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Volunteers move a root ball while helping landscape the yard of John and Michelle McClellan in the Greenbriar community on Saturday. Orr Partners development company selected the McClellans as the first beneficiaries of their "Community Initiative" after the McClellans' middle ...



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Neighbors lend a hand

Fairfax County

By Layla Wilder

Source: Fairfax County Times

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John and Michele McClellan got a yard makeover last weekend thanks to the goodwill of several area businesses.

"We couldn't have asked for a more kind and caring offer from anybody," John McClellan said.

The four-day project at the couple's home in the Greenbriar community began in February, at the wake for the McClellans' middle son Timothy.

Gwen Krahl attended to support her former neighbors and began talking to Michele about her yard.

John McClellan said his wife joked about how much it had been neglected during Timothy's long hospitalization and

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lamented that she would never get a meditation garden.

Weeks later, Krahl and her daughter, Alex Krahl, got their company Orr Partners to revamp the McClellan's yard.

Falls Church-based Orr Partners decided to put more effort into helping the community last Christmas.

"We thought this would be the perfect project to start with," Gwen Krahl, an administrative assistant at Orr, said.

A yard once covered in patchy grass, rocks and dead leaves is now graced with a new fence, trees, boxwoods, daylilies and new bulbs.

Falls Church's DPR Construction, Ruppert Nurseries and Century Fence Construction also brought volunteers and supplies.

"We try to take every possibility to give back to the community," said Ron White, DPR's project executive. "When we heard what this project was about, we were more than glad to help."

"Michele now has a whole yard for a medication garden," McClellan said.

Timothy McClellan went into the hospital in October with a severe head injury after he was assaulted in a tavern in Frederick, Md.

The trauma his body suffered from the attack killed him in February. He was 24 years old.

"We can't figure out the reason he has died, but so many people have been so kind," John McClellan said.

John and Michele have two other sons, John and Joseph.

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