

RESTORING HOPE



Celebrating God's Faithfulness

by Tom MacAulay and Nina Groop

As we celebrate our 30th year, all of us at Good Neighbors are feeling reflective. We are full of stories of what God has done. The Bible speaks about setting up remembrance stones to honor how far God has brought us. At Good Neighbors we have so much to remember and thank God for.

Years ago, someone was driving to work and noticed a man entering a house in obvious disrepair. A large tree branch had fallen and collapsed part of the porch and roof. The driver was so concerned that he called the police who appointed a county nurse to investigate. The nurse asked Good Neighbors' founder and leader at the time, Jay Maltherner, to join her and visit the house. They met the owner (we'll call him Joe) and learned about his history. Joe had some challenges and no income except for a few odd jobs, and the house had fallen into disrepair. He'd lived for two years without electricity or running water, heating the house with a wood stove. He would get water from neighbors in plastic jugs and go to the YMCA to get a shower; his neighbors were aware of the situation, but they didn't know how to help.



For two years we worked with various agencies, contractors, churches, and businesses to mobilize resources on Joe's behalf. Electricity and plumbing were restored and upgraded. A local real estate agency brought dozens of employees and



their families to work at the house to do yard work cleanup and planting. Over the years more than 400 volunteers helped in countless ways to impact Joe's life. Good Neighbors' summer youth camp worked at his house for a week two consecutive summers. Over time we learned from Joe that he had some experience in bookkeeping and accounting, which ultimately led to him being hired at a nonprofit. Nine years later he is still with that nonprofit and still lives in his restored home.

One day a check for \$10,000 showed up at the Good Neighbors office, a donation from a business that had never donated to us before. Eventually we learned a woman had watched Joe's house slowly transform as she passed it on her way to and from work. Her boss had had a

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Birthdays are interesting, aren't they? When we're children, we want toys. As we get older, we're willing to trade some of the "things" for great experiences: amusement parks in the early years followed by beautiful scenery or exotic destinations like an island or a mountain retreat. As we get even older, our bucket list might diminish and our priority become having time with loved ones.

Good Neighbors Home Repair is 30 years old this year. We have sufficient tools and physical things. We have had lots of new experiences that round out our ministry to families with critical repair needs. We are now in the process of leveraging our resources to bring hope to more families. This year we are expanding into southern Lancaster County, and we have launched an interesting health study (our Healthy Homes initiative) to improve the mobility and safety of seniors who are at risk of slips, trips, and falls.

This is where you, our friends, come in. We need your prayers, your presence as volunteers, and your support to help even more families. Two weeks ago, three teams of volunteers mobilized to tear off and replace a homeowner's roof, and they also removed a dangerous shed that could have hurt someone. Debra, her daughter, and two grandchildren are so grateful for these repairs. We saw tears of joy.

Happy Birthday - we celebrate this news every day!

Bless you!

Harold Naylor, Executive Director

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very good year and asked her to find some worthy non-profits to make donations to, and she chose Good Neighbors.

With immense gratitude for God's creativity and provision, we remember Joe and all the volunteers and partners who made the work possible. Community and partnership are agents of transformation. When God is in it, all things are possible.

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