

# TradeWinds employees help make Habitat dream a reality

By BOB McCLURE

ST. PETERSBURG – A team from TradeWinds Island Resorts were among those on hand May 15 for the dedication of a new Habitat For Humanity home they helped build.

TradeWinds employees contributed 350 volunteer hours toward the construction of the home at 531 51st Ave. N., that Salondia Joyce and her teenage daughter moved into a few hours later.

The property was donated by Bank of America to Habitat For Humanity of Pinellas County and construction funding was provided TradeWinds Island Resorts.

"I am extremely proud of the more than 40 TradeWinds employees and their families who volunteered over 300 hours to this worthy cause," said TradeWinds CEO Tim Bogott. "And we look forward to the day when one of our employees qualifies for home ownership through the Habitat program, so that our employees can volunteer to help build a home for a member of the TradeWinds family."

Bogott said this was the first such project for TradeWinds after company was approached by Habitat about supporting a build.

"I knew about Habitat but we had never participated in a build before," said Bogott. "The only cost to the company was the volunteer hours. So there might be more in the future. People just feel good about giving back."

TradeWinds staff were often at the site contributing to the construction side-by-side with Joyce who fulfilled a 16-year goal to own a home.

The land donation was part of Habitat's national partnership with Bank of America, through which the bank is donating up to 2,000 vacant properties for reconstruction. Habitat For Humanity of Pinellas County has received 20 property donations from the bank over the past 18 months.

The new home was No. 326 for Habitat For Humanity of Pinellas over the last 30 years. For information, visit [www.HabitatPinellas.org](http://www.HabitatPinellas.org).



New homeowner Salondia Joyce, standing fourth from left, celebrates with members of the TradeWinds staff who helped to build her home at 531 51st Ave. N. in St. Petersburg.

Photo by BOB McCLURE

## BUDGET, from page 1A

receive a software upgrade to Windows 7.

Clerk of the Court Ken Burke's budget is over the target by \$466,120. However, Burke believes two staff technology positions should be funded by Business Technology Services, which would bring his deficit down to \$292,120.

The Clerk's Office is using contractors to fill those technology positions, which is expensive, costing \$80 to \$100 an hour per contractor, he said.

Burke also needs to hire employees to help with the additional workload in the Clerk's Office, thanks to changes in responsibilities due to software upgrades. He said two employees are doing too much, working 55 hours a week. He is also looking toward replacing a key employee who will be retiring soon.

Tax Collector Diane Nelson presented a budget that is \$739,100 under the target. She said 82 percent of her budget goes toward providing personal services. She plans to give employees a 3 percent pay raise next year. She has unfilled positions, but is leaving them open so she can have additional resources for her "front-line" employees, who serve the

public.

"I have positions I can fill, but I choose not to," she said.

Nelson is currently looking for a place to put in an expanded office in St. Petersburg with room for a driving range.

Property Appraiser Pam Dubov's budget was \$180,180 under the target. She is making plans for a turnover in her office in 2016 when a new property appraiser is elected. Dubov is not running for reelection.

In addition, 25 members of her staff have retired recently, totaling 610 years of experience.

"And we're not quite done retiring people out," she said.

During the recession, staff in the Property Appraiser's Office dropped from 158 to 123. She said the upswing in the economy, especially the real estate market, means she needs additional people. And, the retirees were faster and more efficient, she said, even though she has hired quality people.

Dubov told commissioners that her final budget hinged on approval for a Windows Server license in the Business Technology Services budget. If that is

not approved, Dubov said her budget would then become \$60,000 over.

Staffing is her No. 1 concern.

"I have a responsibility to my successor to fill some holes to keep doing good quality work here," she said.

## Next in the budget process

The property appraiser is scheduled to provide an estimate of taxable values on June 1. The commission is expected to finalize funding options for next year's budget on June 4.

A June 9 budget information session will cover the capital improvement program, review user fees and surface water assessment fees. A public hearing is scheduled on June 23 to set initial surface

water rates.

The property appraiser will provide certified tax values to the county commission by July 1. County Administrator Mark Woodard is scheduled to present the proposed budget on July 21. Tentative millage rates are scheduled to be approved on July 30. Millage rates must be provided to the property appraiser by Aug. 3 to prepare the Truth in Millage statements, which will be mailed Aug. 21.

The first public budget hearing is scheduled on Thursday, Sept. 10, and the second and final hearing is on Tuesday, Sept. 24. The hearings take place in the fifth floor assembly room of the Pinellas County Courthouse, 315 Court St., Clearwater.

For more information on the budget, visit [www.pinellascounty.org/budget](http://www.pinellascounty.org/budget).



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## Dealing with Dementia or Alzheimer's? Consider Comfort Keepers!

According to the most recent Alzheimer Disease Facts and Figures, one out of eight older Americans has Alzheimer's, therefore it is likely you have a loved one or close friend touched by this disease. The more you learn to better understand this disease will help in how you communicate with your loved ones. As tempting as it might be to say, "Mom/Dad, you just said that," this is not helpful. If his/her statement seems to beg for a response, just say, "Oh, OK, Mom/Dad," or "Thanks for telling me," in a positive way, and move onto something else. When you remind him/her they are repeating themselves, what you're really doing is lowering their self-esteem. It is best not to make a person with Alzheimer's disease feel impaired or ashamed. Try to respond in a positive manner, directing conversation to focus on a memory topic they are still familiar with, thereby supporting their self worth.

Caring for a person with dementia is stressful. Seeking the help of support groups, and finding a responsible caregiver who can give you a break when needed is important. It is one thing to finally realize someone close to you has Alzheimer's. It's a completely different thing to accept that fact.

Comfort Keepers provides our caregivers with extensive, hands-on training, which includes preparing them to care for those with Alzheimer's disease and dementia. Comfort Keepers in-home care services are available in all of Pinellas County. Loved ones who need special Alzheimer's care can benefit from Comfort Keepers' services because the caregivers are trained to address the needs of people from early onset to late stages of dementia and Alzheimer's.

The unique Interactive Caregiving system Comfort Keepers integrates, allows each caregiver to develop a real and personal relationship with each senior. It's meaningful, honest and helps to develop trust, companionship and a feeling of safety between the caregiver and the elderly loved one.

Consider Comfort Keepers Alzheimer's care services for any loved ones or friends who are in need of extra care around the home, visits in assisted living or to provide respite care relief, knowing they are truly cared for.



**Diane Genovese - Owner**

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