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# The Valley

## Housing pros invited to class

Partners for Affordable Housing Home Stretch Group hopes to expand education into rural areas

By Dylan Thomas  
Free Press Staff Writer

**NORTH MANKATO** — In an effort to expand home-buyer education into rural communities, the local Partners for Affordable Housing Home Stretch group is inviting rural housing professionals to its December session in North Mankato.

Program coordinator Kathie Davis said “community teams” from Faribault, Gaylord and St. James are planning to attend the class. They can then choose to offer Home Stretch classes in their own communities.

In two four-hour sessions, Home Stretch educates home buyers about the entire process of buying a home, from budgeting

before the purchase to appraisal to closing.

Davis said rural home buyers often commute to Home Stretch sessions in Mankato or North Mankato. A class in their own communities could focus on specific issues with buying rural homes.

“It’s different buying a home in Blue Earth or Gaylord than it is in Mankato,” Davis said.

Rural lender AgStar Financial Services will also send several representatives to the Dec. 4 and 5 session.

Jodie Hermer, vice president of real estate services, said AgStar currently offers its own home buyer education course but may merge that program with Home Stretch. Hermer said Home Stretch has the advantage of both visibility and a well-proven curriculum.

Rural housing professionals — as well as interested home buyers — can still register for the December session. Register online at [www.homebuyerclass.org](http://www.homebuyerclass.org) or call (507) 345-3029.