



## Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine, 2002-2017

---

Volume 18  
Issue 3 *Fall 2009*

Article 9

---

Fall 2009

### Extreme-ly Helpful

Rachel Hatch

*Illinois Wesleyan University*, [iwumag@iwu.edu](mailto:iwumag@iwu.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/iwumag>

---

#### **Recommended Citation**

Hatch, Rachel (2009) "Extreme-ly Helpful," *Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine*, 2002-2017: Vol. 18 : Iss. 3 , Article 9.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.iwu.edu/iwumag/vol18/iss3/9>

This is a PDF version of an article that originally appeared in the printed Illinois Wesleyan University Magazine, a quarterly periodical published by Illinois Wesleyan University. For more information, please contact [iwumag@iwu.edu](mailto:iwumag@iwu.edu).

©Copyright is owned by the University and/or the author of this document.

# Extreme-ly Helpful

Alumni and students help make a new home for area family.

By **RACHEL HATCH**  
Photos by **MARC FEATHERLY**

With a deafening cry, hundreds of volunteers charged to destroy a worn down home in Philo, Ill. Helping lead the charge was Illinois Wesleyan alumnus Ed Brady '85. His act was one with charitable intentions. The owners of the demolished house had been chosen to receive a new home by the popular ABC television show *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, and Brady's construction company, Brady Homes, was 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 ran from 6 a.m. to midnight in order to construct the house in seven days, a task that usually takes four months.

A total of 18 IWU students volunteered to help in the project, along with Illinois Wesleyan's Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students Kathy Cavins. The students helped keep the site clean, moved bricks and supplied lunch and water to the other volunteers.

Chosen for the show was the family of Nathan Montgomery, a former engineer who gave up a lucrative career to start the Salt & Light pantry which provides food, clothing and ministry to around 250 families in and near Philo, located southeast of Champaign.

The completed home was revealed to the Montgomery family in August. The episode is scheduled to air this fall.



**"It's a barn-raising of the 21st century," said Ed Brady '85 (above left) at a press conference announcing the completion of a house for a Philo, Ill., family (shown at right) who were chosen to receive a much-needed new home by the ABC TV show *Extreme Makeover Home Edition*. Brady's construction company, Brady Homes, donated labor and resources to construct the house, visible in the background.**

“This entire project is about the family, about communities coming together to provide food and shelter,” said Brady. “The Brady family is honored and happy to give back to this family who has given so much of themselves for others.”



**Bill Brady '83 and wife Nancy '82 volunteer in the food tent, which Nancy helped organize.**

The small town of Philo 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. A third brother — 1983 IWU alumnus and Illinois State Senator Bill Brady Jr. — oversees the real-estate side of the business. Bill’s wife, Nancy (True) Brady, is a 1982 Wesleyan graduate.

Support for the project has been pouring in, said Ed Brady, who noted more than \$300,000 in goods and services had 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 and the Brady Homes Web site. The sites offer visitors updates of the construction, and also links to ways people can get involved — from food shopping lists for the pantry, to blood drives in Bloomington and Philo.