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- Other Top Leaders

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- Today in DoD
- News Releases
- Press Advisories
- Transcripts
- Audio Clips

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- Imagery Archive
- Highlights
- Photo Essays
- Week in Photos

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- Recovery Act
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First Lady, Soldiers Welcome Extreme Home Makeover

By Stephenie Tatum
Fort Bragg Public Affairs

FAYETTEVILLE, N.C., July 21, 2011 – A former sailor who houses homeless female veterans here received the surprise of her life today when hundreds of workers and well-wishers – including First Lady Michelle Obama – were on hand as she became the latest winner on the Extreme Makeover: Home Edition show.



Eleanor B. Raines, a former Steps N Stages Jubilee House resident, hugs Barbara Summey Marshall, a Navy veteran and women veteran's shelter director who was selected to receive a new home from the Extreme Makeover: Home Edition television show. U.S. Army photo by Stephenie Tatum (Click photo for screen-resolution image);high-resolution image available.

The ABC-TV reality show's host Ty Pennington, as well as design crew, workers and volunteers have been at the home at 120 Langdon St. for 24 hours each day for the past seven days, working to finish the house on time. Between scorching temperatures and a grueling schedule, workers were put to the test.

Barbara Summey Marshall, a 15-year Navy veteran, bought the house with the hopes of providing shelter, support and services such as mentoring and life coaching to homeless female veterans. Just a week ago, Marshall was struggling to house the women in the modest, 1,600- square-foot ranch house that was in need of major renovations.

But when the Extreme Makeover crew showed up at her house on July 14, Marshall knew that some very special volunteers would donate their time to help build her a new home.

Today, those volunteers turned out en masse with none other than Obama at the front of those congratulating Marshall and wishing her well.

"The fact that [Obama] came to Fayetteville to take part in this phenomenal project confirms how passionate she is about people, women and veterans," said Master Sgt. Jennifer Loredo, Comprehensive Soldier Fitness noncommissioned officer in charge, 18th Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, N.C.

In the end, the builder met its deadline and Pennington and crew, along with hundreds of volunteers and local residents, revealed the new and extremely improved Steps N Stages Jubilee House today with the show's shout out, "Bus driver, move that bus!"

Marshall's new house now includes enough space for her to move in with her son, and space for additional residents to live comfortably. It includes a gym, garden, greenhouse, resource center and more than Marshall ever dreamed of.

Staff Sgt. Ebony Dublin, a Smithfield, N.C. native and supply sergeant at Fort Bragg's Advanced Airborne School volunteered during the week and attended the reveal.

"I was more than happy to volunteer my time because that could be me one day. I think it is great that Barbara spends her time helping people, so now that someone is taking the time to help her – it's awesome," Dublin said.

In addition to her stop in Fayetteville, Obama will continue to promote "Joining Forces," a national initiative that mobilizes all sectors of American society to support service members and their families. Her next stop will be July 24 at a New Hampshire event for National Guard and Reserve families.

"This campaign is about all of us -- all of us joining together as Americans to give back to the extraordinary military families who serve and sacrifice so much every day so we can live in freedom and security," Obama said during an event earlier this year.

The first lady and Dr. Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden, have made numerous appearances to further the program's reach.

Obama's last visit to the Fort Bragg area was in March 2009 for her first tour outside the White House after becoming first lady.

"I had the distinct honor and pleasure of, not only, meeting Mrs. Obama today but also shooting a few scenes with her for Extreme Makeover Home Edition, Loredo said. "She was very genuine and expressed her gratitude for my family's sacrifice, as I am a Gold Star wife. I am extremely grateful for this opportunity and will never forget it."

The Extreme Makeover: Home Edition show featuring the Jubilee House is scheduled to air in October.

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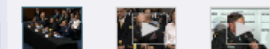
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1-3 of 17

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Extreme Makeover: Home Edition cast member Paul DiMeo speaks with a Fort Bragg parachute demonstration team member at the home of Barbara Marshall, a Navy veteran and women veteran's shelter director, July 14, 2011, Fayetteville, N.C. Marshall was selected to receive a new home on the show for her Steps N Stages Jubilee House. U.S. Army photo by Stephenie Tatum

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ABC television *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* star Ty Pennington lead cast members, Fort Bragg soldiers and community volunteers to the home of Barbara Marshall, July 14, 2011 in Fayetteville, N.C. Marshall, a 15-year Navy veteran, runs a women veteran's shelter in Fayetteville

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