

Rebuilding Together Philadelphia

Spring 2008

Steve Seweryn, Executive Director

WHY REBUILDING TOGETHER PHILADELPHIA?



Yi Xie, Wharton volunteer
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As a management and fund-raising consultant to nonprofits for 15 years, I've worked with more than 100 organizations. They all fulfill an important need, and still, are a relatively small percentage of the many, many worthy causes in the Philadelphia region. So one might easily ask why I have chosen RTP as the priority recipient of my volunteer time, talent, and treasury.

I love RTP's efficiency. By leveraging volunteer energies we turn every dollar given into \$5 worth of repair services. We are not about extreme makeovers. Our mantra is warm, safe, dry; addressing the critical needs that will have the most significant impact on the quality of life of an individual or family.

I love the people. The homeowners are interesting, each with a story to

tell. The elders are living histories of Philadelphia's neighborhoods and often share the wisdom of their long years. Watching kids learn how to paint or work on a project with an adult is a delight. Our loyal sponsors "get it" usually asking "how much?" rather than "why?" The volunteers are remarkable; undaunted by the hard work. They are annoyed only by interruptions and frustrated only by the knowledge that there are more people in need.

It is an honor and a pleasure to be part of RTP. I am continually energized by your words of encouragement, volunteerism, and gifts. Thank you.

Jennifer Shropshire
President, Board of Directors

KICKIN' UP OUR HEELS

20 years
neighbors
helping
neighbors

The Martin Luther King Day of Service project in January at the St. Vincent

DePaul warehouse in the Juniata Park section of the City kicked off RTP's 20th anniversary celebrations.

Upcoming projects/events include:

RTP-Lowe's Special Homeowner Project—May 10

Whole Foods 5% Day—June 18

Dragon Boat Festival—October 4

Stay tuned for more details and be prepared to help celebrate!

OUR MISSION:

To prevent homelessness by partnering with the community to rehabilitate the homes of elderly, disabled, and low-income homeowners so that they may continue to live in warmth, safety, and independence.



RTP is an independent, local affiliate of Rebuilding Together, Inc., a national network of 250 affiliates serving 900 communities focused on preserving affordable homeownership.

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www.rebuildingphilly.org

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HOME: KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY

Kenneth Haines sleeps right down the hall from his childhood bedroom complete with the original cowboy mural. He was born and raised in the house in North Philadelphia and moved away to serve in the Navy during the Vietnam Conflict. According to Kenneth, when he returned, "the City had changed and the economy had dissolved." Times were hard and then his mother, Kathryn, became ill. When she died in 1994, she left the home to Kenneth. He calls it his "pink elephant," a special, unexpected gift.

Time has taken its toll and the home is in need of repair, including a new roof as well as wall and ceiling repair. This spring, RTP and a team from **Keystone Mercy Health Plan** will work alongside Kenneth to complete these crucial repairs to his home. Kenneth explains, "My mom always told me to keep a roof over my head. And that's what I need right now. I am glad this work will

be done. It's incentive to get done what I need to in my house, something I want to do anyways, and to do my part in it, too."

The house management team from Keystone Mercy will at Kenneth's home beginning in April. Jeanie Heffernan, house captain and long-time volunteer with RTP, has spoken with Kenneth several times and has a firm plan for the work to be accomplished. According to Jeanie, "Keystone Mercy has a team of 20 plus associates who have volunteered for this great cause and are ready, willing and able to partner with Ken to begin the work. We are excited about taking this project on and look forward to seeing the culmination of our teamwork."

After all of the work is through this spring, Kenneth's cowboy mural will remain; and so will many warm memories—some very old, and some brand new.

THE WORLD IS BIGGER THAN US

Tina and Michael Dean support RTP through their business Dean Special Risk, Inc., and the Deans have made RTP a philanthropic priority. Michael says, "There are a million good causes, locally, regionally, and internationally. You see the TV commercials and know they are noble causes, but there must be something that we can do in the City, close to home. RTP is a really good cause, and we know the Seweryns, so RTP was more visible to us." Michael says choosing RTP initially was Tina's idea, and Tina underscores Michael's comments. "So much of the donation goes for what the organization is supposed to do, instead of administration."

Michael recently volunteered with the St. Luke's team. By his own admittance, he's not handy. (Tina says, "the spirit is willing, but...".) His primary jobs were sweeping, vacuuming, and fetching. He says

he did a mid-point clean up so that "I could see we'd done something." RTP often is at once both a humbling and empowering experience. Michael shared the following insight, "The world is a whole lot bigger than you, and you're not the most important person in it. We are fortunate in that our kids are healthy and we've built a successful business together. What not share it?"



Graeme and Liam Dean [back row at left] are strong paddlers at the Dragon Boat Festival while Tina and Michael always cheer on Team RTP.

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THE MCCUES REVISITED

Several years ago, RTP volunteers built a handicapped accessibility ramp for Joe McCue. Joe is former police lieutenant and Navy veteran. He is living with Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy Syndrome, which is so debilitating that he must use a wheelchair to get around. The ramp was an architectural marvel in that it had to accommodate the ten-foot distance from street level to the front door. Joe described the experience as follows, "They all worked so hard and whistled and had fun... we are overwhelmed at the kindness we have seen."

This spring, RTP volunteers are returning to the scene. The McCue family is in urgent need of assistance. Carbon monoxide had reached dangerous levels in the house; the chimney was 90% clogged. RTP volunteers, from **Sears** and **Becky's Beauties** are addressing these safety issues as well as a host of other repair and home modification projects.

RTP volunteers also will undertake maintenance of the wheelchair ramp. They will move the washer/dryer upstairs to make it more accessible for Joe. Energy efficiency projects throughout the house are a priority. Not only will they help the family be



Joe McCue outside his home in Glenside
© 2008 S. Seweryn

more comfortable, but even more important, reduce heating and cooling bills. Joe's medical bills leave the McCues with very little to live on.

This project is funded by the **Sears Holdings Heroes at Home** initiative. In partnership with RT National, Sears created **Heroes at Home** to assist military personnel, and their families, by making critical repairs and modifications to their homes.

Heroes at Home was launched Memorial Day weekend 2007 at Sears and Kmart stores nationwide. The in-store fundraising campaign raised \$1.3 million.

Visit www.searsholdings.com/communityrelations/hero/

AGING IN PLACE

Independence and safety are often major concerns for older adults eager to age in place. Incorporating home modifications into the home repair process has become a high priority for RTP.

Currently, the occupational therapy (OT) departments of two local universities **Thomas Jefferson University** and **University of the Sciences in Philadelphia** are lending the expertise of OT students and professionals.

For the past three years, OTs at Jeff have formed a house management team. On average more than thirty students contribute their time and energy to the project each year.

This is the University of the Sciences' first year working with RTP, and the collaboration has gotten off to a tremendous start. The OT Department has integrated the RTP experience into their curriculum. Liz Bressi-Stoppe, Vice President for Community Partnerships at USP says, "I have such passion for this project. This is a partnership that benefits everyone, our neighbors in the community as well as our students and faculty who are engaged in a real world application of their skills."

20 years neighbors helping neighbors

L I F E , L I B E R T Y & L O W E ' S

In some cultures, when it's your birthday, you bring gifts for everyone else. As RTP turns 20, it seemed appropriate to celebrate in ways that brought gifts to others. When Lowe's wanted to sponsor a project for a homeowner with a great need, RTP saw it as a multi-layered opportunity:

- 1) help someone whose physical disability would benefit from significant home modifications;
- 2) serve a homeowner outside our traditional Block Build areas; and
- 3) reach out to other nonprofits in order to develop new relationships.

A special homeowner selection process led to Iva Peterson who was referred by **Liberty Resources**, a nonprofit that advocates and promotes independent living for persons with disabilities. Iva Peterson lives in Mt. Airy and lost her leg in a car accident a few years ago. Liberty Resources built an access ramp for her in 2007 so that she could continue to study human services administration and get out in the community.

RTP volunteers will undertake a number of home modifications projects throughout the house. Making the kitchen fully accessible is a high priority. Volunteers

also will install a stacked washer/dryer in the kitchen. Iva also will receive a new roof and new windows. Volunteers will fix the plumbing in her bathroom.

All this is possible because of RT National's partnership with the **Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation**. A \$1 million grant is funding rehabilitation and home modifications projects for approximately 100 homeowners across the country. For more information on the Lowe's Charitable and Educational Foundation, visit www.lowes.com/community.

THANKS TO OUR 2007-2008 SPONSORS*

Civic Partner—\$100,000+
AARP

Community Leader—\$25,000-\$49,999
Jewish Federation of Greater
Philadelphia
Opus East, LLC
Sears Holdings *Heroes at Home*

**Community Sponsors—
\$10,000 to \$24,999**
American Petroleum
Institute/ConocoPhillips
Dragon Boat Paddlers and Sponsors
HSBC—North America
Lowe's

**Block Sponsors—
\$5,000 to \$7,499**
Anonymous
Dean Special Risk, Inc.
Honeywell Hometown Solutions
Individuals via the United Way
Liberty Mutual Surety
Sherwin-Williams/CLEARCorps

House Sponsors—\$3,000 to \$4,999
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The Hankin Group
The Home Depot
Independence Blue Cross
Keystone Mercy Health Plan
KPMG LLP and the Duck for Cover
Dodgeball Tournament
Wharton Graduate Association

Builders—\$1,500 to \$2,999
Pete Beale
Cherokee Investment Partners, LLC
Epiphany of Our Lord, Plymouth
Meeting
HGTV
HomeVestors
Jones Apparel Group
Pat and Ken Kempf
Keystone Mercy Health Plan Employees
Michelle and Jason Kopp
Margo and Rich Mocarski
Morgan Stanley

Neighbors—\$1,000 to \$1,499
Anonymous
Patrick Coyne
Diane Fitzgerald
Robert Hughes
The Eleanor M. and Herbert D. Katz
Family Foundation, Inc.
David Konopka
William R. May Funeral Home
PREIT
Hether and Don Smith

WHY PARTNERSHIPS?

The ingredients of a successful partnership are resources, expertise, and powerful execution grounded in a unified vision. This spring's Block Build in West Shore epitomizes a successful partnership between Rebuilding Together and **AARP** at the national and local levels. AARP has joined forces with Rebuilding Together because the two organizations share a vision of barrier-free, universal design ideas at home that allow people to age in place and maintain control of their lives. By working together, AARP and Rebuilding Together are addressing the concern that as America ages, so does its housing stock.

Resources

As AARP celebrates its 50th year, it affirms its commitment to livable communities. Philadelphia is one of seven signature rebuilding and modification projects across the country in 2008. Locally, AARP's resources are funding extensive neighborhood revitalization through ten homeowner repair projects in addition to improvements to the Southwest Community Enrichment Center. Furthermore, the grant is funding RTP's participation in community outreach activities designed to provide interdisciplinary solutions to support older adults in multi-generational communities.

Management

With 20 years of experience, RTP is a strong partner for AARP. We know how to build authentic relationships with the community. We match projects with volunteer capacity. RTP's on-the-ground logistics prove that it's both an art and a science to fulfill the pledge "under promise and over deliver."

Execution

Approximately 500 volunteers from Wharton and Penn are the primary "muscle" for the homeowner projects. OTs from the University of the Sciences in Philadelphia are leading the home modification activities. AARP volunteers will put on the finishing touches, including landscaping, on May 8—AARP's Day of Service.

Spotlight on the Southwest Community Enrichment Center

SCEC is a community-based human service organization that provides a broad range of services. Founded in 1969 by local residents, programs and services for children, older adults, and families operate out of four row houses.

As part of the Block Build project, the **Community Design Collaborative** initiated a design to make the entrance to SCEC's main space fully accessible.

Legal Workshop and Information/ Health Fair

presented by:
The Senior Collaborative

in partnership with
- Southwest Community
Enrichment Center
- West Shore Civic Association

Saturday, April 26, 2008
9 AM to 12:30 PM
4500 Woodland Avenue
(Glasser Hall)
at the University of the Sciences



WHY BLOCK BUILDS?



Opus East, LLC employees and Gung Ho! teamed up in 2007

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There are thousands of homeowners in need throughout the region. One might ask how RTP sets priorities for selecting homeowners to be part of the program. For nearly two decades, the initial screening was:

- ✓ Are you low-income?
- ✓ Do you own your own home?
- ✓ Can volunteers address your essential needs in a few short weeks?

Today, the same criteria remains, yet RTP has turned toward a Block Build approach as the primary way to preserve affordable homeownership and revitalize communities. With Block Builds, RTP can utilize its volunteer and financial resources more efficiently. Additionally, the impact is more enduring as RTP must develop strong partners in order to carry out a successful Block Build.

This year, RTP returns to Fairhill/Lower Kensington, again close to New Creation Lutheran Church. **Opus East, LLC** stepped up to be the anchor sponsor, ensuring RTP's commitment to undertake significant projects in this neighborhood. Opus not only has given financial support, but also has lent the skills and leadership of Erika Rymsha, a Project Manager at Opus East. She is backed by enough volunteers to complete work on three houses. This is consistent with Opus' corporate philanthropic philosophy.

Community stewardship has been at the core of Opus since it was founded in 1953. Opus has always contributed 10% (compared to the national average of 1%) of its pretax profits and a tremendous number of employee volunteer hours to dozens of nonprofits. Across the U.S., Opus employees have teamed up with Rebuilding Together affiliates in Chicago (Opus North) and Sacramento (Opus West).

In addition, a number of veteran teams have returned to work on the North Philadelphia Block Build:

- ◀ **First Unitarian Church of Philadelphia**
- ◀ **Independence Blue Cross**
- ◀ **Internal Revenue Service**
- ◀ **Keystone Mercy Health Plan**
- ◀ **St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic Church**
- ◀ **The Bellwoar Family**
- ◀ **Gung Ho!**

New kids on the block, include:

- ◀ **New Creation Lutheran Church congregants** as well as a menagerie of volunteers led by our very own RTP Administrator, **Jen Wooten, and her husband, Scott.**

Many thanks to all of the house management teams who do Herculean tasks, working collaboratively, to make a real impact on a neighborhood in need.

Friends—\$500 to \$999

Joseph L. Ashenbrenner
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 Building Owners and Managers
 Association of Philadelphia
 Leo Carey
 Celeste Duke
 Lisa Most and Christopher Evans
 Frezel Family Foundation
 Liz Hanify
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 Denise and Doug Leach
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 Beth Goodell
 Denise and Doug Leach
 William R. May Funeral Home
 Jennifer Shropshire
 Talson Solutions, LLC

* Note: list as of press time.

ESTIMATED STATISTICS

	Home-owners	Lots/ Agencies
Chester, PA	1	
Germantown/Mt. Airy	2	
Montgomery Cty	4	
North Philadelphia	18	2
South Philadelphia	14	5
West Philadelphia	31	2

Homeowner Characteristics

- ◀ 100% have low, very low, or extremely low incomes
- ◀ 70% are women who are the sole provider for their household
- ◀ 53% are 65 years old, or older
 - ◀ 51% live alone
- ◀ 34% have a physical disability or medical hardship
- ◀ 29% have children under 18 living with them (45 children total)



© 2006

A SAFE & EFFICIENT HOME

A HEALTHY HOME

RTP is benefiting from the national partnership of **Sherwin-Williams** and **CLEARCorps**. Executive Director Steve Seweryn attended a training session in Cleveland in July 2007 to learn more about lead-based paint remediation. The training session was led by CLEARCorps, which is an AmeriCorps service program created in 1995 and dedicated to protecting children from lead poisoning. With financial support from companies like Sherwin-Williams, CLEARCorps is able to provide on-site, family-centered education, training and lead hazard control services. Sherwin-Williams also has made a financial gift to RTP to support local repair projects.

Ensuring a safe home has always been a priority for RTP. This year, however, volunteers are placing even more emphasis on projects that not only create a healthier environment, but also lead to reduced energy costs. Tasks range from inexpensive items that are fairly easy to install, to jobs that require expertise as well as a significant investment of time and money.

RTP's priority checklist is:

✓ **Smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are a must!** Today's homes are demanding more from aging electrical systems, putting homeowners at risk. RTP provides critical electrical upgrades and installs these important advance warning and recovery systems.

✓ **Energy-efficient light bulbs save money!** RTP is providing Compact Florescent Lights (CFLs) for every homeowner. CFLs require 75% less electricity than conventional incandescents to produce the same amount of light. Although the CFL bulb costs more it lasts longer; a typical household will pay 125% less over the course of a year.

✓ **Avoiding extremes!** Weather-stripping and caulking windows and doors are important for a healthy environment and help increase energy efficiency for both the hot and cold months of the year.

✓ **Safety first!** Non-slip surfaces help prevent falls and other injuries, making a profound difference in the quality of life of elderly homeowners and others who have mobility challenges.

✓ **Better heat, less money!** RTP is repairing and replacing more heaters this year than ever before. This minimizes inefficient performance and saves the homeowner money on his or her heating bills.

✓ **Roofing matters!** Many people think of roofing as keeping them dry, which is true. Many people realize that a sound roof is important to the structural integrity of the house, which also is true. Roofing also is critical to energy efficiency, just as one wears a hat to keep the heat from escaping in the winter.

2007 - 2008 PROJECT OVERVIEW

YESTERDAY

Take it to the Streets Food Ministry

Sponsored by HGTV

Homeowner Project, Willow Grove

Sponsored by Honeywell

St. Vincent DePaul Warehouse

Sponsored by HSBC

Homeowner Project, Linwood

Sponsored by API/ConocoPhillips

Mitzvah Mania Block Build

Sponsored by The Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia

Homeowner Project South Philly

Sponsored by Sears "Heroes at Home"

TODAY

West Philadelphia Block Build

Anchor sponsor—AARP

◀ Southwest Community Enrichment Center - facility improvements

◀ Homeowner projects

◀ Home Modifications

North Philadelphia Block Build

Anchor sponsor—Opus East, LLC

Homeowner Projects in Norristown

Sponsored by Liberty Mutual Surety; Epiphany of Our Lord, Plymouth Mtg.

TOMORROW

Homeowner Project, Glenside

April 26

Sponsored by Sears "Heroes at Home"

Homeowner Project, Mt. Airy

May 10

Sponsored by Lowe's

Community Facility Project

June

Sponsored by HSBC

Homeowner Project

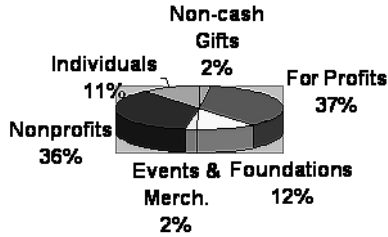
June/July

Sponsored by Honeywell

YOUR GIFT PUTS ERIC TO WORK

THANKS ERIC REDLINE

Did you know that, on average, individuals in the United States give more than 75% of the total charitable dollars each year? For RTP, corporate (for-profit, nonprofit, and faith-based) giving dominates.



Nevertheless, for RTP, individual gifts are like diamonds. They may be relatively rare, but they are precious. Individual gifts provide RTP with the most flexibility in how funds can be used. Accordingly, RTP counts on individual gifts in order to pay for

many of the nonglamorous items of the budget. These items are crucial to having a solid organization supporting the volunteers' work.



Currently, we are more than \$10,000 away from reaching our individual giving goal of \$46,000 for 2007-2008.

Please make it a priority to "put Eric to work." Your gift helps ensure that RTP volunteers will have the materials and supplies required to undertake the vast majority of the "warm-safe-dry" repair projects planned for this year.



Many thanks to Eric Redline for letting us use him as the "poster child" for our appeals this year. Eric represents the 1,000 volunteers who work tirelessly to help our neighbors in need.



Yes, I'd like to support Rebuilding Together Philadelphia!

- \$3,000 pays for work on a typical house
- \$2,000 provides a new roof
- \$1,000 buys four new windows
- \$500 subsidizes a major plumbing repair
- \$250 equips a bathroom with two grab bars, a handheld shower and chair, and a toilet seat riser
- \$100 fixes basement steps (another \$25 illuminates the steps for safer access to laundry facilities)
- \$50 replaces a door lock
- \$35 installs a handrail
- Other _____ (any amount you can give is much appreciated)

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Work Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Thank you for helping to improve the lives of our neighbors!
Please mail your gift to: Rebuilding Together Philadelphia
P.O. Box 42752, Philadelphia, PA 19101-2752

www.rebuildingphilly.org

4/08

UNITED WAY ID #09799

EIN23-2549594

The official registration and financial information of Rebuilding Together Philadelphia may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1.800.732.0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

WHY NORRISTOWN? NEED, COMMITMENT, LEADERSHIP



Original architectural elements are still very much a part of homes in Norristown. © 2007 J. Shropshire

Liberty Mutual Surety employees and congregants from **Epiphany of Our Lord, Plymouth Meeting** have been a significant team of volunteers with RTP for the past ten years, helping more than two dozen homeowners. For the past six years, they have chosen to concentrate their efforts in Norristown in order to have a positive impact on communities in need close to where the volunteers live, work, and worship. The team is helping two homeowners in Norristown this year.

Located on the Schuylkill River, Norristown was established as a mill town and as the county seat of Montgomery County. With a wide variety of manufacturers based here it was, at one time, a retail center for the rural areas outside Philadelphia. The growth of suburban communities and large shopping malls such as those at King of Prussia and Plymouth Meeting spurred the steady decline and eventual collapse of Norristown's retail sector. Today, its economy is powered by county government jobs, the legal profession, and health care.

As of the 2000 Census, there were 31,282 people residing in 13,531 housing units. More than 9% of households are senior citizens living alone. More than 17% of people in Norristown live below the poverty line.

James Gibson and Peggy Rahill of Liberty Mutual and Bud Yanak of

Epiphany are the house captains of the House Management Team focused on Norristown. This is a "soup to nuts" responsibility, requiring strong leadership, project management, and interpersonal skills. Both Liberty and Epiphany make financial gifts, leveraging volunteer efforts five fold. Bud explains Epiphany's motivation, "About 20 parishioners—both young and old—get together for 3-4 weekends to help a homeowner in need. But, the positive impact that both the homeowner and our volunteers experience lasts for years!"

CONTACT US:

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www.rebuildingphilly.org

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