



Painting Their Hearts Out for Deserving Military Veteran Tenants

An Important Contribution to the Affordable Housing Initiative

In a new twist on TEAM's Paint Your Heart Out program, TEAM volunteers recently painted two homes earmarked for lower income military veteran rental tenants. One is owned and managed by the [Punta Gorda Housing Authority](#) and the other by the [Gulf Coast Partnership](#). This specialized housing program is being orchestrated by [PORCH](#) (Peace River Community Housing Partners), an initiative of the Gulf Coast Partnership. Funding was provided by Charlotte State Bank. Sherwin Williams provided paint at a greatly reduced cost. The Punta Gorda Rotary Club provided volunteers for one of the homes. Additional homes will be renovated later in the year.

TEAM committee chairman Barry Simescu, with friends and family from Michigan (top right) took on the Fitzhugh house in Punta Gorda. Barry and Punta Gorda Rotary volunteers (bottom left) completed the Conway house in Port Charlotte.



TEAM CEO Nancy Johnson explains how this important initiative came about.



“In 2015 TEAM focused on the issue of affordable housing. We held a community seminar on it. We then followed up by developing a consortium of interested individuals and organizations to study and discuss the problem. Their focus was on land trusts as a strategy for affordable housing.”



“Soon thereafter, Angela Hogan, long-time CEO of the Homeless Coalition, left that post and founded the Gulf Coast Partnership (GCP), an organization dedicated to ending homelessness. The group we helped launch became an advisory board to them,” said Johnson, who represents TEAM on the advisory board.

Charlotte County recently sold six properties to the Gulf Coast Partnership and six to the Punta Gorda Housing Authority, all destined to become rentals for qualified military veterans. The properties require a significant amount of upgrading. TEAM's volunteers are assisting with exterior painting and landscaping.

