

Youth group building new homes for poor

By Rob Cullivan
Staff writer

PITTSFORD — When Drew Frasch traveled to Green, Maine, last August to fix up houses owned by the local poor, he stirred up a hornets' nest. Literally.

Frasch, a senior at Pittsford-Mendon High School, was stung in the hand by an angry hornet whose nest the student happened upon when he was tearing down the side wall of an enclosed porch.

Despite that one painful memory, Frascch, a member of Destiny — the youth group at Transfiguration Church — would love to go back to the rural town again next summer.

The senior said that he returned from his week in Maine with a new insight toward helping others.

"A little bit does make a difference," he said, recalling how he and other Destiny members helped build a new chimney for one family. "A little bit from everybody helps. You see (that) these people now have a chimney where there wasn't one before. It's kind of a cool feeling."

Frasch was one of 10 teenagers who — along with six adults from the Pittsford parish — volunteered their services from Aug. 13-18 for the Rural Community Action Ministry. The ecumenically funded Christian housing program works with low-income families throughout Maine.

By issuing low-interest loans and using

Villa needs volunteers

St. Joseph's Villa of Rochester, a non-profit agency that provides mental health and supportive services to adolescents, is in need of volunteers.

The villa is looking for adults 21 years and older to share their interests and experiences with a troubled teenager.

Call Kathleen Pexton, director of volunteers, at 716/865-1550 for information.



Ten students and six adults from the Pittsford parish traveled to Maine to help renovate and build homes for low-income families.

volunteer laborers, the program helps families renovate or build homes, according to Mary Presutti, director of religious education at Transfiguration Church.

Most of the students were inexperienced in carpentry, masonry and painting, but they learned the tricks of the trades



Teenagers from Destiny, the youth group at Transfiguration Church in Pittsford, take time out from their volunteering this summer in Maine for the Rural Community Action Ministry to clown for a picture.

quickly, Presutti said.

She recalled that within one week, the group put in a water line for one home; moved and housed a generator; shingled another house; restored a roof, removed a porch and replaced it with a deck; and built a two-and-a-half-story chimney.

Destiny members and their adult co-workers finished tasks in record time, said Christine Jackson, a Pittsford-Mendon junior.

"(Architects for the housing program) said we did really well ... We got the work set up for us to do in five days done in three days," she said.

The volunteers spent their last two days doing odd jobs and getting to know the various families they were helping.

One endearing child stood out in the memories of the students who built the chimney, said Shane Piles, a Pittsford-Mendon senior.

One of two girls whose mother worked full-time to make ends meet, the three-year-old girl and her eight-year-old sister watched from their bedroom as the students worked, Presutti said.

When the teenagers finished the chimney, the three-year-old girl came downstairs to admire their work and asked Piles, "Will Santa Claus be able to come down our chimney now?"

"Most definitely," Piles replied.

ND students send money, food to S. Carolina hurricane victims

ELMIRA — Students at Notre Dame High School recently contributed to a relief effort organized by city officials on behalf of victims of Hurricane Hugo in South Carolina.

The killer hurricane devastated coastal areas of the state last month.

Members of the student council and senior class government spent the first week of October collecting money from students during lunch hours, said Anthony Ferrara, student council president.

Students also filled four large boxes with canned goods and sent them to Mandeville

Hall at the Clemens Center, which is serving as the headquarters for Elmira's relief effort.

Notre Dame students contributed about \$100 to the relief effort, according to Jeff Sobkowski, a spokesman for the school. Sobkowski added that Notre Dame has previously coordinated similar fundraising drives when disasters have occurred.

Students gave generously to the latest such effort, Ferrara said.

"At Notre Dame, we like to give as much as we can," Ferrara said. "The students ... emptied their pockets for us."

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