

"Helping Hands"

Brother Knights, in recent years our annual April Improve a Home program has begun to again support more ambitious projects. The budget for the program had previously been reduced because few projects included skilled repairs/renovations; most only involved basic upkeep and yardwork. We're hoping to change that in the coming years by increasing the budget and organizing volunteers and their resources in a more structured way, to allow us to expand the support offered by our council, especially to widows and the elderly.

Because those in need can't always wait until April, we also want to increase the frequency of job details as well as the number of volunteers who participate. We suggest the name "Helping Hands" as an ongoing complement to the annual April Improve a Home program.

Our first step forward will be to better identify those in need. We plan to establish and maintain an open communication with the parish's widow support group. We hope to present our capabilities and plans at one of their upcoming meetings and begin to gather project "wish lists".

In order to create a list of services we can offer, we need to catalog volunteer skill sets, volunteer availability and other necessary resources to support the work. Once we have a database of volunteer information, specialized tools, materials, etc. we can begin to match resources to requirements and schedule work details to meet the identified needs.

To begin this cataloging, Brother Tim Hartle has created two Google forms to gather standardized information. One form will gather volunteer contact information like: name, phone numbers, address, skill type, availability and an idea of what the volunteer is able to do. The other will gather information about specialized tools or other resources that the volunteer can provide. Examples items for this form include air nailers, trucks, lumber, dry wall, electrical tools, backhoes, chainsaws etc.

Although "the right tool for the job" is important, manpower is even more important. So, even if you have no tools other than a hammer and screwdriver, we need you. We need your intellect, muscle, finesse and ideas. Completing the volunteer form and not completing the specialized tool form is perfectly acceptable.

The two forms will be posted on the Council 8600 website, but you can complete them right now by clicking on these links:

Volunteer form: <http://goo.gl/forms/VdtMUz6zMDP9NOqe2>

Specialized tool form: <http://goo.gl/forms/QBgBsjMAFbElrDg12>

Please complete the forms now and let us know what ideas you have to design and implement Helping Hands.