



Appalachia Service Project
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

First Home Dedication for 'Rebuilding Rainelle'

Appalachia Service Project's long-term recovery effort to help rebuild the community of Rainelle, West Virginia

RAINELLE, W.Va. (October 13, 2016)— On Friday, October 14, Appalachia Service Project (ASP) will dedicate Russ & Becky Gilkeson's new house—the first new home to be built in West Virginia for a flood victim. Russ is a former teacher and coach at Greenbrier West High School.

The Gilkeson's home is being built through Rebuilding Rainelle—Appalachia Service Project's long-term recovery effort to help rebuild the community of Rainelle, West Virginia, the epicenter of June's deadly flood. This is the first of up to 50 new homes that ASP will build for families devastated by the flooding in June.

Many gracious partners helped make the Gilkeson's home possible through their support of Rebuilding Rainelle. Partners from Johnson City, TN where Appalachia Service Project is headquartered include Mullican Flooring, Grace Meadows Church, Munsey United Methodist Church, and BedInABox.com. West Virginian partners include the United Way of Greenbrier Valley, Homes for West Virginia, Window World® of Beckley, The Potomac Highlands Fuller Center and the Cales Family Foundation. The Federation of Appalachian Housing Enterprises (FAHE), of which ASP is a member, has contributed funding to the effort. Solid Rock Carpenters in Chicago built and shipped three complete sets of walls.

Volunteer groups including students from West Virginia University, Georgia Tech, and Virginia Tech's ASP College Service Project, along with churches and groups from Ohio, Tennessee, Iowa, Connecticut, Georgia, Maryland, Virginia, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Illinois and North Carolina have come to help rebuild Rainelle. ASP has also partnered with two other volunteer groups, Christian Aid Ministries and Southern Baptist Disaster Relief, to help with Rebuilding Rainelle.

The flood—one of the worst in state history—destroyed over 1,000 homes statewide and 23 people lost their lives. Rainelle was devastated, including 90% of the homes near the downtown area. Five people in Rainelle did not survive.

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Many of Rainelle's low-income homeowners are unable to rebuild their homes because they have no insurance, are unable to qualify for emergency loans and have few personal resources. These families are the focus of ASP's longer term recovery efforts through Rebuilding Rainelle.

According to ASP President/CEO Walter Crouch, "Rebuilding Rainelle will bring volunteer and financial resources together to build new homes and perform major rehab on homes that are repairable. We have been working alongside Rainelle Mayor Andy Pendleton and other community leaders, and have identified as many as 50 homes that will need to be replaced and countless others that will need to be repaired."

"For families receiving replacement homes, we will provide them with energy efficient and low maintenance homes," said Crouch. "Our standard floorplan is a three bedroom, one bath home—864 square feet—but the number of bedrooms can be adapted to fit the family's needs."

"Gifts of grace" are what Crouch calls the home repairs and new homes that ASP provides. "No mortgages are involved. It's a fresh start for those in need and allows us to reach families without regard to their credit history or income level. We do, however, require owners of new homes to attend financial literacy and homeownership courses to prepare them for a successful future in their new home."

Families impacted by the flooding in Rainelle can apply to ASP for consideration. Visit www.asphome.org/apply and click the "apply for home repair online" button (fastest method), or pick up an application at the Rainelle Town Hall or Red Star Lumber. Filling out an application does not guarantee selection and additional applicant requirements are required. ASP will determine with a home assessment whether or not repairs or a new home is needed.

Rebuilding Rainelle is just one part of ASP's larger outreach to families in need across Central Appalachian Kentucky, North Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia.

ABOUT APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT (ASP)

Appalachia Service Project (ASP), is a Christian ministry, open to all people, that inspires hope and service through volunteer home repair in Central Appalachia. Our vision is that substandard housing will be eradicated and everyone who comes into contact with this ministry will be transformed.

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 flooding and others whose homes are beyond repair.

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ABOUT REBUILDING RAINELLE

Rebuilding Rainelle, is the name of the long-term recovery efforts being led by Appalachia Service Project (ASP). It is a collaborative partnership which bring together the strength and resources of the non-profit and for-profit sectors who work alongside of and in cooperation with local and state government. For more information or to make a cash or in-kind donation to support these efforts, call David Kelley at (423) 607-1156 or visit www.ASPhome.org/donate.

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