, TN
Home Store Update

There have been two major changes recently at the Home Store. The first you don’t even have to go inside to recognize. The new parking lot addition that everyone has been waiting for is complete. The fourteen new parking spaces make a lot of difference and are already being used every day.

The other change welcomes Christy Callahan as the new Store Manager and bids farewell to Sandi Bright-Greene who has been manager at the store since 2012. Sandi led the store through tremendous growth and will be missed by staff and customers alike. We wish her well on her retirement, but know she will still be seen cashiering in the store.

We are really in need of cashiers, so if you would like to join her, just call Sammie Shanks, our volunteer coordinator, at (865) 640-5578. She’s a long-time volunteer for us and brings the same enthusiasm and zeal to her work.

The study further states that these children will have fewer behavioral problems, higher educational attainment and greater future earnings.

Alicia will join us by video at our annual Houses & Hope Breakfast on September 27th. Please join us and hear more about this outstanding young woman and how she sees the road ahead.

For more information, call Sandi Byrd at (865) 458-0704 option 2, ext 4 or email her at Sandra@loudoncountyhabitat.org. There is no charge to attend.

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Note Burning Celebration

These were Gina Russell’s first words as she began speaking at her recent note burning celebration. Her story is as simple and as complex as life itself. She went through many trials and tribulations and had many happy times as well.

When she bought her Habitat house 20 years ago, she couldn’t even fathom paying off the note she signed. She was so happy to have a home for her children and be in a safe neighborhood to raise them, that she couldn’t even see that far ahead.

But on Saturday, July 16th, more than 75 friends and family gathered at the Episcopal Church of the Resurrection to laugh, cry and celebrate the fact that Gina has now paid off her Habitat house mortgage.

Over the next few years, other Habitat homeowners will reach this milestone, and each one will be celebrated and cherished for the accomplishment that it is for each of these families. Please include Gina and all the other Habitat families in your prayers.

This is truly the very essence of our mission - families becoming stronger and more self-reliant through homeownership.

Summer Fun

Any given Friday evening this summer, you could find a bunch of kids gathered at Susie Golf’s house in our Hope Haven neighborhood. Susie has a full-time job with Boys and Girls Club, but that’s not enough for her. She holds Bible School for all the children in the neighborhood. The kids learn, laugh and play together - no one enjoying their time together more than Susie!
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Hard Work and Determination—A Winning Combination

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