



Appleton
Post-Crescent
Wisconsin

SEARCH
ALL

All [Local News](#) [News Archive](#) [Calendar](#) [More »](#)



SPONSORED
BY:

[HOME](#) [NEWS](#) [SPORTS](#) [LIVING](#) [ENTERTAINMENT](#) [VIEWS](#) [MULTIMEDIA](#) [OBITUARIES](#) [WEATHER](#) [BUY SELL SHOP](#) [CUSTOMER SERVICE](#) [SUBSCRIBE NOW](#)



Comment, blog & share photos
[Log in](#) | [Become a member](#) | [Search people](#)

POWERED BY YOU AND **THE POST-CRESCENT**

A company comes together to help a woman fulfill her and her late husband's renovation dream

BY KARA PATTERSON • POST-CRESCENT STAFF WRITER • AUGUST 11, 2009

[Print this page](#) [E-mail this article](#) [Share](#)

When Debbie Nelsen sits under the tall, leafy chestnut tree in her yard at 202 E. North St. near downtown Appleton, she has a clear view of the garage her late husband, Dale, designed.

ADVERTISEMENT Dale, who worked as an architect at the Appleton-based Consolidated Construction Co., meticulously had calculated the distance between the rays of a sunburst in a brick-red triangle where the garage's roof comes to a point.

Last summer the couple had to put on hold their 24-year process of renovating their property and Victorian-style home, a former multifamily residence that Debbie estimates to be more than 110 years old. Dale had received a diagnosis of cancer, which spread throughout his body over the course of a year.

Dale died at age 55 on May 28, the couple's wedding anniversary. He had continued to work at Consolidated Construction up until about a week and a half before his death.

"Dale, he would tackle anything," said Debbie, 55. "The house was a total rental. It was almost like a giant boarding house, in a way. But I remember when I saw the house feeling like it was everything that I wanted. It was kind of like I really felt it was supposed to be our house. The renovation, it was out of necessity but we enjoyed it."

Inside the garage one recent afternoon, a carpenter cut wood into boards to correct mismatched flooring in Debbie's dining room. His work is part of Consolidated Construction's Finish the Dream project. The company's employees and subcontractors are picking up where Dale left off, partnering with Debbie to complete most of the renovations on the Nelsen family home by Sept. 1.

Consolidated Construction president Rick Bickert said Dale was a person who "walked his talk."

"We all knew Dale had an older home and we knew he was in the process constantly of trying to fix it up," Bickert said. "He would give help all the time, but he was never the kind to ask for help. We wanted to show what kind of effect that has on people. We just wanted to continue Dale's legacy. When a lot of people get together it isn't even really work."



Duwayne Krause of Consolidated Construction Co. works on the home of Debbie Nelsen of Appleton. Post-Crescent photo by Kirk Wagner

[buy photo](#) | [zoom](#)

HOW TO HELP

Consolidated Construction Co. has pledged to match dollar for dollar, up to \$20,000, any community contributions to the Nelsen Family Fund by May 28. The funds are intended to help offset the Nelsen family's medical bills and other expenses. Make checks out to the Nelsen Family Fund and mail them to: Attn: Tiffany La Pointe, Nelsen Family Fund, 4300 N. Richmond St., Appleton, WI 54913-9704.

People also can make in-kind or volunteer contributions to the company's Finish the Dream initiative. Employees and others are completing renovations to the Nelsen family home at 202 E. North St., Appleton. For material donation and volunteer inquiries, contact La Pointe at 920-882-2553 or tlapointe@consolidated-const.com.

Related Topics

- [Places - Appleton, WI](#)
- [Life - Home Listing, Home](#)

Contextual linking provided by Topix

More Local News Headlines

- [Story, slideshow: The King in Hortonville](#) (4)
- [Brewers' Suppan to start for Rattlers on Saturday](#)
- [Guitar legend Les Paul, a Waukesha native, dies at age 94](#) (2)
- [Photos: Perseid meteor shower](#)
- [Baby killed in horse-drawn buggy crash](#)

1 | 2 [Next Page](#)

Kara Patterson: 920-993-1000, ext. 215, or kpatterson@postcrescent.com

In Your Voice | [READ REACTIONS TO THIS STORY](#)

[Hide Comments](#)

characters left