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# Home & Garden



**'Scapes:**  
 Photojournalist John Rottet finds beauty in a spiral staircase at Duke Chapel.  
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## home of the month

December's profile of a well-designed living space

See more photos of today's design and all of the 2006 Home of the Month profiles at [www.newsobserver.com](http://www.newsobserver.com), key word: **architectural**.



**natural light** The mood in the living room changes as sunlight pours through the vaulted glass ceiling, and shadows and light create geometric abstractions in a room filled with art. On clear nights, the ceiling is a window to the stars. Mrozek created bookcases and display niches throughout the house for the Doyles' huge collection of books, art and memorabilia. Interior trim, also custom-milled, mimics the lines of the exterior siding. Travertine marble on the floors is a sleek contrast to the homeowners' artful clutter.

PHOTOS BY SETH TICE-LEWIS



**kitchen** Mrozek designed the house around the kitchen, which nearly replicates the one in the Doyles' previous house. It has ample counter space near appliances and is big enough to move around in without being huge. The cabinets are cherry, a warm, reddish wood that is also used, along with ash, in a border on the living room floor. Other materials used in the house include metal, stone and stucco.

### the project the doyle residence

**architect** | Karl R. Mrozek  
**firm** | Karl R. Mrozek, AIA  
**project location** | Chapel Hill  
**beds/baths** | 4 / 3½  
**square footage** | 5,638 heated, 850 unheated  
**cost** | undisclosed  
**key design concepts** | daylighting/natural light

## a perfect fit



House suits wooded slope, golf course community and family's art-filled lives

Home of the Month, a collaboration with the NCSU College of Design, shows possibilities in constructing a living space that is well thought-out and built with the homeowners' living patterns and preferences in mind. Recently, readers were given the opportunity to decide which of the remaining 2006 Home of the Month entries they wanted to learn more about. Today's house design, the Doyle Residence, is our Readers' Choice selection.

By MARTHA QULLIN  
 STAFF WRITER

looking the 25th hole of the golf course, fit with the Doyles'.

**CHAPEL HILL**  
 From beginning to end, the job of building a house for Jill and Scott Doyle was a process of fitting in.

It helped, Mrozek said, that he could look at the plans drawn by the first two hires and see what the Doyles didn't like, which included most standard variations of three bedrooms, 2½ baths — a series of rectangular rooms connected by rectangular hallways.

It began with the Doyles' selection of Karl Mrozek as architect and builder for the house on a lot they had had for several years in the Governors Club development, in Chatham County about four miles outside Chapel Hill.

It also helped that they liked the home he had built for himself, in a contemporary, Frank Lloyd Wright-influenced style with cantilevered porches and decks, deep window

Mrozek was the third architect to draw up plans for the house, but the first whose vision for the property, on the wooded hillside over-

SEE DOYLE, PAGE 3E



Wendy Tregay, of The Scrap Exchange in Durham, turned old sweaters into mittens and stockings. You can, too, with help from 'Altered Couture.'

## A crafty new resolution

By ORLA SWIFT  
 STAFF WRITER

If the holiday season has left you spent, with cash registers echoing in your brain, you may be wishing for a gift moratorium.

But the new year promises new celebrations, from Valentine's Day to Father's Day and all the other gift-giving milestones.

Instead of hitting the shopping centers this year, why not take an alternate route: Go "shopping" in your garage, your junk drawer or your sewing cabinet. Many houses are full of cool gifts just waiting to happen. With help from a bevy of clever new craft books, you or your children can give a newfangled twist to the old-fashioned tradition of making things by hand.

Below are a few suggestions for off-beat gifts, and the books that can help you create them. For more reviews, go to this story at [www.newsobserver.com](http://www.newsobserver.com) key word: **homegarden**.

**Project:** Recycled hats, mittens and purses.

**Source:** "Altered Couture" (Somerset Studio, \$14.95).

**Ingredients:** Old sweaters, tapestry needle, yarn.

**At a glance:** You'll never let go of an old piece of clothing again. Not with these artists' ideas for partial and total revamps. Sweatshirts become funky cardigans. Shoes become mobile sculptures. And denim overalls turn into purses. Instructions aren't illustrated step-by-step, but they're intuitive from the final photos.



**Project:**

"No-worries" dolls

**Source:** "Fabric Leftovers," by D'Arcy-Jean Milne (C&T, \$26.95).

**Ingredients:** Fabric scrap, thread, beads.

**At a glance:**

Milne's collection is packed with inventive ideas for even the tiniest scrap, including a chubbier version of the traditional worry doll. You can also make colorful necklace cord with a zig-zag stitch, and pendants, earrings, pocketbooks, CD cases, coffee cuffs, frames and other unique gifts.

SEE PROJECTS, PAGE 6E

## Stashing toys is not child's play

By STACY DOWNS  
 McCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS

KANSAS CITY, Mo.

For a few precious days after Santa comes, the children's toys are nothing but a joy. Scattered around the tree, they add to the festivity of the season.

But after you cart off the tree, you have a kidspllosion on your hands.

"You want your home to be kid-friendly without looking like a day-care center," said interior designer Shelby Lewis of Leawood, Kan. Lewis, who has a 21-month-old son, struggles year round to corral toys.

It's not easy to limit the number and size of toys you have. Before kids can even crawl, pediatricians recommend the stationary "exer-saucers" for physical development. Infants stand upright in the large devices, which are difficult to hide because they're encircled with colorful toys and don't fold up.

And child development experts like a

SEE TOYS, PAGE 4E





**light** Glass railings on the stairs allow light from the main floor to fall into the ground floor, which would otherwise be cave-like because it is built into a hill.

**DOYLE**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1E

overhangs and a gentle blending into the natural surroundings.

Once he saw the Doyles' lot, Mrozek understood immediately that the house would have to be made to fit the contours of the land, and not the other way around.

Governors Club, a gated community put together by developers in the 1980s out of 33 parcels, is something of a geological anomaly, with its steep hills and rugged rock outcroppings. Laced through by a meandering creek, it looks more like North Carolina's foothills than the Triangle.

But the house needed to fit into its man-made surroundings as well. The Doyles' favorite residential architecture — "1950s Palm Springs, Frank Sinatra-style," as Scott Doyle describes it — could look out of place amid the Georgian and Colonial Revival homes of Governors Club.

The couple didn't want to fight with the development's architectural review board, but more important, they didn't want the design of their new home to be so jarring to their neighbors that it would be considered an eyesore.

What Mrozek came up with is what he calls "elegant contemporary," a mix of elements from California modern and Prairie styles, with long horizontal lines and lots of glass that meets seamlessly at the corners and offers panoramic views of the trees and golf greens.

The lower level is built into the hillside, causing the least disturbance of the landscape and giving the main floor a suspended-in-air, treehouse effect. The crowning glory of the home is a soaring, peaked glass roof over the living room that makes the space feel like a conservatory on sunny days and turns it into a planetarium on clear nights.

Approached from the front, the house appears much smaller than its Governors Club neighbors, some of which approach 9,000 square feet. Only when viewed from the back — from a passing golf cart, for example — does it look like the 5,638 square feet it is.

Part of the deception lies in the placement of the house on point, with the entry set into a corner of the house. The structure angles into the lot rather than stretching out perpendicular to the street.

Directly behind a small foyer is a staircase leading to the ground floor and, behind that, the living room. To the right is Scott Doyle's office and the master bedroom; to the left, a music room and a dining room.

**Hearth of the home**

The kitchen is near the center of the house in more ways than one. "Basically, we built the house around the kitchen," says Mrozek, who traveled to Florida to see the kitchen in the house where the Doyles were living before they moved to North Carolina. It was nearly the perfect kitchen, they told him, with good flow, adequate work surfaces and space enough on either side of the appliances to set down pots and dishes.

When they re-created it in the new house, they also installed a vegetable steamer and an espresso maker in one wall, and a camouflaged laundry chute for dirty dishcloths in another. Such details make the house feel warm, despite its contemporary design, and user-friendly, despite its size.

Cherry cabinetry in the kitchen

offsets cool, black-granite countertops. Music plays in every room, programmable from any computer in the house to pipe in Sirius radio, or any song from 2,000 CDs on built-in players or from iPods that can be plugged into various receptacles.

The horizontal lines of exterior cedar siding are repeated in painted interior trim, and a four-square motif that appears on the front-facing end of the glass roof shows up again at various places inside the house, both giving a sense of continuity. Bookcases seem to be everywhere.

**The art of light**

The glass roof allows in so much light that on the main floor, the Doyles say, most winter days the lights don't have to be turned on until at least 5 p.m. And those lights are subtle — lamps and subtle rope lights that hide behind high ledges. For privacy, windows can be covered with remote-controlled shades.

Because Mrozek was both architect and builder, he was able to make changes in the design as the house was being built.

The biggest of these was the serial conversion of one ground-level storage space after another into living space. That floor was originally designed with a rec room large enough to house a pool table; a laundry room; and two symmetrically placed guest rooms for the Doyles' two grown boys, separated by a shared bath.

It includes an exercise room, a sauna, a photo darkroom, a third bedroom for the couple's youngest son, who is in high school, and an office Jill Doyle carved out of a closet.

That left the couple with something else to fit in: all the paintings, prints, carvings, sculptures, masks, sports memorabilia and other objects the Doyles have collected during their 37-year marriage.

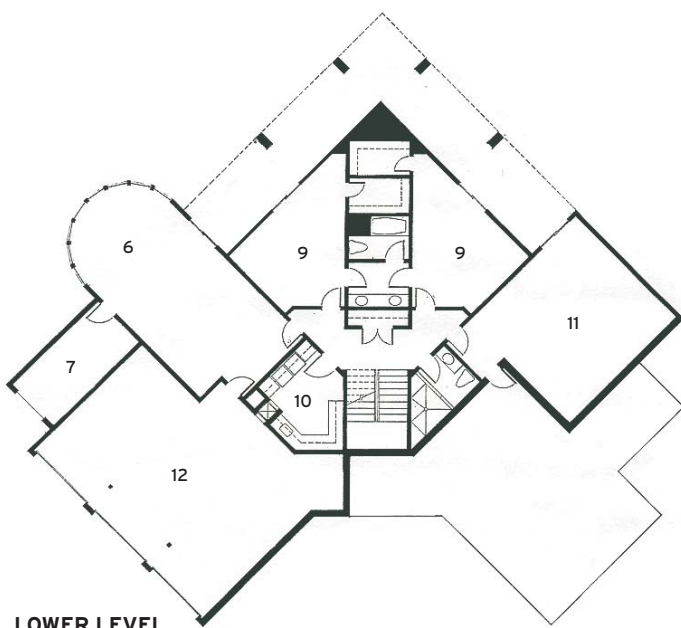
Stuff is everywhere: covering the walls, sitting in the corners, perched on tabletops. It took two tractor-trailer moving vans to get it all here when the Doyles moved in three years ago. Even then, they gave furniture to Mrozek's carpenters and had to place some things in storage.

They are loath to get rid of much else, and they say if they had it to do over, they would enlarge the sitting area off the kitchen and the downstairs rec room that shares that part of the blueprint.

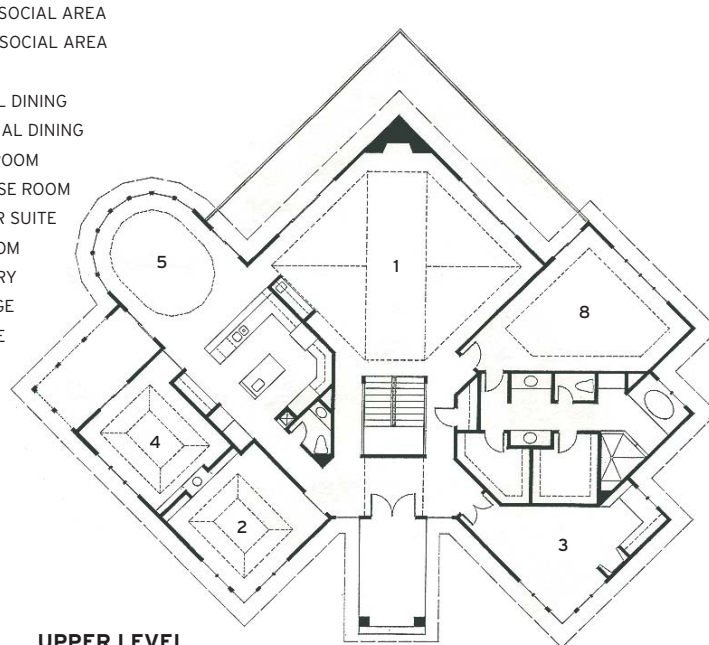
Other than that, they say, this house is a perfect fit.

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**the floor plan**



LOWER LEVEL



UPPER LEVEL

- 1 LARGE SOCIAL AREA
- 2 SMALL SOCIAL AREA
- 3 STUDY
- 4 FORMAL DINING
- 5 INFORMAL DINING
- 6 GAME ROOM
- 7 EXERCISE ROOM
- 8 MASTER SUITE
- 9 BEDROOM
- 10 LAUNDRY
- 11 STORAGE
- 12 GARAGE



**patterns** Horizontal lines of exterior cedar siding are repeated in painted interior trim, and a four-square motif that appears on the front-facing end of the glass roof shows up again at various places inside the house.

PHOTOS BY SETH TICE-LEWIS



**glass corners** Natural light illuminates Scott Doyle's home office in a south-facing corner of the house. The mitered-glass corner and long, vertical windows take full advantage of the view outside.

**architect's aim**

Says architect Karl R. Mrozek, AIA: "A tour of the Doyles' residence reveals their appreciation of painting, sculpture, literature and music. They are patrons of the arts. When we started to design their new home, they were looking to make another investment in art, the art of architecture."



Mrozek

**Project credits**

**Contractor** | Mrozek Design and Construction Co.  
**Landscape architect** | Kurt Maddocks ASLA

**Coming in January**

Find out the winners of Home of the Month 2007, plus get a look at all the entries.

**tree house**

The back of the house, as seen from the Governors Club golf course, reveals its true size, 5,638 square feet. The turreted seating area off the kitchen has the feel of a treehouse, the exact effect the homeowners wanted. Deck railings are made of glass so they don't obstruct the view.

