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Alumnus Leads Construction of Extreme Makeover Home

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Alumnus Leads Construction of *Extreme Makeover Home*

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – With a deafening cry, hundreds of volunteers charged to destroy a worn down home in Philo, Ill., Thursday morning. Helping lead the charge was Illinois Wesleyan University alumnus Ed Brady. His act was one with charitable intentions. The owners of the demolished house have been chosen to receive a new home by the ABC television show *Extreme Makeover Home Edition*, and Brady's construction company, Brady Homes, has been selected as the local building sponsor to donate his company's labor and resources.

The television show chooses deserving families to receive a new home. Under the leadership of a local construction crew, the old home is razed and a new one built in about a week. For the home in Philo, shifts of construction workers and volunteers will be running from 6 a.m. to midnight in order to construct the house in seven days, a task that usually takes four months. Filming of the episode has been ongoing for the past week, and will continue until the completed home is revealed to the family next week. The episode is scheduled to air this fall.

Chosen for the show was the family of Nathan Montgomery, a former engineer who gave up a lucrative career to start the pantry Salt & Light that provides food, clothing and ministry to around 250 families in and near Philo, located southeast of Champaign. "This entire project is about the family, about communities coming together to provide food and shelter," said Brady from the demolition site. "The Brady family is honored and happy to give back to this family who has given so much of themselves for others."

The small community is often described as "a family" by its residents. The analogy hit home with Brady, whose business is a family affair. Founded in 1964 by Bill Brady, Sr., the construction side of Brady Homes is run by Brady and his brother Bob. Another brother, and 1983 Illinois Wesleyan alumnus, State Sen. Bill Brady, Jr. [R-44], oversees the real-estate side of the business. Bill Brady's wife, Nancy (True) Brady, is also an Illinois Wesleyan alumna, class of 1982.

Support for the project has been pouring in, said Brady, who noted more than \$300,000 in goods and services have been gifted to the project by area businesses, while both State Farm

Insurance Companies, and COUNTRY Financial have been holding food drives for the Salt & Light pantry. More than 7,500 people have posted as fans of the Brady Homes Facebook site (link to www.facebook.com/ExtremeBradyHomes), and the Brady Homes Web site not only offers visitors updates of the construction, but also links to ways people can get involved, from schedules for volunteers and food shopping lists for the pantry, to blood drives in Bloomington and Philo. (link to www.extremebradyhomes.com).

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