

2 Fellsmere businessmen want to build 2 homes in 1 day of work

By Lamaur Stancil

FELLSMERE — Joe Talese is confident he and fellow businessmen can build two homes in Fellsmere in one day.

But it'll take a few months of planning and recruiting to make sure they can pull it off. Talese, vice-president of Regatta Construction of Vero Beach, is partnering with Holmes Homes Construction of Vero Beach to rebuild two rundown homes in the Carter Hall James subdivision and build new, fully functional ones from start to finish on Nov. 10.

Talese will meet at 10 a.m. Thursday with several subcontractors at the Bridgepoint Clubhouse, 4548 Bridgepoint Club Drive, Vero Beach, to discuss the \$260,000 construction plans.

The homes in Fellsmere belong to next-door neighbors Martha Rainey, 63, and Pamela Jefferson, 40.

Rainey is fighting colon cancer while raising her grandson.

Jefferson, a mother of two who is on workers' compensation, sought government money to help make her repairs, but couldn't get any. That's when the Indian River County Health Department's Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence program learned of her plight and got Talese's company interested in replacing her home. The program conducts meetings in communities and tries to develop solutions.

Carter Hall James is a predominately black, low-income neighborhood in Fellsmere. Rundown homes have been a problem there in the past, and City Manager Jason Nunemaker said he's trying to find ways to address it.

Following the 2004 hurricane season, the city had to prod five homeowners to tear down their homes when they weren't able to afford repairs or replacements. Also, the county is planning to have another two homes demolished on 100th Place, just outside Fellsmere city limits, said Julianne Price, coordinator for the community excellence program.

- Regatta Construction and Holmes Homes Construction are partnering to build two homes in Fellsmere in one day on Nov. 10, as part of a volunteer effort by the companies for two needy families.

- Sub-contractors and donors on board so far include Home Depot, Custom Homes by C&J, F&G Trimming, Bradford Electric, Meeks Plumbing, Meeks and Sons, Cardinal Roofing, Garage Door Sales, Kitchens By Design and Dynamic Air.

- Plumbers, painters, drywall installers, carpenters and electricians are also needed, as well as cash donations.

- On the Web: www.everydreamhasaprice.com