

Point of pride: Ministry helps people afford housing in Edmond

BY MOLLY M. FLEMING
The Journal Record

EDMOND – In 2013, Callie Chappell wanted to be more independent, but her parents didn't want her to be too far away because she is legally blind. They found a Turning Point Ministries rental home near their downtown office.

The organization later approached Chappell about buying one of the homes in its first neighborhood, Legacy Station.

"Of course, we jumped at that chance," said Sandy Chappell, Callie's mother.

The neighborhood started in 2009 and finished with 13 homes in September 2015.

Turning Point Ministries builds affordable homes for people who qualify. Applicants must be able to make a down payment based on credit history, volunteer 300 hours to building the home and have a need to live in Edmond. Other factors include work history. Callie, a Francis Tuttle Technology Center Culinary Arts School graduate, logged her 300 hours cooking for the crew that built her house.

The ministry, which started in 2008, has built 15 homes and is starting its second neighborhood, Heritage Village. It is on N. Fretz Street, north of W. Hurd Street in Edmond. Legacy Station is near Broadway and Edwards Street.

"The average new home in Edmond is \$200,000," said Josh Moore, Turning Point president. "What that means to our group is there is a large portion of Ed-



Callie Chappell owns a Turning Point Ministries home in the Legacy Station neighborhood in Edmond. PHOTO BY BRENT FUCHS

mond residents – workers, students, moms, dads, and grandparents – that can't afford to own their own home. Our purpose was to fill that gap of the cost of a new home with something a lot more people could afford."

Turning Point sells its homes for about \$110,000.

The work has helped the City Council meet one of its goals, which was to create more affordable housing, City Manager Larry Stevens said. The city provided \$500,000 in infrastructure

work for Heritage Village, and completed the infrastructure work for Legacy Station as well.

"(Both neighborhoods) were in an area where development hadn't taken place for 40 to 50 years," Stevens said.

The Legacy Station homes were all three-or-four bedrooms, ranging in size from 1,300 to 1,400 square feet. Moore said those homes were too large for some applicants.

"What we found was there is a need for either empty nesters or homeown-

ers that don't have large families or kids," he said. "They may only need two bedrooms."

Heritage Village is platted on 7 acres to have 37 homes, with 13 two-bedroom structures. The homes were all designed by architect Bruce Bockus, principal at Bockus-Payne Associates. The other 24 homes will be three or four bedrooms. The development has a playground donated by St. John the Baptist Catholic Church.

Moore said Turning Point is accepting applications for Heritage Village, with construction slated to start in the next 60 days. Two to four homes are built at one time, taking six months to complete. Once this neighborhood is complete, Turning Point wants to keep working in the city. But that will be a challenge, Moore said.

"The reality in Edmond is it has always been tough to acquire land for something like this," he said. "The land price is what sets the mark for the sale price. The challenge is to get the land so we can do a project like this one."

Callie Chappell said having her own home has allowed her to be independent. The organization worked with her to build the halls wide enough for her friend in a wheelchair. Her home also doesn't have steps. The kitchen has a nonporous countertop that makes it a better food-prep surface.

"Everyone (at Turning Point) was easy to get along with," she said. "I really like (my house). I like not having a roommate."