



Lowe's and Habitat for Humanity volunteers clean up some of the front yards at the King Arthurs Mobile Home Estates on Saturday.



Habitat for Humanity volunteers Vivian Muniz, 19, and Sheri Wijegunawardena, 21, paint a mailbox at the mobile home park in Riverside.

HELPING HANDS

90 volunteers of all ages helped spruce up a mobile home park in Riverside.

By TOM SHERIDAN
STAFF WRITER

Residents of King Arthurs Mobile Home Estates who were up early Saturday morning might have noticed the hum of activity emanating from the area around the clubhouse.

A little before 8 a.m., some 90 volunteers were in the process of gathering to clean, trim, rake and paint — in general, spruce up — 15 residences at the mobile home park, just a stone's throw from the 60 freeway near the 91 interchange in Riverside.

The project was coordinated by Habitat For Humanity, which is no stranger to the neighborhood.

"This is one of the parks we regularly work in," said Kathy Michalak, executive director of the local Habitat For Humanity chapter. "We have a really good relationship with this park."

More than half of the volunteers were employees of Lowe's stores. Myrna Vega, a Lowe's store manager, helped coordinate the project and gather the volunteers.

"We love going out into the communities, not only where we work but also where we live," Vega said. "So we can help people love where they live."

Other volunteers came from Habitat for Humanity chapters at Ramona High School and UC Riverside. Funding for the project included a \$25,000 grant from Lowe's for Habitat's Women Build Week program.

Michalak referred to this as a minor operation. Crews painted mailboxes, trimmed bushes, pulled weeds from flower beds and raked rock gardens.

The term one of the Lowe's volunteers used to describe the effort was "curb appeal."

As the crews hit the streets, Mike Buchanan took charge of a handful of high school students paint-



The community's assistant manager estimated that nearly half of the 201 units at King Arthurs Mobile Home Estates have been repainted through the efforts of Habitat for Humanity and its partners.

PHOTOS: FRANK BELLINO, STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER



Volunteer Felcia Singuimani sweeps up one of the front yards at the King Arthurs Mobile Home Estates.



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the red flag. You want to trim the tape.

"And when you leave, you want to clean up your mess. Even though it takes a little bit longer."

Michalak said that Habitat for Humanity has conducted house-painting projects at the mobile home park in the past through its "A Brush With Kindness" program. Louie Sanchez, the community's assistant manager, estimated that nearly half of the park's 201 units have been repainted.

"The park looks so different now than it did five years ago," Michalak said.

Park resident Derrell Duncan, 87, came out to check on the volunteers working on the unit next to his. Noticing they were having a little trouble reaching the top of an 8-foot bush, he offered the crew his ladder.

Duncan, a retired electrician, appreciated the effort. "It makes everything look neater," he said.

ing mailboxes.

The 58-year-old Moreno Valley resident is a professional maintenance man: painting, landscaping, you name it.

Buchanan has a professional's eye for detail, instructing the crew as it taped off the post and wood platform on which the mailbox sat, and demonstrating proper spray-painting tech-

nique.

Apply the paint lightly. Don't hold the nozzle too close. Let it dry. Then go over it again.

"Everything's done like you want at your own house," said Buchanan, as the students moved on to the next house on the block. "You want it done neat. You want to scrape (the flaking paint). You want to make sure there's no black on