

Finding a Home of Their Own

A year ago, Roger and Tracy Hall were homeless and living outside. The two are former members of the Safe Ground community. Roger who is a veteran had made attempts to find housing through the Department of Veterans Administration (VA) and was placed on a list at the last Sacramento Stand Down in the fall of 2009. The couple had to wait for a home because of a lack of available housing.

In December of last year Roger and Tracy received a motel voucher which provided them with a place to live to begin to put lives in order and to continue the search for permanent housing.

“Motel vouchers gave us a shot. We didn’t have to worry about the police hassling us, we had a place to leave our stuff and take a bath” said Roger.

They rode their bikes to look for places to live and found barriers that sometimes made the search frustrating.

“The biggest hurdle was the criteria. The credit reports and the cost of rents, even for places that weren’t even up to code made finding a place hard” said Tracy.



Three months after moving off the streets and into the motel, Roger and Tracy found a permanent place to live.

The house, that Roger credits Tracy for finding, is a small two bedroom that was badly in need of a wide range of repairs. With the help of the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program (HPRP) they were able to receive assistance with a first month’s deposit to get moved in.

Roger, who formerly worked as a general contractor, completed a number of the repairs himself.

The house, now fully furnished includes the couples own unique touches, including Roger’s prize find, a refrigerator that he bought for \$5.00. As a skilled amateur seamstress Tracy has added her hand sewn accents and window coverings throughout each of the rooms of the house. All told, the entire house was furnished for less than \$800 dollars, an accomplishment that required bargain hunting skills that they developed over time and out of necessity.

“It takes some getting used to having things like a refrigerator and a freezer with ice cream. We’re back to being like everybody else.”

