

# 2023 Highlights Report

**"Words cannot express the deep appreciation and gratitude I have for the change you have made in my life... Every time I look into the back yard, I am reminded of the kindness of you all. Every day I am in my house, I have you to thank. I was sinking and you rescued me. You are my angels. I still wonder how and why I deserved this kind of help from strangers. It has me looking at things differently. I have a home I can plan to stay in again thanks to you all. With love, respect and gratitude."**

*- A homeowner we assisted with substantial property improvements in order to avoid penalties from her village (see story below)*

## **Rebuilding Together North Suburban Chicago**

in partnership with social service providers, community leaders, donors and volunteers, helps our neighbors who need essential home repairs they cannot afford to live in dignity and to remain in their homes, safe, warm and dry. We want the homeowners we help to feel cared for, respected and proud of our work. We consider it a privilege to serve.

## **DURING OUR 2023 FISCAL YEAR (7/1/22-6/30/23) WE:**

- Processed over 100 applications for free home repairs from Evanston to Zion
- Worked on 61 single family homes and one not-for-profit organization in 14 communities
- Served our neighbors in need, many of whom are seniors, veterans, families with children or those with disabilities
- Organized Volunteer Team Projects with 16 Teams at 14 homes with over 250 volunteers
- Worked with many skilled contractor partners and donors to transform homes and lives

## **Here Are a Few of Our Stories**

### **Garage *Falling Down***

A municipal code enforcement officer referred this senior because her dilapidated garage needed to be removed. The home is in a downtown area, and its natural yard needed attention. A team of volunteers cleaned up the yard retaining the natural status important to the homeowner. With help from partners at Team Rubicon and Waste Management, we demolished the hazardous garage and cleared the debris. The property was transformed from an eyesore to an area of tranquility for the homeowner and community.



### **Bathroom Rehab** **Deeply Needed**

A senior's only bathroom, located upstairs, was in big trouble. The toilet had a serious leak, and was in danger of falling through a badly rotted floor. The tub was discolored; the sink and tub barely drained. After major plumbing repairs, we rehabbed the bathroom and refinished the tub.



### **A Restored Bathroom Provides** **Relief to a Senior who Lives** **with Back Pain**

This senior homeowner lives alone in a condo and was unable to use her tub or shower for years. Before the Covid pandemic she used park district facilities but once those were closed, she resorted to sponge baths. She has back problems, can't take pain medicine, and her only relief was soaking in hot water. A skilled contractor gutted and renovated the bathroom. Later, a team of volunteers deep cleaned her unit and performed various repairs. The homeowner stated in part,



***"This is just a miracle. Hot water is the only thing that gives me relief. I can finally fall asleep... And think of [the volunteers] taking time off on a SATURDAY to help someone else. They are the most happy people and the most happy workers. I have never seen anything like it."***



### ***Profound Help for a Family with Great Needs***

We provided substantial ongoing assistance to a family living with extreme challenges in their lives. The homeowner is a 62-year-old Japanese immigrant whose husband passed away in February, 2022. Her middle school children (12-year-old twins) both have special needs. One child lives with the challenge of autism which requires a high level of support, and is non-verbal. The family has few relatives, none in North America. When the husband/ father died following an illness in February, 2022, they lost their breadwinner, driver, translator, accountant and home maintenance person. The homeowner is at capacity handling her day-to-day responsibilities with her children and house maintenance has gone by the wayside. We have done significant work inside the house, including major plumbing repairs and a partial bathroom rehab, critter remediation, and much more. We provided a new refrigerator when their 20-year-old model failed and accommodations to address the child's deep needs. A volunteer Team and horticultural specialists also transformed the exterior of the home and yard.



### ***Providing a New Shower and More for a Working Senior***

First, we remediated mildew and mold in the basement. Next, we rebuilt the senior's precarious and hazardous chimney. We also replaced her non-working shower with a prefabricated unit, repaired bifold doors and repaired a broken pantry shelf.





### ***Making a Family's Home Safer and Healthier***

A senior with mobility issues provides a home for two young adult grandsons, one of whom has serious health challenges. The home had a badly broken sidewalk and unsafe porches, and the bathroom had fallen-down tile and a ceiling with peeling paint and mold.

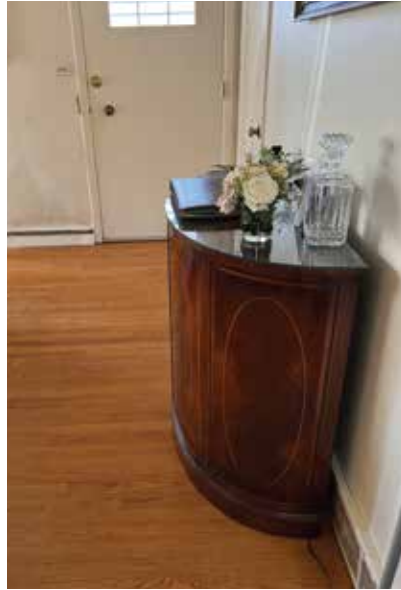
We installed basement and exterior railings, did extensive concrete porch and sidewalk repairs and rehabbed the bathroom.





### **Multiple Issues in Home for a Family**

This recently widowed homeowner and her adult daughter were living without a stove, had a tremendous number of unwanted possessions and needed many home repairs. We purchased a new range and hood, did electrical repairs and carpentry including replacing broken doors, and repairing damaged walls. Later the neighborhood experienced flooding due to heavy rains; the water pressure broke basement windows, allowing water into the home. With the help of a flood remediation service and skilled contractors, we filled one dumpster with wet items, cleaned up post-flood and replaced six windows.



Later, dozens of volunteers spent several days sorting and disposing of a large quantity of unwanted possessions in three dumpsters. They also transformed the yard with plantings and replaced large sections of fallen-down fence which had generated a warning citation from her Village.



### ***Assisting a Senior with Urgent Structural and Other Repairs***

This senior, age 84, has suffered a stroke which left her partially paralyzed on the left side. Her husband and one of her sons passed away a few years ago from Covid. With family support she manages well in her home, but could not afford pressing repairs including a failing chimney and capstone, broken and hazardous threshold under her front door, extremely uneven sidewalk, and warped kitchen floor. She also needed grab bars, a hand shower, exterior handrails in the front and on the side of the home and other miscellaneous repairs, including installation of new smoke detectors. We have completed all of this work, greatly enhancing the safety of this home.





## **Helping a Hero**

An inspiring young Mom is a recent widow and a former nurse with eight-year-old twin boys. One twin's serious heart condition led to early medical intervention and multiple strokes followed by a heart transplant at age one. This twin lives with spastic quadriplegia resulting from the strokes, and is 100% dependent for all care. He is g-tube fed, nonverbal and wheelchair bound. The Dad excelled in home improvements and maintenance, and was a wonderful hands-on Dad to the twins. Tragically, he passed away suddenly after contracting Covid. This Mom carries on with much grace and grit, meeting immense challenges every day. Kinzie Builders has led this incredible project, with support of vendors Coyote Construction, Landscape Construction and Floor & Wall, extensively rehabbing the large deck by removing a rotted pergola, installing new railings and floor, etc., improving the large unruly yard, addressing serious drainage issues, overgrown invasive plants and trees and more.



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### **Helping a Hero (Continued)**

Kinzie regraded the entire yard, removed a huge berm, placed sod, and landscaped and replaced the large falling-down fence. 101 Mobility moved, rehabbed and extended an existing metal accessibility ramp to reach 60 feet. GV's Heating and Cooling also replaced the home's central air when the 40+ year-old system gave out, responding on an emergency basis, just before a heat wave and poor air quality hit. Next year we plan to install an exterior lift.





# Impact of Our Work

Thanks to our donors, skilled tradespersons and volunteer teams, in our 2023 fiscal year (7/1/22-6/30/23) we accomplished the following and more:

- New roofs at three homes (one SFH and two mobile homes)
- Gut and rehab of four bathrooms in great disrepair, partial bathroom rehabs at two homes, and tub modification for accessibility at one home
- Replaced the subflooring and flooring in two homes and replaced flooring and/or installed new carpeting in three homes, in addition to above-mentioned bathrooms
- Installed three new furnaces, two new water heaters, and four central air units
- Provided 15 new appliances
- Performed major plumbing repairs in at least eight homes
- Installed exterior railings and grab bars in at least five homes along with other safety modifications
- Addressed basement leaks and mold at three homes
- Installed one new fence and repaired three
- Performed many carpentry repairs, including installing six doors and/or screen doors, and repairing four porches
- Performed concrete repairs of stairs at two homes, and porches and/or walkways at two homes
- Installed new gutters at three homes
- Painted the exterior and/or interior of more than seven homes
- Performed electrical repairs and improvements at seven homes
- Tore down a hazardous garage which was dangerous and subject to citation from a municipality

The **Rebuilding Together North Suburban Chicago** network is composed of donors, house captains, skilled and unskilled volunteers, tradespersons and contractors who make our work possible.

***We are grateful to all who support our mission. Donations are greatly appreciated.***

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