

Scouts make life for others a little more pleasant

By KIRK MOORE
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For families who have left their own homes suddenly, the new patio at their temporary home is a space to relax in fair weather, stretch out on the new furniture and even fire up the barbecue.

It was all built in a weekend by a group of Scouts, with professional help, in a project that Kyle Reid, 13, of Boy Scout Troop 52 in Toms River planned out as his community work toward his Eagle Scout rank.

Kyle said he got the idea after reading a newspaper story about Dottie's House, a shelter for abused women and their children that had just opened its new facility in Brick on March 1.

He called Debbie Galletta, the program director for Dottie's House, and asked how he could help. She said they would like an outdoor patio, and Kyle agreed to undertake the project.

"He and I talked on the phone, and he came to our facility," Galletta said. Once the ground had been regraded and was level, Kyle came back with a measuring tape. He laid out a 14-by-20 foot patio area and 4-by-10 foot walkway.

"It gives them an area to enjoy the outdoors and have barbecues," Kyle said. He didn't have construction experience himself, but knew someone who did — Bill Ball of Ball Landscape Construction, a father whose son E.W. is in Cub Scout Pack 57 from Cedar Grove Elementary School, along with Kyle's younger brother Hunter.

Before he approached Ball, Kyle contacted Anchor Concrete Products of Brick to describe his project and ask if the company could donate pavers, the finished concrete blocks for the patio surface. It took "a bunch of phone calls" and company officials told Kyle they would be pleased to help him.

After discussing the project with Ball, Kyle next made a call to A.C. Hesse Contractors, a paving company in the area, which provided the fine sand and base materials to prepare a bed for the pavers.

"It took me a few months to plan this all out," he said. Still, he had to scramble at the end when several last-minute needs became apparent. He made some more phone calls with essentially one word: Help.

"At the last minute, a day before the project was to begin, I realized I needed a Dumpster



Boy Scouts from Troop 52 of Toms River work on a patio at Dottie's House in Brick. The construction was organized by 13-year-old Kyle Reid (kneeling, center) as his Eagle Scout project. (PHOTO: COURTESY OF KYLE REID)

(Seaside Park). I asked for a roll-off (container) for the next day and they took the time to help me at short notice," Kyle recalled in a written summary of the project. "Bedrock Stone & Supply Co. (Lakewood) and the Ocean County Recycling Center also came through at the last minute when we realized we were short on sand" and base material.

On top of that, he could see the project would take more than a day, and the weather would be warm. He made more calls to local ShopRite and Foodtown supermarkets and a Subway shop, where managers set him up with donated food, drinks and gift cards to keep his crew fed and hydrated.

The Scouts and their adult advisers spent the first day digging and leveling the site.

"They started June 1, on a Friday afternoon. Kyle and his guys came here, and they had the materials dropped at the site," Galletta said. "They were here bright and early Saturday morning, and didn't get finished until around 7 o'clock in the evening. They did a beautiful



From left: Hunter Reid, Stephen Kendrick, Mike Petersen, George Reid Jr., Kyle Reid, Eddie Pajus and Bill Ball, who worked on and completed the project last month.