

# groundviews



REACHING SOLID GROUND

## Part of the community

See story, pp. 2 & 3

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

### Brilliance... Kindness... & Persistence...

Kelly Bridwell in front of the new housing building she hopes to move into at the end of February 2011

With the generous **Adopt-a-Family** support from the following companies and groups, all 600 homeless families Solid Ground serves had a brighter holiday. Thanks to: Adobe Systems, American Piledriving Equipment, BOLA Architecture + Planning, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, ghd, Google, Graham & Dunn PC, Islamic House of Seattle, Izilla Toys, Liberty Tattoo, Mars Hill Church, Microsoft employees, National Multiple Sclerosis Society (Greater Northwest Chapter), Pharmaca, Razorfish, Sage BioNetworks, St. Andrews Episcopal Church, Seattle BioMed, Seattle Firefighters, Seattle Times - New Media Team, Stokes Lawrence, Third & Wall Art Group, Ticor Title, UW Office of Research, Unum, Wallingford Neighborhood Association and Workforce Development Council of Seattle-King County! ... Harmonious thanks ring out to **Egan's Ballard Jam House** for hosting the 5th Annual **Songs for Shelter** benefit for our housing services! ... **Chuck Skaggs** and **Loomis** were heroes for picking up sacks of **Penny Harvest** coins in Bethel and driving them to the bank. ... **Wide World Books & Maps** generously hosted a **Nancy Pearl** book signing benefit and children's book drive for Solid Ground. ... And our **JourneyHome** staff are grateful to **The Sharehouse** for always being there to provide free furniture and household goods to folks moving into stable housing. Now that's brilliant! ●

PROGRAM NEWS

### From the Ground Up

**Partnership bolsters literacy work:** Solid Ground's North King County Washington Reading Corps (WRC) was named by Seattle as the lead partner for the Cities of Service Initiative. Seattle is one of 10 cities awarded a Rockefeller Foundation grant to support mobilizing community volunteers to respond to urgent needs. Seattle chose to use the funds to focus on the issue of early learning, and the WRC will lead the collaboration of community-based organizations and community members to address this need.

**Helping people survive benefit reduction:** People living on low incomes in Washington State face reduced public benefits on two fronts. While Solid Ground's legal staff helped get the state to rescind proposed cuts in Disability Lifeline benefits, the state did reduce the benefit amount. Now, people who have received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits for 60 months face losing that safety net starting Feb. 1, 2011. There are hardship extensions and exemptions. If you need legal advice to see if you qualify, call our attorneys at 206.694.6742. ●

Special issue: An update on...  
**Sand Point Housing**

## REACHING SOLID GROUND

# Part of the community

Before moving into transitional housing at Solid Ground's Sand Point Family Housing in Jan. 2010, Kelly Bridwell and her 6-year-old daughter had never had their own apartment. Kelly had little education, no driver's license, and trouble keeping jobs. She says, "I was homeless. I had my daughter, I was living in and out of my grandma's house. I never really had anywhere to stay. I'd get a job and lose a job, and get a job and lose a job."

But today, after less than one year living in transitional housing at Sand Point Family Housing, she's made so much progress toward her housing stability goals that she's at the top of the list to move into Brettler Family Place – the brand-new "transition-in-place" permanent housing that Solid Ground is building at Sand Point. If approved by Seattle Housing Authority, Kelly will pay 30% of her income in rent, plus utilities – eventually working up to paying market rate rent.

Her case manager, Darlene Finney, was asked to review her caseload to recommend families ready to make the move from transitional to permanent housing at Sand Point, and Kelly immediately rose to the top of her list. Darlene says, "I chose her for a number of reasons, even though she's not working right now. I don't have any doubt, with her ability to get along with other people, that she will find something pretty quick. She's never been late on her rent, she's never caused any trouble with other clients. There's no drama around her.

"She's never had her own place before; this would be her first apartment. And I'm really excited to think that

it will be somewhere so nice as Brettler Place. You know, she gets to start out right. She's just really grown up since being an early wild child! She's still young, but she's come a long way."

### Turning her life around

Kelly is straightforward and sober about her history: "I come from addiction. I came from a treatment center in Seattle. I was there for 15 months, and from there I moved here. And so I have 27 months clean." Darlene says, "Her early background was a little dicey, but she's just turned it all around. She did everything that she needed to do. She got through school, all of her programs, she paid off fines, everything required of her."

Kelly attended Seattle Vocational Institute "for a certificate of Administrative Office. I graduated with a 3.98 grade point average. Didn't miss a day of school. I did really, really well. It gave me a lot of confidence."

For six months last year, Kelly worked through Community Jobs – but because of her unsteady job history, they didn't keep her on when she finished the



Kelly Bridwell and her daughter, Kelly Dakota Bridwell, walking home from Sand Point Elementary

### SAND POINT CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATES

- 51 = Total family units built by end of Stage 1
- 102 = Total units (71 family, 31 single) built by end of Stage 2
- 250 to 275 = Total people to be housed
- 60% of residents = Children under age 18
- 2/28/11 = Projected Stage 1 move-in date
- \$4,300,000 = Private Capital Campaign goal
- \$3,570,352 = Private funds raised to date

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

## University Sunrise Rotary

University Sunrise Rotary Club prides itself in being deeply involved in the Sand Point community. Club President Karen Camandona and star member Teri St. Onge are especially proud of the Annual Block Party they have put on at Sand Point for the past five years. Karen says, *“What it gets down to is, Sand Point Housing and Solid Ground align with what we value – ending our community’s homelessness. We like being a part of this very special and unique community and can’t find a better partner than Solid Ground.”*

Teri says, *“The Annual Block Party is an outing that everybody feels good about volunteering for – from food planning and preparation, band set-up, games and prizes for both kids and teens, raffle items and giveaways – everybody can be involved in a meaningful way.”* Thank you Karen, Teri and University Sunrise Rotary for bringing so much joy to Sand Point through your volunteerism!

For more info on volunteering at Solid Ground, contact Volunteer Coordinator Indiigo Klyne at [volunteers@solid-ground.org](mailto:volunteers@solid-ground.org) or 206.694.6825. ●



*Continued from p.2*

program. Despite this setback, she has a positive attitude and is determined to find work: “I had two job interviews last week, and I have another one tomorrow – I’ve really been looking hard. Something’s gonna open up for me.” She adds, “What I really like about this program that helped me a lot was making realistic goals. I make a goal plan every three months. Darlene helps me get out on paper what I need to do to meet these goals. And since I’ve been here, I’ve achieved every goal I’ve made.”

### A safe & stable environment

Kelly says, “It’s really cool being part of the community we have here at Sand Point Housing. It’s pretty quiet in this area, and there’s a lot of families. For me, I like that it’s a clean and sober environment. It’s safe and stable. My daughter is friends with just about all the kids here. The school’s right up the street. And the kids become friends, and the mothers start talking. And

the YMCA before- and after-school program – they have all kinds of programs.

“When I was younger, I moved schools every year. I never went to the same school twice. She changed preschools three different times, and that was really hard for me, because I’d been through that. And I know it’s hard to make friends when you move a lot. Even though this is her first year of kindergarten, it would mean a lot for her to stay in the same school.”

Kelly says the idea of moving into Brettler Family Place “makes me want to cry! When Darlene told me she had a room for me, I cried. I just want to raise [my daughter] in a stable environment.”

She says permanent housing at Brettler Family Place would offer “the stability I need to raise my daughter, find a permanent job and save money to be self-sufficient. It would mean so much to me to live there! It will mean *a lot* for my daughter. She’s never had her own room, and she wants it *so bad!* And she deserves it – she’s such a good girl. I just want to do the best for her that I can.” ●

● For more info on Brettler Family Place, email Jill Braun at [jillb@solid-ground.org](mailto:jillb@solid-ground.org).

● For info about the *On Solid Ground at Sand Point Capital Campaign*, visit the Capital Campaign website at [www.solid-ground.org/GetInvolved/SandPointCC](http://www.solid-ground.org/GetInvolved/SandPointCC).

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

## Christina Rockrise

A devoted donor for nearly a decade, Christina Rockrise is also a member of the Sand Point Capital Campaign Task Force. In reaching out to our community and raising dollars to build affordable, permanent housing for homeless families, Christina uses her social capital to end homelessness and build community.

A long-time city planner, one of Christina’s core beliefs is that you can’t expect people to focus on the issues that keep them in poverty until they have basic and safe shelter.

*“The people who will be living at Sand Point will have direct access to all these programs, many of which will be brought to them where they live. Those who are accepted into the housing enter not just a home, but a tailor-made program that will meet their specific needs.”* Thank you, Christina, for your generous support!

For more info on supporting Solid Ground, contact Individual Giving Manager Ali Friedman at 206.694.6852 or [alif@solid-ground.org](mailto:alif@solid-ground.org). ●



COMMUNITY NEWS

## Cool / Not Cool

**Cool:** We were recently honored by the Wallingford Chamber of Commerce with a “Wally” award: Neighborhood’s Best Nonprofit. The award cited the *Pirates & Pipsqueaks Carnival* we held in August to benefit our Broadview Shelter & Transitional Housing program – an event produced with love, creativity and affection by the Broadview staff.

**Not Cool:** The federal government reports that nearly 44 million Americans live under the poverty level, 14.3% of our population. This is up from 13.2% the year prior, the largest annual jump ever.

**Cool:** Penny Harvest 2010 was a huge success! Over 15,990 pounds of coins PLUS almost \$3,000 in cash and checks were collected by students at schools throughout the community! The total value of the harvest will not be known until later this month. Meanwhile, students at 61 schools will begin researching issues they care about in preparation for convening their Philanthropy Roundtables to grant the money raised back to community-based organizations.

...and an **Extra Cool:** Thanks to generous support from many companies and groups (see list on p. 1), our Adopt-a-Family program made the holidays brighter for all 600 homeless families Solid Ground serves! ●



### Where's Indiigo?

Our Volunteer Coordinator and Adopt-a-Family project lead extraordinaire, Indiigo Klyne, swims in a sea of gifts to be delivered to children in Solid Ground's housing programs.

## TAKE ACTION

### Some Ways to Get Involved!

- **Tour Sand Point Housing!** To schedule a time to visit the new affordable housing construction site, contact Individual Giving Manager Ali Friedman at [alif@solid-ground.org](mailto:alif@solid-ground.org) or 206.694.6852.
- **Help us meet our *On Solid Ground at Sand Point* fundraising goal!** To make a secure donation, visit our website at [www.solid-ground.org/GetInvolved/SandPointCC](http://www.solid-ground.org/GetInvolved/SandPointCC).



Building community to end poverty

1501 North 45th Street, Seattle, WA 98103-6708

A Community Action Agency... Helping people, changing lives.

**groundviews** is Solid Ground's newsletter, published six times a year to highlight our efforts to create a just & caring community, free from poverty, prejudice & neglect.

**Reasonable accommodations for disabilities made on request.**

Supported by



United Way of King County

#### EDITORS

Mike Buchman & Liz Reed Hawk

#### EMAIL

[publications@solid-ground.org](mailto:publications@solid-ground.org)

#### PHONE

206.694.6716

#### TTY

7.1.1

#### WEB

[solid-ground.org](http://solid-ground.org)