

Extreme Home Makeover

HOW ST. LOUISIS' MASONRY INDUSTRY PLAYED A ROLE ON NATIONAL TV

It was like a military maneuver. A detailed battle plan was constructed and squads of men and tons of equipment were trucked in. A veil of secrecy cloaked the operation so nothing could leak out before the commanders were ready to launch their mission.

But all this activity wasn't a set-up for a military attack.

Instead, the preparations were for a construction blitz to build a new home for a deserving local family and their special-needs children. Dawn and Emmanuel Martirez and their two severely disabled children were suffering because of the inadequacy of their Shrewsbury home. Cramped hallways, steep stairs and a single, handicapped inaccessible bathroom had made their lives a nightmare. Attracted by word of the family's dilemma, the producers of ABC Television's Extreme Makeover: Home Edition came to St. Louis to build a new home for the Martirezs as part of a program to be aired in November.

And while hundreds of construction workers and volunteers were rebuilding the home in September, the family was treated to a dream vacation at Disney World.

"They built this project in 106 hours," said **John Spencer**, owner of **Spencer Brickwork**, supplier of the masonry labor (and other donations) on the intense project. "We brought in two complete trailer loads of equipment to hit each side of the building and 22 men to split it up," said Spencer.

Spencer was recruited for the job by **John Shea**, president of **Callier Thompson Shea Construction and Design**. Well-known as **KTRS Radio's** Mr. Fix-it, Shea had himself been contacted by the television show's executive producer. Knowing he would need help with this and a related non-masonry project, Shea brought in **Dave Dunlap** of the **Consolidated Construction Group** to partner in running things.

As initially planned, Spencer's crew was to brick only the four columns at the front of the house. But the scope of the mission soon increased. The show's producers learned that Shrewsbury had a 50 percent masonry clause in its building code, said Shea. "John went from doing a small part to doing half the house. But his crew, with smiles on their faces, worked through the night, putting on the architectural stone that really made the house jump." But even with their expanded task, Spencer and his crew had yet another surprise in store for



ARCHITECTURAL STONE FOR THE SIDE ELEVATION WAS ADDED TO THE BLUEPRINTS AFTER THE ORIGINAL MAKEOVER DESIGN HAD BEEN CREATED.

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TOP OF PAGE: SPENCER BRICKWORKS' CREW WORKED THROUGH THE NIGHT TO MEET THE EXTREMELY TIGHT SCHEDULE.

LEFT: SPENCER WAS INITIALLY RECRUITED TO ADD MASONRY TO THE FOUR PORCH COLUMNS.

RIGHT: THE SHREWSBURY HOUSE WITH ITS DRAMATIC MAKEOVER. SPENCER BRICKWORKS PLAYED A LEADING ROLE IN PLACING THE HOUSE'S MASONRY AND RECRUITING THE SUPPLIERS.



2008 SUPPLIER CONTRIBUTORS

PREMIER PARTNER

Kirchner Block & Brick

SUSTAINING PARTNERS

Irwin Products • Richards Brick Company

PLATINUM LEVEL

**Earthworks, Inc. • Missouri Brick & Supply Co.
Raineri Construction Products**

GOLD LEVEL

**ACME Brick • Building Products Corp.
Goedecke, Inc. • Midwest Aerials
Midwest Block & Brick • Midwest Stone Supply
Oldcastle/Belgard • Quikrete**

SILVER LEVEL

**American Steel • Buchheit Supply
Lemay Concrete Block Co.**

BRONZE LEVEL

**Elite Distribution, Inc. • Enloe Enterprise
General Material Co. • Illinois Products
Pat Kelly Equipment Co. • PROSOCO
Trends in Tile • Western Lime Corporation
Wire-Bond**

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them. "I got a call from a designer in Hollywood who said they wanted to put stone on a fireplace," said Spencer. As a result, after the walls were in place his men added river rock stone around the fireplace.

Fans of the show will be interested in learning that the producers didn't cut any corners when it came to the construction. "It was really first rate," said **Mike Gilbert**, Spencer foreman who helped run the masonry activities. "It was amazing to see the whole thing drywalled in about two hours and roofed in about 45 minutes," added **Dave McKinney**, who was the Spencer foreman in charge of the on-site work. "It was challenging, but I was glad to be able to say I participated in it."

Through the years, the masonry community has donated a significant amount of labor, supplies and equipment to help with projects that make St. Louis a better place to live. As demonstrated by Spencer Brickwork and the masonry suppliers on this project —**Kirchner Block & Brick, Earthworks, Buchheit Supply, Raineri Building Material**— that spirit of generosity is still going strong. "Spencer Brickwork was just great to work with," Shea concluded. "And I'm glad that Shrewsbury had that masonry provision because (the architectural stone) really makes the house look great!" **M**

COMPLETED BRICKLAYER APPRENTICES

JANUARY–JUNE, 2008

NAME	CONTRACTOR	COMPLETION MONTH
Joshua Adams	Jahnsen Masonry Contractors, Inc.	May
Greg Allman	Robert Allman, Inc.	February
Christopher Bishop	St. Charles Brick Co.	May
David Caul	Blattner's Masonry, Inc.	May
Eduardo Chacon	John J. Smith Masonry Co.	January
James Dickinson	J.D.S. Masonry, Inc.	March
Brandon Dimitry	Superior Waterproofing and Restoration Co.	May
Jon Paul Ellison	Superior Waterproofing and Restoration Co.	June
Chad Garner	Robert Allman, Inc.	January
Michael Hulvey	Joseph Finder Bricklaying Co.	June
Keith Orlick	Blattner's Masonry, Inc.	February
Blair Rebal	Frisch Masonry, Inc.	May
Joe Rogers	Boegemann Bricklaying, Inc.	May
Darren Stanfill	Joseph L. Sotolar Tuckpointing Co. Inc.	April
William Stiles	Heitkamp Masonry, Inc.	April
Ronald Trail Jr.	Joseph L. Sotolar Tuckpointing Co. Inc.	April
Geoffrey Walthes	Superior Waterproofing and Restoration Co.	June
Jeff Ward	John L. Spencer Brickwork	March

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