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Planning nearly done for Old Town's first Habitat project



PHOTO COURTESY COLLETON RIVER PLANTATION

Volunteers from Colleton River Plantation work on a Habitat house in Promise Way in Ridgeland.

By *Ruth Ragland*
CONTRIBUTOR

Hilton Head Regional Habitat for Humanity and the Town of Bluffton are finalizing details on Habitat's first project in Bluffton's Old Town.

The affordable housing project for the corner of Wharf and Robertson streets will include six cottages ranging in size from 308 to 1,081 square feet.

Part of the funding comes from a federal Neighborhood Stabilization Program Grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The program targets communities blighted by foreclosures and abandonment for renewal.

Bluffton received \$727,940 for demolition and redevelopment of affordable housing. As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the NSP grant funds are meant to be spent quickly and boost local economies. The deadline to spend all grant funds is May 15, 2011.

The grant, along with funds from the Town's affordable housing budget, will be used to purchase land and contribute to some of the construction expenses.

Habitat for Humanity is donating time, volunteer labor and fundraising to pay for construction and minor infrastructure improvements.

Please see **HABITAT** on page 6A

Local community director receives Order of the Palmetto

Lara Williams, executive director of the soon-to-open Belfair Gardens assisted living community in Bluffton, recently received an Order of the Palmetto Patriot award, the highest honor bestowed by the office of the lieutenant governor of South Carolina.

In presenting the honor, Lt. Gov. Andre Bauer recognized Williams's commitment and dedication to public service by advocating for South Carolina's senior population, primarily for those living in assisted living residences.

In addition to her position with Belfair Gardens,

Williams also serves as the director of the S.C. Assisted Living Federation of America (SCALFA). Williams is a certified dementia specialist who has been an assisted living director, specializing in the care of those with Alzheimer's and dementia, for more than 20 years. The award was presented at the 2010 SCALFA Fall Conference.

The Palmetto Patriot is an award that recognizes indi-



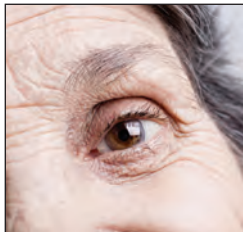
SC Lt. Gov. Andre Bauer and Lara Williams

viduals who have made outstanding contributions to the state of South Carolina and their fellow citizens.

Belfair Gardens is a 23-bed assisted living community that cares for residents with Alzheimer's and related dementia and is scheduled to open in early December. Belfair Gardens is located behind Kroger in Belfair Town Village on a campus with Riverside at Belfair retirement community.



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