

Going to extremes



Hour photo/ERIK TRAUTMANN

Ty Pennington, third from right, and his crew from ABC's "Extreme Makeover" television program film as they demolish a home in Bridgeport.

Bridgeport home gets 'extreme makeover'

Local businesses lend helping hand to build new house from scratch

By **JEREMY SOULLIERE**
Hour Staff Writer

REGION — Before ABC's "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition" moves that bus next week to unveil a new home for a disaster-stricken Bridgeport family, local contractors and businesses from Norwalk, Westport and Wilton will be donating their time, equipment and materials to help shape the family's dream house.

"We're a big fan of the show, and we really wanted to do something for the community and volunteer anyway we could," Theron Canevari, owner of Canevari Heating and Cooling in Norwalk, said about why his business signed on to help build the heating and air conditioning system in the soon-to-be erected home.

Canevari Heating and Cooling — along with more than 100 other businesses and organizations from the state, including about 10 from Norwalk, Westport and Wilton — are all pitching in to help ABC home designer Ty Pennington and crew create a new home in one week for the Brown family of Bridgeport, whose home has

been severely damaged three times due to flood and fire.

Gloria Brown, a mother of three who has worked hard to move her family out of the projects, barely escaped a fire last year at her 285 Hollister Ave.

"(Gloria) is just an incredible person. She's just an outstanding citizen."

Theron Canevari
Canevari Heating and Cooling

home, according to a press release, with her 16-year-old son Fred knocking down the door that trapped her in one of the house's rooms.

The Brown family has been described as the heart and soul of their community, with Gloria teaching children at her church and community center to express themselves through dance and song. Gloria and Bobbi, her 17-year-old daughter, also host a local radio show that serves as a "positive voice for the teens in the community." As

the youth president of the NAACP in Bridgeport, Gloria also encourages young people to be more active in the community.

"They are one of the nicest families I've seen on the show," Canevari said, "and (Gloria) is just an incredible person. She's just an outstanding citizen."

The Browns learned on camera Wednesday morning that they would be getting a new extreme dream home, said Sam Gault, owner of the Westport-based heating oil company Gault, Inc., which is helping to build the home's heating and cooling system and providing two years of free heating oil to the family. The show's designers and volunteers moved all of the family's possessions out of the home on Thursday, he said, and got it ready for demolition.

The Brown's fire-damaged home was demolished Friday, and construction of the new home began today. The builders and designers will be working around the clock through Tuesday to construct, landscape and furnish the home, with the Brown family first seeing their

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new house on Wednesday. The Extreme Makeover episode is expected to air sometime during the show's 2007-08 season.

"It's really awesome to just be a part of this," said Gault, who is a "big fan" of the Sunday night show. "It's just a great thing to give back to a family in need in our community."

Along with Canevari Heating and Gault, Inc., other Norwalk, Westport and Wilton-based businesses contributing to the makeover cause include, from Norwalk, Gribin Construction; Klaff's Lighting and Accessories; L&L Evergreen plant distributors; REO Appli-

ance; Norwalk Music, Inc.; from Westport, A.J. Penna & Son construction and Kowalsky Brothers construction, as well as Wilton Electrical Services and Brandman's Paint and Decorating, which has locations in Norwalk and Westport.

The general contractor organizing the project is Gulick Associates, LLC in New Canaan.

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