

ANE Disaster Response

Indian Creek serves with Brethren Disaster Ministries

Mountain City, TN

On September 21st, volunteers from the Ambler, Indian Creek, and Wyomissing Church of the Brethren congregations, along with several guests from outside the CoB, set out for Mountain City, TN. Mountain City is the newest Brethren Disaster Ministries work site in eastern Tennessee, and this group of volunteers were the first to serve there. The group of 12 volunteers included three first timers along with nine seasoned BDMers.

Upon arrival Sunday evening we were greeted by the familiar faces of long-term project leaders Mary and John Mueller and Steve Keim. While they had only been there a few days themselves, they and the BDM site set-up crew had things in good order and ready for us to get started.

Sunday evening excitement and anticipation quickly grew as old friendships were renewed, and new friends quickly engaged each other. As the project leaders led us through orientation, experienced volunteers recognized the familiar well-vetted processes that have made BDM a standard for disaster recovery programs. For the new volunteers, they quickly realized that this was a well-run organization.

As orientation ended, talk quickly switched to who was working on which sites and what type of work they would be doing. Minds and ideas were spinning as volunteers excitedly anticipated the coming day's experience.

We were blessed with three work sites that included a mobile home with a rotted-out floor, a retaining wall project to prevent future damage to a newly restored home, and a home that required gutting to the studs and bare sub floor.

When we arrived at our work sites Monday morning, the stark reality of the tasks before us began to set in and we wondered if we were up for the task. After all, our youngest volunteer was 60, two were in their 80s and the rest in their 70s. With little delay the shovels were preparing the retaining wall footings and hammers and pry bars began tearing



Monday morning after breakfast,
volunteers gather at the tool trailers for
orientation and to gather up tools required
at their work sites.

out the damaged materials in search of solid and dry structure. By mid-week, progress started to be evident, and we were amazed at how much was accomplished in just two days.



John Mueller (background left), Dennis Moyer, Don Moyer, our homeowner, Gary Breckbill, and Ted Noble get the first pieces of drywall in place. Our homeowner and his brother-in-law worked side by side with us all week.

By the week's end, the retaining wall was completed, the mobile home work was completed, and the house at the third site was completely gutted, with new walls in place and drywall going up!

Throughout the week we were well fed by Mary Mueller and our own Pat Bub. From packing our own lunches from a nice selection of choices, hot breakfasts, and great dinners, topped off with seafood alfredo Friday night, food was excellent and abundant.

After dinner Friday, folks shared their experiences, at times through tears of

emotion as they recounted the joy and appreciation of those we had served. Those we served were so appreciative and grateful for our service while we were surprised at all we had accomplished.

As Saturday dawned, we were up and on our way home. Albeit sore with new aches and pains, we had grateful hearts for having answered this call to serve. Everyone left looking forward to the next BDM trip.

-Submitted by Bob Lane



Cleaning the worksite was a constant effort throughout the day. It not only made for a more pleasant and safe environment, but I think the homeowner appreciated how we cared for his home.