



Helping Those in Need During These Challenging Times.

By Walt Hibner, Executive Director
Home Builders Association of Dayton

Yesterday, 1,200 volunteers from throughout the Miami Valley provided free home repairs to 19 homeowners in neighborhoods throughout the City of Dayton. The occasion was Rebuilding Together Dayton's "Rebuilding Day". The swarms working on every home were sprinkled with HBA of Dayton volunteers. The HBA of Dayton has participated with the group since its inception in 1996. Rebuilding Together Dayton's goal is to harness the spirit of neighbors helping neighbors to keep people living in safety and independence.

This year was no exception; the Association's participants included a few HBA Remodeler and Builder firms, local energy utilities, material suppliers, architects, urban developers, plumbers, bankers, painters, and staff members and families of the HBA of Dayton. They worked along side churches, major corporations, financial institutions, city volunteers, other associations and community volunteers to lend helping hands to people such as 72 year old Charles Crawford who has lived in his home in Dayton's Fairview neighborhood for 25 years. He also is caring for and has three children living with him. Volunteers repaired floors, walls, doors and concrete around the outside and painted the interior and exterior of the house.

In addition to repairs, all the homeowners received energy-saving compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFLs), caulking around windows and other home improvements to decrease energy use and save them money. These items were provided by Dayton Power & Light, Inc.

In addition to the 19 houses, hundreds of volunteers revitalized the Dayton Christian Center Food Bank on E. Fifth Street and Wesley Community Center. In Historic South Park they painted vacant properties, swept alleys and landscaped green spaces. In Highview Hills, the work included sprucing up community vegetable and flower gardens.

The local group is part of the national Rebuilding Together organization that has over 200 affiliates in 50 states, working to restore and revitalize America's low-income houses and communities.

The group's work is especially important as most of the elderly or disabled homeowners cannot afford or make home repairs but want to stay in their own home where they are most comfortable. The average age of the homeowners who will receive assistance is 74 and the average time in their home is 30 years.

According to Amy Radachi, the hard working and passionate Executive Director of the local organization, Rebuilding Together focuses on the issues of homeownership for the elderly, the disabled and families with children. By identifying the challenges these homeowners face, they create sustainable solutions for the low-income homeowners we serve.

Rebuilding Together sponsors the National Rebuilding Day every April. Among the tasks that were completed by all this year's local volunteers are: interior and exterior painting, electrical and plumbing work, roof, door and window repair or replacement, modifications for grab bars, hand rails and wheelchair ramps, general cleaning and yard work.

The homeowners are selected from nominations by neighborhood groups, churches, city housing inspectors, priority boards and individuals. The organization, formed in Dayton in 1996 through Preservation Dayton, has repaired over 300 homes over the years. The local organization has been recognized by its national counterpart for several innovative and best practices.

As you can tell, the HBA of Dayton members not only provide the ultimate American dream for many new home owners during the work week, but they share their skills on their time off helping those in need to keep their dream alive.

For more information on Rebuilding Together Dayton, visit <http://www.rtdayton.org>.