

Extending the welcome mat

By Sarah Cox

Developers. Steve Bodtke says he thinks that while many regard them as only being focused on the bottom line, they are anything but that. It is a myth that he and his partner, Jason Boyle, have recently blown clear out of the water – well, rescued from the water is more exact.

Bodtke, a REALTOR and managing broker with Long & Foster in Blacksburg, is also involved in a townhouse product on Silverleaf, next to St. Mary's Catholic

Church. He got a call about a month ago from St. Mary's, asking him if he knew of an inexpensive apartment that would be available for a family that had lost their home in New Orleans. The family was staying temporarily with relatives in the Blacksburg area but needed more permanent quarters until they could go back to Louisiana.

"It worked out that it was an obvious fit that one of our townhouses would suit," said Bodtke, who has been building nine townhouses and a single family house in

the area.

"It was wonderful, how things turned out.

"In two weeks' time the townhome was finished – two weeks ahead of schedule – and the kitchen stocked. It took Boyle and his brother, Justin, both of Green Valley Woodworks, Inc., to do what Bodtke called "amazing things."

It took the REALTORS from Long & Foster and some of the members of St. Mary's congregation to furnish the house. And between them all, the kitchen

was well supplied.

"The house was completely ready," said Bodtke. The family moved in the weekend of Sept. 17.

"We were, originally, about one month out from when we had intended to finish this unit," said Bodtke, who has made it available, for free, for as long as the family needs it. The town of Blacksburg also stepped up – Adele Schirmer, director of planning and engineering; Steve Hundley, the zoning administrator for Blacksburg; and Cathy Cook, the building official,

cooperated by scheduling final inspections even after hours so that Keisha and Jimmy Costello and their children, 8-year old Christian and 11-year old Jade, could get settled.

"We get a bad name," said Bodtke of developers. "Everybody thinks we are only in it for the money – who cares about the land and the people? That's not the case, and I don't know of any developers where that is the case. We are trying to provide a product for the people who need it."