

## Dream team: Volunteers restore Betty's Dream patio, gardens

By Adam Leech  
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PORTSMOUTH – When Don Cayo saw the baseboards on an outdoor patio bend underneath the wheelchair of one of his fellow residents at Betty's Dream, he knew something was wrong.

“It started sagging. I said ‘Bob come back here.’ I went on it myself and just jumped a little and it went boing, boing, boing,” said Cayo, who moved to the independent-living facility eight years ago after suffering a brain injury. “I said whoa. That’s how this project got started.”

The next day Cayo went back to work at Home Depot, where he’s worked as an associate for six years, and asked for help. With the help of Jen McFarland, co-captain of Team Depot, the store’s associate-led volunteer program, the Portsmouth team secured a \$4,200 grant from the Home Depot Foundation to replace the patio.



The patio is set back into a wooded area at the end of Longmeadow Lane next to the parking lot for Betty's Dream / Rainbow Apartments. “Sherman’s Woods” was built more than a decade ago for people using wheelchairs to sit under a tall forest canopy.

Nearly two dozen Team Depot members from Portsmouth and North Hampton spent Sunday morning ripping apart the old patio and all of Monday putting it back together. This time, composite decking was used which should prevent a similar issue from happening again for quite some time.

“It has an extremely long lifespan. So it should hold up,” said Bill Gladhill, a Team Depot member working Monday. “We have people cleaning up the gardens here as well.”

Every Home Depot retail store in the U.S., Canada and Mexico has a Team Depot program and volunteers. All of the time spent on the project is volunteered by the employees. Some of the employees spent Sunday cleaning up Wallis Sands Beach in Rye as well.

“Its fun for us because you get to work with other stores and you get outside; it’s more relaxed,” said McFarland. “It’s been a lot of hard work, but it’s been fun.”