

Bucket Brigade surpasses 1,400 houses painted in 29th Annual Paint Day

by Madelaine Gerard, Staff Writer
May 14 2016 1:28 PM



ALTON – Teams of determined volunteers spread out across the River Bend in efforts to make its communities more beautiful this **Saturday** for the **29th Annual Bucket Brigade Paint Day**.

Created by **Dale Neudecker** in **1988**, the Bucket Brigade program aims to help neighbors beautify their homes when their owners cannot take on the jobs themselves or afford the materials and labor to do so.

“When we finish painting the houses today, we’ll pass over 1,400 houses since we started, averaging 50 houses a year,” Neudecker said.

Although it’s been nearly three decades since his idea for the Bucket Brigade came to fruition, Neudecker loves to see how the program has grown.

“My original idea was that it should be doing to improve the community, to make it better, and I have several different ideas. I tried to think of something that most people could do. I figured that most people could use a paintbrush, whether you’re from junior high to senior citizens. We have all age ranges, practically every denomination of church involved; Rotary, Kiwanis and other different organizations. **Sherwin Williams** gives us the first 300 gallons of paint which makes this all possible.”



In this 29th Annual Bucket Brigade Paint Day, the organization, co-sponsored by **Pride Incorporated**, over 16 houses were chosen to by the committee. Organizations like

Marquette Catholic High School has taken some of the slack off of the group by undertaking some of the brigades themselves as a part of their senior service projects earlier this spring.

Volunteers from around the community, including workers from **Carrollton Bank** and **Abundant Life Community Church**, took time out of their Saturday to insure a more polished, clean look in the area's neighborhoods.

"I think the painters get as much out of it or more," Neudecker said. "A bunch of friends come out to help a neighbor in need and at the end of the day, they felt that they have done something worthwhile."

The residents of the houses, of course, were more than gracious to be a part of the process, picking out the colors of quality Sherwin Williams paint for their home's exterior and watching it all come to light as the paint begins to dry.

Homes that can be nominated for Bucket Brigade must be owner-occupied one-story houses with owners that cannot maintain their home without physical or financial assistance.

"There's a story with every house," Neudecker said.

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