

Dapper Dads

Spanish Sparkler

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BY KIRSTEN BALLARD

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Karen Ramsey and son Randall

Karen Ramsey has seen rock bottom. Four years ago, the young mother reached a point where her struggle with her cocaine addiction left her at an all time low, and she signed away her parental rights to her son, **Randall**.

But on June 14, after a four-year journey, she celebrates a fresh start in her new Habitat House at a dedication ceremony. Karen closes on the three-bedroom house on June 30.

"We are so very proud of Karen and how hard she has worked to get where she is today," says **Gail Mills**, co-founder of the **Durham Rescue Mission**. "When she came to the Mission she was very discouraged as she saw all that she had lost due to her drug addiction; but today she has a bright future and reaches out to help others."

"At first I didn't want to be there with all the rules," Karen admits. "But it's been wonderful."

Karen's journey began as an uphill battle when she moved into the Rescue Mission in March 2011. She was enrolled in the one-year recovery program. On Dec. 24, 2011, Karen got the best Christmas present—the parental rights for Randall back. From there, Karen was employed by the County Manager as a receptionist. After a year as a receptionist, Karen was promoted to the tax office and moved into her own apartment. Now she's moving into her own home.

Son Randall has also improved himself. When Randall moved into the Mission, he was behaviorally

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disruptive and struggled in school. He was on medication for ADHD. But Randall settled into his new life and is now off his medication and working above grade level.

The Ramseys are thrilled to be moving into their new house, which is located on a cul-de-sac so Randall can play outside safely. And, “he gets his dog back,” his mom says.

“[The Mission] helped with the foundation of my life. There is hope at the end of the tunnel,” Karen says. “I never imagined I’d own a house. I’m just thrilled.”

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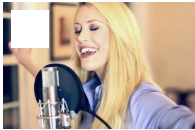
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