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## Rally builds support for 'Extreme Makeover' - Fayetteville



Staff photo by James Robinson

Hundreds of people attended the 'Extreme Makeover: Home Edition' pep rally Thursday at the Crown Coliseum.

By Amneris Solano  
Staff writer

The countdown to "team extreme" has begun.

The "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" TV crew rolled into the Crown Coliseum on Thursday to kick off next week's construction of a dream home for one deserving family. Hundreds of people attended the pep rally to generate support for the build.

The reality program, which airs on ABC, uses the help of volunteers and donations to make the family's wish come true. Senior producer Milan Vasic said it is through the community's support that the show is able to perform the miracle of building a house in 106 hours.

"It takes an entire community to step up," Vasic told the crowd. "I think at the end of the day, what the show is looking for are heroes, and heroes come in many, many forms. Right here in Fayetteville, you have heroes everywhere."

The rally provided a platform for show producers to ask for volunteers to come forward by giving their time or donating money or supplies for the project. The show is looking for items such as laptops

and skilled workers such as masons and fence and deck installers.

"If you've not signed up to volunteer, please get involved," said Chip Smith, president and chief executive officer of Blue Ridge Log Cabins of South Carolina.

"Extreme Makeover" chose Blue Ridge to design and build the Fayetteville home for an episode to air this fall during the show's ninth season. The lucky family has been selected from thousands of nominees. Five Fayetteville families are being considered for the home.



Staff photo by James Robinson

"It takes an entire community to step up," Milan Vasic, senior producer of 'Extreme Makeover: Home Edition,' said at the Crown Coliseum on Thursday. "I think at the end of the day, what the show is looking for are heroes, and heroes come in many, many forms."

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**Fort Bragg Life**

The selected family won't be revealed until July 14, when host Ty Pennington arrives at their doorstep accompanied by hundreds of volunteers wearing blue shirts and hard hats.

Mayor Tony Chavonne, who spoke at the rally, said having "Extreme Makeover" film in Fayetteville is a coup for the city.

"We have the opportunity to really put Fayetteville on the map with this project," Chavonne told the crowd.

Many of the people who attended the rally already had signed up to help with the build.

Denise Luto, a home health aide who lives in Fayetteville, came with her 21-year-old son, Andre Weathers. The pair said they plan to help out any way they can.

"I watch 'Extreme Makeover' every week," Luto said. "I love volunteer work and helping out. As long as I can do it, I will do it. I'm glad they're helping somebody here that really really needs it."

Owen Clark, a retired Army chief warrant officer, came prepared by already wearing his hard hat. Clark, who lives in Fayetteville, said the hat - decorated with a bald eagle and stars and stripes - shows his patriotic side.

"I bought it several years ago. I help with projects like Operation Inasmuch," Clark said. "I like (the show). I don't watch it all the time. But I have seen it. I do enjoy it."

The rally served as an orientation of sorts for volunteers. Vasic introduced the audience to the show's behind-the-scenes staff and explained the logistics of the project. He also told the story of the program's history, showing video clips from the series, which has been on the air since January 2004.

"One of the greatest things the show does is be an ambassador for good," Vasic said. "You can make a difference when we come together."

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