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Broward County Rotary clubs help rehab homes

Volunteers help repair and make safer 14 homes for the needy

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Dorothy Paul sat in her breezeway, shaking her head and chuckling in delight as she watched a team of strangers working on her Lauderhill home.

One man installed a security lock and grab bar on a sliding glass door. Another put grab bars next to her toilet and in her shower. Still others prepared to install new kitchen cabinets. They even got her some touch-activated lamps for the bedroom.

Paul, 75, was one of 14 homeowners in Lauderhill's St. George neighborhood to benefit from the labor of eight different Rotary clubs and other organizations doing home makeovers through Rebuilding Together, [Broward County](#). The nonprofit group oversees the annual Rebuilding Together Day on the last Saturday of April across the nation, said David Reiersen, executive director of Rebuilding Together, Broward. This was the local event's ninth year.

More than 300 volunteers from Rotary and local businesses gathered to do more than \$170,000 worth of renovations to the homes and to St. George Catholic Church. Roofers, painters, plumbers, contractors and public safety workers pitched in on projects that actually began two weeks prior, said Ted Hasle, 51, of the Pompano Beach Rotary Club.

Hasle, who owns 4-Star Services plumbing and air conditioning, acted as foreman at the home of Mildred Wilcox, 62.

Wilcox sat in a chair watching her gutted home be painted inside and outside. A new shower was installed in place of the tub, and she got a new kitchen.

Wilcox, recovering from open heart surgery just a few days earlier, was enthusiastic about the changes to her home.

Recipients of the philanthropic event must meet requirements that include low income, homeownership, age, disability and family, Reiersen said.

"That is what we focus on," he said. "Our objective is to restore safe and sanitary living conditions."

Reierson bent, looking at an uneven walkway leading from the door to the sidewalk in a hodgepodge of landscape tiles, low sandy areas and tufts of grass.

"This is a hazard," he said, glancing back at Wilcox with her badly swollen feet. "We are going to pour concrete to reduce this hazard and chance of injury."

Inside the home, Jessie Foster, 52, was overseeing the work being done by Southland Painting. He brought along his 9-year-old son, Jessie Jr.

"They need to learn how to share and help other people, especially today when they come up with the me-me attitude, we need to start teaching the kids all over again," Foster said, watching his son scrape old paint from a window jamb.

"This is a great project," he said.

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