

ASHEVILLE

# CITIZEN TIMES

## Volunteers help provide respite for military families

By Leslie Boyd

ZIRCONIA — At a builders convention in Las Vegas a couple of months ago, Brian Morrison began describing a respite house he is building for military families with critically ill children.

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He wasn't a minute into his spiel, he said, when Jason Buechel said, "Count me in."

This week, Buechel and his company, Natural Stone Veneers, of Fond du Lac, Wis., are at the house, putting stone on the outside and around the fireplace.

"I didn't have to hear the details," Buechel said. "I knew this was good work. Part of being a good business is helping to care for people."

Last week, Carl Dakes came from Baltimore with all the materials, management and labor to prime and paint the inside of the house.

Morrison, founder and CEO of Believe in Tomorrow National Children's Foundation, has built six houses either next to military hospitals or in vacation spots, so military families with sick children could have time together.

"People need a place to get away to restore their energy," he said.

Maryanne Davis, who works for Believe in Tomorrow, said military families often struggle more than others because military hospitals often don't have the same services civilian hospitals do.



Leslie Boyd/Citizen-Times

Joe and Jason Buechel of Natural Stone Veneers of Fond du Lac, Wis., put up a platform so they can finish putting stone veneer on the Believe in Tomorrow Foundation house in Zirconia.

"They have excellent care, but they don't necessarily have the same social and support services," she said. "Families don't always have a choice what hospitals they're sent to, and a military parent can be deployed in the middle of a child's treatment."

This latest project is in a new development atop Pinnacle Mountain. It is not convenient to any hospitals because the point is to be on vacation, Morrison said. However, in an emergency, Hendersonville is 20 minutes away.

The house is built mostly with donated materials and volunteer labor.

“When people join together to volunteer, the sum of their efforts is far more than anyone can do individually,” he said.

Bruce Sprinkle, a Hendersonville interior decorator, has offered to donate his services.

“If everybody gives just a little bit, that’s what it’s all about,” he said. “You can do anything.”

Con Dameron, an Asheville architect, also donated his services.

“I had been working in Pinnacle Falls, and I heard about it, so I signed on,” he said.

The house has three bedrooms and three bathrooms with a large room upstairs ready to be converted to two more bedrooms and an additional bathroom. It has a wraparound deck and a large yard.

“We want to put a peace garden in the backyard,” Davis said. “If a child is too sick to go out on a hike or play, there will be this beautiful garden you can see from the deck. We want this to be a place of beauty and peace for people who need it.”

### By the numbers: Want to help?

• 120: Number of local volunteers participating in the project. • 500: Estimated number of families who will use the Believe in Tomorrow House at Pinnacle Falls over the next decade. • 3,300: Square footage of the house at Pinnacle Falls. • 3: Number of bedrooms in the house at Pinnacle Falls. • 3: Number of bathrooms in the house at Pinnacle Falls. • 5: Miles of hiking trails. • 10: Miles from downtown Hendersonville. • 35: Miles to Asheville. • 1,000: Number of feet to closest swimming pool. • 1,400: Number of feet to closest waterfall. Items needed to complete the house include hardwood flooring, cedar siding, porch railing, interior solid wood doors, new kitchen appliances, bathroom fixtures and interior furnishings. Gardeners and plants also are needed for the peace garden. For more information, call 410-744-1032 or toll-free at 800-933-5470, or visit [www.believeintomorrow.org](http://www.believeintomorrow.org).



**Leslie Boyd/Citizen-Times**  
Brian Morrison, president and founder of Believe in Tomorrow Foundation, stands in front of the foundation’s latest project, a respite house for military families with critically ill children.



**Leslie Boyd/Citizen-Times**  
Believe in Tomorrow National Children’s Foundation, has built six houses either next to military hospitals or in vacation spots, so military families with sick children could have time together. This latest project is in a new development atop Pinnacle Mountain. Here, workers from Natural Stone Veneers in Wisconsin perform volunteer labor with donated materials at the house.