

## Contractors take on "Extreme Challenge" in Fellsmere

Reported By: Bryan Garner

Photographer: Jenny Newell

The children racing their bikes down the street may not realize, but their neighborhood, Carter Hall James, is one of the poorest in the small town of Fellsmere.

Overgrown lots and rundown homes line the streets. Some of them, like Pam Jefferson's old place, carried lingering damage from hurricanes that is now beyond repair.

"I had mold damage, water damage, rotten wood," says Jefferson.

She's struggling to recover from a disability, out of work for two years, and trying to raise three children.

"When we went into the home it was like third world conditions in there," says Indian River County Detective Teddy Floyd.

Detective Floyd and Julianne Price of the Florida health department couldn't believe what they saw at Pam's home.

"It was so bad it needed to be corrected," says Price. "She needed to have a safe place to raise her children."

They called on a network of local contractors, hoping to get Pam some help. But they didn't stop with her.

Pam's Aunt Martha, who lived next door, was just as down on her luck.

"I had been diagnosed with a disease I never would have believed," she says.

Recently diagnosed with cancer, Martha was raising three grandchildren on her own, in a home unfit for anyone.

"These were by far the most needy families in this Carter James community in Fellsmere," says Price.

And so a group of contractors was asked to build homes for not one, but two families.

The owners of Regatta Construction didn't just say 'yes,' they said they would do the impossible: build them both in a single day.

"I told them it's never been done before, let me give it some thought," says Joe Talese, co-owner of Regatta Construction. 'And after a couple of days after I called up my co-workers we said we could do it."

To build two houses from the ground up in a single day the volunteers will have to work fast. Most tradesmen will have to do their work in just 15 minutes. The roof will go up in 40 minutes, dry wall in an hour.

Martha's family and Pam's say they don't know how the volunteers will pull off such an incredible feat in one day; they're just glad someone's willing to try.

"Oh God I'm so thankful and blessed," says Martha Rainey, "And I really, really appreciate it."

Last year more than 400 volunteers joined in to build a home in a day in Indian River County. Organizers say they'll need even more to build two homes. The scheduled construction date is November 10th.

If you'd like to contribute time, materials or money to the effort, you can visit this web site: [www.everydreamhasaprice.com](http://www.everydreamhasaprice.com)