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Daily Herald

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NHS celebrates efforts for local homeowners

NHS of the Fox Valley, a nonprofit housing, counseling, and lending organization, recently held an open house to celebrate what the office has accomplished in three years. This includes helping 26 new homeowners, providing free homebuyer education classes in English and Spanish to 417 families, and impacting 37 properties with NHS affordable fixed-rate loans totaling more than \$4.6 million.

Elgin Mayor Ed Schock commended the Fox Valley bilingual staff for providing credible help to Elgin families.

"There's been over 1,000 foreclosures in Elgin, but this office is on the front line to help our community save their homes," said Mayor Schock, encouraging people to attend an NHS "Keep Your Home" event in Elgin. It will be from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 2, at the Hemmens Cultural Center, 45 Symphony Way.

NHS of the Fox Valley Neighborhood Director Johnny Placeres praised the city of Elgin and Kane County for their support of the office's programs. Fox Valley



New Elgin homeowner Iliana Rodriguez cuts the celebration cake with Elgin Mayor Ed Schock while Ed Jacob of NHS, left, Scott Swanson of Charter One, and Johnny Placeres of NHS look on. Rodriguez, who moved into her new home in mid-September, took NHS' free homebuyer education classes and secured her fixed-rate loan through NHS of the Fox Valley.

COURTESY OF NHS

administers Kane County's down payment assistance program, which gives qualified first-time homebuyers up to \$20,000 — an increase of \$10,000 — when they

purchase a foreclosed property. One new Elgin homeowner Iliana Rodriguez took NHS' free homebuyer education classes and secured her fixed-rate loan through NHS

of the Fox Valley.

The city of Elgin and the Fox Valley office will expand its focus to reclaim vacant properties through its Neighborhood Stabilization Program.

"Empty, vacant properties have a detrimental affect on our neighborhood," Placeres said. "Programs like these provide tangible help to new homebuyers and create pride in place."

It takes the help of many private and public partners to revitalize neighborhoods. NHS of Chicago Executive Director Ed Jacob thanked the 11 partners who have funded the NHS of the Fox Valley office. He recognized Charter One and Scott Swanson, president of Charter One, for being the leading contributor to the NHS of the Fox Valley office, for their financial support as well as providing leadership on various boards and committees.

"Housing is the center of family. Charter One joins with NHS in advancing affordable housing strategies and education, and the stability these create in our communities," said Scott Swanson, president of Charter One, Illinois. "More than 150 homeowners are in their homes today as a direct result of NHS of the Fox Valley's efforts. That's outstanding."

Fox Valley notes on religion

To include your church in the free listings, e-mail to foxvalley@dailyherald.com.

West Ridge Community: On Sunday, Oct. 3, the Rev. Gordon Venturella will begin a five-part series titled "One Month to Live: Living in the Dark" at 9 and 11 a.m. at West

"The Mustard Seed and the Leaven" at 8 and 10:30 a.m. at St. Peter Lutheran Church, 18N377 Galligan Road, Gilberts. Sunday school for ages 4 through high school meets at 9:15 a.m. Adult Bible study at 9:15 a.m. Sunday will cover "Prayer: How, When, Why?" On Sunday, Oct. 3, Walgreens

how that event affects life today at 7 p.m. The Wednesday Bible class will be at 9:30 a.m. with "The Many Wonders of Heaven: The Wonder of God." Call the church at (847) 464-5721 or visit stpetersnorthplato.org for details.

Faith Community: On Sunday,

gin. There are Christian education classes for all ages from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. The youth group meets at 12:45 p.m. All are invited. For details, call (847) 741-0038 or visit fumcelgin.org.

St. John: On Sunday, Oct. 3, the Rev. Howard Gleason will

