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News

Church-led groups remodel home of Madison woman and her family (with video)

Sunday, June 30, 2013

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While an RV wasn't involved in a dramatic reveal like on the famous "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" TV show, that didn't make the remodeled home Joan Barnes received any less meaningful.

"Every day I read the Bible and I asked God to help me find somebody to help me fix up my home," the 74-year-old Madison Village resident said. "And God answered my prayers."

About 45 people volunteered, putting in new flooring, painting walls, installing a few new appliances and making some repairs to the roof, among other projects, as part of Crossroads Community Church's second annual Backyard Mission.

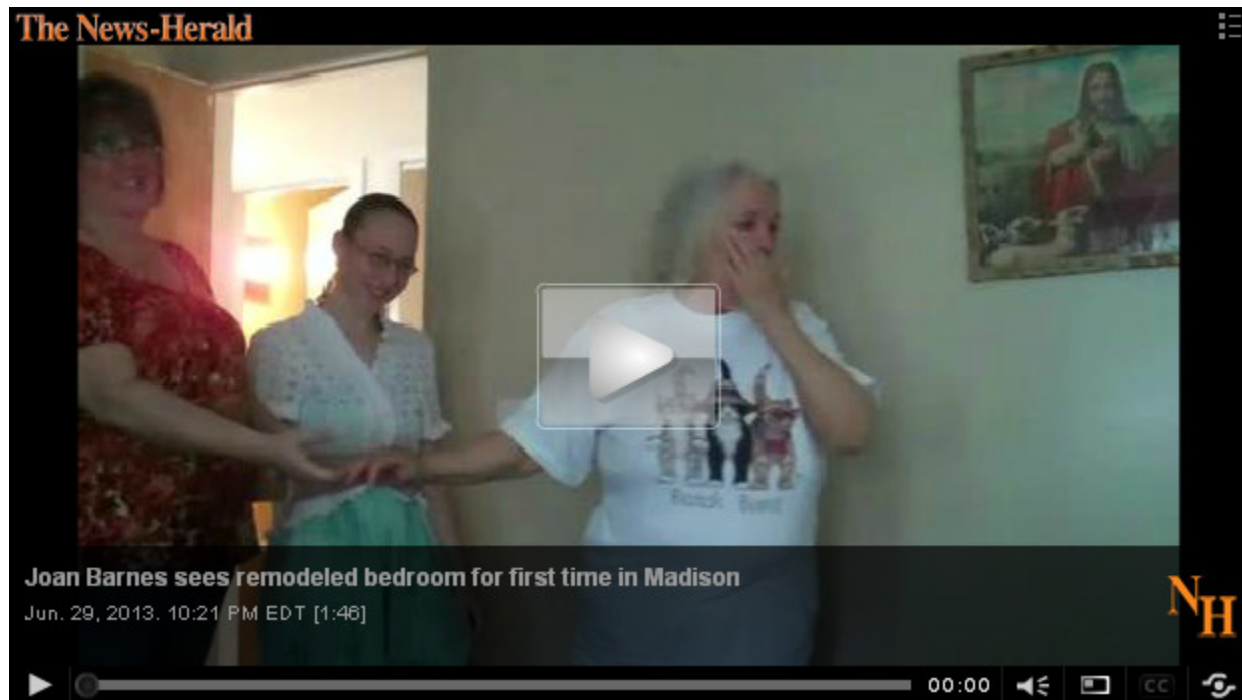
Robyn Steinmetz, who served as the project's facilitator for Crossroads, said the church contacted the Lake County Council on Aging and asked if they knew of any older people that might need some help, and the council gave them Barnes' name.

"There's people in our congregation that just love to serve," Steinmetz said.

"You're supposed to put your words into actions. That's why we do it."

She added that without the support and donations of the community and area businesses, including Carter Lumber, Madison Sears and Levin Furniture, the project would not have been possible.

Nine of the volunteers on hand traveled all the way from Benson Baptist Church in Benson, N.C.



Ken Tart, one of the Benson workers, said this was the second year of a partnership between Crossroads and Benson.

Matt Zapp, a former Madison Village administrator, now the town manager of Benson, has helped foster this partnership, Tart said.

"This home needed a lot of work," he said.

"They started (Friday) even before our team from North Carolina got here, tearing out carpet, priming and cleaning up things getting ready for today."

While they originally planned on finishing the work Saturday, Tart said they would most likely return today before heading back to North Carolina on Monday.

The volunteers encountered a few bumps along the way, including humid conditions and a minivan that needed some pushing and towing to get out of a muddy front yard, but that didn't stop them from finishing Joan Barnes's bedroom before any of the other rooms were completed.

It featured new paint, new floors and even a new bed.

"Do you like it, Grandma?" Joan Barnes's 21-year-old granddaughter, Janie Barnes, who also lives at the residence, asked when they entered the room.

"Oh, yes I do," Joan replied, fighting back tears.

A few minutes later, Janie placed a figurine on one of the end tables, which she explained was the last Christmas gift her grandfather gave to Joan before he passed away a few years ago.

"Grandpa would have loved it." she said.

"I know he would," Joan answered.

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