

Mom establishes foundation to aid disabled children

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As a single mother of two children diagnosed with a form of muscular dystrophy, Lynn Robinette knows firsthand the importance of helping the disabled become independent.

In April 2002, Robinette, of Lawrenceville, formed the Wishes 4 Me Foundation. The nonprofit foundation hopes to help three disabled people become more independent by making wheelchair accessible modifications to a three-bedroom house in Lawrenceville by September. Robinette's two children were diagnosed with Freidriech's Ataxia in September 1996. Her daughter will be one of the home's residents.

"The house is located at 143 Towler Road and was purchased on July 19, and we are finishing up on acquiring the proper permits to proceed with the modifications required to accommodate disabled adults," Robinette said. "This is the first house the foundation has worked on." In its four years, the foundation has also sponsored a Walk for Independence in April and raised \$7,500 for the disabled. In 2004, the foundation also put together and sold cookbooks with 250 to 300 recipes, from which the proceeds went toward helping individuals with disabilities.

Robinette said she realizes it will "take a village to raise the home to where it needs to be in order to make life as comfortable as possible for disabled adults."

"As a single mother with two disabled adult children with no relatives in the state of Georgia, I have seen first-hand their desire to live on their own and have a sense of independence or as much independence they can acquire while they still can," Robinette said. Robinette said the foundation will try to have the modifications completed by the first week of September.

"The initial project will consist of all required modifications to accommodate disabled adults living in the house. There will be additional projects to improve the landscape and shed," she said. "We need all of the volunteers we can get, whether they are skilled or unskilled. We have some plumbing work that needs to be done, tile work, electrical work and much more needed." Robinette's daughter, Robin Cheatwood, and Becca Van Schoick of Athens, who also suffers Friedreich's Ataxia, hope to be residents in this newly purchased house.

"As an adult, no one really wants to live at home," Von Schoick said. "But we are not all fortunate enough to have the option of living on our own, so the (foundation) offers an excellent opportunity for people in my situation to experience normalcy."

Robinette said the new residence for disabled adults can give the tenants a sense of pride, independence and a means to have some form of social life. For more information on the foundation and how to help, call 770-982-0275 or visit www.wishes4me.org.