

I talk to so many people each week about this project and can't remember who I send this email out to, if you already have the story just scan down for all the updates.

All of you know about the horrific auto accident Alex Yurewich had in back in May 05', if not here's quick story to help you understand....

Greetings all,

I have a little story I would like to share with you all. It may get a bit long and drawn out but please read through it. On May 5th, 2005, Ransom Tipton, age 16, and Alex Yurewich, age 15, were both tragically killed in a terrible auto accident. It didn't take long for the word to spread about how the both of them donated their organs to help others survive. Long story short, ABC's Extreme Home Makeover heard the story and their whole team showed up here in Canton and completely rebuilt Ransom's mother's home. If you happened to see the show, it was quite moving but it also left quite a few people wondering what about Elaine, Alex's mom. Before the show aired, the network contacted Elaine wanting to know all about Alex so they could also add it to the story line. I remember watching the show waiting for them to talk about Alex. You see, Alex was one of my local kids that hung out here at the skatepark. Like most kids, he came in after school to skate around and chill out with his friends. For me, the best part of my job is meeting and getting to know the people in my community, while the worst part is when I loose one of "my kids." Unfortunately since I've been here I've lost three and believe me, it's not easy to get over. The relationships we form here result in a close knit family instead of just customers. Again, this is where Elaine and Alex come into play: they're part of my family. Back to Extreme Makeover, my family and I watched the whole show, and it was great what they were doing for Ransom's family. Even when the show was over I thought they would have a little tag line at the end "In Memory Of Alex Yurewich." Nope - nothing. I was crushed after watching the show because I knew exactly how Elaine was feeling. I knew she would be devastated. I remember emailing her that night and all I said was "I understand". When we did talk, it was worst than I thought it would be: she was an emotional wreck. She couldn't understand how the network could completely blow off her son after they were the ones requesting the information. After a year and a half, she was just starting to cope with the loss of her son but, with the show, it was like the accident had just happened. I can't even imagine what she was feeling. I just knew that something had to be done and it had to be done fast. I started talking with my poker buddies about all of us getting together and doing some remodeling on her house because it desperately needed it. It was pretty cool - everyone I talked to about her house wanted to do there part to help. Things were going along really well, and then I received a phone call from a fellow regarding two guys who were part of the original Makeover Crew wanting to do something for Elaine. How cool was this? Now I would have money behind the project. I met with the guys, and they had big ideas. It came down to ripping Elaine's house down and building her a new one. All I wanted to do was a nice remodel job, but they wanted to go all out. I remember they asked Elaine to put all her ideas down on paper of what she and Corinne would want in a house. Elaine was so excited; she would work days on designs and layouts. It was so nice to see her somewhat happy again. The Makeover Guys had the plans drawn up and then - boom - it stopped. What just happened here?. Here we go again; I was so bummed out because I felt I had let her down. She pretty well gave up on the idea that anything positive was going to happen in her life, and I just couldn't let that happen. It took another eight months, but I finally found out that a mortgage company had \$10,000.00 in an account for Elaine from almost a year ago. Wow, you give me 10 grand and I'll get 25 grand worth of work out of it. It was back to the phone, and I began calling all by buddies back, letting them know the project was back on. In one week, I have been able to get commitments for all the hardwood flooring, all the sheetrock, all the trim work, all the electrical, all the paint for the house, new bedroom furniture, new bathroom with fixtures, all new entry doors and screen doors, two 30 yard dumpsters, new appliances, landscaping, and I even have three moms who want to handle

the interior decorating. I would say I have at least 90% of the project covered. I just need a few more items. What I need to get secured this week is enough wood to build a 10'x12' deck (\$500.00, I'll give someone a new ATT BlackBerry with GPS for the wood). I need some help for my decorating ladies (pillows, blinds, curtains, linens, towels: poofy stuff to make it feel like home). With a little help from a lot of friends, the project should be completed within the next 30 days. Just this past week we tore down the old garage, I had twelve of my skate kids completely clear four years of leaves and branches out of the yard, on top of that we had to strip most of the house so we can start on all the flooring on Monday. It was a long week, but what a great week it was. This is the first time in three years I've seen Elaine this excited. She knows that this time it's really happening. I just can't imagine how she felt this week when Habitat For Humanity came to her house and pick up all of Alex's bedroom furniture. Understand until this week, Alex's room was just the way it was left three years ago until now when it for the store. I think she knows it's time to move on. I guess all I can say is thanks to everyone who has made this dream come true; it means so much me and – especially – Elaine.

Week One: Things completed this week....

(Week ending May16th)

1. All floor coverings removed from entire home
2. Yard cleaned of 4 years of leaves and branches
3. Insulate entire underside of home
4. Remove sliding glass doors from back side of house, repair structure damage and construct new walls, install black board and install all new cedar siding.
5. Built new walk-in closet in Elaine's room, construct new laundry room, construct new bathroom (area where sliding doors were)
6. Rebuild and case three 18' high skylights
7. Remove top kitchen cabinets and counter top
8. Remove all interior doors and casings.
9. Remove old entree doors and Installed new entree doors
10. Remove all cedar next to fireplace (replace with sheetrock)
11. Jacked center beam of home 2"
12. Pressure wash entire home, driveway and walkways
13. Remove all ceiling and wall trim
14. Removed all wallpaper from bathrooms
15. Had all paint colors approved by builders association
16. Removed all cedar and concrete from front deck area
17. Leveled all floors in entire home,
18. Remove all interior lighting to paint entire ceiling.
19. frame out for Carrins new walk-in closet
20. All interior paint colors approved by Elaine, Carrin and decorators

Removed two 30 yard dumpsters of crap!

Week Two: This is a good part of what I can remember off the top of my head

What we accomplished on Monday..... Today we had a total of six guys (and Elaine) working on her house. Our friends at All South Painting came through as promised. This was the first major cosmetic change to the house. The guys had a tough job ahead of them painting the 18' high ceiling; they applied an antique white finish, what a great look and the perfect color (thanks to my decorating crew). These guys are true painters and take pride in their work. Their work and attention to detail was the best! Then there's our friends at Bates Building Materials, I've been doing business with these guys most of my life and it's a group of guys I can call true friends. It's the classic Canton family business, working hard and taking care of their community. Kim stepped right up when I asked for his help, he hooked us up with all the ceiling paint and Benny mixed the perfect color. Then there were my electricians, Eddie and his helper have pretty well rewired the whole house over the past two days, the house is without a doubt a safer place to be. That left me and Mike doing everything else. I have the privilege of working with a guy named Mike Frame; he is a true master at what he does. He can rebuild anything to do with a house, we've been doing business with each other for quite some time and he knows what I want out of a job. He's serious about what he does but we do laugh a lot during the day, I like working with him because we work at the same pace. Today we finished the siding on the back of the house, insulated the new walls in closet, new laundry room and new bathroom. We disassembled the back corner of the house, the rear porch, sundeck, wall siding, entree door, everything came out. We had to cut out the face plate, install a new one and sure up the door casing. Once everything was back together we had to jack the floor up an inch. All the floors are now level and will get their final sanding tomorrow

with hardwoods coming on Friday. We installed the new door casing for the new bath, finished out the front entree casing; we cut out a side double hung window and reset it straight (that widow drove me crazy). We also studded up a couple of small walls.

Tomorrow (Tuesday) will be big, sheetrock goes up. I'll keep everyone posted about our progress.

Thanks again to the whole crew; it was a great day.....

Sorry for the late update, my internet is still down from the storm the other night. It's now early Friday morning and the guys from Cherokee Floor Covering are coming in a few hours, this is something I've been looking forward to for along time. The hardwoods are finally going down! Chip says he's sending a big crew and they will have it done by the end of the day. Cool!

Let's see, what's happened in the past couple of days. Tuesday was a huge day, Toby Latimer from Latimer Construction brought in his crew to hang and finish all the sheetrock. Like everyone before, they brought their A game. I just don't understand how they do what they do. Four guys all dialed in, they are the best sheetrock finishers I've ever seen. The house now looks twice its size, with new walls and a new painted ceiling. Mike and I worked on tying things up Wednesday and Thursday. Sanding floors, leveling, getting all those staples up really sucked, but it's done and they're ready for hardwoods. Carin got a new walk-in closet today, that was a bit challenging, but it's also done. Zzzzzzzz.... sorry feel asleep on the keyboard, where was I, it's now later on Friday morning and Elaine just called and said the floor guys were there right now and already working. Next thing to happen will be paint, it will all get delivered today and be up in the next few days. I have to be at the park all weekend so I'm not really sure what the next few days have ahead of us. I'll keep you posted.

If you need me, call me on my cell, Mike DeLuca 770-833-4555

One more quick update, just got a call from a fellow, Dan Okeef, someone I've never met, who is willing to pay for the 12'x14' sundeck and I was also informed that another person wants to take

care of all the blinds and someone else that wants to do plantation shutters. Can't wait to meet these people.

Week three,

This week was one of those weeks, a lot of stress over little things. One thing I didn't stress over were the team from Cherokee Floor Coverings, Chip Prance and his crew set all the hardwood floors in, wow! Nothing like hardwoods. Thanks again to the Prance family for stepping up. All the sheetrock is now finished and painted, last night we had a paint party and got the first coat of paint put on, hopefully by the end of the weekend it will all be finished. Thanks to Doug Vanderlip, Owner Of Benjamin Moore Paints At Hickory Flat, some of the best paint I've ever put up! Then our friends at Superior Building Products stepped up with eight new interior six panel doors, two new storm doors and a couple of new windows. Mike and I hung all the doors yesterday, what a difference! Thanks to Todd Neal, he's another person I've never met until now, I can't thank you enough. The last big structural project was also completed this week, again Mike and I stripped off all the rear siding, cut out three bad window units, installed new one's and resided the house. It's a great view out of the kitchen now. Speaking of the kitchen, after all this work we have decided that the kitchen cabinets have to be updated, it's not a lot of cabinets were talking about here, but we have to replace them. With that being said, if you know someone that can help us out here, we really need it. I have some money left in the budget to pay for this service; we just needed it done yesterday. If you might know someone, please have them call me. We also met with Pat Tolan yesterday from LA Painters. We went over all the details for painting the exterior of the house next week. Another project for next week is the new sundeck, my man, Dan O'keef came through and delivered all the wood, keep in mind, I've never met this guy and he hooks me up with a complete 12'x14' deck. That was huge!

Monday June 2nd Update from Elaine's.....

Unfortunately, we don't get to do much on Elaine's house over the weekends because of my real job, but on Mondays we knocked it down. On the weekends I try and iron out the details of the job for the following week, mainly lots of emails. Today, Mike and I prepped the entire exterior of the house for new paint later in the week. It's hard to believe that we used 26 tubes of caulk to seal it up, but we did. We also replaced the bottom face plates of cedar on the front of the house and finished all the cedar trim. God only knows how many nails we pulled out and replaced, good part is all the exterior woodwork is finished! Bring on the paint. Another detail we address were the two skylights in the back room, they're sealed and they should never leak again. This took us about 10 hours to do and I believe a majority of the hard work is over. Elaine painted all day, the new bath, laundry room, closet and master bedroom now have their second coats of paint, Carins room got its first coat of paint in the new color, the first color selection didn't turn out the way everyone thought. The new color was right on! All the things we did today were nothing compared to the news we received at lunch time. For me this past weekend was pretty stressful (if you know me, I'm not a guy that stresses out that often) it was the kitchen I couldn't get off my brain, with only 12 days left in my schedule, I had no idea what were doing with it. Mike and I brainstormed this morning thinking that we could build something ourselves or run to IKEA and see what they might be able to do. It was all I could think about, 15 minutes after Mike and I talked I received a phone call from Caren Danneman from Danneman Designs, she designs custom kitchens. It was one of those Twilight Zone moments, what were the chances of this happening? She told me she would be at the house in a couple of hours to measure the kitchen and get the ball rolling. Sure enough, she came over and we started the brainstorming thing again. Wow, she's on a whole different page than us (in a good way) ain't no pine cabinets here! I believe we went with cherry wood, all I remember is, it was the perfect wood to accent the house. Caren stayed with us for quite some time discussing every detail, she knows her stuff. She left and then returned a couple hours later with an idea; awesome is all I can say! Simply amazing what she came up with, so much in a small area. I've attached the following files showing the idea, I'm sure you'll agree. My stress level has taken a nose dive, Caren was my gift that I really needed today.

Tomorrow will be another big day, Mike is handling a majority of the work on his own, I didn't realize until today that I have worked my employees at the park for seven straight days, oops. Anyway, I'll be at

the park all day and Mike will be doing the work of three guys. This weeks goals are high but I really think we'll pull them off with no problem. I want to have the house completely painted inside and out, new sundeck installed, front screen porch completely finished, new bathroom fixtures installed and hopefully all the trim installed. It should look like a house by Sunday night! That's it for now, don't forget to pass the story on to your friends, it's what makes the project.

Friday June 6th update....

To say it was a tough week is an understatement, but as usual everyone came through. O-well, we didn't get it all knocked out but we did get a lot accomplished. The entire interior of the house is finally painted, thank God. We actually worked two shifts painting Wednesday, trim, trim and more trim, right at a 1,000 feet of it! Thanks again to Laura, Dawn and the team they brought along. When you replace everything in a house that makes for a bunch of unfinished wood. Pat got a majority of the exterior house painted, it should be done by the beginning of next week. Most of the front deck is finished, just not sure how we are going to detail it yet. The new rear sundeck is going up Monday evening.

And again, how do I thank my friend Toby Lattimer, I call him on Tuesday, he has trim delivered by our friends at Bates Building materials that same day, we paint it on Wednesday and Thursday and his team hangs it on Friday. They worked 13 straight hours and completed the job, you can not do it any better Thanks Toby! Uncle Eddie, our electrician was back for a full day again today, lighting up all the new rooms we added and getting the electrical ready for the new kitchen.

A couple of really big things came up today, I was informed that Sears/Kenmore wants to replace all of the kitchen appliances, I was going to use the old dishwasher, but they want all new! I had Home Depot sell me a LG side by side refrig a few weeks back at a big discount; it will be for sale since we will be an exclusive Kenmore home. If you need a new black frig, let me know, I've got a deal on one! I also met Chris from Eden's Keepers this morning, he is our landscaper, wow, he has big plans for the yard. We didn't waste any time and have already filed our paperwork for the removal of a couple of bad trees, this is going to be exciting project, he's so into it. Maybe by next weekend it should be done. The pace will slow down a bit over the coming weeks. The cabinets aren't going to be here for three weeks so we have some time to breathe and chill a bit. Since most of the interior

is finished, the ladies are going to start shopping next week for all our poofey stuff and get the decorating going. I'm thinking somewhere around July 6th as our total completion date.

June 12th update

Wow! There's light at the end of the tunnel, were almost there and pretty close where I wanted to be at this time. The next two days will put us just where we need to be. The guys from LA Painters will be done by lunch tomorrow, Dirt Cheap Plumbing will have all plumbing completed by Saturday, blinds will go up on Friday (still a week or so out on plantation shutters). Mike set all the tile on the front porch today, awesome as usual, grout goes on tomorrow. Elaine's bathroom has a new tile floor; new vanity and toilet go in tomorrow. Laundry room will get tiled on Monday. Today, Elaine and I started the process of cleaning all the rooms, except for some minor electrical work, which will be completed on Saturday, Carin's room is done, Elaine's bedroom and closet are done, new bathroom is done, the fireplace is finished except for the mantel which will go in tomorrow, thanks to Bobby Smith. The front entree room is done. All lighting will be done on Saturday. Today Martin Campbell measured all the closets; it seems that his wife Laura has pulled off another deal for me. She somehow traded some concrete work out for custom closet shelving, o-yea! I have Blaine and some of his buddy's from Ga. Tech coming in Saturday to start moving Elaine back in, if all goes right, she will be in her new bed Sunday night.

Then there's the Sears/Kenmore/Southland Home Builders project. I had the opportunity to meet Neil Chester from Sears on Tuesday. He along with Brian Henson from Southland and Caren Dannamen(our kitchen expert) had a major meeting of the minds to redesign the entire kitchen. Neil and the Kenmore folks are going all out with some of their newest appliance designs. Brian had some new exciting ideas and let me tell you, the kitchen will be the focal point of the entire home. Caren has the new plans done and the ball is rolling! Neil came back to the house today and presented a list of what Kenmore is kicking in. A new three door frig, new dishwasher, new stove and a new convection/microwave oven with a new state of the art exhaust system and a garbage disposal, get this, five bucks for everything! Thanks to Brian and Neil for making this happen.

On another note, the Cherokee Tribune will be doing a little story about the project, everyone knows how I personally felt about this but

when your budget is drained and you still need a little more, this will without a doubt help. Like a friend told me, Elaine will benefit and it lets her express her appreciation.

June 19th update

It's now Thursday and it's been a couple of long days for all of us. After too many days, Elaine's master bathroom will be done today. It was one thing after another in there. Mike had to basically rebuild the whole shower, hey, it's not leaking for sure now! We had a change of vanity and sink, so we had to reroute plumbing and fix more sheetrock, the tile work in the laundry room was completed last night and again after the plumbers left we had some more sheetrock repair to take care of in there also, done, some minor painting and grout tomorrow. After that the room is 100% done. We tackled a really big project over the past 3 days. There is one upstairs room in the house that was Alex's bedroom. Everything had to be moved out to make way for the new flooring that also meant Alex's closet. It was the one area that has been avoided during this whole project. Elaine had a really difficult time of packing up the remaining possessions that belong to her son. It took some time but she pulled it off. Jamie and I then went to work laying all the concrete board down and right now Mike is up there laying the tile. This new room will now be Elaine and Corin's new art studio. The room except for the paint on the walls(Gina will be in next week to paint the wall murals) should be completed by tomorrow night.

That will pretty well wrap a majority of the job up. Friday was my deadline and except for cleaning up, we'll be there. Next week the ladies will be there to start the decorating.

Eden's Keepers will also start the yard next week, Lake Arrowhead approved what tree's we wanted to cut yesterday, now Chris and his crew are ready to start.

July 5th update.....the new kitchen cabinets came in on July 3rd, Wow! Pretty sweet, they were actually about two weeks early. I'm hoping the electrician and plumber make it over during the weekend so we can start installing them at the beginning of the week. Part of the great deal was we have to install them.

Eden's Keepers are hard at it; they cut down a number of trees and brought up their grinding equipment to make all the mulch we need. Chris is going all out for us, thanks to him and his crew for the HARD work.

All the closet shelving is also finished, Thanks to California Closets for their time, materials and effort.

I forgot to mention a huge problem we faced two weeks ago, all the tile that we had purchased from Home Depot came up missing. Since I signed for it on an earlier pickup (we didn't get it then because we ran out of room on the truck) they knew we were picking it up later but since I signed for it there was nothing they could do about it. Again I called my old bud Toby Latimer up and asked if he could get me some type of deal on some and again he said not to worry and just run down to the tile store, pick up what I need and charge it to him. Toby has been a lifesaver to me this whole project. When the odds are stacked against me, he always comes through.

I talked with Windstream on Tuesday and they were willing to come up and wire all the phones in the house for me, sweet. Now I'm waiting on Monday for Comcast's answer on running all my cable and outlets, I feel pretty confident that they'll come through. With four new flatscreens going up we need all the picture quality we can get!

Saturday July 12th.....It's punch list time. A big part of this week was the kitchen, tearing out the old and bringing in the new. The new kitchen has lighting built in everywhere, we were having some issues getting electrical finished, I called my old friend David Johnson from Johnson Electric, David was there the next morning with his crew. They wired the whole kitchen, installed the remaining light fixtures and they did it quick. Without David I would have been in a major pickle again but as usual someone above is watching over us. Brian Henson of Southland Homes really came trough again for me. He asked me who was installing the new kitchen and I told him it would be me and Mike Frame. We had no idea how to do it but we both knew we could. Brian got on the phone and in no time flat had his installers lined up. They came up on Thursday and hung all the top cabinets;

unfortunately I'm still waiting on some plumbing before we can install all the bottom units. I put a call in to my old pal Steve Johnson at Johnson Plumbing and he agreed to be there on Monday morning to get the kitchen prepped, just in time since the cabinet guys are coming back Tuesday along with the folks from Sears/Kenmore. All the new appliances are here and ready for the install. After all that is completed the only other job to be looking at us will be the countertops, no big deal, just time. My guy Mike Frame worked on little things all week, some new front steps, connecting the washer and dryer, new toilet for the second floor bath. My nephew, Chris DeLuca from All Pro Glass Tinting dropped by on Wednesday and tinted some widows on the back of the house and then cleaned the remaining windows, a perfect job, but then again he learned from the best! Last of all, Thanks so much to the New Life Sunday School Class, their cash contribution could not have come at a better time! Thank You, Thank You, Thank You!

Holy Cow, time just blast by, it's now March 26th 2009 and we are actually going to have an open house for everyone who helped along the way. So much has happened since that last July 12 update. Here's the play by play in a nut shell. We were 95% finished with the house and the world stopped. So many of our friends who helped in this project were taken out by I guess what you would call, hustlers, mobsters, greedy bastards or we could just say, the government. Whatever, a lot of folks fell on tighter times. Finishing that last 5% took forever. It was around the first of December when it all came together. Everything again got put on hold because Elaine was finishing up with her Masters in Fine Arts. Her last project was her art show. We had no time to do an open house; the house was in full use, especially the art studio. Remember, that was originally Alex's bed room, now it's where she gets her inspiration to do her paintings. The art show premiered in late January at the Reinhardt College Fine Arts Center to great revues. It was called "coming out of the dark", it was an interpolation of Elaine's dark three years after Alex's death and how she finally found the light. It was journey into her brain, she had to dig up a lot of bad thoughts and put it on

canvas. She had so many bad days reliving it all, but she stayed on it and created some incredible art.

Right after the art show started Elaine got contract to do illustrations for children's book. She just finished that up, now we have time to do an open house, on top of that it's Alex's Birthday this weekend. Time to celebrate!

Wow, it's been a 10 months since all this started. Our goal was to change Elaine's life, we did. She is still so blown away by what people have done for her and Carin. This is by far my favorite project I have ever done, in the worst economy in a century we were still able to pull off a \$75,000.00 remodel. Take that Hollywood.

So I guess this is it, this journey is over; cool thing is I already have my next big plan in motion. I want to raise \$15,000.00 in one day for breast cancer research. I'm doing it, your welcome to come along.

Your Friend
Mike DeLuca

Friends that are making things happen.....

Kim and Hal Hamrick (Dumpster Solutions)

Toby and Wes Latimer (Latimer Construction)

Chip Prance (Cherokee Floor Covering)

Eden's Keepers Landscaping

Doug Vanderlip, Benjamin Moore Paints At Hickory Flat

Kim Bates, Bates Building Materials

The Quibano Family (new bathroom)

Todd Neal, Superior Building Products (interior doors, windows)

Behr Paints
Home Depot
Tyson Swann (Premier Heating and Air)
Blaine DeLuca (demo)
Uncle Eddie (electric)
Bob Casteel (Casteel Construction, new exterior doors and locksets)
No Hands Dan (interior paint)
Mike Frame (our hero)
All South Painting Ron & Lori Maschino
Pat Tolan, L.A. Painters
Phillip, Shane & Kyle Register
Soloman Mosley
Stephen Reynolds
Matt Ireland
Mikey Hill
Riley Bierce
Corey Gunn
Sonny Age
Mitch & Dawn Farber
Laura Campbell
Kim Kindred
Dawn Jones
Bobby Smith
Gina Coleman
Brian Henson
The Bagwell Family (a true brother)
The Mattson Family
The Logan Family
F.T. & Mary Rich
Joan McFather
Joseph & Andrea Becelaere
Beverly & John Skinner
David & Michele Corley
Charles & Janie Edwards
Adam Camp (Two 32" TV's)
Helen DeLuca (Kitchen Utensils)
Nancy Serrand (stained glass art)
Cherokee Closeouts
Windstream
Chris DeLuca/ AllPro Glass Tinting
Steve Johnson/ Johnson Plumbing
David Johnson/ Johnson Electric
New Life Sunday School Class
Mike Miller and The Lake Arrowhead Church
If I missed mentioning your name, please let me know, it's really important to me.