

WNC

OPERATION TINY HOME

It all came together so quickly. Danny Kelly; Co-Owner of Kelly McArdle Construction, HBAGC Past President, Life Time Board Member and 2024 Distinguished Builder of the Year, along with Julie Yenichek, Senior Director of Community Relations at Lowe's hatched a plan to deliver 100 tiny homes to Western North Carolina before Christmas, which was six weeks away. Danny, along with Andy Mitchell and Donnie Brigman of Kelly McArdle Construction, Chisa Brookes, Bob Zweier, Robbie Kornegay and other HBAGC Board Members and volunteers started construction on the prototype. In Danny's backyard, the original home and the plan to build 16 more took shape.



It took looping in others. Laura Belcher from Habitat for Humanity and Jen Schuster from the HBAGC would organize the volunteers. Julie and her team from Lowe's would coordinate the supplies and logistics. Amy Cantrell from BeLoved Asheville would formulate the tiny homes placement while Pete Jung from NASCAR would organize transportation of the homes to their final destination.



The prototype wrapped up construction in early December and a warehouse space was donated by Paxton Hollar with SunCap Property Group. Materials and supplies were delivered and organized. All the pieces were falling into place and with one week to go, a call for volunteers went out.

Construction began on Thursday, December 12th, with the sixteen trailers arranged around the monumentally large warehouse, surrounding piles of lumber and supplies. Along with countless

unskilled and semi-skilled volunteers, we were going to need professional crews to help us along the way. John Bain from Advanced Framing was the first to offer up such assistance. The company donated a framing crew for two days that knocked out framing construction while Habitat for Humanity volunteers lifted and nailed the walls into place.

Slowly different pieces of the puzzle came into place as the homes started to take shape. Over the weekend, behind schedule and tired from the work completed, each of us contemplated whether we could get it done on time. Six days to build sixteen tiny homes was an aggressive schedule, a crazy timeline, but Julie's pep talks and optimism, along with Danny and Andy's diligence, kept the project moving forward.

A burst of volunteers came Monday, December 16th through Wednesday, December 18th, the warehouse was buzzing with energy as each tiny home began to near completion. Crews donated from Builders Wholesale (flooring), DGH Plumbing, Summit Electric, Agua Source, Carolina Electric Pros, Price Brothers, Quan Services, DPR, Reliable Services USA, and so many more, finished up the technical portions of the build, while volunteers built and installed cabinets, painted interiors and installed exterior siding.

On Thursday, December 19th, NASCAR picked up the first eight tiny homes. A group of organizers and volunteers followed them through the mountains to their final destinations, delivering each home to families who have lost everything in Hurricane Helene. Andi Dirkschneider-Bliss and Jen Schuster followed one tiny home to Swannanoa where we saw first-hand the devastation and then witnessed the joy of giving. We laughed, cried and put up Christmas decorations with Amy, the recipient of the home.



The next day, NASCAR hauled the remaining eight homes to their new families while volunteer crews cleaned the warehouse. The task complete, mission accomplished. Everyone involved with the organization and execution was exhausted. Danny and Andy practically lived in the warehouse for a week, working around the clock. HBAGC Board Members (Robbie Kornegay, Chisa Brookes and Bob Zweier, just to name a few) offered up all their spare time, well into the night, to make the build possible. Habitat project leaders and experienced volunteers were invaluable – providing their leadership, tools and skills every step of the way. Charlotte Tool Bank, along with Lowe's, provided the tools needed every step of the way. The team at Lowe's, including Laurel Waller, Alysia Han and Marcel Soloman, led by Julie, supplied not only optimism and materials, but every Chick-fil-a chicken biscuit and lunch wrap. Thank you for your never-ending trips to Lowe's to find this screw or that part, your generator and tiny heaters, all the PPE, the media/PR campaign and, last but not least, the hand warmers.

We hope Operation Tiny Home inspires others to do crazy, inventive and monumental things. Without Danny and Julie's vision, their perseverance and belief in our community, this would not have been possible. We saw over 500 volunteers in six days, built and delivered 17 (includes prototype) warm tiny homes to families in need and pushed ourselves to do something we didn't think possible.

Everyone has a tie to WNC. Whether you grew up there, have a favorite camping spot, a restaurant you love, friends and family that call it home...it's a part of the fabric of NC. The region is still in need of help, attention and goodwill, and will be for years to come. Get inspired and take action!



WNC

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Thank you!

With deep gratitude and appreciation for the businesses, organizations and individuals volunteering their time, skills and resources to make WNC Operation Tiny Home a success, we thank you!

Lowe's

500 Volunteers over 6 days

Kelly McArdle Construction

Organizing Team & All Star Volunteers:

Habitat for Humanity

Danny Kelly

HBA of Greater Charlotte

Andy Mitchell

Advanced Framing

Julie Yenichek

Advanced Roofing & Exteriors

Jen Schuster

Agua Source

Alysia Han

Audio Video Services

Laurel Waller

Bill's Electric

Marcel Solomon

Builders Wholesale

Laura Belcher

Cardinal Rents

Mel Ressler

Carolina Electric Pros

John Elliot

Carry-On Trailer

Katherine Riley

Charlotte Tool Bank

Paxton Hollar

DGH Plumbing

Peter Jung

HBI - Build Strong Academy

Robbie Kornegay

NASCAR

Bob Zweier

Price Brothers

Chisa Brookes

Quan Services

Andi Dirkschneider-Bliss

Reliable Service USA

Stan August

Summit Air and Electric

Morgan Smith

SunCap Property Group

Casey Hess

SunPoint

David Vickers-Koch

True Homes

Rick Batchelor

Waterworks Plumbing

David Mitchell

Envision Millwork