Volunteering Brings Pride and Recognition

The month of April is designated as “National Volunteer Month.” Employees, board members and residents of the Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority (AMHA) contribute hundreds of volunteer hours and resources to many community organizations throughout the year.

In this issue, I am pleased to recognize two very special voluntary efforts related to AMHA. First, the American Red Cross H. Peter Burg Community Leadership Award was presented recently to long-serving AMHA board member Leonard Foster for his decades of voluntary service. Also, each April several AMHA employees participate in Rebuilding Together, and have done so for more than 15 years.

The American Red Cross sponsors the annual Acts of Courage Dinner as a means of recognizing individuals who performed heroic acts that helped others. Many involve life and death situations, and are truly compelling acts of bravery. Ten area citizens were recognized at the awards dinner for heroism and fulfilling the mission of the Red Cross.

The H. Peter Burg Award for Community Leadership was started in 2005 and celebrates exceptional community service that is reflective of the many contributions made by the late Mr. Burg to the greater Akron community. The award presentation by the Red Cross cited Leonard for his compassion for helping others, his visionary leadership and his tireless sense of commitment to improving the community, all hallmark traits for Burg Award recipients.

Leonard Foster exemplifies community service, having served AMHA as a board member for more than 20 years, as well as a long list of other organizations that would easily fill a full page. He is director of human resources for the County of Summit and previously had a long public sector career. He holds degrees from the University of Akron and Lake Erie College. His volunteer efforts have benefitted virtually every segment of the community. We congratulate and thank Leonard for all that he has done and continues to do helping others.
AMHA Staff Members Continue to Support Rebuilding Together

In April, AMHA staff again participated in National Rebuilding Day. The event, sponsored by Rebuilding Together Greater Cuyahoga Valley, provides home rehabilitation services to improve the quality of life of local homeowners who are elderly or disabled so that they may continue to live independently. This goal is accomplished through volunteers giving their time to provide home repairs.

This year, AMHA staff donated $1,616 toward Rebuilding Day 2016 through Casual Dress Fridays. This monetary donation was coupled with the donation of additional funds and supplies approved by the AMHA board of directors, resulting in a very successful Rebuilding Day.

The day of the event, AMHA volunteers worked in the home of Arlene Whatley, who was pleased and excited to have Rebuilding Together’s help. She lives in the house where she grew up and wanted to return it to its former glory. AMHA volunteers pulled out their paint brushes to spruce up both the inside and outside of Ms. Whatley’s home. They also improved its curb appeal with bright, new flowers. Finally, they provided general repairs to remove trip hazards, enhanced her security and improved the home’s plumbing.

AMHA has supported Rebuilding Together for many years due to a shared goal of providing quality housing options for Summit County residents. We are glad to partner with this organization that has served more than 3,000 homeowners in our region.