

Non-profit group moves bathroom addition to family in need of basics

On Wednesday, Feb. 16, the North Carolina Rural Communities Assistance Project, Inc. (NCRCAP) in Pittsboro moved a bathroom addition to a family which had been living without indoor bathroom facilities.

Workers transported the bathroom unit from the Central Carolina Community College Siler City campus to a household near Seagrove in Randolph County.

NCRCAP's Safe Housing Initiative (SHI) program is designed to address the severe housing needs of very low-income house-

holds in Chatham and Randolph counties.

The agency's primary focus is to work with families currently living without indoor plumbing, a protected water source, and/or an appropriate means of wastewater disposal. To this end, NCRCAP provides services such as housing rehabilitation, construction of bathroom additions, installation of septic systems and wells, and assistance with accessing federal low-interest loans and grants. Since the start of the program, NCRCAP has assisted almost 30 households and is currently working with eight families to eliminate the health and safety hazards posed by substandard housing.

The Safe Housing Initiative began in 1998 when NCRCAP recognized the need of rural residents living without basic services and teamed up with a group of volunteers from the NC American Water Works Association/Water Environment Federation to build a bathroom for a Chatham County family. NCRCAP was also assisting households with tapping into county-administered Community Development Block Grant Funds for housing repairs.

NCRCAP then began to look for ways to expand our housing rehabilitation/bathroom construction program to begin to meet the obvious need of rural area families.

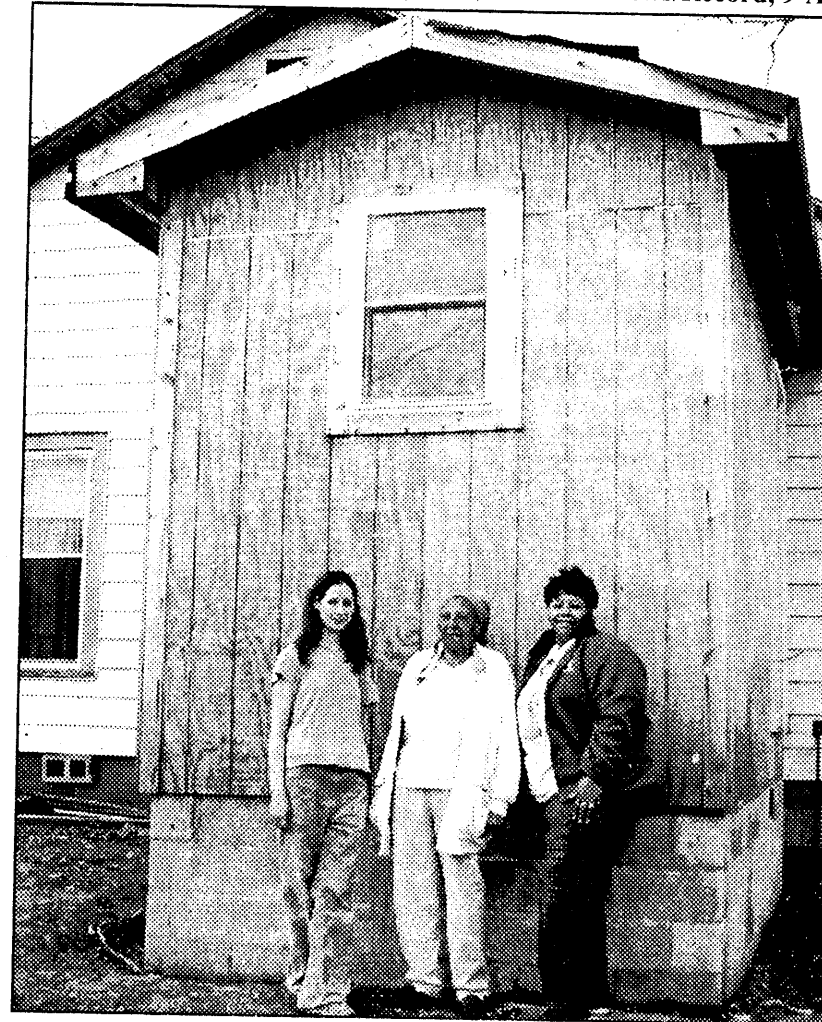
With limited funding sources available to address housing rehabilitation in rural areas, NCRCAP created a network of partners and resources to further

expand the capacity of the Safe Housing Initiative program. Primary funding for completing the rehabilitation work comes from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Housing Preservation Grant Program.

Other key partners include: Central Carolina Community College, Chatham County, Joint Orange Chatham Community Action, Randolph County, Regional Consolidated Services, Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project, and numerous professionals and companies who have provided donations of materials, charged reduced rates for services, or have volunteered their time.

The North Carolina Rural Communities Assistance Project is a statewide nonprofit organization with the mission to provide assistance to low-income, rural communities on public health and environmental quality issues pertaining to water, wastewater, solid waste, and affordable housing needs.

For more information about the agency's Safe Housing Initiative program, call 919-542-7227 or email at ncrcap@ncrcap.org or visit our website at www.ncrcap.org



From left are NCRCAP construction coordinator Gaby Fornari; Cladie McSwain of Seagrove, recipient of the new bathroom; and McSwain's daughter, Lister Headen.