



News and Highlights

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Helping hands repair local homes

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Hands in the Community is an organization that knows the meaning of a dollar, founder Lester Moon says.

"It's amazing what one organization can do with a \$19,000 annual budget," he said. The group put its budget to good use Saturday by helping Exeter widow Jean Lillich, 70, renovate the exterior of her classic home. The structure - which features an array of frog-related collectibles - was built in 1913, she said.

"This home is worth preserving, and there's no way I could do all this work on my own," Lillich said.

Next week, Hands in the Community, a nonprofit organization, will be helping someone else, Moon said. In 2009, the organization helped 325 area residents repair aging homes.

"That work was worth more than \$500,000," Moon said. "We make a dollar go a long way." Potential clients help cover the expenses of materials while Hands in the Community supplies expertise and volunteer labor, Moon said.

In Lillich's case, expertise was provided by professional painter David Crisswell, who not only directed Saturday's volunteer painting crew but helped repair delicate wooden trim along the porch.

"It's enjoyable working with the volunteers and helping people," Crisswell said. Among the volunteers was Sandi Carr, 68, who was also busy helping spruce up the porch. Carr's husband, Johnny Carr, is pastor at an Exeter church.

Sixteen area churches support Hands in the Community, Moon said, with others joining every month.

"It's worthwhile," Moon said. "Everyone benefits."

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