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MICHAEL PEKOR
of East Meadow

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Resident wins
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Lights, camera, makeover!



Nick Buglione/Herald

SOME 125 WORKERS have been laboring to transform this South Ozone Park, Queens, home for the ABC television show "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition." An East Meadow construction company, Alure, is heading up the job.

E. Meadow company makes over home for reality TV show

By NICK BUGLIONE

A down-on-its-luck Queens family is about to get the surprise of a lifetime, thanks to an East Meadow construction company.

Alure, a Hempstead Turnpike-based firm specializing in kitchens, bathrooms, basements, siding, windows and roofing, agreed to essentially rebuild the South Ozone Park family's house for the ABC television show "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition."

Airing Sundays at 8 p.m. and entering its second season, the hit reality program and its seven-man design team seek out deserving families with run-down homes for surprise makeovers that are performed virtually overnight.

"This project was very unique, because the family was very down on its luck," said Sal Ferro, president and part owner of Alure.

Lucy, who lives on 128th Street with her two adopted sons, Paul and Kuran, hired a contractor

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Construction company's good deed

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to put a second-story addition on her home. (The family's full identities are not being released until the show airs.) "Basically the contractor gutted the place, walked with the money and filed for bankruptcy," said Jeanette Stone, the show's design producer.

The family was out \$72,000, and worse, no longer had a home, according to Ferro. "They had nowhere to live," he said, noting that they bounced around with relatives and even took up residence in a homeless shelter for a time. "Extreme Makeover" said we need somebody to step up. They need a hero and we answered the call."

"Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" receives some 40,000 applications a week from potential candidates for the show, but this family stood out. To get them out of the house so work could begin, ABC sent them on a Disney cruise, Stone said, but they have no idea their home is getting a huge facelift.

"We want it to be a surprise when they come back," Stone said. "It's the best part. My favorite moment is when the family comes home and you see their faces."

Based on the work Alure is coordinating, this family's collective jaw should drop. The company is taking on a \$500,000 project in which it is, among other things, reframing the second-story addition and building three new bathrooms and bedrooms. It is also installing a new kitchen, front and back decks, roofing, siding and landscaping. The company is also laying down new carpets and giving the house a fresh paint job.

And the work, a six- to nine-month job under normal circumstances, all had to be planned in about four weeks and completed in five days, Ferro said.

"It takes more guys than you'd ever imagine," to pull off such a feat, he said: a crew of approximately 125, working around the clock. What's more, they're being filmed while they work.

"It's an extreme amount of preparation in a very short time," Ferro said. "I feel a very tremendous mix of excite-



Nick Buglione/Herald

THE SHOW featuring Alure's work will air in the fall.

ment, combined with a level of stress and tension and anxiety that you're not ready to deal with on a regular basis."

The family will receive new furniture and appliances — even a new wardrobe. All materials and items are donated, Stone said.

Work began last Thursday and was set to conclude on Tuesday, as the Herald went to press. Ferro was confident, however, that the job would be completed on time.

"The biggest thing is making sure construction stays on schedule," Stone said. "Construction comes before production." Still, the show knew Alure would be up to the challenge. In the first season, the company redid the Manhattan apartment of two New York City firefighters who had been

having a rough time since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001. It was a special live episode in which the apartment was remodeled in just 12 hours.

"The first one was a very positive experience," Ferro said. "I had no problem doing it the second time around."

"We feel we can make a difference and we're looking to make a difference one nice act at a time."

The program featuring Alure will air in the fall.

"Alure's vision and ability to organize the scope of work and then to execute it shows why Alure is the top builder," said Conrad Ricketts, senior producer of "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition." "It is the quality of Alure's work that stands out."