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## Homes

### These houses are for the dogs

Local architects working on the Bow Wow Haus project design and build unique dog houses.

By ELIZABETH BETTENDORF  
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[Times photos: Chris Zuppa] Everett Henderson and his wife, Phyllis, built this dog house for the Bow Wow Haus contest. Their West Highland white terrier, Mac, stands in the house built to keep the dog elevated and cool because Everett says that is what dogs like.

BAYSHORE BEAUTIFUL - Everett and Phyllis Henderson graduated in May from architecture school with some pretty big ideas about building.

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For people, of course.

The couple never thought much about building for animals.

But recently, they faced a rather quirky architectural question:

How do you build a better dog house?

After all, Marie Antoinette's dog had one.

So did George Washington's and LBJ's.

Dogs reside in little pagodas in China and miniature cottages in the English Cotswolds.



Mac, a West Highland white terrier, rests his head in his Bow Wow Haus equipped with a tennis ball dispenser. The dog house was built as part of a charitable project involving local architects and artists.

Even Frank Lloyd Wright designed a prairie-style abode for a client's Labrador retriever.

As participants in Bow Wow Haus, a project that kicks off in October and benefits The Humane Society of Tampa Bay, the pair designed and built their very own fantasy house for Fido.

Actually, it's really for an imaginary circus dog, Fifi, who bears more than a passing resemblance to the Hendersons' own Sir Rocky "Mac" MacTavish, a 13-year-old, stout West Highland white terrier, who adores tennis balls and sofa jumping despite his years.

"I asked myself, "If I were a dog, what would I want?" Phyllis says. "What would Mac's fantasy be?"

Easy.

"Living surrounded by the things he's obsessed with," she says.

This dog house features Plexiglas walls packed with hundreds of yellow tennis balls. It also offers an enticing platform for jumping - much like the forbidden living room couch - and a space for hiding and snoozing underneath. The structure appears modern and sculptural, though it calls

back to the historic designs of the Sarasota School of Architects, Phyllis says.

It's built uniquely for Florida, to catch cool breezes and shade a hot pup. Round holes have been punched through a plywood sunshade and are meant to catch flying tennis balls.

Of course, the house provides plenty of functional amenities, too, including chutes that dispense the balls for maximum chase and play time.

Take this seriously, please:

"The house is disjunctive and mismatched," Everett explains. "And some of the shapes are anthropomorphic, resembling a dog's leg, for example."

A spoof on the avant-garde German Bauhaus movement of the 20th century, Bow Wow Haus is the brainchild of 30-year-old Jay Goulde.

Goulde was founder and director of the 2001 Tour of Turtles, which featured dozens of fiberglass turtles painted and decorated by area artists. He now heads the Outdoor Arts Foundation of Tampa Bay, a nonprofit, privately funded group that organizes public arts projects, such as the murals that hang on downtown Tampa's Park Tower building.

Goulde was searching for another large project when one of his board members mentioned seeing architect-designed dog houses in the Hamptons.

"As soon as she said it, I thought, boom, that's it," he says. "I wanted to do something that hadn't been done before."

Although a similar event was organized in St. Louis last year, only 15 doghouses were featured. Ultimately, Goulde hopes for 40, reflecting the work of dozens of architects, builders and artists, including Theo Wujcik and the architectural firm of Fleishman Garcia. One builder, R.R. Simons Construction Corp., enthusiastically signed up for two houses.

The first batch of completed doghouses will go on display in mid-October at Reeves Import Motor Cars. After a brief stint at an Old Hyde Park Village storefront, the exhibit will move to Westshore Plaza and Tampa International Airport in January. Next spring, the houses will be auctioned at a charity gala benefiting the Humane Society of Tampa Bay.

All will be featured in a 40-page glossy publication aptly named Barkitechtural Record.

The offerings go way beyond the pitched roof-style hut that Snoopy called home.

Collman & Karsky Architects in Tampa is creating a copper-domed, eclectic canine castle that blends the charming, beach-town architecture of Dunedin - where the firm has another office - with high-tech Tampa. About 10 architects are volunteering on Saturdays on the project, which is under construction in the firm's lunch room.

"It has a neat little architectural flair," says architect Derek Ray, 33, who

was thinking of his late whippet, Devo, and his sister's black Lab, Sabrina, also deceased but very much on his mind.

"This is definitely for a medium-sized dog," he says.

Like a beagle.

In theory, at least.

Goulde predicts collectors will choose to display them as art objects.

In fact, the canine castles might even be snubbed by creatures who prefer toilet bowls to water bowls.

"I tried to get my dog, Misty, to go in. I even put her favorite treat inside," says artist Eileen Goldenberg, who is festooning her dog house in wild trim, shingling the roof and shaping the windows like dog biscuits.

She's also adding molding, sconces and a fringed zebra-striped rug inside. Splashes of "dog graffiti" decorate the interior walls.

Goldenberg reads a few aloud:

"Love me, love my dog."

"Dogs are the gods of frolic."

"A good dog deserves a good bone."

With all that inspiration, Goldenberg still can't coax Misty inside.

Even her kids have tried.

"She just won't go in. Maybe when it's painted."

[Last modified September 25, 2003, 10:50:10]

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