

GERALD McLAUGHLIN

Mentions in [The Daily Herald-Tribune](#), Grande Prairie, Alberta, Canada

Handyman volunteers time

By MARG SMART
of our staff

When something needs a little attention at Odyssey House all that's needed is a quick call to Gerald McLaughlin.

Mr. McLaughlin volunteers about 15 to 40 hours a month at the hostel as a maintenance man. He fixes the plumbing, maintains the furnace, does structural repairs, fixes appliances, maintains the yard, does minor carpentry work and "just about anything you want to name."

"Whatever I can do is what it amounts to," Mr. McLaughlin said.



Gerald McLaughlin

As well as regularly checking on the equipment and the building he also responds to emergency calls as soon as possible.

"They were looking for volunteers so I went down there to check it out and they needed someone for maintenance. So I volunteered," Mr. McLaughlin said.

He has worked at the hostel for about one year.

Odyssey House is a 21-bed hostel open to women, with or without children, who are in need. The hostel began as Kroken House in June of 1980 and was relocated and named Odyssey House in the summer of 1981. Half the occupants of the hostel are battered women and children but the home also houses women who, for other reasons, are in need of an immediate place to live.

Mr. McLaughlin was born and raised in Bezanson and is still a resident of that town. He is a mechanic with R. Angus in Grande Prairie and usually finds time to do the maintenance work for Odyssey House after work. Helping people is second nature to Mr. McLaughlin.

Volunteer of the Week

"If somebody needs help, I help," he said. And that can mean anything from fixing a door to driving someone to the hospital from Bezanson in an emergency.

When Mr. McLaughlin has time left over from his volunteer work and his job as a mechanic he enjoys reading. History, politics and science are his favorite subjects.