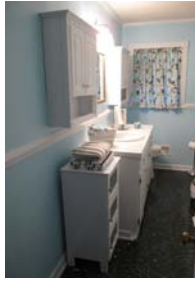


FIX-A-HOME

Fix-A-Home is an annual community service project sponsored by the **Greater Chapel Hill Association of Realtors** (GCHAR) started in 2007.



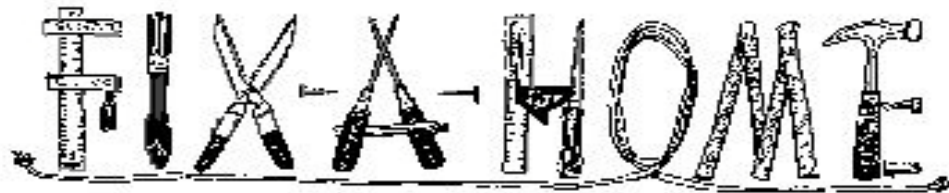
- Members of the association evaluate applications from qualifying candidates before selecting the *Fix-A-Home* winner. The house is carefully inspected to identify the repairs and renovations that can be performed.
- **GCHAR** partners with community vendors and workers who provide the materials and expertise to help get the job done.
- The work usually involves a lot of cleanup and preparation. As well as coordinating efforts inside and out.
- But the work is always a team effort whether the project takes place in the yard or inside with brushes, rollers and paint.
- The work can be fairly simple, using hand tools and strong backs, or it may require more complicated equipment, special materials and experience.
- We have planted trees in the front yard and a row of shrubs along a driveway.



- Volunteers and construction professionals have worked together building brand new stairs to improve safety.
- And there is a lot of satisfaction when we can transform an outdated bathroom into a bright and gleaming new space. Or, take a crowded, disorganized work space and make it place for dream projects to become reality.



- The nominee will be a homeowner who is currently facing a physical or financial hardship which prevents them from maintaining the structure, systems or safety of their home.
- You can help by nominating individuals or families who you think qualify for 2012's Fix-a-Home winner. In the end, after lots of hard work and dedication, it's the big smiles on everyone's face that makes *Fix-A-Home* such a worthwhile project. Join us in 2012 to keep *Fix-A-Home* working in our community.



2012 ~ Be a Part of It



STAFF PHOTOS BY CHRIS BERNARD
Christine Khoury, foreground, with The Home Team, helped organize the fix-up effort.

High standards

Fix-A-Home's first project brings out the best

2007



Mary Bryan Adair with Prudential and Terry Crook with Coldwell Banker Realty Center add a coat of paint to a house on Prince Street in Carboro as part of the Fix-A-Home project.

BY VALARIE SCHWARTZ
News Columnist

It didn't look or sound like a hive of bees, but on Oct. 25 a swarm of people were certainly buzzing in every area except the two bedrooms of the Carboro home of Evelyn Thompson.

Despite the rain that day, some people busily placed panes and placed chrysantheums outside while others painted the living room, kitchen and bathroom inside. The day before, a crew had removed the decrepit cabinetry and everything else in the kitchen except the linoleum (it would be replaced later) before washing and prepping the walls.

The workers were all Realtors set upon improving Thompson's life.

"She had lived here since the 1960s," explained real estate agent Christine Khoury. "Her late husband built the house."

Identifying the need

Few members of the community see our living conditions like real estate agents do. Granted, most of the time when they enter a



Mike Capps, left, with IMS, and Brian Decker with Forville Mortuary help out in the yard.

home it has been scrubbed, straightened and everything else required to look its best.

Real estate agents know, however, that not everyone has the means to bring their home up to its best standards, which was one of the motivations behind Fix-A-Home, a sub-committee within the Community Service arm of the

Greater Chapel Hill Association of Realtors.

"The idea was first brought for consideration by our executive officer, Sue Millager," said Khoury, chair of the committee.

"I heard about the program at a convention two years ago and immediately brought it to the attention of our Community Service committee," Millager said. She learned about the Montebello Region Board of Realtors in Concord, N.H., that started Fix-A-Home 12 years ago. "They only do one house a year but the program has grown in volunteers and sponsors with involvement from lenders, contractors, plumbers, electricians and so many others."

"Our first concern was about how to target a person," Khoury said.

They considered making an announcement and letting people apply for a home fix-up. But the board's attorney recommended checking with Orange County Social Services, and soon Thompson, 84, was selected.

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THE CHAPEL HILL NEWS

HOME

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1A

A-Home volunteers specialize in.

"Her home definitely needs some repairs, but the needs were not so serious that they would be beyond our budget or volunteer abilities," said Neagle.

In 2007, the Fix-A-Home project kicked off after Sue Millager, executive director of the Greater Chapel Hill Association of Realtors, saw a similar program in New Hampshire.

"We were looking for a community service project that would help the community and be related to real estate," said Millager.

"With our first home, we put in a new kitchen, painted the living room and bathroom, pulled carpet and [did] general cleaning," said Millager.

The project uses money raised through Realtor members, local fund-raisers, local businesses and community members.

"We've been very fortunate to have outstanding volunteerism from the community," said Millager, who recruited the help of Wayne Herndon, general contractor and owner of Herndon Construction.

"Wayne Herndon has been our on-site 'supervisor' all three years and he volunteers his time and crew," said Millager who met Herndon when he did kitchen remodeling for her home.

Herndon said he feels blessed and gives back as much as he is able to the community. "I have steady work, I have a good crew, and I do believe God is watching out for me and my family," he said.

Herndon supplies as many as five crew members for each project's work days. "My guys enjoy doing a meaningful renovation project," he said, "and we've done Habitat for Humanity before, and thought why not Fix-A-Home, too."

Last year's home employed 60 volunteers over two days to repair siding, paint the ex-



Kaye Martinez washes dishes in her kitchen, which will soon get a new floor and cabinets.

STAFF PHOTO BY HARRY LYNCH

terior of the home and landscape the yard. Volunteers also installed a fence and new dog house for the owner's Australian shepherd, said Millager.

This week's work on Martinez's home will include landscaping, new kitchen cabinets, floors, paint, exterior wood repair, new steps and driveway and general beautification inside and out.

Martinez who is diabetic and has been battling a brown recluse spider bite with antibiotics since April, said she was still in shock over the upcoming renovations.

"It means a lot to me and my family," she said, though at the time of this late August interview she said she was more excited about ending her summer break (as a 10-month employee) and getting back to her middle school kids.

"I love working with the kids," said Martinez who makes it her personal mission

to find the right book for the right child.

"I understand you have to catch their interest to make them want to read a book," she said, recalling one seventh grader who had never read a book completely through.

"He said, 'You will not be able to find anything I like to read,'" Martinez said, and laughs. "I gave him 'The Boy from the Basement,' and he came back to me a week later and said it was the best book he'd ever read."

The Fix-A-Home project which is still fairly new, has been welcomed by local Realtors.

"We are very proud of the project and the work we've been able to do these last three years," said Millager. "We're looking forward to seeing what transformations happen at Ms. Martinez's house."

Contact Rebekah Cowell at rebekah.cowell@gmail.com



Carrboro resident Kaye Martinez stands outside her family home on South Greensboro Street. Martinez was selected as the recipient of this year's Fix-A-Home project, which will provide needed repairs to her house.

STAFF PHOTO BY HARRY LYNCH

Realtors make house call

Free repairs coming for middle school library assistant

By REBEKAH L. COWELL
CORRESPONDENT

CARRBORO - When Kaye Martinez was a baby, she learned to crawl on her home's unfinished hardwood floors. Now she's about to get some help making repairs she could never have afforded on her own.

Martinez, 55, a lifetime resident of Carrboro, has been a library assistant at Culbreth Middle School for 23 years.

Her home was selected by the Greater Chapel Hill Association of Realtors (GCHAR) for its annual Fix-A-Home project, which this year focused on people working in service-sector jobs such as teachers, bus drivers, janitors and the like.

"We considered all those wonderful people who have a hand in educating our most precious commodity, our children," said project chairwoman Pat Neagle.

HOW TO HELP

Work days for Kaye Martinez's home are Wednesday through Friday. To get involved, contact Pat Neagle at www.patneagle.com

and knew this was the right group of people to assist."

Martinez's home needs major renovations.

In 1948, her father, a World War II veteran, moved sections of army barracks from Camp Butler, to a lot at 423 S. Greensboro St.

The cost to build the family home place was \$3,200. It took Martinez's mother, Virginia Sturdevant — who made bullets in Carr Mill when the former cotton mill was used for a foundry work during the war — 30 years to pay it off.

Currently, Martinez pays \$3,200 in

property taxes, one-fourth of her yearly wages. She remembers her mother paid \$380 in the mid-1990s.

Her son, Tyler, 19, also grew up in the home and still lives with her.

Their kitchen is rustic and does not have a dishwasher. The kitchen cabinets, which Fix-A-Home will replace, are original and came from the medical supply room at the army barracks.

In 1996, Martinez's mother signed the home over to her daughter.

Martinez then took out a mortgage to replace the asbestos shingles on the sides of the house with siding. She also invested in central air and heat, since the house had neither. Three years ago, she finally got a shower.

Martinez home, which is structurally sound, is just the type of project the Fix-

SEE HOME, PAGE 4A

2009

'A reason to feel positive again' 2010

Realtors' Fix-a-Home project restores house and hope



Members of the Greater Chapel Hill Association of Realtors and subcontractors landscape around the house and grounds at 632 Ward St. in Chapel Hill. The group chose Chapel Hill artist Lisa Russell's home as their annual Fix-a-Home makeover project.

By Catherine Wauar
CORRESPONDENT

Lisa Russell knew something was wrong with her house in Chapel Hill, but she couldn't do anything about it.

A degenerative disease in her spine had forced her to retire from her job at UNC Hospitals, where she had worked for 30 years in the Pediatric Hematology Oncology Program as a nurse and recreation therapist.

Physically, Russell — in her 60s — couldn't do the work needed to maintain her house. And financially, she couldn't afford to hire someone to do it.

Yet, this weekend she's in a seemingly new house — thanks to the Greater Chapel Hill Association of Realtors' annual Fix-a-Home project.

The program, which started four years ago, relies on volunteers and donations to provide a mini-makeover for a homeowner who is physically or financially unable to do the work.

This year, the association partnered with UNC Hospitals to find a possible candidate.

Russell recalled a friend told her, "Your



Homeowner Lisa Russell is all smiles during her first look at her new kitchen with a new dishwasher, new granite countertops, sink and refurbished cabinetry.



From left: Larry Tollen, Tom Holt and Robin Mullis pitched in to paint the inside and outside of Lisa Russell's home.

floor is falling down, and your walls are crumbling and your roof is leaking. Why don't you apply?"

"So I applied," she said.

Originally, she asked for just a few things to be fixed: the picture windows at the front of her house that had been cracked for several years, the leaking kitchen sink, a large crack in the wall of one of her bedrooms.

But the association and its volunteers have done much more.

"We were trying to repair things that were necessary, like structural concerns with joists under the house, a leak in the sink, the water heater," said Caroline Shilto, industry partner of the association and owner and principal designer of the kitchen and bathroom design company emma de

SEE FIX, PAGE 2B



Erik Aasen, left, and Thomas Ocampo, employees of Heininger Construction of Pittsboro, inspect and replace roof sheats in the roof of Lisa Russell's home in Carrboro as part of the 10th annual Fix-a-Home event.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY HEININGER CONSTRUCTION

The kindness of strangers

Realtors' Fix-a-Home project transforms longtime resident's house

2011

By Catherine Wauar
CORRESPONDENT

Carrboro resident Jackie Healey walked into a newly improved kitchen and new laughter last week, thanks to a whole lot of volunteers.

The Web site designer's two-bedroom house was the winning nomination for the Greater Chapel Hill Association of Realtors' annual Fix-a-Home project. The program, which started five years ago, relies on volunteers and donations to provide a mini-makeover for a homeowner who is physically or financially unable to do the work.

A blind and deaf woman, Healey's home after hearing her falls about the stroller stairs in her basement.

"I guess I was complaining about having to go up and down my basement stairs to do my laundry," said Healey, who has lived in the house for 28 years. "I have runfall down these stairs on a couple of occasions where there has been ice on the stairs or where there are stairs on them because they're outside, but the difference is now I'm 62 years old and I have osteoporosis."

The work requested by the association was to install Healey's reader and dryer on the home's main floor. But volunteers also learned about an unusual hazard: changing the red fire alarm's dialing system to meet new code requirements.

"We prepped the cabin and discovered structural problems, plumbing problems and roof problems," said Jo Ellen Johnson, Asheville-based agent and this year's project coordinator.

A fire alarm disconnected during the association's inspection of the home — and resolving an issue that had stopped working — was immediately taken care of. The work started over several months to fix the issues and to prepare the home for a final inspection of code requirements.

"I think it's the best thing that we do as an organization," said Larry Tollen, an agent with The Home Team, which donated funds for Healey's new reader and dryer. "It has an immediate visible impact on people's lives."

More than 20 businesses donated services or materials, and 38 to 40 people volunteered each weekday on Oct. 29 and 30. The project received an estimated \$10,000 in donations.

"I cannot even tell you how much love and effort everybody put into this. It was incredible," Healey said. "Jo Ellen keeps reminding me painting the

SEE FIX, PAGE 2B



SPONSORS

- Three businesses donated labor or materials or helped in other ways: Ferguson
- Rich Lumber
- Healy Carpet and Interiors
- Land Services/Plumbing Inspections
- Gardner Operative Finishes
- Burley Interiors
- Wachter Construction
- Lester Service
- M.C. Green Plumbing
- Pro-Hall Brick
- PODS
- Roar's Glenn Co.
- Rubek's Bedcut Service and Much More
- Shapiro Williams
- The Home Team
- The Most House
- Triangle Electrical Services
- Wall-Covered Landscaper Design and Build
- Wood Done Right
- Wilson Dot Flooring and Air-Clean Systems



Volunteers Elizabeth Anderson and Kelly Yellonick, TRD, paint inside Healey's house. ABOVE, volunteers and local business sponsors work on, in and around Healey's home.



Volunteers Complete Prep-Work

FIX-A-HOME

2011





Volunteers And Professionals Work Together



FIX-A-HOME

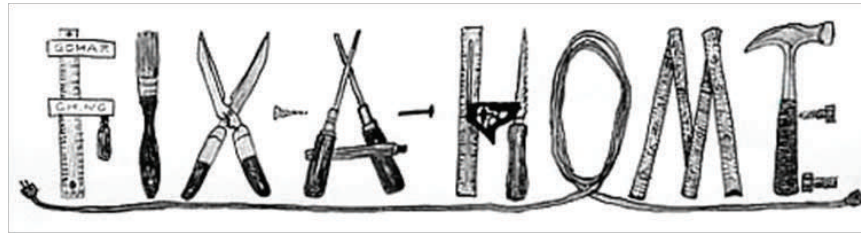
2011



FIX-A-HOME

2011 Hauling, Climbing and Lots of Paint





*Join GCHAR in 2012
To Make a Difference In Our Community*



Before



After

