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Wilson dreams of all the ways he can help improve his friend Gigi's house so that she'll be warm, comfortable, and happy.

One day, friends and neighbors from all over come to help make Wilson's plans come true. Everyone volunteers to pitch in to make Gigi's house safe, clean, and pretty.

Inspired by a friend's volunteerism, author Julia Durango tells a story of community and togetherness, showing that by helping others we help ourselves. Further information about Labor of Love, United Way, and Habitat for Humanity is included at the end of the book.

The One Day House Details

Date : Published August 15th 2017 by Charlesbridge Publishing (first published 2017)

ISBN : 9781580897099

Author : Julia Durango , Bianca Diaz (Illustrator)

Format : Hardcover 32 pages

Genre : Childrens, Picture Books, Family, Fiction

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From Reader Review The One Day House for online ebook

Elisabeth says

I absolutely adored the illustrations in this book, especially those “drawn” by the protagonist. It’s incredibly sweet each time he mentions an improvement he wants to make to his Gigi’s house, but the fact that they actually transpire is absolutely heartwarming.

Dulce says

Wilbur, a young Latino boy, teaches us that you can make a difference, no matter how old you are, by bringing together his friends and neighbors to repair the house of his elderly friend Gigi. When Wilbur sees a sign on the outside window of the local café for “Building up Neighbors”, he begins to tell Gigi and people in the neighborhood his plans on the changes and repairs he would like to see done to Gigi’s home one day. When that day comes, everyone Wilbur has shared his plans with shows up to make Gigi’s house safe and beautiful again.

The illustrations in this book are a beautiful representation of a small low-income neighborhood, where the ice cream man’s truck has flavors in Spanish and English and you can see one of the neighbors collecting cans in a shopping cart. The details in these illustrations add to the story itself, such as Wilbur being in a Bilingual classroom because of the Spanish and English labels around the classroom, as well as help visualize Wilbur’s ideas when hand-drawn illustrations of some of his plans are shown.

This would be a great book for students K-3 who are learning about making a difference, their community, and helping others.

Amy Layton says

Do you want to cry like a little baby? Do you want your heart to be so full of joy that it almost actually explodes? Do you want affirmation that there's something good in the world? If so, this book is for you. It pieces together hope, love, and community action in a way that's sweet, endearing, and positive. This book shows that we can make the world a better place because we can, no questions asked, for nothing in return. It's a beautiful book with an even more beautiful message. This should not only find a place on your bookshelf, but in your heart, too.

[Review cross-listed here!](#)

Kay Carman says

Lovely new picture book about a little boy who dreams of making life better for an elderly neighbor by making repairs to her home, planting a garden, and mending her piano. As he shares that dream with others in their neighborhood, a cadre of helpers, caring souls with good hearts, join forces to make the dream come true.

I especially liked the author's note who described the annual Labor of Love event held in LaSalle County, Illinois, that served as the inspiration for the story. She refers readers to Habitat for Humanity and United Way for ideas of how they can be of help in a similar manner.

Linda says

A young boy wants to do so much for his grandmother and not only does he wish these things, he draws a picture of them. Bianca Diaz creates the illustrations in her own style, but in the boy's youthful style too. The boy Wilson says, "One day, I will paint your house orange and yellow like the sun." Gigi, the grandmother smiled. "I will like that. But today, you are all the sunshine I need." The story continues with more of Wilson's wishes and at the end, there is a big surprise.

Julia Durango tells there is a story behind this story about a tradition in her small town called "Labor of Love Day" where many volunteer to fix the needs of some repairs in their homes. She adds links to Habitat for Humanity and other similar organizations.

Stephanie Bange says

An inspiring story of kindness and helping your neighbor.

Wilson expresses his altruistic ambition to help Gigi fix up her house to everyone he meets. While Gigi seems happy as she is, she is overwhelmed when many people in their community show up and repair her house. Durango's tale was inspired by a friend who helps similar events happen in their community. Her debut book, Bianca Diaz successfully uses mixed media to visually tell the story, as it occurs in a very diverse neighborhood.

Hopefully this will inspire some young people to action!

Elizabeth says

Minh Lê's "Best Picture Books of 2017" gave this an Honorable Mention for "Best Surprise."

Young Wilson tells a neighborhood elder Gigi about how "one day" he will do things to improve the house she lives in. It's very sweet -- accompanied by childlike drawings of his plans -- and she affirms him while also affirming that being with him right now is joy enough. I really appreciated the multiracial community we see throughout the pages and then oh! The unexpected ending is so sweet! I almost got teary!

Pamela says

Recently I've been blessed, reading a good many gorgeously illustrated, heartfelt and purposeful children's picture books that make my heart sing with hope and joy. Hope for all the little ones who will soon become the next generation of leaders. And joy for us grandparents who get to watch it happen.

A young grandson, has big beautiful dreams for making life a better, brighter place for his grandmother. Orange and yellow paint for her house. Bold colorful flowers. Tasty vegetables in a garden plot. Sturdy stairs and new shingles too. Grandmother is happy to enjoy her grandson, making him a priority, despite the needs she has. Yes, she'd love the things he suggests, but she's resigned to make do.

Then one day

Dreams sometimes do come true . . . with helping hands and giving hearts.

FIVE ***** Children's Literature that Warms the Heart AND Instills Hope, Paying it Forward *****
STARS

Kaci Noyes says

This is a great story about how a young boy wants to make a better home for an older woman named Gigi. He has many suggestions, though some may not be realistic, but he is not able to do this on his own. One day, he gains support of the whole community and they are able to make a dream home for Gigi.

I thought this was a very cute book and I loved how it was intergenerational. Most children's book involve kids doing things for other kids, but this was much more than that. I also loved how the entire community comes together to do something great. It is very inspirational.

This could be used in the classroom as a lesson on helping other and how you don't have to do it alone. It is sometimes best to come together to do something kind for someone else. This could be followed by a class community project.

Brenda Kahn says

A lovely read aloud about altruism and community spirit. Also a beautiful example of friendship between an elderly person and a child. Vibrant mixed media art.

Ms. B says

A book about helping your neighbors, this would be a great book for promoting Habitat for Humanity or Doing Good Together.

Tasha says

Wilson wishes that one day he will be able to help Gigi in many ways. He says that one day he will paint her house yellow like the sun, but Gigi assures him that he is all the sunshine she needs. Wilson wants to build a fence for her yard, fix her stairs so she can climb them again, fix her piano so it can be played once more. He wants to create a garden for her and fix her roof. There are so many things to fix and Wilson can't do them

by himself. Luckily though, Wilson asks for help and the community turns out to help Gigi and have Wilson's wishes for her come true.

Inspired by an action day in the community the author lives in, this book shows the power of community to help the elderly and those with disabilities live in safe and functional homes. Details on this sort of community involvement is offered in the Author's Note at the end of the book. The young character in the book discovers the program at the beginning and has to wait several months and seasons for the help to come. There is no quick fix here, it's people coming together to make a difference.

The illustrations are rich and bright, showing Wilson's own art as well as depicting the friendship between young and old vividly. Done in watercolor, gouache and acrylic, the art is filled with the bright colors of an urban setting, lit by a sunlit sky.

A call to communities to come together, this picture book is inspiring. Appropriate for ages 4-6.

Meg says

Julia Durango's new picture book about caring for neighborhood friends is about Wilson, who wants to fix up the house of his elderly neighbor, Gigi. With the assistance of his community friends, Wilson is able to help Gigi have a better home. The Bianca Diaz illustrations are perfect using many artistic ways (watercolor, gouache, acrylic, india ink, pencils, crayons, markers and handmade paper) to portray aging community buildings. The author cites the "labor of love" in her La Salle County, Illinois where local relief charities with the help of Habitat for Humanity and The United Way are making repair of needy homes a priority! This story is inspirational for children and adults of all ages to help their neighbors! (Grades K-2 Picture Book.)

Jana says

Wilson promises Gigi, an elderly lady who lives in his neighborhood, that one day he will fix all of the broken things in her old house. When the day finally arrives, the little boy and a small army of neighbors show up with sleeves rolled up and love in their hearts. This awesome picture book is an inspiration to everyone to serve their neighbors. In a world where there is so much bad news, this wonderful story reminds us the importance of being connected to each other. The last page has an author's note describing her own community's efforts to help elderly neighborhoods and ways readers can try similar efforts in their own cities.

Vickie says

This is a book with a heartfelt story based on a boy determining that he will help his grandma repair things inside and outside of her home "one day". The community, which seems at first passively, verbally supportive, surprises the grandmother by showing up in her yard "one day" and helping her with all the things that need repair and improvement. It is very simple, but incredibly positive message and also a joy to read.

The author's inspiration for the book is her friend who for the past 15 years participated in "our community's annual Labor of Love event, a day each fall where hundreds of volunteers come together to help repair the homes of the elderly, disabled, and needy....Roofs are patched, windows are replaced, boilers are fixed, trees are trimmed - whatever needs doing gets done. Local businesses donated building supplies, and church and charity groups work together to feed the volunteers throughout the day. It truly is a labor of love - an amazing display of human compassion and generosity at its best."

This book was awarded a 2018 Ezra Jack Keats, New Illustrator Honor.
