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RELEASE: IMMEDIATE

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HABITAT PRESIDENT ADDRESSES ST THOMAS BOARD OF REALTORS & RAISES OVER \$3200

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ST. THOMAS, March 28, 2006 – Tom Bolt, President of Habitat for Humanity of the U.S. Virgin Islands (Habitat-VI) spoke on behalf of Habitat-VI to nearly 50 attendees at the St. Thomas Board of REALTORS® meeting held at Palm Court Harbor View on Friday, March, 24.

Bolt highlighted the goals and objectives of the organization, explaining that Habitat for Humanity is a charitable non-profit organization that builds and restores homes locally through a partnership effort of individuals, businesses, and faith communities and is founded on the premise that every man, woman and child should have a decent, affordable place to live in dignity and safety.

Bolt emphasized the need in the Virgin Islands by informing the group that the poverty threshold in the Virgin Islands for a family of four is an annual income of \$18,267. According to the 2002 census, there were 5,119 Virgin Islands residents living below the poverty level. 75% of these families have children under the age of 18 and many more have young children under the age of 5.

In addition, Bolt announced the progress of the first Habitat home located at No. 4 Adele Gade in the Garden Street area of St Thomas which was donated by Cecile de Jongh and the Galiber family. “This will be our first Habitat-VI home,” Bolt noted, “We are going to put the music back in to Adele Gade”. Bolt referenced that the site was the former home of a music school teacher where many local students studied piano. The hope is that this new home will rekindle the spirit of inspiration and joy that once filled the home. The first Habitat-VI home owners will be selected by Habitat-VI’s Family Selection Committee this May. Habitat-VI held two Family Selection Public Meetings. The first was at The Windward Passage, Holiday Inn, and the second at the Lutheran Church of the Reformation, in Tutu. The combined meetings garnered a huge response with more than 130 attendees which resulted in more than 45 applications for homes.

At the close of the Realtors meeting, Bolt highlighted that getting involved has various meanings such as donating funds, land, materials and supplies, labor, and/or becoming a volunteer. He strongly encouraged everyone to attend the upcoming

Kick-Off Fundraiser Brunch at Coral World on May 7 which will take place from 11am – 2pm. Tickets are \$60 each and include a day of entertainment by the Louis Taylor Quartet, brunch and park admission as well as Habitat-VI announcements. Tickets will be available at the Habitat-VI office and through board members. In addition, Clive Rainey, Director of Communications, Habitat for Humanity International and Habitat's 1st volunteer in April 1977 will be in attendance to discuss his nearly 30 years of experience with Habitat for Humanity International.

Habitat-VI is truly grateful for the generosity of all its donors including the outpouring of support from several St Thomas Realtors which donated more than \$3200 at the meeting not to mention, several Realtors pledged to send funds.

Virgin Islanders interested in volunteering or participating in Habitat-VI should call (340) 714-5678 or send an email to info@habitat.vi. For more information on Habitat for Humanity of the U.S. Virgin Islands visit www.habitat.vi. Thank you for caring.