

Pathway Home Lights Up

Edwin Warren – Reporter

Saturday morning, September 20 found over 50 volunteers from 10 organizations gathered to spruce up Madison Hall, the home of the Pathway Home. It was a classic example of good old American volunteerism.

The Pathway Home is a well-regarded treatment program for returning veterans from Afghanistan and Iraq. The innovative program, led by Fred Guzman, provides a short-term intensive opportunity for soldiers with TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury) and PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder) to learn new ways to handle their difficulties.

Members of different groups came together to clean, paint, and replace. It was a marvel to witness a swarm of people organized to do a wide variety of TLC tasks. How did this come about? The major organizations were the U.S. Army Warrant Officers Association of Northern California, the IBEW Local Union 180, and the First Command plus the deft connections of Major General Richard Lundin, Army Reserve Ambassador for California.

It began when Dr. Lundin met Kevin Shaw, President of the USAWOA, and pitched the Pathway Home. Since the concept of "Veterans Helping Veterans" runs strong, they sent John Wallingford, the Facilities Manager of old Fort Ord, to survey Madison Hall. Realizing the scope of electrical work to be done, a



contact was made with Dan Broadwater, Business Manager for IBEW Local # 180, to provide the electrical work support.



Fort Ord WOA people and Yountville staff led the transformation of the massage therapy room into cool blue coated walls with carpets on the floor. The several volunteers who worked all day on this project performed the major renovation in only one day.

The biggest effort was lighting up all the overhead electrical fixtures. Home Depot donated the ballasts and florescent bulbs for this effort. Dan Broadwater, Business Manager, for



IBEW local 180, brought many union members, with trucks and equipment, to donate their time to change 600 overhead fixtures. It was an all-day process



and resulted in a great heap, of well-organized discarded ballasts and bulbs. All that remains today is hallways that are uniformly bright. The saving in electricity was said to be 1/30 of the old equipment.

The Home Plant Ops coordination was facilitated by three staff members – Dave Kernohan, Chief Engineer; Jimmy Hough, Tiles; and Kern Quinn, Painting. Mike Horak, Development Director of The Pathway Home was ever about to make things work. This was an outstanding volunteer project that will have long-term and immediate improvement of living conditions for Pathway Home veterans.

Lunch was provided to all volunteers, who continued their work of wall and blinds cleaning into the afternoon. Kids worked beside their parents making dust disappear and windows shine.

Thanks to one and all for a day of service. It's what makes America great.