

With the help of others, resident gets a new ramp for Christmas

By Alicia Petska
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For two months Maggie Lovett, an 85-year-old Culpeper resident, was confined to a local nursing home, unable to return to her house after an accident left her with a broken hip.

"My hip went out and I went down and couldn't get up," said Lovett, who had been putting away groceries at the time.

Now shaky on her feet and forced to use a walker, Lovett found herself barred from her own home, no longer able to master the two concrete porch

steps.

With the help of several local organizations, though, she was able to return by Christmastime.

About 10 volunteers from the Culpeper Ruritans, the Jefferson Ruritans and the Jefferson-Culpeper United Methodist Men teamed up to build Lovett a solid wood ramp, complete with handrails. The United Methodist Men also donated the materials.

"I was so glad," said Lovett, standing outside her home near Yowell Meadow Park. "I couldn't come home before. I'm so glad and I appreciate all these men so

much."

Before her accident, Lovett had had meals delivered to her house from the Senior Citizen Nutrition Center, which organized the effort to bring her home.

Gladys Williams, coordinator of the local senior citizen relief organization, had enlisted several center volunteers for the project, who in turn reached out to their community groups.

"It was just a matter of the community coming together," a jovial Williams said when Lovett

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and the volunteers met for the first time Saturday morning. "We have so much to be thankful for in this community."

A Friday night call-to-arms in mid-December brought out 10 volunteers the next day, who spent about eight hours constructing the ramp. Lovett returned the following Monday and was able to host her family's Christmas celebration that year.

"It was good that we were able to help," said Dave Lindgren of the United Methodist Men, who was holding one leg of Lovett's walker to give her extra balance as she crept closer to the edge of the porch.

"It really put the Christmas spirit in the season," added Scott Jenkins of the Culpeper Ruritans.

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Staff Photo, Vincent Vala

Maggie Lovett of First Street in downtown Culpeper stands on a ramp constructed at her home by members of the Culpeper Ruritan Club, the Jefferson Ruritan Club and the United Methodist Men.