

FLIP This Benefit



Photography by Diana Beck-Blue Iris Media



The Montelongos are at it again. You probably recognize the name from the family's famed connection to the A&E series "Flip This House." Well, they're indeed flipping yet another house, but this one is not your run-of-the-mill renovation. This story is one of historic preservation, one of rallying the community for a common cause, and above all, enduring compassion.

The Montelongo family business of flipping houses typically involves purchasing twenty to twenty-five houses per month, rapidly renovating and remodeling them, and then quickly selling them for a good profit. When they came upon the Summit House in Monte Vista, David and Melina Montelongo knew they had a diamond in the rough. Built by Judge J.O. Terrell in 1910, the stately home was originally located at 101 West Summit Avenue, but was moved across the street to 118 East Summit. It later became the San Antonio Kindergarten-Primary Training School, and then was used again as a residential home for many years. When David and

Melina snapped up the 6000sf home it was used as a 6-plex, but over the years had fallen into quite a state of disrepair.

Seeing that the house was located in a historic district compelled the Montelongos to turn the structure back into a traditional residential home. After all, in a city with as much history as San Antonio, they felt it was better to restore the old home and the warmth of its history as opposed to building an entirely new structure. Meeting with their contractors generated an important conversation regarding the home's potential to sell, and that's where the story gets interesting.

The Montelongo's contractor, Daniel King of D.K. Construction, mentioned that the Summit House was just down the street from the Davidson Respite House Emergency Shelter. When exploring ideas on how to market the home once refurbished, joining forces with Respite Care of San Antonio seemed not only mutually beneficial, it seemed that there was no way not to include the shelter. It was an organization that was hugely protected by the Monte Vista community, and one whose involvement would leave an indelible mark on the Summit House. You see, Respite Care of San Antonio is a home that provides temporary and emergency shelter to children with developmental disabilities and complex medical diagnoses. Many of these children are in protective custody and are in need of a safe haven in which to recover and heal. Children are enrolled from throughout Texas as this is the only licensed emergency shelter in the state providing care to children with special needs. The Respite House in Monte Vista was established in 1997 and has since garnered a large amount of support from the local community. Although Respite Care is funded by the state in a small way, it relies heavily on the community's donations to remain operational.

Melina Montelongo, who is the company's Marketing Director, connected the two endeavors and created an event to both reveal the final look of the renovated Summit House and benefit Respite Care. The home's big

reveal, so to speak, will occur at an Open House in Summer when the public can tour the home. What people will find most compelling, however, is the children's involvement in the project. Not only will they have helped create a unique garden in the backyard, they will also have created art to decorate the home especially for the event. Local artists are working with the Respite Care children to paint canvas chairs which will be on display during the Open House to later auction. Additionally, Diana Beck, of Blue Iris Media, is photographically documenting the entire Summit House/Respite Care project, and those images will be on display.

The Open House's main benefit to Respite Care will be in donating all proceeds from the purchase of art to the Davidson Respite House. Additionally, they'll be taking donations throughout the weekend event. On building awareness of the needed support for Respite Care, Melina says, "We're ordinary people who have come across something extraordinary and are using it to give back to the community." With live music, wine, hors d'oeuvres and a fabulous crowd united for a common cause, the Open House is sure to be a blast. And there's also that small task of finding a buyer for an incredible, newly remodeled, five bedroom, five and one-half bathroom home in Monte Vista. But with the huge flow of San Antonians through a home involved in such a compassionate project, we're sure that several buyers will be duking it out to get their hands on such a gem.



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For more information on Respite Care of San Antonio, visit www.respitecaresa.org
To see the Summit House's progress, visit it at 118 East Summit Avenue