

## GOOD NEWS

# Hearts and Hammers set for first renovation project for Calgary couple

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**Peter Howard shakes hands with Dave Bonk of Hearts and Hammers, the organization that has chosen the home of Peter and his wife Debbie for its inaugural renovation project, kicking off this fall. Photo courtesy Hearts and Hammers**

The renovation of a southeast Calgary home means two dreams are coming true.

When Dave Bonk began the not-for-profit agency Hearts and Hammers, helping people like Peter and Debbie Howard was exactly what he wanted to do.

And for the Howards, who have been married more than 40 years and want to live together as long as possible despite health issues threatening to keep them apart, Bonk's group is exactly what they need.

Hearts and Hammers aims to provide a major home renovation project for one household each year.

"We're seeing a great need out there," said Bonk.

"Accessibility issues are something we're seeing."

The renovation projects, to be awarded to families who are in need of home repairs or upgrades but who are unable to make them happen for various reasons, are intended to create safe, positive and sustainable living environments.

The group also does smaller-scale work in homes, such as repairing leaking pipes, said Bonk.

The Howards are the recipients of the first major renovation project, valued at about \$40,000, after being nominated earlier this year.

Peter suffers from multiple sclerosis while Debbie has been in and out of hospitals for several years due to injuries sustained in a car crash.

Most recently, she's been in the hospital for the past 16 months.

With carpet throughout part of their McKenzie Towne home, getting around is tough in wheelchairs or walkers, said Bonk.

"She wouldn't be able to come home to it the way that it is," said Bonk of Debbie.

"(Peter) is trying to create a way."

Peter's own difficulties and the accessibility issues at their home meant Debbie might have to move to an assisted living facility.

Among the work to be done at the Howards' home is the installation of hard-surface flooring to make the home wheelchair friendly, cabinet repairs, the addition of bars in the bathrooms, better storage and new paint and baseboards, said Bonk.

"Mr. Howard is so thankful and we really get the impact that this is going to have for them," he said.

"It's very fulfilling."

The project is expected to get underway Nov. 1.

For more information, visit [heartsandhammers.ca](http://heartsandhammers.ca)

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