

# Habitat named nonprofit of year

Local chapter is building affordable-housing projects in Eagle, Edwards

[Edward Stoner](#)  
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EAGLE-VAIL - Frances Trevizo says her home improved her life.

"It did, and it still does," she said.

The mother of three put hours of work into her Habitat for Humanity home before she moved into the Eagle duplex in 2005. The price of a free-market home would have forced her to work much more than she already does.

"If you buy another house in this county, how expensive they are, you need to work so much in order to pay your mortgage," she said. "It gave me freedom to enjoy my house."

## Get involved

To volunteer or to donate to Habitat for Humanity, call Elyse Howard at 748-6718. To donate used appliances, furniture or construction materials to the Habitat Outlet in Gypsum, call 524-0669. Free pickup is available.

Trevizo owns her own cleaning business and also works in the Habitat Home Outlet in Gypsum, where she started as a volunteer and was eventually offered a job.

The local chapter of Habitat for Humanity has ramped up its efforts over the last few years, and officials are hoping to see more success stories like Trevizo's.

The Vail Valley Chamber and Tourism Bureau has recognized Habitat for Humanity of Eagle and Lake Counties as Nonprofit Organization of the Year for

bringing more affordable housing to the valley.

Habitat homes here usually cost under \$200,000; compare that to Eagle County's average home price of more than of \$800,000.

"It's a big difference," said Elyse Howard, development director for Habitat.



The local Habitat for Humanity affiliate is building a housing complex in Eagle and is planning another groups of duplexes in Edwards.

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homes in 2005.

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They achieved the goal, starting five homes in 2005 - two in Leadville, two in Eagle and one in Gypsum.

They were also successful in another goal: building more homes in Eagle County instead of Leadville. Jobs are plentiful in Eagle County but because of the scarcity of developable land, finding good places to build can be difficult.

They now have two projects in Eagle County. One is a seven-apartment complex in the Bluffs neighborhood in Eagle. The other project is Fox Hollow in Edwards. That project, which will begin this year, will have eight duplexes.

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Habitat homes are built mostly by volunteers, including the people who will live in them. People who live in Habitat homes are selected based on need, their ability to repay no-

interest loans and their willingness to help build their home and other Habitat homes.

Habitat had 400 volunteers last year on one project, said Elyse Howard, development director for the organization.

More and more corporate groups are volunteering, including Vail Resorts and Morter Architects, Howard said.

There are also neighborhood groups who are donating funds and volunteering for Habitat. Arrowhead residents built a home in Eagle. Also last year, the local Habitat started Women Build, an all-women's week of volunteering on job sites.

In another new venture last year, Habitat opened the outlet store in Gypsum that sells second-hand appliances, building supplies and furniture. The store raises funds for Habitat.

Habitat wants to make sure the affordable housing stays in the forefront of people's minds in Eagle County, Healy said.

"We hope to take a leadership role in terms of awareness in the community," he said.