



Hartford



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Volunteers to Make Asylum Hill Senior Center Safer, More Accessible
AARP, Rebuilding Together Hartford Start Renovations on Saturday

HARTFORD, Conn. – Seniors in Hartford’s Asylum Hill neighborhood will soon have a safer, more accessible and energy efficient place to meet thanks to the work of more than 30 volunteers who begin renovating the Salvation Army Senior Center, known as the Asylum Hill Senior Center, this Saturday, March 1.

The renovation of the 7-year-old center (prior to 2001, it was located in the Salvation Army’s headquarters on Asylum Avenue for more than 30 years) is part of a Livable Communities Initiative that AARP Connecticut and Rebuilding Together Hartford formed three years ago to provide home repairs and social services to low-income homeowners 50 and older in Asylum Hill. So far, AARP and Rebuilding volunteers have made repairs to 19 homes owned by people 50 and older in the historic Hartford neighborhood. In addition to the senior center, AARP and Rebuilding volunteers will make repairs to three Asylum Hill homes this year.

This year, in observance of the 50th anniversary of the founding of AARP, volunteers from AARP Connecticut, who typically work with Rebuilding volunteers on repairing Asylum Hill homes, are helping renovate the senior center. During a lunch break, volunteers will be served slices of an AARP 50th birthday cake.

On Saturday, a total of 10 AARP and Rebuilding volunteers will be joined by 20 volunteers from the Asylum Hill Congregational Church to paint and reorganize the interior space and make general repairs to improve the look and feel of the center’s environment. Later in March, skilled volunteers and contractors will make more technical repairs.

“It is so important that we all come together to help our neighbors who are most in need,” said Greg Secord, RTH’s executive director. “We are especially happy to be able to serve Hartford’s seniors, since they are the heart and soul of our neighborhoods.”

“We are thrilled to be working with the Asylum Hill Congregational Church on this important project,” said Brenda Kelley, state director, AARP Connecticut. “It’s our collective goal to not only improve the homes of seniors in Asylum Hill, but also to improve the community, so that they and their families may live safely and comfortably.”

The renovation of the senior center was made possible by funds from Home Depot, a national partner with AARP. Home Depot contributed the funds through the AARP Foundation, AARP charitable arm. Home Depot has joined AARP and Rebuilding in promoting universal design, a solution to building and adapting homes for people with disabilities and people as they age. The designs are attractive and usable by as many people as possible regardless of age, ability or situation.

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MEDIA INVITE

WHAT: Volunteers renovate the Salvation Army Senior Center (also known as Asylum Hill Senior Center)

WHEN: Saturday, March 1

- **9 a.m.** AARP and Rebuilding volunteers arrive, renovations begin
- **11 a.m.** Asylum Hill Congregational Church volunteers arrive
- **10:30 to 11:30 a.m.** best time for coverage to get all 30 volunteers in action
- **Noon** lunch, good time to interview volunteers
- **12:20 p.m.** Greg Secord, RTH, and Brenda Kelley, AARP, and others will speak more about the partnership and their organizations
- **12:30** Volunteers will be served slices of AARP 50th birthday cake
- **3 p.m.** Volunteers stop for the day

WHERE: 120 Sigourney St., Hartford

WHO: More than 300 seniors use the services at the senior center and will benefit from the safety, improved accessibility and efficiency modifications completed by the volunteers and contractors

RSVP: Greg Secord, executive director, Rebuilding Together Hartford, gsecord@rthartford.org, (860) 757-9428; Charles Botts III, AARP Livable Communities consultant, cbotts@aarp.org; (860) 548-3185.

Rebuilding Together Hartford, Inc., is a non-profit, non-sectarian, volunteer organization dedicated to helping low-income homeowners, through home renovation and repair. Its goal is to keep people living in warmth, safety and independence, while helping to build better neighborhoods in Hartford. For more information, visit www.rthartford.org.

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan membership organization that helps people 50+ have independence, choice and control in ways that are beneficial and affordable to them and society as a whole. We produce AARP The Magazine, published bimonthly; AARP Bulletin, our monthly newspaper; AARP Segunda Juventud, our bimonthly magazine in Spanish and English; NRTA Live & Learn, our quarterly newsletter for 50+ educators; and our website, AARP.org. AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. We have staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

I received a call today the senior has been in the neighborhood for more than 30 years prior to 2001. Volunteers will be arriving at 9am.

Greg, Brenda and representatives from the other partners will be on hand to give interviews.
The day should wrap up around 3pm.