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# Habitat's 'green' home a source of pride



Among those helping to raise a wall of the 600-sq-ft South Shore Habitat for Humanity house in Stoughton were Haril Pandya (at right front) of CBT Architects and new homeowner Karen Struck. (Tom Thrasher)

By Johanna Kaiser  
Globe Correspondent / March 18, 2010

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The foundation is set, the inspection is complete, and the final touches are in place. The only thing the South Shore Habitat for Humanity's newest house needs is a family.

That is what it will get on Saturday, when the nonprofit dedicates its latest home to Karen Struck and her two sons in Stoughton. Struck, who owns a one-person business making decals for trucks, called Struck by Design, has been living with her parents.

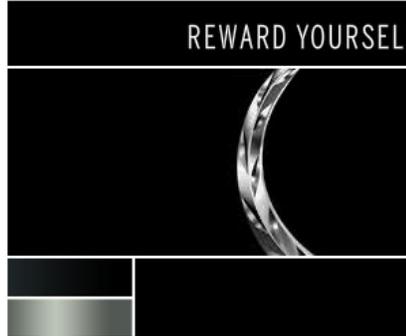
Not only will it be a first home for a family with limited means: It will also be the first environmentally sustainable home built by South Shore Habitat. The chapter partnered with Boston-based CBT Architects to design and build the eco-friendly affordable home, on Lakewood Drive.

"It was a way to celebrate our 40th anniversary as a firm and an opportunity to give back to the community — something we really believe is part of architecture," said Haril Pandya, senior associate and project manager for CBT.

The firm held an in-house competition to find a design that was modern and spacious yet affordable, Pandya said. The winning design features an open floor plan on the first floor of the house, with cathedral ceilings and large windows in the three bedrooms upstairs. A pavilion connected to the main portion of the house acts as a living room and has 15-foot vaulted ceilings and large windows.

The large windows allow the sun to light and warm the house, the floors are

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made from bamboo, which regrows quickly in nature, and the siding is HardiPlank, a fiber-cement siding that is nontoxic and long-lasting.

Because building supplies are donated, the design team could not ensure that every material and appliance was sustainable or energy-efficient, but the firm found other ways to reduce the home's environmental impact, said Pandya. The house was oriented in a way that takes advantage of solar and wind energy, while uprooting as few trees and plants as possible, he said.

More than 700 volunteers helped to build the house on Lakewood Drive, including Struck, who spent 250 hours working on the house as part of her agreement with Habitat.

"It's been such a big positive [for Stoughton]. It's a real focal point of civic pride," said Jerry McDermott, executive director of South Shore Habitat for Humanity. McDermott said the community has rallied for Struck and her sons, lifelong residents of Stoughton.

Volunteers faced a few extra challenges in building a house that is larger and more complex than the usual Colonial, Cape, or ranch design used by Habitat, but McDermott said the chapter would like to continue building "green" homes.

"Maybe a simpler model, so it's volunteer-friendly, but we do like a lot of the environmentally friendly and sustainable products," he said.

The dedication ceremony will take place at the house, at 219 Lakewood Drive, Saturday from 10 a.m. to noon.

*For more information about South Shore Habitat for Humanity, visit [www.sshabitat.org](http://www.sshabitat.org). Johanna Kaiser can be reached at [jkaiser@globe.com](mailto:jkaiser@globe.com).* ■

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