

Albert Lea Tribune



photo by [Brie Cohen](#)

Albert Lea High School student Meghan Sipple shows off her duct-tape trophy Saturday next to “Extreme Makeover: Home Edition” designer Paul DiMeo after Sipple won the duct-tape competition. DiMeo is holding one of the duct-tape entries, a duck-shaped pencil sharpener. Sipple won the contest with many duct-tape creations, including a prom dress, popcorn box and an Albert Lea football pillow.

Student wins duct-tape contest

By Rachel Rietsema, special to the Tribune

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HAYWARD — Duct tape knew no limits at the “Extreme Makeover: Home Edition” contest Saturday. Many footballs and jerseys were in the running to help decorate Derik DeVries new bedroom. One contestant constructed a duck with an electric pencil sharpener near its rear end and another made a monstrous popcorn box costume.

From 4-year-olds to distinguished artists, the surrounding communities came together to create about 70 pieces, hoping theirs would win the ultimate prize, a trophy made of duct tape. Derik’s love for duct tape brought together this diverse crowd, gathered in a harvested corn field.

Dylan Arnold, an elementary student from New Richland, put four hours of work into his hat. Arnold’s decision to feature the words “Extreme Makeover: Home Edition” on his creation set it apart from many other hats. He hopes that his hard work will be displayed somewhere on Derik’s wall or on Derik’s head.



Photo by Brie Cohen

Designer Paul DiMeo reacts to finding out Meghan Sipple also created the duct tape popcorn box Saturday during the duct tape contest. DiMeo then called Sipple “the gal with too much time on her hands.”

Helping out the family was his main goal, and he thinks it would be awesome if his hat were chosen.

“I put pride into making it like Derik would,” Arnold said.

Another duct-tape contestant, 15-year-old Henry Manges from Albert Lea, knows what Derik likes. As his friend, he made an orange and camouflage gun case for Derik to take hunting. It only took a little less than an hour, but Manges is positive his friend will think it’s cool.

Fourteen-year-old Macy Paul from Albert Lea dedicated five hours to this challenge by creating a blue jersey and a little football for Derik. Even though Paul doesn’t know the family, she thinks that it’s wonderful to be a part of this for a family that deserves a new home.



Photo by Brie Cohen

Brandon Sampson of Six Mile Grove plays in the corn fields near the DeVries home Saturday to a crowd waiting for the duct tape competition to begin. Six Mile Grove was founded in 1997 in Lyle.

Since this is a special house, she would feel honored and excited to have her work displayed in his room. Because football and sports in general are a big deal in the DeVries family, she thought the jersey and football would be the perfect addition to the room.

“I think they’re big sports fans and they do a lot for the community,” she said. “I think he’d like it for a long time, especially since it has his name on it.”

Among the line of artists was one who takes duct tape a little bit more seriously. Meghan Sipple, 17, was the winner of the duct-tape contest. She is one who watches “Extreme Makeover: Home Edition” to see “how they turn a simple idea into an amazing, explosional creation.”

As a member of ducttapeclub.com, it is obvious that duct tape is more than just a hobby; it’s a way of life for Sipple. Her designs for the contest included a tuxedo and a prom dress with her

logo Sip. Ink on both. Two to three months of work for those designs weren't the only items she brought along. She made a popcorn box costume, but the Albert Lea Tigers football pillow was made especially for Derik.



Photo by Brie Cohen

The "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" production crew films the local crowd cheering before the duct tape contest started Saturday.

"I want to show that other people have the same interests and that he's not the only person who is into all this duct tape."

Kelly Frankenberg, an artist from Minneapolis, came down for the event to show her artistic capabilities. As one of the adult few representatives participating in the contest, Frankenberg built a skateboard, drum set and a dream catcher. Duct tape isn't her usual medium for art purposes, but she tackled the challenge. She believes her items are useful and something a teenager would really enjoy.

"Dream catchers catch bad dreams and the good dreams come true," she said. "Everybody needs good dreams, especially for them in the new house."

These contestants and many others made their way on stage to be greeted by Paul DiMeo's smile. Each participant and the bystander gathered as close as possible to listen to DiMeo's witty banter. Laughter and bursts of applauding followed his jokes, even when he messed up in front of the camera.

The crowd's whistles and cheers decided the winner of the trophy. DiMeo only awarded one lucky winner, but who knows, DiMeo might just incorporate a myriad of them into Derik's new room.

"Thank you very much for coming out," DiMeo said. "It's overwhelming the many things you can do with duct tape. It's one of the things we are going to give Derik."