



Home > Things to do

## 'Extreme Makeover' star Paul DiMeo at Philly Home Show today

By Irene Kraft  
OF THE MORNING CALL  
JANUARY 16, 2010

E-mail Print Share Text Size

You won't see the ends of a ribbon fall to the floor at today's 10 a.m. opening ceremony of the 29th annual Philadelphia Home Show. That's because Paul DiMeo, a designer on ABC's "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," will kick off the show by sawing through a 2-by-4.

What else would you expect from a member of team that week after week wows television viewers with its ability to creatively and rapidly rebuild homes for families in need.

And, yes, it really does happen as quickly as it looks on TV. DiMeo says the team recently built a 6,300-square-foot home for a family of 12 in six days.

The teary eyes are genuine, too. "If you let yourself be taken on this journey for seven days, nine out of 10 times, they are certainly tears of joy," DiMeo says.

Yesterday, before heading to Detroit's airport on his way east, DiMeo took a few moments to share a little bit of about himself and what he'll be sharing with visitors to the home show, where he'll be until 3 p.m. today.

Flying in for the home show will be like coming home for DiMeo, who was born in Media, Chester County. In 1976, he graduated from Penncrest High School, where he says he was "heavily involved in theater and music." He continued to study theater at Point Park College, now University, in Pittsburgh. He picked up his construction skills working behind the scenes on stage production.

"I've been doing theater all my life, on stage and behind the scenes," says DiMeo.

He wound up in New York. "At night, I was doing off-Broadway," he says, while honing his craft as a finish carpenter during the day.

When he moved to Los Angeles, he and a friend started a lucrative remodeling business, doing everything from kitchens to bathrooms.

"We were building for great clients," says DiMeo, rambling off a list of the rich and famous that including Ralph Lauren.

After completing a project at a home in Hollywood Hills, they threw a party to celebrate. The producer of "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" "just happened to be invited," says DiMeo.

The rest is history. "The show was just in its infancy and I had the good fortune of becoming involved right from the beginning," he says. "We still marvel at its success and we're finishing our seventh season. We all feel very blessed in this economy."

Addressing home improvement on a budget is key at this year's home show and among the most important topics DiMeo will focus on today.

"I'll be trying to look at what we can do with \$100 to work on our house -- with \$500, even \$20. With our pocketbooks so tight, it's important that what you do has to last a long time," DiMeo says.



**Topics**  
Theater  
Colleges and Universities  
Los Angeles  
[See more topics >](#)

Ads by Google

**The Refreshing Remodel**  
Tub Liners, Walls, Bases & More! Get A Free Estimate - 805-424-4200  
[www.pcrebath.com](http://www.pcrebath.com)

**QuikStix Metal Framing**  
Visit us at Booth C3365 at IBS Show See a Mock up of QuikStix Products.  
[Armstrong.com/Quikstix/IBS](http://Armstrong.com/Quikstix/IBS)

**\$100,000 Home Makeover**  
You could be Next! View our Recent Winners here.  
[www.entertowin.net](http://www.entertowin.net)

Catholic Schools of Lehigh and Northampton Counties  
Pre-School through 12th Grade

Students Learning to Change the World

Diocese of Allentown

[Click here to find a school near you](#)

THE MORNING CALL Community Fund  
HOPE  
2009 FALL CULTURAL CALENDAR

**GET CULTURAL!** From Classical music to Broadway, Artwork to Family Fun, and even a behind the scene look at the Muppets, visit the full **2009 Fall Cultural Calendar!**

metromix lehigh valley

CHECKOUT THE PHOTOS, EVENTS & SEARCH TOOLS  
LV METROMIX

[Check out metromix here.](#)

"We are a wasteful nation. We consume more than we produce. We buy two, three or four, when we need only one. I want to help us see how we can better our lifestyles without spending a lot of money," he adds, explaining that buying and wasting less also keeps the planet cleaner a greener.

Keeping the planet cleaner is the focus of the home show's Green Zone, a showcase of local energy-efficient products and services.

DiMeo says one of the best ways to keep down costs is by doing a project yourself. Although "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" may seem to have endless resources, it quickly becomes clear that many of the home decorating projects are handmade by the design team, often using a family's personal items, such as furniture, photographs or favorite sports items.

"What made us successful is how we do things," says DiMeo. "You want to make a project with the family. There's a joy in it. We try to do that a lot."

Always ask: "How can we decorate a house with little or no money?" says Di-Meo, who says he'll also share funny moments from the show and will have a question-and-answer session.

"The home show is a wonderful place to go to get ideas," says DiMeo. "There are so many vendors there, new products, new tools, new storage ideas. Often you can take some of those ideas and implement them yourself."

About 500 experts will be available throughout the week to offer additional advice on products and services.

DiMeo says he has not grown tired of his role on "Extreme Makeover" and particularly enjoys working with artisans and carpenters from each community when building a home.

"We trade stories. I'm learning a ton, not just about building, but about the families we build for," he says. "From going through children's hospitals to accompanying the Muppets on the piano, it's a lot of fun."

[irene.kraft@mcall.com](mailto:irene.kraft@mcall.com)

610-820-6597

Copyright © 2010, [The Morning Call](#)

[E-mail](#) [Print](#) [Digg](#) [Twitter](#) [Facebook](#) [StumbleUpon](#) [Share](#)

COMMENTS (0) | [Add Comment](#)



**PURCHASE DISCOUNTED  
SKI TICKETS**

*Online NOW at AAA*





CAMELBACK Mountain Resort



BEAR CREEK MOUNTAIN RESORT & CONFERENCE CENTER



Blue Mountain

\*AAA Membership Login required

**AAA.com/Tickets**



**GET ONE FREE MEMORY FOAM PILLOW!**

When you complete a personal Body Diagnostic Test.  
Limit one per household



### Special Sections

- [Living in the Lehigh Valley Education Guide](#)
- [Career Training](#)
- [Readers Choice](#)
- [NIE - Newspapers In Education](#)
- [Lehigh Valley Auto Show 2009](#)

### Special Sections

- [Contests](#)
- [Mayfair Program 2009](#)
- [Bank On Us](#)
- [How to Book](#)
- [LVIP](#)
- [H&G Directory](#)
- [Travel Agent Guide](#)
- [Bride & Groom](#)
- [Outlook 2009](#)
- [Call for Hope](#)

### Classified

- [Jobs](#)
- [Cars](#)
- [Real Estate](#)
- [Apartments](#)
- [Place an Ad](#)
- [Interactive Media Kit](#)

### Milestones

- [Births](#)
- [Obituaries](#)
- [Engagements](#)
- [Celebrations](#)
- [Celebrations Form](#)

### Services

- [No Paper?](#)
- [Subscribe/Renew](#)
- [Vacation Options](#)
- [Order Back Issue](#)
- [Purchase Photos](#)
- [Purchase Reprints](#)
- [Archives](#)
- [Contact Us](#)
- [Feedback](#)

### Resources

- [Public Notices](#)
- [RSS Feeds](#)
- [History](#)
- [PA Lottery](#)
- [NJ Lottery](#)
- [Grocery Coupons](#)
- [OnlineCoupons](#)
- [Internships](#)