



CENTRAL ADMINISTRATION OFFICE

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NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ribbon Cutting Held for Self-Help Housing Program

The not-for-profit North East Community Action Corporation (NECAC), USDA Rural Development and two participating families cut the ribbon June 20 for construction of two homes under the Self-Help Housing Program.

The original groundbreaking ceremony was moved to the Cairo school parking lot because of heavy rain at the construction site along County Road 1630 northwest of the community. Representatives of NECAC, USDA Rural Development and other regional dignitaries attended. The Heather Applebury family is building at the Cairo location and the Dawn Shannon family is building east of Moberly. June is National Home-Ownership Month.



Pictured (from left) are Randolph County Commissioner and NECAC Board Member Doug Galaske; Tim Freeman, representing U.S. Rep. Kenny Hulshof; USDA Rural Development Missouri State Director Greg Branum; Self-Help participant Dawn Shannon; NECAC President and Chief Executive Officer Don Patrick; Missouri State Rep. Therese Sander; and NECAC Self-Help Housing Field Supervisor Mike Bounds.

“NECAC is proud of the partnership we have been able to enjoy with USDA Rural Development and families such as these,” said Don Patrick, NECAC President and Chief Executive Officer. “The Self-Help Program has solidified NECAC’s already-strong reputation for delivering quality housing programs and other services. The Self-Help program not only helps families realize their home-ownership dreams, but it helps boost the tax base of local communities. We all know that rural Missouri is stronger economically when people are moving in rather than moving out.”

Greg Branum, Missouri State Director of USDA Rural Development, has participated in many Self-Help Housing ceremonies, but says it never gets old. “One of the most rewarding parts of the job is to be able to go out and help the individuals to kick off the process,” Branum said. “While it will be a long and trying process, the reward is much greater than the process.”

Missouri State Rep. Therese Sander of Moberly spoke at the ceremony and compared the Self-Help program with lessons she taught her children about self-reliance.

“As I was raising my kids I made them do jobs around the house or around the farm, and when they objected I said ‘You know what, you need to know how to do this – that’s a survival skill – and someday there may come a time when there isn’t going to be anybody around who can do it for you.’ This kind of project is exactly that sort of thing. I just think it’s a wonderful idea.”

Randolph County Commissioner Doug Galaske, who serves on the NECAC Board of Directors, said the development of new homes is always a welcome sign of economic vitality.

“We love to see this in rural parts of Missouri because it is so easy to watch people leave the area, but to see them build here that’s special, and that’s what we want to see,” Galaske said. “We really like to, as a commission, see these things happen in our communities.”

Shannon, a single mother of three boys who works as a hair stylist in Moberly, said the ribbon cutting marks a new chapter in her life. “I’m very excited,” Shannon said. “I’m ready to get started – learning new things along the way, and knowing that that’s going to be my home.”

NECAC, which administers the Self-Help Housing Technical Assistance Grant for USDA Rural Development, is a 12-county area not-for-profit social service, community health and public housing Community Action Agency that serves the low-income, elderly, youth, handicapped and disadvantaged. The agency’s Central Administration Offices are located in Bowling Green, with NECAC County Service Centers operated in each county.

Under the Self-Help program, applicants who meet income and credit guidelines are eligible for low-interest loans through USDA Rural Development. Instead of making a down-payment, the families each spend at least 25 hours a week working as a team with NECAC construction supervisors to build their homes. The families save money by pooling their resources and labor. They then pay off the loans over a specified number of years.

Since 1998, 41 Self-Help homes have been built under the NECAC-USDA Rural Development partnership in Shelby, Monroe, Randolph and Montgomery counties.

More information is available by calling NECAC Randolph County Service Coordinator Tricia Rivero at 660-263-6595 or visiting the NECAC Randolph County Service Center, 1210 Highway 24 West in Moberly.