



Appalachia Service Project
4523 Bristol Highway
Johnson City, TN 37601
(423) 854-8800
www.ASPHome.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Appalachia Service Project dedicates three homes ahead of the holidays for wildfire victims in Sevier County, Tennessee.

JOHNSON CITY, Tenn. (December 18, 2017)—On Friday, December 22, 2017 at 4 p.m. Appalachia Service Project (ASP) will dedicate three newly-constructed homes in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. This celebration will be held just in time to allow these families to have Christmas in their own homes, putting the wildfires of 2016 behind them.

ASP is building new homes as a part of their disaster recovery efforts in Sevier County after wildfires swept through the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, Gatlinburg, and Pigeon Forge in November of 2016. The fire killed 14 people and destroyed over 2,800 buildings, eventually burning over 17,000 acres of land. These are the fifth, sixth, and seventh homes to be completed as a part of ASP's 25-home commitment to help low-income residents of Sevier County recover after the wildfires.

The first recipient of a new home will be Wanda Tippie, who will become a first-time homeowner. Wanda is very active in the Gatlinburg community, through the Fire Ministry team at FBC Gatlinburg, and with delivering treats to the local fire and police departments. Her home was constructed with the help of First Baptist Church in Gatlinburg, First Baptist Church of Sevierville, Our Savior Lutheran Church of Gatlinburg, UMC Disaster Recovery of Cherokee County, North Carolina, West Lawn UMC from Reading, Pennsylvania, and Ball Camp Baptist Church of Knoxville, Tennessee.

Michael Cushman is the second recipient, who will be able to use his new home to continue taking care of his elderly mother. His home was built with the help of Calvary UMC of Nashville and the New Build Tennessee staff. And finally, the third home will go to Billy Lee and Michelle Huskey, who are mother and son. Their previous family home burnt in the wildfires, and they are very excited to be back home for the holidays. The Huskey's home was constructed by Mike Hodge and crew, Fountain City Presbyterian Church, and Calvary UMC of Nashville.

ASP has already begun construction on three additional homes and necessary permits are being drawn for five more, with plans to have a total of 12 homes in various stages of construction within the next month. ASP is currently seeking skilled local volunteers to join in the efforts of these projects, you may contact TNSevier@asphome.org for volunteering information.

Partners for the 25 homes ASP has committed to building in the next year include the Holston Conference of the United Methodist Church, Volunteer East Tennessee, Mullican Flooring, Cherokee Partners, AmeriCorps, the American Red Cross of East Tennessee, the Dollywood Foundation, Tennessee Housing Development Authority, the Federal Home Loan Bank of Cincinnati, the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee, and the Mountain Tough Recovery Team.

Mountain Tough Recovery Team continues to be the lead recovery organization, accepting applications from families seeking site cleanup, home repairs, new home construction and individualized recovery assistance related to the Sevier County, TN wildfires in November 2016. To apply, visit Mountain Tough's website (www.mountaintough.org) and complete the pre-application or call the Mountain Tough office at 865-436-8112. Volunteers and donors interested in helping with site cleanup, replacement home construction and home furnishings may visit <http://www.mountaintough.org/i-want-to-help/> for details on how they can get involved.

ASP has experience with helping communities rebuild after disasters. In 2012, ASP built 25 homes for families who had lost their homes to massive flooding in Washington County, Tennessee. And in 2016, ASP launched a multi-year project to help rebuild homes in Greenbrier County and surrounding areas for families whose homes were destroyed by flooding. ASP has already completed their first 54 homes that will be built for low-income families in Greenbrier County and surrounding area in West Virginia.

HOME DEDICATION DETAILS

Holiday Home Dedications
Friday, December 22, 2017 at 4 p.m.
142 Hickman Hollow Road
Gatlinburg, TN 37738

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ABOUT APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT

Appalachia Service Project (ASP), is a Christian ministry, open to all people, that inspires hope and service through volunteer home repair and replacement in Central Appalachia. Since 1969, ASP volunteers have been making homes warmer, safer and drier for families in need in Central Appalachia and providing life-transforming experiences for everyone involved. In recent years ASP has expanded its outreach to include building new homes for low-income families whose homes were destroyed by fire or flooding and others whose homes are beyond repair. This year ASP will have over 16,000 volunteers working in 5 different Central Appalachia states helping over 600 families with home repairs and new construction.

MEDIA INQUIRIES

Walter B. Crouch, ASP President/CEO
(865) 368-9380 cell/text
Press@ASPhome.org

Dave Kelley, ASP Chief Advancement Officer
(423) 607-1156 cell/text
Press@ASPhome.org

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Visit ASP's Newsroom (<http://asphome.org/newsroom>) for a fact sheet about Appalachia Service Project, downloadable press releases, photos, and other information.