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Making a big difference –

One family at a time

It was the straw that broke the camel's back, so to speak, and reduced a Colt couple to tears of joy.

That was the scene Thursday afternoon, Sept. 14, when Bert Oswald Reeves and his wife, Linda Sue, received a phone call from a Forrest City merchant asking when would be the best time to deliver a new refrigerator to their mobile home in the community about midway between Wynne and Forrest City.

Reeves noted later, "I didn't have any idea we'd be getting a refrigerator. Nobody mentioned that. But the guy told us we were. We just couldn't believe it."

That "guy" was Ronald Martin, coordinator for the Crowley's Ridge Development Council's Weatherization department branch office in Wynne.

The refrigerator surprise was just the first in a string of unexpected developments the couple has been enjoying for the past two weeks as CRDC and Entergy partnered to provide some much needed improvements.

It all began when Betty Cole of Colt, secretary of the CRDC Board of Directors, answered the call by the Reeves as part of her position with ElderCare in Forrest City.

The summer temperatures had passed the 100 degree mark and the Reeves had no air conditioning.

Ms. Cole decided to contact

Mike Davis, customer service manager for Entergy in Wynne.

At the Reeves residence Thursday morning, Davis related how he had come to view the situation first hand and that when he arrived at the Reeves home, an outdoor thermometer read 106 degrees.

"When the couple came to the door, they were red-faced, perspiring heavily and in obvious discomfort," Davis said. "It was heartbreaking. They needed help, no doubt about it."

Davis explained that the temperature inside the mobile home was stifling and that only fans were in use and they did little more than move

the tepid air about the room.

"We go to the aging (CRDC Senior Center in Wynne) every day to eat and get cool," Bert said. "That's always a good place to go. There's a lot of us old folks who get together there."

He noted that the power loop for the home was totally inadequate and Entergy provided a 200 amp loop so the couple "could use more than one appliance at a time. Before, if they tried to use more than one, the breaker blew."

Davis then took the initiative, seeking out a used air conditioner, finding a technician to clean the unit and make sure it was functional, and then contacting CRDC to see if other help was available. And available it was.

Martin notes that some \$4,000 will have been spent by the time the project is completed (hopefully next week) and that the Reeves will have a much safer, healthier and comfortable home environment.

"Everyone has been great," Mrs. Reeves said with a huge smile. "They have done so much and worked so hard. I just can't believe it all."

Larry Brown, maintenance technician at the Wynne Weatherization office, has been hard at work at the Reeves residence for about a week. He has replaced windows and doors, repaired holes in the roof and floor, added lights in



In the photo above (l to r) Bert Oswald Reeves, Linda Sue Reeves and CRDC Weatherization technician Larry Brown pose in front of Colt home.

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