

Volunteers help Galveston clean up hurricane damage

January 27, 2010

GALVESTON—A team of Virginia college students used their winter break to make a couple of Galveston homes a bit more livable.

More than a year after [Hurricane Ike](#) hit the island city, teams like the one from Broadus Memorial Baptist Church in Mechanicsville, Va., still are needed to help homeowners make the places they live more habitable, said Peter DeWorken of 1 Mission Galveston.

A mission team from Broadus Memorial Baptist Church in Mechanicsville, Va., tackled the renovation of this home that was damaged by Hurricane Ike more than a year ago.

DeWorken's ministry helps facilitate groups from all over the United States who recognize the great need that still exists in Galveston and want to make a difference. [One Mission Galveston](#) not only provides materials and tools needed to do the work, but also feeds and houses mission teams for only \$25 a night per person.

Headquartered in a former elementary school centrally located on the island, the ministry provides hot meals, cots and shower and laundry facilities as well as Internet capabilities. While a hotel would provide many of those same functions, it would not provide meals, supplies or tools, or facilitate ministry opportunities, DeWorken pointed out. Also, all the money

that comes in addition to expenses is used to buy supplies and other things to continue the ministry for the next group.

In addition to construction teams, other groups provide outreach ministries to the homeless, provide workers for Vacation Bible Schools, work in local food distribution ministry, prayerwalk the city and clean up neighborhoods. There is more than enough work to go around, DeWorken said.

While it has been a more than a year since the hurricane, volunteers still are heeding the call. So far, more than 200 Galveston homes have had teams come to work on them, but some of them need additional attention and many more have yet to be begun, DeWorken said.

Two thousand volunteers were expected to come to the island in January, February and March to minister to the people living in Galveston.

“We’re thrilled about it, and we’re scared to death,” DeWorken said with a broad smile.

Many of the volunteers will be coming from churches throughout Texas, he noted.



Lindsay Turner paints the ceiling of a home in Galveston.

“Without Texans helping Texans, this ministry wouldn’t be near what it is,” he said.

Still, many will travel from much farther, such as the group of 17 college students and sponsors from Virginia.

The young adults were challenged last spring to pursue a mission opportunity during their Christmas break by Gary Bone, minister of education and senior adults at [Broadus Memorial Baptist Church](#).

Bone, who formerly served as minister of education at Columbus Avenue Baptist Church in Waco, said that after investigating the possibilities, he gave the volunteers a choice between Galveston and Toronto, and they overwhelmingly selected Galveston.

Aaron Hazelgrove, a junior at Virginia Tech, said being in close contact with the family they were helping was one of the best parts of the trip for him.

“They are interesting people, an interesting family,” he said. “It’s fun to work on the house of someone when you have a face to go with it.” The homeowner was so thankful, she made the crew a large batch of brownies, he added.



Emily Gardner, a Virginia Tech student, taped windowpanes before painting. She worked on home repairs in Galveston as part of a mission team from Virginia.

Emily Gardner, another Virginia Tech student who worked on a different house, agreed the people she met made the trip special.

“I have a real heart for missions, and it’s what I plan to do with my life,” she said. “And it has been great to get to know the lady whose house we have been working on and very moving to be able to help her home become a little warmer.”

The house Gardner worked on had a 4-foot by 8-foot hole in the side that allowed the cold and rain to stream into the attic and then sail down a stairway into the rest of the house. The elderly homeowner only had gas heaters to try to fend off the cold.

In addition to covering the opening with a tarp on the inside and outside with plywood in between, the team also replaced 21 windowpanes, removed and replaced water-damaged sheetrock, and painted two rooms in the home.

“I don’t know how I would ever have gotten it done,” homeowner Mary Hall said.

Even her neighbors were thankful the Virginia college students made the trip to help her.

“The lady across the street was so impressed, she brought them a batch of cookies,” Hall said.

For more information about bringing a mission team to Galveston, visit www.onemissiongalveston.org.