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Save the Shutters Helps Homeowners

Posted by Margaret Evans | Mar 14, 2023 | Culture, Local Color | 0



Allison Bonner & Amanda Denmark

Allison Bonner and Amanda Denmark, local professionals from the architecture industry, have launched Save the Shutters, an initiative whose mission is restoring livability with community.

Save the Shutters is a charitable effort administered by the Community Foundation of the Lowcountry, dedicated to helping homeowners who have been temporarily displaced from their home, or have a barrier to access, due to degradation of the home, or an event that has caused an unsafe/unhealthy living environment, and do not have the means to restore it.

"Save the Shutters works with teams and volunteers in the community to pool resources, time,

donations, and kindness to make this goal achievable," said Allison Bonner, adding, "We work closely with the Town of Bluffton's Neighborhood Assistance Program, and many other charitable groups, to manage the process of which funds can be used, how much is available, and what needs to be supplemented through Save the Shutters."

Bonner is an architect and Denmark is a project manager at Pearce Scott Architects in Old Town Bluffton. While Pearce Scott Architects is one of Save The Shutters' biggest donors, Bonner and Denmark are running the initiative separately from their architecture firm.

The first project (which is still ongoing), located in the Town of Bluffton, initially involved a roof repair after a tree fell on the home close to two years ago. The house had been covered in tarps for a good year while the homeowner fought for a repair.

"She was brought to our attention as someone who had exhausted all avenues and still could not get the complete help she needed," Denmark said.

Bonner and Denmark helped organize the repair — securing a structural engineer to visit the site and a builder to coordinate the project with a roofer and carpenter. Within a month, Save The Shutters and these generous tradespeople helped the homeowner get a new roof, with donations from the goodness of many hearts.

"The issue that we were now faced with was that because of all the water intrusion from the tarp insecurity, the entire house tested positive for mold and it was toxic for anyone to live in," Bonner said.

Most of the local charities around Bluffton do not work with mold removal/remediation, including the Neighborhood Assistance Program. Save the Shutters brought Servpro on board to remove all of the toxic materials and treat the house to make it safe to enter the home.

Once the house was cleaned of all the mold, we had to address the structural damage found due to the age of the home and the tree impact.

"Where we are now: We're working on the foundation and framing in order to stabilize the



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home," Denmark said. "The homeowner is one of the most deserving people in the community. We have a long list of generous people who are ready to donate finishes, appliances, HVAC systems, plumbing, electrical, flooring, etc. just to finish this because they love her so much."

Donations help fund these efforts for many low-income, both newer and generational families, in Bluffton whose contributions to the Lowcountry community have been part of establishing and continuing our wonderful town.

For more information, e-mail savetheshutters@gmail.com.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Margaret Evans

Margaret Evans is the editor of Lowcountry Weekly, where she has been penning her award-winning column, Rants & Raves, for over 20 years. She and her husband Jeff also publish The Island News. Margaret's articles and essays have appeared in magazines and anthologies throughout the South, including 'State of the Heart: South Carolina Writers on the Places They Love,' 'Our Prince of Scribes: Writers Remember Pat Conroy,' and 'Southbound' magazine. She is the former editor of 'Beaufort Magazine' and former editorial assistant to novelist Pat Conroy. The South Carolina Press Association has honored her with 1st place awards for column writing, humor writing, arts writing, and feature writing. As a former English major, Margaret just feels lucky to have a job.

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