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Interfaith Housing Coalition of NW Florida

Work Begins as *Journey* Community Moves Forward

The sound of a *gyro-track* will soon be heard clearing brush on the *Journey* site in the 3200 block of W. Avery Street.

“It’s literally a case of not being able to see the forest for the trees,” says IHC Housing Director Bill Compton. “There are parts of the property we can’t even get to because it’s so overgrown.”

Reaching the several hundred protected trees on the property is vital to accurately locate them on the future map of the development. The master plan is a draft until the trees can be sited.

The tree project has been funded in part thanks to grants from **Bank of America** and **SunTrust Bank**.

The market study completed by Zimmerman Volks & Associates brought some new insight to housing needs to be met in the *Journey* design.

A larger percentage of smaller household sizes than originally assumed could mean that some smaller units might serve a larger number of families. Single parents, nontraditional families (such as grandparents raising grandchildren), and first-time home buying working couples with only one child might make up a larger part of the mix.

“That adds to an increasing diversity of household types,” Compton says, “and that’s what *Journey* hopes to offer -- a community of neighbors of all shapes and



The Rev. Alan Gantzhorn (Aldersgate United Methodist Church/Molino), Rev. Jackie Slaughter (Myrtle Grove United Methodist Church), and Jean Norman (President, United Way of Escambia County share leadership for *Journey* land blessing.

sizes. The kind of hometown we imagine where everybody doesn’t look just like us.”

The *Journey* continues....

Financial Support Comes from Faith Communities & United Way

Escambia County’s faith communities continue to bring gifts in support of undesigned operating costs that are so hard to raise in any other way. During the late spring **Olive Baptist Church** added its contribution of \$10,000 through the efforts of IHC Board member **Deacon Stan Lollar**.

Additional support was forthcoming from the Hurricane Recovery Commission of the **Presbytery of**

Florida (PCUSA) whose contributions to IHC’s long-term housing recovery effort have now exceeded \$50,000.

United Way of Escambia County has been able to direct an additional \$30,000 to IHC. “The sustaining commitment of UW has been a God-send,” said Community Development Director, the Rev. Cherie Isakson.

This fall IHC will also be included in the **Combined Federal Campaign** which enables workplace giving by Federal employees. That will carry information about IHC into thousands more households, some of whom might be potential future residents of *Journey*.



**INTERFAITH
HOUSING COALITION**
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*Building communities
by creating
quality affordable homes*

Responding to a Community's Needs

There is so much good to do! It's always a challenge to a not-for-profit organization to determine its fit in a community. How can it respond most effectively to meet an identified need?

For IHC, the challenge is remain true to its mission "to build communities by creating quality affordable homes."

Early on, the Board de-

ecided to commit to avoiding duplication, engaging in supportive partnerships, and acknowledging that IHC *could not be all things to all people*. The Board must continually reaffirm those goals in order to avoid what is called "mission drift." Here's what IHC does:

- Builds mixed-income communities for work-force households;
- Works *with* partners like Habitat for Humanity,

Community Enterprise Investments, Inc., Rebuild, or Catholic Charities, but *does not* do the same work they do;

- Does not *itself* provide supportive housing situations for special populations (e.g., the homeless or those who require group homes) but remains

open to partnering with groups and organizations that do;

- Creates and sustains interfaith efforts and communicates the value of such work to the community;

IHC is a new kind of response in Northwest Florida. It seeks to serve as a model that can be taught and replicated to the benefit of all.

Journey Land Dedication -- "Great is Thy Faithfulness!"



Bishop John Ricard, (Catholic Diocese)
Rev. Jerry Ireland, (Charity Chapel),
Rev. Hugh King, (Greater Union Baptist Church)



Rev. Jackie Slaughter, (Myrtle Grove United Methodist Church)

Rev. Wesley Wachob, (First United Methodist /Pensacola)

Tom Baroco directs the Catholic High School Music Ministry students in leading the worshippers in song. *Journey* will be Catholic High's next-door neighbor!

