

*From this  
restored chicken  
coop . . .*



*To this dream home in  
just six days . . .*

*with the help of Yellowstone Valley Electric*



## Community means *you* to this co-op

**Story and photos  
by Diana Propp**

The *Extreme Makeover* bus rolled into Billings and turned up on the Roundup Road on June 16 with the blast of a bullhorn and a “Good morning!” wake-up call to the Lon Carter family, members of Yellowstone Valley Electric Cooperative.

Ty Pennington and the rest of the cast and crew from the popular TV show greeted the family with the news that their house was coming down. *Extreme Makeover* finds a deserving family, a run-down house and devotes six days to rebuild.

By afternoon 27 volunteer office employees and outside crews from YVEC, their spouses and families were tromping through tall grass pounding stakes and building temporary fences around the perimeters for parking areas and off-limits areas.

Next day 10 crew members from YVEC were on the site to disconnect power to the house. They set a new pole and from there built a temporary underground service to the new home’s site.

The Carters were whisked off to New York City for a week-long vacation while hundreds of workers and volunteers kicked off the whirlwind construction project.

Once a restored chicken coop, the home was demolished Monday, and the marathon of building of a new home for the Carters was underway, beginning with concrete footings.

Tuesday most of the outside was finished, plumbers and electricians were working inside, and YVEC’s crews were back in, hooking up permanent service to the home.

Wednesday sheet-rocking, taping and painting made way for trim work.

On Thursday while the fin-

ishing touches were still going on inside, landscaping work was begun.

Friday included paving the road and last-minutes details.

At 3 p.m. the key was turned over to the *Extreme* crew for final decorating.

Saturday afternoon the Carter family arrived in a black Lincoln limousine and shed tears as they viewed the landscaped yard and walked into their new home.

More than 50 companies helped with construction. A hundred companies provided materials, and by the end of the week, thousands of volunteers touched the project in some way. A home like this would normally take six months or more to complete but this was completed in just one week.

YVEC manager Terry Holzer emphasized the importance of one cooperative principle, concern for community, in his column to members of the Huntley-

based co-op. “I am especially proud of our 27 employees who volunteered their time to come to the aid of one of our members,” he wrote.

The Carter episode is set to air on *Extreme Makeover: Home Edition* on ABC in October.



*Diana Propp is the Communications Director at Yellowstone Valley Electric. Her story, edited here for space, appeared in her co-op newsletter.*