

Extreme Makeover: Hospice Edition

By Kathleen Barran / The Citizen

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Chet Susslin / The Citizen

Mike Poorman, left, and Dave Andrews place roofing material on the Hospice of the Finger Lakes during a volunteer and donation day of repairs Saturday. Poorman, of Mike Poorman Contracting, helped find and direct volunteers to do the work.

AUBURN - They were asked, and they came. A spirit of volunteerism and cooperation was demonstrated at the Hospice of the Finger Lakes during a major makeover Saturday.

Led by contractor Mike Poorman, volunteers worked with donated materials to fix a leaky roof, install gutters and insulation and add solar panels to supplement the facility's hot water system. The estimated cost of the project is more than \$40,000.

At 7 a.m., workers began arriving, eventually numbering about 40. They hammered nails, blew in insulation, painted shutters, trim and railings and even pruned the shrubbery. They planned to finish by 5 p.m.

Barbara Judson, 78, of Auburn, was slapping green paint on a shutter and said her daughter's mother-in-law had been in the hospice.

"I've known a lot of people in hospice," said Dawn Wilson, of Auburn, who has worked for the hospice for a year. "I love working for hospice." Saturday morning she, too, was brushing on paint.

Alice Cheney and Gail Upfold, both of Jordan, were pruning shrubbery in front of the hospice building, waiting for mulch to arrive.

Anna Fellfoldi, in charge of the office at Phoenix Energy Supply, was sprucing up the black railing at the building's entrance. Originally from Hungary, she has lived here 19 years.

"I just do whatever I can," she said.

Mitch Conklin, of Phoenix Energy Supply, said his company was installing two 16-tube solar collectors which will be preheating water going into the existing hot water system.

“When the sun's out,” he said, “the hardware will collect the hot water into a storage tank, which the plumbing will connect to the existing system.” While his company is primarily involved with geothermal heating systems, he also provides solar systems, which are supplemental.

Poorman said this system will save the hospice money because they do a substantial amount of laundry. Phoenix contributed about \$9,000 in labor and materials. Builder's Choice put in about \$4,500 in fiberglass insulation. Erie Materials supplied about \$4,500 in roofing materials and shingles, and Down-and-Out added about \$3,000 in rain gutters. Ron Thompson of R.T. Painting also supplied paint and labor.

“Mike's (Poorman) the mastermind behind the whole thing,” Hospice of the Finger Lakes Director Terry Klinbe said. “We're just grateful beyond words for all of the support of the contractors and businesses that Mike Poorman has recruited to participate in this project. It's like an old-fashioned barn raising.”

Hospice of the Finger Lakes exists to offer compassionate guidance and supportive services, providing quality of life with dignity in a comforting home setting, to terminally ill persons and those who love and care for them. It has provided support and services to more than 1,850 terminally ill patients and their families since May 1988.

“Everyone's been great in stepping up and starting out,” Poorman said. The project was his idea.

“My mom passed away a few years ago,” he said. “She was in this place. The hospice has been close to my heart for the last four years.”

Besides businesses already mentioned, those donating materials include: CertainTeed Corp. (gypsum wholesalers), Dana Bolinari Construction, Advantage Plumbing and Heating, Printing Screen Printing, Taylor Rentals, Robinson Roll-Off, Auburn Party Rental, Tim Horton's, IRR Supply, Saxton Electric, Mathieson Company.

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