

# Calistoga Tribune

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## Can they fix it? Yes, they can!

154 volunteers take on 33 home repair projects as part of non-profit housing group's 'Rebuilding Calistoga' project

**By Michelle Wing**  
Tribune Staff Writer

Sunny skies, willing hands and warm smiles came together last weekend to make the first Rebuilding Calistoga a resounding success.

One hundred and fifty-four volunteers worked on 33 housing repair projects on Saturday and Sunday, teaming up to bring not only new steps and new windows to local residents, but also a sense of community.

"I thought it was fantastic," said Paul Ingalls, vice president of Calistoga Affordable Housing (CAH), the organization that sponsored the event. He credited CAH president Larry Kromann for turning the dream into a reality.

"There were more than 30 projects, each one unique, requiring special materials, special skills, but also dealing with the emotional issues of the people who needed this work, and the effort it requires to bring all that together," Ingalls said. "I just can't say enough about how much Larry put into this."

Kromann, too, felt good about the effort. "The volunteers really had a good time," he said, noting that everyone worked very hard. "Quite a few of

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PHOTO BY PAT HAMPTON

**Volunteers Jim Tate, left, and Brent Randol work on replacing two windows on a home in Chateau Calistoga Mobilehome Park during Saturday's "Rebuilding Calistoga" work day. Thirty three projects were undertaken by 154 volunteers over the weekend, ranging from deck work to plumbing to painting jobs. The weekend was coordinated by Calistoga Affordable Housing (CAH). President Larry Kromann said CAH plans to make it a yearly event.**

## Calistoga News

### **REBUILD**

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them told me it helped them become more aware of what's going on in the community. And I think that's very, very positive."

Kromann said, "One of our goals was to bring the community together, and I think we did that."

Carol Frommelt was one of the volunteers, up for the day from Napa. Her nephew, Brent Randol of St. Helena, and sister, Gail Randol, were also volunteering. She spent some time painting a newly-built entry ramp bright red.

When asked what she got out of the experience, she laughed and said, "Very sore!" Then, more seriously, she added, "It has to make you feel good, to give back. We'll do it again next year. We like being involved in the community, and we're Napa natives, so we feel like the whole Napa Valley is ours."

Bill Hill and his wife Barbara, who live in Calistoga Springs Mobilehome Park, also pitched in. Bill Hill said he read about it in the newspaper, and volunteering sounded like a good idea. He worked on some painting, while his wife delivered sandwiches.

"It was a good thing to do," he said. "There's a lot of old people, older than me, and we've got to take care of them."

Kromann said about 14 of the projects remain incomplete, but he hopes they will be finished by Sunday. There were some scheduling issues, because a large crew of volunteers from Pacific Union College was expected, but they cancelled at the last minute because of a student's funeral.

Kromann said the majority of the projects were fixing decks that were unsafe due to dry rot, doing exterior painting, revamping steps and ramps, and replacing leaking windows. The



crews also repaired two stovetops and remodeled one bathroom.

Supplies were purchased from Home Depot, which Kromann said gave CAH a good contractor's price, in addition to a \$5,000 gift card. M&M of Napa donated the use of three moving pods to store the supplies, keeping them safe and dry until the work days. And Upper Valley Disposal donated three large dumpsters to collect all of the construction debris.

The weekend culminated with an appreciation event at the Napa County Fairgrounds. Kromann said there was a good turnout, with great support from

local restaurants Bosko's, Palisades Deli & Café, Checkers, All Seasons, Bon Appetit, Cal Mart and Miguel's.

"From the homeowners who came to the event, and from our leadership crew who went back to talk to them – we got a really positive response," Kromann said.

The CAH president said he plans on a repeat performance for Rebuilding Calistoga next year, although he's not sure exactly when it will be, or how it will be structured.

For more information about Calistoga Affordable Housing, call 942-5920.



**Volunteer handy-men Bob Beck and Paul Ingalls toss an old toilet from the second story of a Myrledale Road home. Ingalls (near left) worked on a new handi-capped ramp for the 88-year-old homeowner while Beck worked on the home's two bathrooms.**

PHOTOS BY PAT HAMPTON



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**Carol Frommelt from Napa and Bill Hill of Calistoga painted a ramp at a home in Calistoga Springs after helping clean up landscaping. Gail Randol, Frommelt's sister, also helped paint and clean up around the Jasmine Lane home.**