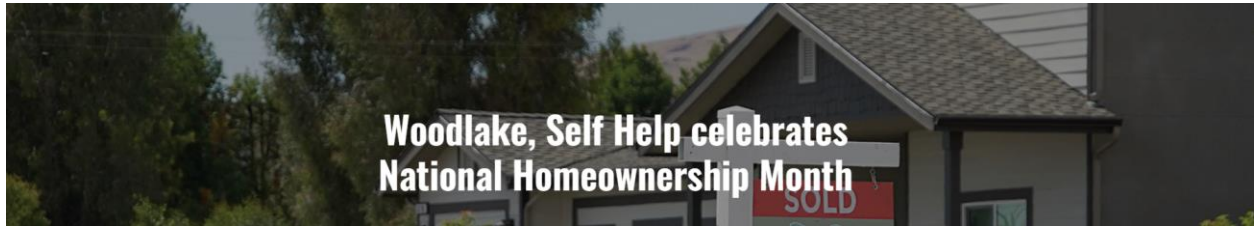


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Woodlake, Self Help celebrates National Homeownership Month

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By: Claire Livingston



Self-Help Enterprises organized the celebration near their Valencia Heights subdivision to support affordable housing in the community

WOODLAKE - The National Homeownership Month celebration highlights the movement towards affordable housing in Woodlake.

Self-Help Enterprises (SHE) celebrated National Homeownership Month on June 24 at Valencia Heights park in Woodlake. SHE partnered with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) for rural development to celebrate with families participating in the construction of their own homes through the Mutual Self-Help Housing Program. The event also included resources for local homeowners to help them maintain their homes and finances.

National Homeownership Month takes place every June across America to highlight housing supply needs in communities and the programs that support local homeowners.

“It’s well documented that the way to build wealth in this country is through homeownership,” said Tom Collishaw, President and CEO of SHE. “We honor your commitment to providing stability for your family through homeownership, and your willingness to work hard to achieve it.”

SHE created their Mutual Self-Help Housing Program to unite a group of eight to twelve families to help each other build their houses with supervision and guidance from SHE construction staff. The program also provides assistance to applicants with securing loans in order to build their homes. Special financing from the USDA and the state of California make the homes affordable.

Valencia Heights is a 70-unit subdivision in Woodlake operated by SHE. The first families in Valencia Heights moved in three years ago and in May 2022, 50 homes had been built while the final 20 were under construction. The project has been a way for the city’s large population of low-income agricultural workers to own their own homes.

Woodlake also has four market-rate subdivisions in development including Hillside Estates, Greenwood Subdivision, Kaweah Homes and Mulberry Estates which is still awaiting approval. The city anticipates an increase in sales and property taxes for the upcoming fiscal year. Part of the city’s budget includes upgrades to water, sewer and roads to accommodate the influx of new homes.