

FOCUS

Built by hands and hearts

Walter Shue (left), Michael Schwarz and Daniel Merriot work on the roof of a midtown home as part of a project that partnered Rebuilding Together Tulsa, the city of Tulsa and World Changers, a national mission group. The 285 volunteers repaired 18 homes in Tulsa last week.

SARA PLUMMER /
Tulsa World



Combined efforts turn disrepair into home sweet home

By SARA PLUMMER
World Staff Writer

Eighteen homes in the Tulsa area received a makeover when 285 volunteers from seven states spent a week replacing roofs, painting walls, building wheelchair ramps, installing siding and repairing eaves.

The weeklong project was a partnership between Rebuilding Together Tulsa, World Changers and the city of Tulsa.

Deanna Boston, executive director of Rebuilding Together Tulsa, said the city's Home Ownership Tulsa program and Rebuilding Together Tulsa found the homeowners, World Changers provided the labor and the city and several foundations and sponsors donated funds and materials.

Shirley Slaucitijas, an east Tulsa homeowner, had her roof replaced.

"First I had hail damage and my insurance wouldn't pay for it, and it leaked real bad," she said. "I started looking for ways to fix it."

Slaucitijas, who has multiple sclerosis and uses a wheelchair, said when her husband died seven years ago, she had to look for help from Tulsa-area groups.

"We really didn't plan on me being left alone," she said. "I started calling different agencies, and there's a lot. I told them my situation. Tulsa is a wonderful town. (The agencies) never made me feel like I was begging."

Carmen Scates, a midtown homeowner, also had a leaking roof before a crew spent a week at her house.

"I'm so happy to be getting a new roof. That water just kept coming in," said the 81-year-old Scates, whose father bought the home in 1936. "It didn't start getting bad until a year ago."

Michael Schwarz, mission communications specialist with World Changers, said the 12- to 14-member crews included teens and adults. Each crew has a chief who supervises the work. The volunteers pay \$275 each to spend a week working outdoors.

"It's a great ministry to go out and help people in need," Schwarz said.

Giorgia Mora from San Antonio, said this was her

BY THE NUMBERS

City of Tulsa, Rebuilding Together Tulsa and World Changers partnership:

Homes repaired: 18

Volunteers: 285

Home states of volunteers: Seven

Work crews: 25

Groups, businesses that helped: Seven

Amount each volunteer paid World Changers: \$275

Labor value: \$100,000

Community Development Block Grant: \$40,000

third year as a World Changers volunteer.

"We're touching the lives of the homeowners and doing the work they can't necessarily do themselves or afford to have done," Mora said.

This was Fort Worth native Jared Shue's sixth year as a volunteer.

"I like that we're helping the community. We help them by putting up a roof or a porch or painting," Shue said.

Millicent Adu-H'Torah, coordinator for Home Ownership Tulsa, said World Changers provided more than \$100,000 worth of labor in one week.

"The office of the mayor and the city are already looking forward to doing this next year," Adu-H'Torah said.

Rebuilding Together Tulsa is taking applications for next year's project until Sept. 30.

Terri Fischer from St. Louis said this was her first year to volunteer.

"My mom's group went last year - she's a youth group leader - and she asked me to help out," Fischer said. "It's been really good. It's definitely hard work but rewarding to see the finished product."

Fischer said getting to know the homeowner is also a benefit.

"She's been great, getting to know her and hearing her story," she said.



SARA PLUMMER / Tulsa World

Cynthia Fambrough, from Boone Terre, Mo., piles old roof shingles into a wheelbarrow at a midtown home remodeling project.

Scates said she's enjoyed having the crew around and looked out for them.

"I'm so tickled. I don't mind it at all," she said. "I worry about them though. That roof is in pretty bad shape."

Slaucitijas said having teenagers fixing her roof was fine with her.

"It will be better when they finish than when they started," she said. "It's a really great bunch of kids. That kind of youthful energy, you just feed off it."

Friends join forces after call for help

By SARA PLUMMER
World Staff Writer

Joan Pinkstaff received a good birthday present this year. Two days before her 78th birthday on July 25, more than 40 people filled her house to paint walls, build cabinet doors, repair plumbing, install a new washer and dryer, put in new ceiling fans and mow and landscape her lawn.

"It was pretty nice. They got a lot of work done. I appreciate it," said the soft-spoken Pinkstaff.

The project isn't finished. The ceiling needs to be rebuilt, plumbing in the bathroom needs to be replaced and some painting remains to be finished, but the majority of the work was done in five hours.

Pinkstaff's granddaughter, Stephanie Pinkstaff, called her friend and former classmate Pam Fodor to help.

"She said, 'Please help me,'" Fodor said. In three weeks, Fodor, who lives in Catoosa, had called on people she knew to help remodel the home and she gathered most of the materials.

"It just worked out that we had people from different trades," she said. "We had an electrician, a plumber, a lawn guy."

She was glad to get the project going.

"(Pinkstaff) is so good about helping her family. She puts them ahead of herself," Fodor said.

The work went smoothly, even with 40 people in the house.

"Everybody had a place. Everybody had a job," Fodor said. "It was just a couple of hours. It was as simple as hanging curtains or as complex as putting in a new laundry room."

Pinkstaff said she has lived in her midtown home since 1982.

"I've been waiting a long time to get the ceiling done. I've been afraid it would fall in," she said.

Fodor said the project received about \$10,000 worth of donated materials, the majority of which came from Habitat for Humanity, and the people volunteered about \$3,000 worth of labor.

"It's like a whole new house," Fodor said.

"It's amazing what people will do when you ask them."

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Larry Vitt (left) with Habitat for Humanity, Joan Pinkstaff, Pam Fodor and Michelle Johnson helped remodel Pinkstaff's home. Fodor gathered 40 volunteers to help work on the home, and most of the materials came from Habitat for Humanity.

AUGUST 2-8

A WEEK'S WORTH OF LOCAL EVENTS. Unless otherwise stated, all events are free and held in Midtown.

WEEKLY MEETINGS

Speaking Singles Toastmaster Club Meet Improve communication through Toastmaster's Club from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Thursday in the meeting room at the Promenade Mall, 41st Street and Yale Avenue. Call 747-5934 for information.

Will Rogers Rotary Meet The Will Rogers Rotary Club of Tulsa will meet at noon Monday at East Side Christian Church, 1438 S. Indianapolis Ave. Visitors are welcome. For information, call 582-7129.

Sertomans Meet Sertoma Club of Tulsa meeting, noon Tuesday, First United Methodist Church, 1115 S. Boulder Ave. Visitors welcome. For details, call 760-9859.

Southeast Tulsa Rotary Meet The Southeast Tulsa Rotary will meet at noon Tuesday at Tulsa Bible Church, 5838 S. Sheridan Road. To learn more, call 744-6444.

EXHIBITS

Opening Reception Tulsa Artists' Coalition will host an opening reception for Backlit Photographs by Elizabeth Downing from 6 to 9 p.m. Friday at Tulsa Artists'

Coalition, 9 E. Brady Ave. The exhibit runs through Aug. 26 and is free and open to the public. To learn more, call 592-0041.

FAMILY AND CHILDREN

Beat the Heat Satur-DAY Suburban Acres Library, 4606 N. Garrison Ave., will host an afternoon of music, games, song and dance from noon to 2 p.m. Saturday. For all ages. To learn more, call 591-4004.

Pajamarama Story Time Rudisill Regional Library, 1520 N. Hartford Ave., will feature story time from 6:30 to 7 p.m. Monday for ages 3 to 5 and their families. Dress in pajamas, bring a stuffed toy and join a fun-filled half-hour of stories, songs, finger plays, simple crafts and short film and snack. To learn more, call 596-7280.

MISCELLANEOUS

Mystery at the Library Schusterman-Benson Library, 3333 E. 32nd Place, will host Mystery Readers Roundtable from 2 to 3 p.m. Thursday. Come for coffee and share what you've been reading. For adults. For information, call 746-5024.

Steak Night at the Legion The American Legion Post

No. 1 will host steak night from 5:30 to 8 p.m. Friday at 1120 E. Eighth St. Cost is \$12. The event will benefit youth and veterans activities. For information, call 587-3938.

Commanders Breakfast An all-you-can-eat breakfast will be from 8 to 10 a.m. Saturday at the American Legion Post No. 1, 1120 E. Eighth St. Cost is \$5. To learn more, call 584-4274.

Birding at Oxley Saturday morning birding will be from 8 to 9:45 a.m. Saturday at Oxley Nature Center, 5701 E. 36th St. North. Free and for all ages. Bring binoculars. For details, call 669-6644.

Sturgeon Moon Walk Oxley Nature Center, 5701 E. 36th St. North, will host a full moon walk from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Monday. The sturgeon moon is named as a good time to cast lines for fish. Participants may seek out aquatic life along some of the water habitats. For information, call 669-6644.

SUPPORT GROUPS

Help for Single Parents Christ United Methodist Church single parents support group, 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, 3515 S. Harvard Ave., Room 122. Discussions will include discipline and setting boundar-

ies, custody, visitation, legal issues and more. Free child care is available. For details, call 747-8601.

Alzheimer's Caregiver Support Group A free Alzheimer's caregiver support group will meet at 6:30 p.m. Thursday at All Souls Unitarian Church, 2952 S. Peoria Ave. For details, call 299-1865.

Grief Support St. John Home Health and Hospice grief support groups meet from 5:30 to 7 p.m. Tuesdays and from 3:30 to 4:30 p.m. Thursdays at the Harvard Medical Building, 4720 S. Harvard Ave. For information, call 747-7901.

LOOKING AHEAD

Edison Touchdown Club The sixth annual hot dog dinner will be at 6:30 p.m. Aug. 11 at the Edison High School cafeteria, 2906 E. 41st St. The dinner is sponsored by the Edison Touchdown Club and the Millennium Masonic Lodge No. 543. All proceeds will benefit the Edison football program, grades ninth through 12. Tickets are \$5 per person. The community is invited to attend. Call 833-1477.

Calendar items should be submitted by 5 p.m. Thursday for the following Wednesday's publication.