

Home & Garden: Extreme makeovers: Ex-Lemoore resident's concrete company works on two homes appearing on popular ABC series

By Barbara Swarm
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It didn't take long for Doug Carlton, a former Lemoore resident and owner of Carlton Concrete LLC of Visalia, to realize just how much he had touched the lives of a family in San Bernardino ... and then in Livermore.

Carlton Concrete LLC was selected by the producers of the television show "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" to install decorative concrete stamping at a project site in San Bernardino. The construction began in early April of this year when a wrecking ball swung heavily into a single story ranch home and launched one of the fastest construction jobs ever undertaken. In just six days, the 2300-square-foot home was totally rebuilt.

"It was a major undertaking," Carlton said in a telephone interview, "to rebuild a brand new home in five days ... it's incredible, it's insane."

Over 200 people worked on the site 24 hours a day.

"It's pretty amazing," said Carlton, who was proud to be involved. "One thing I noticed is how well all the trades worked together. That made it easier."

"Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" is in its first season and is already ranked number one, according to ABC. The network television show airs nationally at 8 p.m. Sunday and is watched by over 21 million viewers each week.

While on the job site, Carlton saw hundreds of spectators, full of compassion, cheering on the workers. He found himself helping other contractors who were running behind schedule. There are many stories like these that happened during that week, but the one that affected Doug the most was when little children began to ask his company employees for their autographs.

"The crew is the ones who made this happen," he said. "They should get the credit."

The show is scheduled to air on Sunday, May 23.

During the San Bernardino taping, ABC producers recognized the talent of the Carlton Concrete LLC Company. Carlton was asked again to install the decorative concrete work for another project for the season's final episode. This time the home was in Livermore.

Carlton immediately accepted the challenge when he learned that the family consisted of eight children - the oldest being 23 years old - who lost their mother and father two weeks apart. The two oldest children were left to care for and provide for the rest of the family.

While on the job site, Carlton said emotions run high.

"There are so many things running through your head," he said.

The Livermore project was not an easy project to tackle, but when all was said and done everything went as planned, said Carlton.

"We were still greeted and cheered on by spectators, children wanted our autograph, and you could again feel the community binding together as one," he said.

During the final taping, they had to stop to let Ty Pennington, the show's host, and others get their composure.

After the taping, Carlton had a chance to go back to visit the family in Livermore.

"As I walked up the front drive," he said, "eight pairs of shoes were lined up. It's a home; their home."

As for "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," the season has ended and will not start up until the first part of June. Already, Carlton has been asked to participate in next season's upcoming episodes. It is and was a great opportunity to be selected to do the decorative concrete work for such a highly ranked network show, especially being a small contractor located in the Central Valley.

"I believe in the goal of the show and have seen firsthand how the show changes lives," said Carlton, who now makes his home in Cayucos. "They (the families) wanted a new change, a new chapter in their life. We definitely accomplished that. It was a great feeling."

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