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**Extreme Construction
'Reveal' Set Monday
Local Family Coming
To New Home**

By ROB CHAPMAN

PRINCE EDWARD — So what are the odds of getting selected for a new home through ABC's *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*?

Almost lottery-esque.

According to the show's Executive Producer, Denise Cramsey, about 5,000 letters and tapes are received every week.

With 52 weeks in the year, that translates into 260,000 requests which makes the odds particularly long considering only 25 episodes are filmed a year.

Still, for Michael and Jean Lucas and their two sons, the odds didn't matter. The family, which has been sent on vacation to Florida earlier this week, is scheduled to return to Rice Monday and see their new home for the first time.

Lucas, a specialist with Charlie Co. 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry of the Virginia National Guard, is serving in Iraq. He was, however, flown home Monday and the couple, in a coordinated announcement, were told they were selected for a new home.

The family had lived in a rental home in Darlington Heights. Lucas had started, but not completed, a home in Rice.

"The first criterion, whenever we choose any family, is that they need to have a home," Ms. Cramsey said, also adding, "So right away with the Lucas family and the fact that Dad had started building their dream home before he was deployed and so then unable to finish it, that really spoke to us as sort of the perfect marriage, if you will.

"...We love to do military families. We consider it our way of giving back for the sacrifices they make. And, the fact that this particular family needed to finish their dream home, which is our business, it seems like a good marriage."

Ms. Cramsey also said what she thought was "neat about Dad in particular in this story is his love of history and his embracing the history of this area and his love of this land. And...he has all these great stories about what happened on this property or in this field or that. And, so I think it's going to be especially nice for him to see all the people from this community coming together and trying to help out his family. It really is something to see and we have a ton of volunteers who have contacted us and signed up so it's going to be a busy week."

Ms. Cramsey estimated that the show would air in April or May.

The Site

Work kicked into full gear Wednesday with the partial demolition of the existing structure. Volunteers in a ceremonial march on a chilly winter morning complete with snow flurries, opened what has been around the clock construction.

"Right now, I'm living in Richmond, but I came home for this," noted Billi Jo Mahan, who attends nursing school.

Ms. Mahan was one of a group of local volunteers that included Kathy Schuler and Mary Beth Atkins, both of Farmville, who were selected to help walking up the unpaved road from the site.

"I love this show. It's great. It makes me cry every Sunday night. I just think it's very awesome what they do and I just kind of wanted to be a part of it," Ms. Mahan says.

Adds Ms. Schuler, "You know, stick out a helping hand. Anything for the community..."

Schedule

Workers are scheduled to hand the keys of the home over to Ty Pennington, the host of the program; the big event, however, will be the show's trademark "Move That Bus" moment scheduled for Monday at 2 p.m. when the family returns from their Florida vacation and sees their new home for the first time.

Spectators are welcome to visit the site from 7a.m. to 7 p.m. Parking is available at Sandy River Reservoir at the boat landing. (To get to the site, turn off of U. S. Route 460 on State Route 640 and then left on State Route 792.) Farmville Area Bus is running a shuttle bus continuously which will be handicapped accessible.

In the meantime, volunteers are still needed—skilled and unskilled. Skilled volunteers, such as contractors, are asked to label and bring their own tools. Updated calls for needed volunteers will be detailed on radio stations WVHL and WFLO. The construction project is being headed up by the Cartersville firm of Ken Broadwater Homes. For more information about volunteering, visit their website at extremekenbroadwaterhomes.com.

Those who want to be there Monday for the culminating moment of the week's construction project may want to arrive well in advance. The spectator area offers standing room only.