



Entertainment

'Extreme Makeover: Home Edition' — The Loud Goodbye

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You'd have to figure a show that features sawing and hammering and a wild man shouting through a bullhorn would not go quietly. "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" makes its farewell appearance after nine years Friday (1/13) with a special two-hour 200th episode. It's an epic job the design team, led by Ty Pennington, is unlikely ever to forget: building seven new homes in seven days in tornado-ravaged Joplin, Missouri.

Designer Paul DiMeo, known affectionately to fans of the show as the soft-hearted Paulie, tells me they got enough video in Joplin for a full season. "They've had a hard time editing it down to two hours. You know, I heard hundreds of stories, walking around during the time we were there, some horrible stuff. This thing took out a third of the city in 30 minutes."

But there are upbeat parts, as there always are on "EM:HE." DiMeo, 54, talks about a little boy whose life was saved by a donated bike helmet his mom got him to strap on as the twister was bearing down on their house.

There are still "EM:HE" specials ahead. DiMeo heads to Knoxville this week to film one, in fact, but it isn't planned for airing until Thanksgiving. Meanwhile, his website thank-you to his colleagues and volunteers, and to his wife, for making their home a place he looks forward to staying in "when it's all over," is enough to get a person a little misty-eyed. Just like the tearjerker show has done for nine years. Have those hankies ready.

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