

# Sale of house benefits Big Oak Ranch for kids

By JON ANDERSON  
News staff writer

Glenn Siddle has built about 50 houses since getting into the construction business four years ago, but he's never built one for free — until now.

The Helena man is to donate profits from the sale of a house he's building to the Big Oak Ranch, which provides Christian homes for abused, neglected, abandoned, orphaned and homeless children.

Siddle's company, New Castle Construction, and Realtor Di-Anne Taylor, who is donating her commission from the home sale, together hope to raise more than \$50,000 for the nonprofit organization.

The four-bedroom, 3½-bath house will be in The Woodlands subdivision off Shelby County 93 in southwest Hoover and should be worth about \$338,000 when finished, Mrs. Taylor said.

Siddle said he's just one of many players working on the benefit house.

The developer of The Woodlands, Genesis Group, sold the lot to New Castle at a discount, and Siddle is trying to get his suppliers to sell building materials at a discount so he can maximize the profit to be donated.

Siddle said he's heard Big Oak Ranch Executive Director John

Croyle speak, and he strongly believes in what Croyle is doing.

"He's an amazing person ... It's incredible what he's done for those kids," Siddle said. "John is sending 16 children to college this year, and he's paying for all of it."

Croyle has to raise \$10,000 a day just to keep the Big Oak Ranch homes going, Siddle said.

"I think what I'm doing is just a small token from what he's done, but I know it helps them a lot," Siddle said.

New Castle's donation is in memory of one of Siddle's brothers, Derek Siddle, who died last year. Siddle's other brother, David Siddle, is the job superintendent for the benefit house.

Mrs. Taylor of Re/Max Associates will donate whatever commission she gets from the sale of the home to a college scholarship fund for Big Oak Ranch children. As the listing agent, that amounts to 3 percent of the sale price. If she finds a buyer herself, the donation will be 6 percent, she said.

Her donation is being set up as the Ryan Burkel Fellowship Fund in memory of an 18-year-old Hoover man who died in a car crash in May, she said. Burkel graduated from Hoover High School in 2000 and was finishing his freshman year at the University of Alabama

when the accident happened, she said.

This is the fifth benefit house that Mrs. Taylor has organized, but it's been a couple of years since she did the last one.

Three of the previous four benefit houses have been in Hoover — two in Lake Crest and one in the Southwood section of Russet Woods. The fourth benefit house was in the Weatherly subdivision in Pelham, she said.

Construction of this year's benefit house is just getting started, but the house should be completed by the Christmas holidays, Siddle said.

Mrs. Taylor is on the executive committee for the Big Oak Ranch and helped formed a support group called Friends of the Big Oak Ranch.

The Big Oak Ranch runs a boys' ranch with nine homes in Gadsden and a girls' ranch with six homes in Springville. Each home typically houses up to eight children and has a married couple serving as houseparents.

Three homes at the boys' ranch are being renovated, and one home at the girls' ranch is empty because of a need for houseparents, said Connie Reeves, Croyle's executive assistant.

Since 1974, Croyle and his staff have provided homes for about 1,400 children.