

PRESS RELEASE & PHOTO OPPORTUNITY

FOR: PEOPLES' SELF-HELP HOUSING

26 E. Victoria St., Santa Barbara CA 93101

AND MONTECITO CHURCHES (M4)

For Immediate Release

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FOUR Montecito Churches Join to Help a Neighbor in Carpinteria

Santa Barbara, CA— A group of over 40 volunteers from four Montecito churches are working together on three consecutive Saturdays on February 7, 14, and 21, 2009, 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. to do temporary repairs to the restrooms and the laundry room at the Carpinteria Camper Park, 4096 Via Real Carpinteria.

Volunteers from the “Community of Montecito Churches” (M4) who will participate are from All Saints-by-the-Sea Episcopal, El Montecito Presbyterian, Montecito Covenant, and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Churches.

“The leadership and parishioners of the four churches are truly grateful for this opportunity through Peoples’ Self-Help Housing to serve these lower income families and to help improve their current living conditions at the Carpinteria Camper Park,” said Don Johnson, Pastor Montecito Covenant Church and spokesman for the Community of Montecito Churches.

The Carpinteria Camper Park was purchased by Peoples’ Self-Help Housing in 2004. The park was meant to be a place for travelers to hook up their campers for a temporary stay in Carpinteria, however, many low-income people ended up living there full time. At the time of purchase there were over 100 families, some with up to seven children, living in small, deteriorating campers. Peoples’ improved security and began to refer families to other PSHH properties to eliminate crowding and unsanitary living conditions.

PSHH is planning to redevelop the Camper Park with new replacement housing which will be called “Casas de las Flores”. Residents have been and will be gradually moved to other PSHH affordable properties prior to the start of construction. The new housing is planned to be completed in 2011. In the meantime, organizations such as the “Community of Montecito Churches” are helping to improve the facilities in order to provide a better quality of life for the camper residents who are technically categorized as ‘homeless’ because of the fragile and temporary nature of their living conditions.

A \$3 million capital campaign is being planned to raise the necessary funds to build the new Casas de las Flores, which will remain permanently affordable for low-income and special needs populations. The new project will feature a community education room, children's playground, half-court basketball court, 10,000 square feet of open green space, walking path, and bioswale.

Present at the event will be committee members Pastor Harold Bussell and Lauri Rawlins-Betta from El Montecito Presbyterian Church, Jim Halvorsen, Don Johnson, Jon Lemmond, and Diana Trautwein from Montecito Covenant Church, All Saints-by-the-Sea Episcopal Church Rector Jeff Bullock and Associate Rectors Rob Fisher and Liz Hendrick, , and Sister Kathleen Patrice and Marilyn Robison from Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church. Peoples' Self-Help Housing will be represented by Rochelle Rose CFRE, Development Director; Property Manager Betty Campero; Ken Triguero, Brad Stevenson, and Jim Hurst from PSHH Housing Development; and youth educator Brittany Hadidian. Forty volunteers from the four Montecito churches are expected to participate.

Peoples' Self-Help Housing (PSHH) was founded in 1970 to address the serious affordable housing needs on the Central Coast and its accompanying social problems. Its mission is to create self-help home ownership opportunities, quality low-income rental housing, as well as youth education, health and community services to low-income families, seniors, and special needs groups living in PSHH facilities.

To date, Peoples' has built over 1,100 self-help homes and has developed 1,200 affordable rental units, serving 6,000 low-income residents throughout San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties. For more information on how to donate to the improvements needed at the Carpinteria Camper Park or to volunteer, contact Rochelle Rose at PSSH (805) 962-5152 x227 or visit www.pshhc.org.

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