



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 23, 2016

Community Renovates Northern Cheyenne Elder Veteran's Home

Description: Red Feather Development Group has partnered with Northern Cheyenne tribal agencies and community members to renovate Bilford Curley's home in Lame Deer, MT. Bilford Curley is a Veteran and an elder of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe. He is raising 4 children in a house that was in critical need of renovation. A new roof, new siding, windows and doors, wheelchair accessibility enhancements, and energy efficiency retrofits are just some of the improvements that have been made. An open house, for the press and those that contributed to the project's success will be held Friday August 26 at 5:30PM MDT. Please call John Marian at 406-585-7188 for further information.

Lame Deer, MT, August 24, 2016 – Last summer Red Feather Development Group was looking for homes to include in its study of energy efficiency and indoor air quality in homes on the Northern Cheyenne reservation. That's when they first learned of Bilford Curley's high energy bills and unsafe living conditions. Curley, a Vietnam-era Veteran raising four children, was receiving Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program support for monthly energy bills that were averaging \$500 a month in the winter.

When Red Feather, a non-profit helping Native American communities with their housing, assessed the home it was found to have a leaking roof, numerous air leaks and mold. Given that two elders and 4 youngsters were living in the home, the mold was a serious health concern and needed to be addressed, especially if the home was going to be sealed up to make it more energy efficient. Curley is a stroke survivor and isn't as mobile as he used to be, and his wife uses a wheelchair, so making the bathrooms accessible was also a priority for occupant safety.

Red Feather Program Director, John Marian, began conversations with various tribal and non-tribal agencies to raise the funding for the renovation work he felt was warranted. Northern Cheyenne's Housing Improvement Program (NC HIP) provided the

bulk of the funding with a \$60,000 grant. The US Dept. of Agriculture awarded a \$7,500 Section 504 grant, which Northern Cheyenne Tribal Housing Authority matched with in-kind donations. A crowd funding campaign raised an additional \$6,720. Numerous materials were donated including: a clean burning stove from US Stove, a solar heater from SolarThermiX, plumbing fixtures from Delta Faucets, and siding from James Hardie.

Volunteers from Catholic Heart Work Camp and St. Labre Indian School were instrumental in completing the project affordably and on time. The day-to-day operations were managed by Talon Construction, owned and operated by Northern Cheyenne tribal member Richard Hamilton. Group Work Camp and the NC HIP program insulated and dry-walled the “bonus room” and built an access ramp to the front door. Leo Campbell, owner of Native Energy Auditors, led the energy efficiency retrofits.

As crews put the finishing touches on the home, plans are being made for a welcome home celebration and open house to be held Friday, August 26th, at 5:30PM MDT at the Curley home in Lame Deer MT. Community members, donors, volunteers and the press are invited to come help celebrate the Curley family moving back into their new healthy and energy efficient home. For more information about the project or the welcome home event contact john@redfeather.org.

Contact Information:

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Editor’s Note: We are able to provide interviews with Bilford Curley and John Marian, Project Lead for Red Feather and with some of the professionals and volunteers who worked on the Project. Please call John Marian at 406-585-7188 for further information.



*(Photo Courtesy: Red Feather Development Group)
The Curley Home with new wheelchair ramp, roofing, siding and windows installed*



*(Photo Courtesy: Red Feather Development Group)
A solar heater that will reduce the family's energy consumption was donated by SolarThermiX, and installed by Native Energy Auditors*