

Norfolk Insider

City of Norfolk, NE

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“Brush Up Norfolk”

A fresh coat of paint on a house can do wonders. That’s why the Norfolk Ministerial Association has taken on the “Brush Up Norfolk” project with volunteers painting the exterior of twenty different homes on October 9.

“We represent a group of churches who want to put their faith into action. It’s much like an old fashioned barn raising. Many hands make quick work,” said Reverend Robin Stoops, pastor of First Baptist Church in Norfolk and president of the association.

To qualify for the program, the homes to be painted must be occupied by the owners who first fill out an application that demonstrates need because they are elderly, on a fixed income, disabled, are members of a single parent family, or are otherwise physically or financially unable to paint their home themselves. Paint will be provided for those who wish to paint their own homes.

He said the service project idea came about from a conference attended by six members of the association represented by five different churches that emphasized an “externally focused church”.

“This isn’t new. Other communities have done this project. It started with our group talking about what’s important for our community instead of our differences. We all care about our community,” Stoops said. Lincoln, Omaha and Grand Island all currently have service paint projects.

Members of area churches, service groups, and businesses are invited to participate by forming teams of five to work on various aspects of the painting project. Some of the teams will be assigned to do preparation work the Friday night before which may involve minor carpentry work or mowing. Groups of three to five teams will be assigned to painting a house all day on Saturday. Some groups will have the responsibility of taking refreshments to people on the job. There will be teams assigned to clean up on Sunday.

On October 9, a free celebration picnic at Skyview Lake will be held for everyone involved.

Area businesses have already donated the white paint that will be used for the Brush Up Norfolk project. One church has committed to sending 100 volunteers to work that weekend.

The City of Norfolk Housing Authority staff will screen the applicants to see which twenty homes best fit the project. All of the houses to be painted must be one story.

Those interested in applying can contact Gary Hilkemann of the Housing Authority at 110 North 4th Street in Norfolk or Rev. Stoops at 402-371-5609.

People who want to help can contact their church, service group or place of employment to organize a team. If an individual is looking to be placed on a team, they can call Rev. Stoops. All teams can choose whether they want to help with preparation, painting, touch up/clean up or hospitality.

“Together the leaders of the churches in this community have said, ‘Let’s put our feet to our faith. This is a way we can all do it together,’” Rev. Stoops said.