

Home addition a dream come true

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KERRVILLE—To say Wanna Runyan has a full house is an understatement. The 77-year-old single great-grandmother has sole custody of her three great-grandchildren—6-year-old twins, Payton and Paige, and their 5-year-old sister, Kodi.



Wanna Runyan and her great-granddaughters loved the butterflies, pink paint and other accents that made their new room feel like home. Runyan, who also cares for an elderly family member, needed another bedroom in her small Kerrville home to comply with Child Protective Services licensing standards, but she didn't know how she could afford to enlarge her house.

"It would have to be a miracle," she said.

Neighbors and friends heard about Runyan's dilemma. One acquaintance, a volunteer from the local Christian Assistance Ministry benevolence

organization, contacted Partners in Ministry, and the ball started rolling.

Partners in Ministry coordinated

“It is indescribable how it all came together,” said Jeff Anderson, executive director of Partners in Ministry, a volunteer-intensive organization that focuses on facilitating innovative collaboration. Anderson began working with a neighbor, Bob Meader, who drew up plans for the project. Several local companies donated supplies or gave discounts to make the room addition come together.

Partners in Ministry enlisted [Kerrville Transition Center](#), a ministry of Baptist Child & Family Services, to assist with labor through its YouthBuild program, which helps young adults who dropped out of high school further their education while also learning the construction trade.

Keith Schoonmaker, YouthBuild’s construction manager, said his youth put in more than 120 hours of hard work, learning to give back to their community.

One YouthBuild student, Eddy, shared his excitement about the project.

“To go from nothing to being a room was amazing. I loved the experience and learned a lot,” he said.

A dream come true

For Runyan, the building project represented a dream come true.

“When they started building, I cried,” she said. “I could not believe it was happening to me. It was like a dream.”

Runyan’s three great-grandchildren grew fond of YouthBuild workers and staff, looking forward each day to their arrival on the construction site. Schoonmaker and his assistant, Russell Wells, even made the three young

youngsters wear safety goggles and a hard hat when they came out to “help.”

Recently, 36 friends, staff and volunteers from BCFS, Partners in Ministry and Christian Assistance Ministry gathered for the ribbon-cutting celebration.

When the doors opened to the pink bedroom, someone asked 6-year-old Paige, “Who built your new room?”

“Jesus built this room,” she answered.