

# A new roof



Ron Floser (left) and Dawn Torres-Gale holding the plaques Sgt. Shawn Kelly (center) presented them for helping him put a new roof on his home in Millbury.

## Local company donates to help out National Guard member

By KEVIN KOCZWARA

Roofs are expensive and important. A home is not a home without a roof to protect the inhabitant from the weather, especially in New England. Sgt. Seawn Kelly of the National Guard knows all too well how difficult life can be in a home with a leaky roof. And just how expensive a new one is.

Sgt. Kelly was looking at paying between \$6,500 and \$7,000 for a new roof on his home on Wheelock Ave. in Millbury. He couldn't afford to pay that on his monthly income as a National Guard recruiter.

Sgt. Kelly looked elsewhere to receive the funding and help to pay for a new roof in August of 2010. His search for help led him to the New England Chapter of Operation Homefront, a non-profit group dedicated to helping deployed or injured soldiers. Dealing with Operation Homefront didn't yield any answers

directly for Kelly, who is neither injured or deployed, but he did find Dawn Torres-Gale, his Representative and leeway with the non-profit.

"I've been going through Operation Homefront, it's a nice program designed to help veterans, people in deployment, and basically anyone in the military. It's an organization that tries to help us out one by one, on an individual basis," said Sgt. Kelly.

"I sent Dawn a letter saying I had issues with my roof and asking if she could help me replace it. She went above and beyond what she had to do. [The Letter] went from the local agent to the national chapter and the national chapter shot it down. So, she kind of took it on herself to see it through. And she got it done."

Torres-Gale worked tirelessly to get Sgt. Kelly a new roof. His roof was leaking and the snow and ice dams from this past winter didn't make things any easier

for him.

"This past winter it was particularly painful with all the ice dams. I've never been up on that roof more times in the twelve years I've lived here than I was this winter," said Sgt. Kelly.

Because of the ice dams and all of the snow, a contractor who was scheduled to repair the roof fell through. Things looked bleak for Sgt. Kelly, but Torres-Gale, who is a military spouse, never gave up working for him.

"Sgt. Kelly contacted us back in August [of 2010] – so it's been a while – saying he needed a roof. He isn't technically deployed or injured, so our national office said it wasn't going to do anything and it just bothered me," said Torres-Gale. "I'm a military spouse – my husband is in the Coast Guard – and I want to do something for my fellow military."

Torres-Gale approached Flo-Dell Exterior Restoration manager Ron Floser two weeks ago about getting an estimate for the job. Floser said the company would gladly donate the labor for the roof for a military member. With the help of GAF roofing materials and Bradco roofing materials of Worcester, who both donated the building materials needed for the roof, Flo-Dell's workers finished

Sgt. Kelly's new roof for him in one day, May 27.

The opportunity for Flo-Dell was one the company jumped on quickly when it heard Sgt. Kelly was in the military and in need of some resources.

"Every year we try to do something in the community," said Floser. "I'm fortunate enough to be able to do it is about all it is. Business wise we're fine, financially we're fine, so why not do it?"

Sgt. Kelly had plaques made for both Torres-Gale and Flo-Dell for their help in getting his much needed roof finished. The roof was in such poor shape that it needed more repairs than Sgt. Kelly anticipated.

"My roof was in pretty bad shape. It was even worse than I thought," said Sgt. Kelly. "When these guys undid the shingles, there was a bunch of damage underneath and they cut out the rot and basically put a whole new roof up."

No longer will Sgt. Kelly be climbing up on his roof to repair leaks and try to break ice dams, something he isn't a fan of because he doesn't like heights. Thanks to generosity of a few people in the community.



Sgt. Kelly's house during the repairs.