



Good deed recognized

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John Fisher (right) of Rebuilding Together Tulsa chats with Anna and Bobby Brown last week outside their newly repaired home. The Browns' house received much-needed safety improvements from Rebuilding Together Tulsa, a nonprofit group that helps low-income elderly or disabled homeowners.

Below: Bobby Brown (from left), John Fisher and Anna Brown stand in the Browns' recently repaired kitchen. Rebuilding Together Tulsa replaced the kitchen floor, which was uneven and dangerous to walk on.

Photos by JAMES GIBBARD / Tulsa World

A Tulsa group is being listed in USA Weekend magazine for fixing a couple's home.

Last October, a group of volunteers made some much-needed repairs to improve the safety and security of Bobby and Anna Brown's Tulsa home.

"The big thing is how grateful they were," said John Fisher, a Rebuilding Together Tulsa board member who did some of the work on the couple's home. "We really made a difference."

Rebuilding Together Tulsa is one of 529 groups and individuals from across the country recognized in Sunday's USA Weekend for taking part in the magazine's 12th annual Make a Difference Day, on Oct. 26, 2002.

"It's fantastic," Bobby Brown, 69, said of the work done by the volunteers, which included 12 Jenks High School soccer players, their coach and a group of Home Depot employees.

The volunteers painted porch columns, installed three storm doors, repainted window trim, and replaced damaged parts of the home, Fisher said. Sherwin Williams Co. donated paint supplies. A heating and cooling unit in the kitchen, working door locks and a new kitchen floor and ceiling were installed, Fisher said.

The volunteers also replaced a back door and repaired the front door, said Deanna Boston, the executive director of Rebuilding Together Tulsa, a nonprofit group that helps low-income elderly and disabled homeowners.

The Browns say their home for the past 39 years now looks almost brand new. If the repairs hadn't been done, they would have had to move out of the house where their two children grew up.

The home had fallen into dis repair over the last 10 years because the couple lives on Bobby Brown's small pension as a retired mail carrier and both have heart conditions, Anna Brown said.

The windows needed caulking and doors didn't keep out the elements. The kitchen could be described as generally hazardous. The kitchen floor's particle board was uneven, and the ceiling was falling in and stained from roof leaks, Anna Brown said.

Fisher added, "The old vinyl was peeling back.

"It was a real safety hazard for them to even walk on."

The biggest and best change, the Browns said, is that they can lock their doors now.

The volunteers even repaired a broken kitchen shelf. "I didn't even ask to get that done," Anna Brown said.

The couple had thought about applying for a \$25,000 loan to have the needed work done, Anna Brown said.

Most of the repairs were completed in one day, except for the removal of rotting particle board and patches of old linoleum from the original kitchen floor.

Make A Difference Day is sponsored by USA Weekend magazine and its nearly 600 carrier newspapers. The event takes place in partnership with the Points of Light Foundation.

The 13th Make A Difference Day is set for Oct. 25.

For more

For more information on Rebuilding Together Tulsa or to apply for repairs, call 742-6241.

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