



**FOR RELEASE: Immediately (March 6, 2009)**

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***Extreme Makeover: Home Edition***  
**Honors Decorated Disabled Desert Storm Veteran**

*www.extremeebheroes.com*

**NOTE TO MEDIA: A NEWS CONFERENCE FOR MEDIA ONLY WILL BE HELD AT THE BUILDING SITE AT 12:30 FRIDAY AFTERNOON.** The building site is 1292 Cooper Lane, Jamesville, NC, south of US Highway 64 bypass. Turn south onto Jerden Thicket Road. Proceed about two miles, then turn east (left) onto Cooper Lane.

**JAMESVILLE, NC** -- Jeff Cooper and his family deserve some good news -- and on Friday, March 6, they got it when they opened the door of their northeastern North Carolina home to find Ty Pennington on the other side.

Pennington, design team leader for the hit ABC Network TV show *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, and his team are building the Coopers a new home -- and a new life -- in partnership with Edenton Builders, Inc. and thousands of volunteers from northeastern North Carolina.

This year, the series is searching for special heroes in everyday life, sifting through tens of thousands of nominations from neighborhoods all over the country. They found Jeff Cooper, his wife Clara and children Windy and Aaron in Jamesville, a small town in North Carolina's historic Albemarle region. Jeff was a combat medic with the U. S. Army in the Gulf War -- Operation Desert Shield/

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Sundays 8/7c on ABC

Desert Storm -- in the early 1990s. He came home from combat highly decorated for his service -- and tragically suffering from Gulf War Syndrome.

Now confined to a wheelchair, Jeff has serious immune disorders and multiple sclerosis. Despite his constant pain over the years, Jeff has an impressive record of advocacy for fellow veterans. He lobbied the North Carolina General Assembly for a special license plate honoring Gulf War Veterans and has spoken strongly for the rights of the disabled.

Jeff is not the only Cooper facing tough challenges. Their young son Aaron was gravely injured when he was run over by a garbage truck two years ago. Using his medic's skills, Jeff was able to save Aaron's life, but the boy lost most of his right arm and has survived several surgeries since.

Despite difficulties that would crush many families, the Coopers have remained upbeat and happy in their devotion to each other and to their important work. The leaking, decaying double-wide trailer that has been their home hasn't made their lives any easier. With bad wiring, a sinking roof and a rotting ramp, it is ill-equipped for disabled family members and uncomfortable for everyone.

By the time the Coopers return Friday, March 13, from a vacation in Washington, D. C., that trailer will be gone -- replaced by a custom-designed home built by the "Extreme Team," local builder John Norris' team from Edenton Builders, Inc., and more than a thousand volunteers. The local architect is Jonathan White of Beacon Architecture in Kitty Hawk, NC.

The design team for this episode of *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* will feature team leader Ty Pennington and designers Michael Moloney, Paige Hemmis and Ed Sanders.

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## **About ABC TV's *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition***

*Extreme Makeover: Home Edition*, which has won back-to-back Emmy Awards as Best Reality Program (non-competitive), is in its sixth season on ABC. The program is produced by Endemol USA, a division of Endemol Holding. Anthony Dominici is the Executive Producer, and David Goldberg is the president of Endemol USA. The show airs on Sundays (8:00 - 9:00 p.m. EST) on the ABC Television Network.

### **Access to the Site:**

**Media with credentials, general (unskilled) volunteers and spectators must check in at the DFI Building at 29333 US Highway 64 in Jamesville, NC, where they will receive directions to the building site and parking instructions.**

**Skilled trade volunteers who have been contacted in advance check in at the building site.**

**Non-working spectators are welcome Monday through Friday only. A full schedule will follow in a separate release.**

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