

REBUILDING TOGETHER* MONTGOMERY COUNTY

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Rebuilding Together's April Project Days Bring Safety and Security to Low-Income Homeowners in the County

Kensington, Maryland, April 8, 2005: Rebuilding Together Montgomery County, Maryland, is gearing up for its annual Project Days, April 17 and 30, 2005. The non-profit organization is focusing on helping low-income homeowners continue to live in warmth, safety, and independence in their homes, by providing needed repairs and modifications to homes throughout the county. This April, Rebuilding Together will reach and exceed 1,000 homes repaired since 1990, with more than 30,000 volunteers providing the time and know-how.

Each year, Rebuilding Together * Montgomery County solicits applications from low-income county elderly and/or disabled residents whose homes are in need of repair, modification and maintenance. Eligibility is determined through verification of income and home ownership as well as a site inspection.

“Every year, the need in our community increases, especially among senior citizens. GROWS (Grass Roots Organization for the Well Being of Seniors) estimates that over the next 20 years, there will be a 74% increase in our senior population. More than 45% of this population growth will be over 85 years old, and the number of County residents with Alzheimer’s disease will almost double,” says Melissa Flynn, Executive Director of Rebuilding Together of Montgomery County. “In addition, every year, more families with children struggle to “keep up,” and more homeowners struggle to stay in their homes as age and physical limitations threaten their safety. With the help of a community of volunteers and the generous support of area businesses, civic organizations and faith-based congregations, Rebuilding Together can make a difference in these people’s lives.”

This year's Project Days participants – both professionals and committed volunteers – will renovate, paint, roof, rewire, and modify for disabilities, 54 homes across the county. On the advice of occupational therapists, more than half of the 54 homes repaired in April by some 2,500+ volunteers will require modifications to address specific physical challenges.

On April 17, a Sandy Spring, Maryland, home will benefit from a joint Muslim-Jewish day of work. As part of the Jewish Community Relations Council Muslim-Jewish Dialogue, members of both communities will work together, repairing and refreshing the home of an elderly resident.

On April 30, the historic Wells-Robertson House of Gaithersburg will get a new kitchen. The House, which provides transitional housing for homeless alcoholics and addicts, is benefiting from the support of the City of Gaithersburg, and the efforts of The Friends of Wells-Roberson, who secured the funding for the kitchen equipment. Local home improvement specialist TW Perry Inc. is contributing the installation of the kitchen.

More than 60 organizations representing a wide cross-section of county corporations, student groups and civic and religious organizations will serve as sponsors, providing both financial contributions and volunteers to pitch in on Project Days. Additional volunteers and home improvement professionals will give their time and skills for the good of their community.

Through the power of volunteerism, Rebuilding Together prevents the deterioration of the housing stock within Montgomery County and revitalizes entire neighborhoods. A recent recipient wrote: *“To all the wonderful people that I know, and those that I don't, all I want is to thank you most sincerely for your help to make my home livable once again. Today after much rain and a ceiling falling in my living room, I have a new roof on my house. No more buckets!”* Neighbors pitching in to help others -- this kind of hands-on volunteerism -- feels good and nets results for individuals and the county in a short amount of time.

On Project Days, April 17 and 30, 2005, members of the media are encouraged to visit selected sites and watch the program and volunteers in action. Interviews with sponsors, volunteers, and homeowners can be arranged. Arrangements can even be made for live broadcasts from selected sites. For more information, please contact Susan Hawfield at 301/ 933-2700 or at 301/461-7417.

Rebuilding Together* of Montgomery County works in partnership with the community to rehabilitate the houses of low-income homeowners, primarily the elderly, the disabled, and families with children, so they may continue to live in warmth, safety, and independence. Rebuilding Together * Montgomery County is the eighth largest affiliate

of Rebuilding Together USA, and serves more than 120 homeowners throughout the county every year through Project Days in April and ongoing handyman projects throughout the year.