

# groundviews



REACHING SOLID GROUND

## Safe at Sand Point

See story, pp. 2 & 3

### On Solid Ground at Sand Point...

#### Building a great place to live for people who need a home

Solid Ground is embarking upon a tremendously exciting campaign to create 106 affordable housing units for homeless families, veterans, seniors and other homeless people at Sand Point adjacent to Seattle's Magnuson Park. This new housing will address immediate housing needs among vulnerable families and individuals in our community and help achieve the goals of the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness in King County.

In early 2010, we will break ground on Stage One of Sand Point Housing, which includes building the first 52 family housing units, plus a vibrant community center from which we will provide parenting classes, children's activities, and other classes and workshops to help people gain long-term stability and the chance for a better future. Our goal is to move our first families into new housing at Sand Point by early 2011!

COMMUNITY NEWS

### On homelessness & affordable housing

- The Seattle/King County Coalition for the Homeless' *2009 One Night Count* shows that 8,961 people – including more than 2,000 children – are homeless in King County on any given night. Service providers project that 2010 totals will be even higher.
- Solid Ground is building 106 new affordable housing units for folks moving out of homelessness. Construction at the former Sand Point Naval Station commences in the spring of 2010! Combined with the existing 94 transitional housing units there, Sand Point Community Housing will eventually have a total of 200 onsite housing units.
- With the job market tight, government benefits slashed due to budget cuts, and the economy still stagnant, homeless people face more barriers than ever to regaining stability.
- Sand Point's Santos Place has a 95.7% success rate in graduating its transitional housing residents into long-term, stable housing. Since its inception in 1999, Sand Point Housing has helped more than 1,600 households transitioning out of homelessness!

Special issue featuring...  
**Sand Point Housing**

REACHING SOLID GROUND

# Safe at Sand Point

For Jackie Wilson, new beginnings seem to start at Sand Point. In the early '90s when Sand Point was still a naval station and she was just 18, she got married in the chapel there in a triple wedding the day before her then husband shipped out to serve in the first Gulf War. What seemed like a lifetime later, after fleeing a different relationship that had turned violent, she returned to Solid Ground's Sand Point Family Housing with her two young children, Cody and Savannah. Jackie

says, "The day I moved in there, I looked out the window, and the chapel windows were right there facing! So you can imagine how I felt – here I was back again, starting all over again in a different fashion."

## Space to heal & rebuild

"I'm from Washington State, born and raised. I left a three bedroom house [in Kansas] with my two suitcases and my children. I wanted to come home because my family's up here." She is grateful for her short stays in shelters in Kansas and Seattle, but moving to transitional housing at Sand Point was a true blessing.

"It was definitely nice to be in our own apartment, and not in an open room. When you're a family, it's awful hard to mix moms and kids, piling into bunk beds all in the same room! It's hard enough when you feel violated from domestic violence, and then you're thrown into a mix, and everything is strange. So I felt safe once I got to Sand Point – and safety helped me to be able to rebuild."

Solid Ground currently owns and operates several programs for homeless families, veterans, individuals and youth at Sand Point, with 94 transitional housing units in renovated former naval buildings. Residents receive onsite case management to set and work toward

goals such as employment, permanent housing and self-sufficiency. Adjacent to Magnuson Park, Sand Point is also a peaceful haven that provides a real community for people staying there.

"I think the day I got in there, I sat and cried, because it was just so nice to have a roof! My main thing was having a solid address, a place to call home. It was hard being in a domestic violence shelter, because – for obvious reasons – you cannot disclose your address, you can't have family over, you can't have friends over," Jackie says. But at Sand Point, "we had all this room. It's so nice, because the park's right there, there's swimming in the summer. The kids could learn to ride bikes there. We got to go to the beach. They had the Family Days and BBQ things out there, Christmas and Thanksgiving dinners, the Block Party. They had a lot of activities – stuff that you normally wouldn't get to do [at a shelter]."

## Support to set achievable goals

Jackie says the onsite case management and other services she had access to really helped them stabilize. She credits all of the staff at Sand Point, from her case manager Darlene Finney, to Housing Program Manager Joshua Welch, to the maintenance guy, Bill ("He has



(above) Jackie Wilson is thankful for a permanent place to call home.

(cover) Jackie snuggles on the couch with her children Cody (4) & Savannah (3).

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a great ear!”) with playing important roles in her process.

“Darlene always helped me set realistic goals, so it made it easy for me to hit those goals – which made me feel good, which made me work harder. She was kind of like a friend, too – a good support. She gave me enough freedom to get done what I needed to get done. She knew I was on track, so she let the leash go a little bit! And every goal that I set with Darlene, I pretty much hit.”

They arrived at Sand Point in August ‘08, and within 30 days, Jackie had a full-time job and a bank account. She also took a financial skills course offered there, “which,” she says, “still helps me to this day! The class was great. I still have all my notes from it, and I refer back to it, and now I’m on the path of building my credit right back up.” And by fall ‘08, she reached her goal of buying a car.

“I’d never been in a homeless situation before. It humbles you tremendously. Most of us out here are only one step away from it, especially in this economy right now, with people losing their jobs, or domestic violence. I don’t think anybody out there is immune; anything can happen to anybody at any time. And we’re not better than each other; we all just hope and pray there’s programs out there like this that can help, because God knows where we’d be if it wasn’t there.”

### Finding affordable housing

Residents can stay at Sand Point for up to two years, but Jackie and the kids only needed a little over a year before they were ready to move on. Still, the process of finding affordable permanent housing was daunting. “I was really concerned, because no one’s moving out of low-income housing. The waiting lists haven’t budged since I signed up in June ‘08. The last thing I wanted to do was turn around and take my kids back to a shelter and start all over again.”

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She ended up finding a market-rate two-bedroom apartment she could afford, \$795 a month, on Craig’s List. “I’m so glad to have a house where, wow, we can do a cartwheel in the living room now!” Yet, she says she still leans on food banks and other community resources to make ends meet. And she’s concerned for some of her former neighbors back at Sand Point: “For your average people that aren’t working, or that have more children, or don’t have a car or these kinds of things, I don’t know – I worry for where they’re gonna go after. I got really lucky finding this place.”

Jackie’s concern speaks to an overwhelming community need. To help meet it, Solid Ground is building 106 new affordable housing units at Sand Point for formerly homeless people – including an onsite Community Resource Center offering parenting, life skills, financial skills, and cooking and nutrition classes; children’s programs; a community garden; and other cultural, recreational and community-building activities.

Jackie thinks this is “a *great* idea. I just can’t stress enough how important programs like this are to people like me. Sometimes life doesn’t give you a lot of choices. And things happen. And it’s not because you’re a bad person; it’s maybe because circumstances went bad. But if you’re given a chance, you can really succeed, and teach your kids a great lesson, you know? Sand Point helped me so much, and I’ll be grateful for the rest of my life.”

- For more info on Sand Point, contact Joshua Welch at 206.529.9450 or [sandpoint@solid-ground.org](mailto:sandpoint@solid-ground.org).
- For info about the *On Solid Ground at Sand Point Capital Campaign*, contact Zanne Garland at 206.694.6862 or [zanneg@solid-ground.org](mailto:zanneg@solid-ground.org).

TAKE ACTION

## Enough about Us, What about You? Sand Point Housing needs your support!

**Donate!** Please consider a donation to support Sand Point's onsite services. For more information, contact **Zanne Garland** at **206.694.6862** or [zanne@solid-ground.org](mailto:zanne@solid-ground.org). To make your gift today, visit: [www.solid-ground.org/Programs/Housing/SandPoint](http://www.solid-ground.org/Programs/Housing/SandPoint).

**Volunteer!** Sand Point Housing seeks a few volunteers to support our children's, tutoring and respite care programs, and to help with monthly community meetings and occasional special events. For more information, contact **Joshua Welch** at **206.529.9450** or [joshuaw@solid-ground.org](mailto:joshuaw@solid-ground.org).



Draft design of new affordable housing & Community Center at Sand Point (Tonkin/Hoyne Architecture & Urban Design, April 2009)

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

## Thank you to our Capital Campaign donors

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*"New housing at Sand Point fits right into the goals of the 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. It's fantastic to see Solid Ground doing more to help our community end homelessness!"*

-DAN BRETTLER, CAR TOYS CEO & COMMITTEE TO END HOMELESSNESS IN KING COUNTY CO-CHAIR

David Brown, Jr. • Matt Rorabaugh • Patricia Ryan • Cory Sbarbaro • Sarajane Siegfriedt • Ellen M. Stoecker • Jeanie Taylor • Seattle Children's Hospital • The Seattle Foundation • Mark Sherman, Jennifer Daves & their kids Annabella & Dylan • Judy Tobin & Michael Baker • United States Dept. of Housing & Urban Development • Martha & Steven Ward • WA State Housing Trust Fund • WA State Building Communities Fund • Wells Fargo • Michael Young •

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Building community to end poverty

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