BLESSED BEYOND MEASURE

When Operation Finally Home officials handed U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Danny Joe Billek the keys to his new home last year, he knew that he and his family were receiving a beautiful gift. But after a year in his new home, Billek says he recognizes the gift for what it is: a blessing.

“It has been a little over a year since we moved into our forever home, and each day brings such joy and happiness,” Danny said. “We have been able to focus on our family and grow closer to God since we moved in—through family dinners in our dining room, watching lots of Marvel movies in the living room, and enjoying many sunny days together in the backyard.”

Operation Finally Home exists to provide mortgage-free homes, home modifications and transitional housing to America’s heroes: military veterans, first responders and their families. Since 2005, Operation Finally Home has completed or is in the planning stages of more than 430 home projects across 32 states.

Danny served his country for nearly 14 years, including four combat deployments: three to Iraq and one to Afghanistan. A right-knee injury during his final deployment ended his combat readiness, sending him and his family, which includes his wife Kimberly and four children, to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. In 2016, Danny was medically discharged.

Enjoying their new home in Bartow, Florida, Danny says the gift has helped his family to find “a healthy balance” in their lives. Danny and Kimberly’s oldest son is now enrolled in college and “making excellent progress toward his degree,” while the younger children are participating in wrestling and Tae Kwon Do in addition to their studies.

“I pray for all the families that have been blessed by this organization because this has been a blessing for our family,” Danny said. “Thank you so much for wearing the light of God for our nation’s warriors.”

It’s a feeling U.S. Marine Corporal Ray Lopez understands well. Lopez, who served for more than four years, including three tours of Iraq, moved into his home in Odessa, Texas, last January.

“The words I have about this blessed and amazing home are excitement, relief and joy,” Ray said. “We are closer as a family because of this gift and the best is how much my girls just love to be at home relaxing with Daddy!”

Lopez says his mortgage-free home has relieved his stress level and allowed him and his daughters to truly enjoy their new home—and each other—more.

“I am excited about this home each and every day,” he said. “It has relieved so many of the stressors that were an issue before. We are so blessed and very thankful for everything Operation Finally Home and Silver Leaf has done for us and continue to do for so many deserving people.”
2022 was a milestone year. We introduced a new look and dedicated our 200th home. With the help of generous donors and partners, we’ve completed or are in the planning stages of more than 380 home projects in more than 32 states since 2005. Here’s a glimpse of what we accomplished in 2022 together:

### By the Numbers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Projects completed or in planning</td>
<td>437</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modifications completed or in planning</td>
<td>139</td>
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<tr>
<td>Homes completed or in planning</td>
<td>257</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transitional homes completed or in planning</td>
<td>41</td>
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<td>Beneficiaries served</td>
<td>344</td>
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<tr>
<td>Individuals served</td>
<td>1,058</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Thank You, Lowe’s!

A long-standing Operation Finally Home partner, Lowe’s recently reaffirmed the partnership, committing nearly $500,00 for home modifications and transitional housing for military veterans, first responders and their families in 2023. Lowe’s plays a valuable role in helping high school students in the Humble (Texas) Independent School District and Huntsville High School provide tiny homes for veterans needing transitional housing.

### Share the Love

In celebration of his newest book in the Oliver the Ornament series, Oliver Doodle Dandy, author Todd Zimmerman and his team are partnering with Operation Finally Home. From May 15-July 4, schools, community groups and more can host a special program for kids that includes a community service project, story time, patriotic picture Bingo and a sing-along. As part of the community service project, participants will write Notes of Love for Operation Finally Home pillar events. If you’d like to learn more, please visit www.OlivertheOrnament.com.

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A Few Words from Dan

Spring is here—and the signs of the season are starting to become apparent, from longer days to blooming flowers.

Spring is a season of growth and renewal but is also a time to refocus on what’s most important. For us at Operation Finally Home, that’s fulfilling our mission to provide homes, home modifications and transitional housing to our deserving military veterans, first responders and their families. We can’t do any of that without the support and generosity of our donors and our partners.

You make a real difference in the lives of those we serve, and we wanted you to see how the gift of a home can truly change a family’s life. That’s why we’re sharing the stories of U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Danny Joe Billek and U.S. Marine Corporal Ray Lopez and their families in this issue of HomeFront. Having a home of their own has allowed these precious families to grow closer as a family, to work toward dreams they never would have been able to accomplish with the stress of a mortgage or rent and to simply have a safe place to put down roots. With your help and support, we are blessed to participate in ushering in this new chapter of their lives!

Over the years, Operation Finally Home President Rusty Carroll has played a vital role in helping us provide a safe place to call home for heroes like Danny and Ray. Some of you may have heard about Rusty’s recent diagnosis of stage 4 colon cancer that has spread to his liver. While this news is overwhelming, Rusty and his family along with all of us have placed it in God’s hands. Please keep him and his family in your prayers.

I’m continually humbled by the work we get to do at Operation Finally Home—and the people we get to work alongside to do it. Thank you for your help in providing homes for veterans, first responders and their families so we can read many more stories like Danny’s and Ray’s.

God Bless,

Dan Wallrath
Founder of Operation Finally Home
### Pillar Events:
**Surprises, Groundbreakings, Notes of Love & Dedications**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Event Type</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 7</td>
<td>William Makaafi</td>
<td>Surprise/Notes of Love</td>
<td>Pflugerville, TX</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 8</td>
<td>Brian Cassidy</td>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>Inman, South Carolina</td>
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<td>Dec. 8</td>
<td>SCHS Tiny Homes</td>
<td>Notes of Love</td>
<td>Houston, TX</td>
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<td>Dec. 12</td>
<td>Jose Barreiro</td>
<td>Surprise</td>
<td>Bartow, FL</td>
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<td>Dec. 16</td>
<td>Jose Jimenez</td>
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<td>Wellington, FL</td>
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<td>Dec. 18</td>
<td>Joanna Ellenbeck</td>
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<td>Dec. 21</td>
<td>Miranda Briggs</td>
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<td>Rincon, GA</td>
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<td>Dec. 22</td>
<td>Aaron Cabrera</td>
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<td>Liberty Hill, TX</td>
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<td>Alan Holbrook</td>
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<td>Notes of Love</td>
<td>Cleveland, TN</td>
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<td>Jose Barreiro</td>
<td>Groundbreaking</td>
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<td>Harold Lincoln</td>
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<td>Waco, TX</td>
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<td>William Makaafi</td>
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<td>April 14</td>
<td>Theresa O’Neal</td>
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<td>Markham, TX</td>
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<td>April 28</td>
<td>Huntsville Tiny Homes</td>
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<td>Huntsville, TX</td>
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*Credit: Nine Oh Three Photography
Credit: Lennar Greenville
Credit: Lennar Orlando
Credit: H-E-B
Credit: Lennar Miami
Credit: Scott Felder Homes

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U.S. Army Sergeant William Makaafi Dedication, Pflugerville, Texas
U.S. Marine Cpl. William Makaafi Dedication, Plugerville, Texas
U.S. Army Sergeant Brian Cassidy Dedication, Inman, South Carolina
U.S. Army Sergeant Major Jose Luis Barreiro Groundbreaking, Bartow, Florida

U.S. Navy Veteran Harold Lincoln Dedication, Waco, Texas
U.S. Army Sergeant Major Jose Luis Barreiro Groundbreaking, Bartow, Florida
U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Jose Jimenez Dedication, Wellington, Florida
U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Jose Jimenez Dedication, Wellington, Florida

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U.S. Marine Cpl. William Makaafi Dedication, Pflugerville, Texas
U.S. Army Sergeant Aaron Cabrera Dedication, Liberty Hill, Texas
Theresa O’Neal, widow of U.S. Navy veteran Elijah O’Neal Surprise, Markham, Texas

Miranda Briggs, First Responder and Surviving Spouse of U.S. Army Ranger Garrett Briggs Surprise/Groundbreaking, Rincon, Georgia

U.S. Marine Cpl. William Makalafi Surprise/Notes of Love, Pflugerville, Texas

U.S. Army Sergeant Joanna Ellenbeck, Houston, Texas

U.S. Army Specialist Alan Holbrook Surprise, Fontana, California

U.S. Army Staff Sergeant Alvin Jackson Notes of Love, Cleveland, Tennessee

2023 // SPRING | FROM THE GROUND UP

Future home of The family of U.S. Army Ranger Garrett Briggs

Credit: Scott Felder Homes

Credit: Houston Texans

Credit: Houston Chronicle

Credit: Lennar Savannah

Credit: Alvin Jackson NOL

Credit: H-E-B

SCAN THIS QR CODE WITH YOUR PHONE TO DONATE TO OPERATION FINALLY HOME.
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Last week we surprised U.S. Army SGT Tony Honda with the news that he will be receiving a home thanks to help from Tim O’Brien Homes and SBCA. Thank you to everyone who wrote Notes of Love for the event!
Taylor Morrison, one of the largest home-building companies in the United States, recently sold the 2022 Greater Houston Builders Association (GHBA) Benefit Home they built in Grand Vista, Texas. A vital partner in our mission, the company donated a portion of the proceeds to Operation Finally Home. Operation Finally Home Vice President of Construction Lee Kirgan was on hand to accept the donation.

Enjoy these photos of some of our Operation Finally Home families celebrating the Easter season.

Phil Crone, a member of the Operation Finally Home Advisory Board, is stepping down from his role as executive director of the Dallas Builders Association (DBA) this summer to join Leading Builders of America as vice president. A great friend of Operation Finally Home who champions our mission, Crone has played an instrumental role in helping us build homes for military veterans, first responders and their families in the Dallas area. We wish him the best in his new endeavor and are grateful and blessed to have had the chance to work alongside him to support America’s heroes.

I can do things you cannot, you can do things I cannot; together we can do great things.

— Mother Teresa

Visit OperationFinallyHome.org or call 615-732-6143 to help a hero!