



# FAMILY HOMESTEAD NEWS

*Sometimes homelessness is a family affair.*

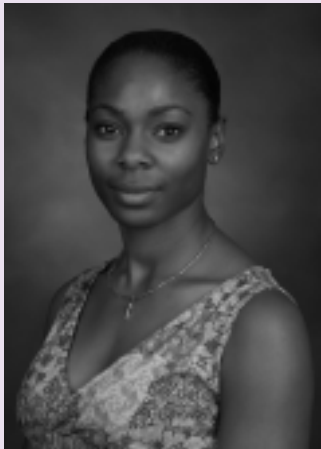
## POINT OF VIEW

By Wenonah Clayton

It was mid-February and I was behind schedule for a meeting with one of Family HomeStead's case managers. I was to shadow her as she performed interviews for admission and follow-up visits. But the weather; the cold dark clouds, smog, or fog (whatever the news was calling it that day) hovered, thick like the enclosed smoke of a thousand cigars.

To no avail, I set the windshield wipers to their fastest speed, but coupled with the back splashing of the cars in front of me and the amount of rain falling, the wipers might as well have been off. Who knew which was better; defroster on or window down? Either way, the cars and trucks were swaying in the slush that covered the highways like a wet cottony mess. I was ten minutes late and counting.

I arrived at the office frazzled and showering greetings of "can you believe this weather?" I was led into a side office, where I met a young boy of 11 or 12 sitting, or trying to sit still, while he and his mother went through their entry interview for one of Family HomeStead's programs. His legs wiggled and bounced under the table as his mother told their history filled with life-altering events. They were finally leaving a string of motels and homes of relatives, and ready for a fresh start in their own place. I glanced out the window, remembering my frustrations of trying to get there on time, and could only imagine their journey. Their possessions packed away in the car and in storage, with her two children, whose school was closed that day, unexpectedly along for each meeting. But she made it and her children were able to watch their mother change their circumstances for the better. The young boy's untamed grin, showing itself sporadically throughout the interview, seemed fastened, bright and brilliant, when he was led into their new home and picked out which room would be his.



WENONAH CLAYTON

*continued on page 12*

## Apartment Association Works Magic



If you like magic, you'll love the Apartment Association of Metro Denver (AAMD). For nearly two decades AAMD has been working its magic on behalf of Family HomeStead and 2009 is no exception. Months of planning and preparation went into the annual Spring Clean, which culminated on June 10 at Family HomeStead's Park Ogden and Zephyr transitional properties.

Perhaps the most dramatic change could be seen in one apartment at Park Ogden. Led by BluSky Restoration, the project transformed this small dingy basement unit into a gleaming showroom after a total AAMD makeover. A brand new kitchen boasted new cabinets and countertops in addition to a shiny new sink and appliances. New flooring, lighting, and a bathroom makeover combined with a sparkling paint job to complete the project.

In the meantime, two dozen AAMD volunteers were busy outside. Some patched the masonry on the buildings' outside walls while others turned overgrown flowerbeds into works of art. Still other hardy souls repaired wooden fencing, mulched courtyard areas, and cleaned up the playground. No abracadabra here, just hours of hard work that left Part Ogden in pristine condition.

Across town in Lakewood, another two dozen volunteers were equally as busy at our two west-side properties. Volunteers painted three apartments while Community Interiors staff tore out and replaced carpet in two. Other hard working folks could be seen rebuilding a playground at our smaller complex while others distributed a truckload of mulch. Still others painted the east-facing wall of the larger building and performed general site cleanup in addition to painting two apartments.

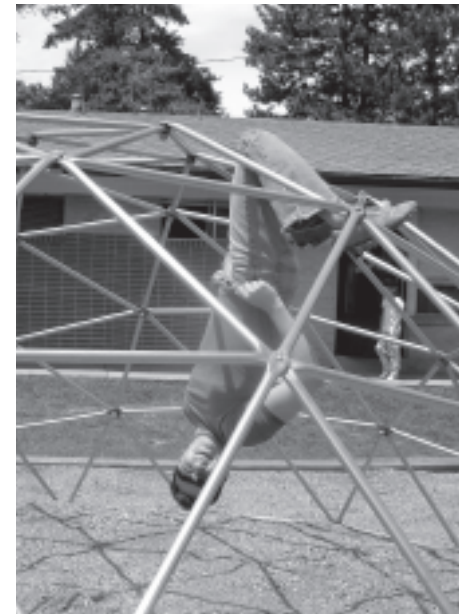
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PRESENTING SPONSOR  
BLUSKY RESTORATION BANNER



LEFT: MIXING CEMENT AT PARK OGDEN. RIGHT: BLUSKY WORKERS POUND REBAR INTO PLAYGROUND BORDER. BELOW LEFT: PAINTING THE OUTSIDE WALL AT ZEPHYR. BELOW RIGHT: COMMUNITY INTERIORS' JON TROSHYNSKI LITERALLY HANGS OUT DURING A BREAK IN THE ACTION. BOTTOM: REBUILDING A PLAYGROUND.



Our heartfelt thanks to BluSky Restoration, Spring Clean Presenting Sponsor, and to Vacant Interiors, Material Sponsor for the event. Breakfast/Lunch Sponsors included Drain-O-Rooter, Wilmar Industries, Community Interiors, RedPeak Properties, Equity Residential, and Alta Staffing. Additional thanks go to these participating companies: Alpine Window Coverings, FastSigns – Midtown, HD Supply, Kwal Paint, Shaker Painting, Sherwin-Williams, Terrain Landscaping, Landscape Accents and Waste Connections.

At the end of the day Spring Clean Chairperson, Equity Residential's Stacy Valentine, noticed some fencing that needed repair. "We'll get that next time," she commented. Good to know – these great folks will come again!

