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# Home & Garden



It's not easy going green: Marni Jameson offers 12 tips so you can do your part to save the planet. PAGE 2E

## home of the month

### March's profile of a well-designed living space

Take a slide show tour of the home and hear homeowner/architect Tina Govan talk about it at [www.newsobserver.com](http://www.newsobserver.com), search 'home.'

# Spacious in disguise



Today's Home of the Month is reviewed by Georgia Bizios, a professor at the School of Architecture at N.C. State University. Home of the Month, a collaboration with the school's College of Design, shows possibilities in constructing a living space that's well thought-out and built with the homeowners' living patterns and preferences in mind. Each month we'll profile a new home, selected by an expert panel, from designs by area architects. The goal: to offer inspiration and knowledge that can be applied to any living space.

BY GEORGIA BIZIOS  
GUEST COLUMNIST

Architect Tina Govan and Matt Goodall started their married life in a modest 990-square-foot bungalow in Raleigh's Oakwood neighborhood.

"We had served in the Peace Corps and worked in Japan, so we were used to living in small places," Govan reflects.

But when the family grew by two boys and a dog, it was time to add on — a living room, dining room, office and spaces for laundry, bathing, sleeping and storage. The only place to expand the house, though, was into the backyard of their 50 feet by 130 feet city lot. It would be a tight fit, but the idea appealed to the family because they were committed to being ecologically responsible. Ren-

ovating the existing house and keeping it small appealed to them.

After identifying some main goals — creating a feeling of spaciousness and honoring the integrity of the original bungalow and the memory of the family's much loved and used backyard patio — Govan decided on a modest renovation to the existing house and an addition of only 650 square feet. The family ended up with two small houses in one, connected by a versatile interior patio that became the new "heart" of the home.

In her design, Govan relied on many ideas she had admired while working in Japan. She reinterpreted them while inventing some new. One of those ideas is found in the backyard addition, a second small

SEE GOODALL, PAGE 4E

## the project

### the goodall addition

**architect** | Tina Govan

**location** | Raleigh

**square footage (heated and unheated)**  
existing 990; addition 650; total 1,640 square feet

**budget** | \$100,000

**completed** | 2006

**key design concepts**  
Asian influences, spacious small addition, in-town living



## the living room

The living room, or indoor patio, is the perfect example of a well-designed flexible space. It has a high ceiling with exposed rafters and structural cable ties, a loft, floor height variety with steps that can be used as seating and glass walls that connect the new to the old and to the outside. Other techniques: interior windows; pocket doors and sliding panels; contrasting materials and textures; and, exterior materials used in an interior space. There's even room for a sentimental touch: a planted tree to commemorate the old backyard tree that was lost for the new living space.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JAMES WEST/JWEST PRODUCTIONS

## Prize perches on display

The judging is over. So go see how the birdhouse entries fared in the Great N&O Birdhouse Contest at JC Raulston Arboretum in Raleigh. The creativity is always a treat. Once you've finished scoping out the houses, catch a tour of the arboretum or become educated on the plants that attract birds. Check out the full schedule of the arboretum events for today and Sunday. Need directions to the arboretum? Go to [www.ncsu.edu/jcraulstonarboretum/](http://www.ncsu.edu/jcraulstonarboretum/) or call 513-7005.



**TODAY**

**10 a.m.** Winners will be announced.

**10 a.m.-5 p.m.** Entries on display.

**10 a.m.** Tours of the JCRA highlighting plants that attract birds.

**2 p.m.** Tours of the JCRA highlighting plants that attract birds.

**SUNDAY**

**Noon-5 p.m.** Entries on display.

**2 p.m.** Tours of the JCRA highlighting plants that attract birds.

**5-6 p.m.** Entries may be picked up.

**MONDAY**

Entries may be picked up between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m. Entries not removed by 6 p.m. will become the property of the JCRA.

# McMansions go miniature

*Kids' playhouses become more elaborate and luxurious*

BY MISSY BAXTER  
CORRESPONDENT

An air-conditioner in a playhouse? And a doorbell?

Those are two of the up-scale amenities that Raleigh dad Shawn Szewczyk installed in the playhouse he recently built for his 4-year-old daughter, MaKayla.

"With the heat in North Carolina, I added the A/C window unit because otherwise it would probably be too hot most of the time for her to enjoy playing in it," Szewczyk said.

"I wired the playhouse and ran an extension cord out there from our house so she would have electricity. The doorbell was her idea

... in case she had company come over to play."

The father-daughter team worked together to construct and decorate the playhouse.

"She painted the inside and she's working on decorating it now," said Szewczyk, who operates HomeTask Handyman Services of Raleigh. "It's been a lot of fun for both of us to work on it."

MaKayla is obviously proud of her playhouse, which she calls her dollhouse.

"I love my dollhouse and I want to make it pretty," she said. "I like to play in it all the time."

SEE PLAYHOUSES, PAGE 3E



M/I Homes built this playhouse fit for a princess. Triangle builders say play spaces are popular.



## architect's aim

"I'd like people to know that they do not need to buy a big house in the outskirts of town to fulfill their dreams. ... A dream home could be smaller and close in to town and neighbors. ... Exciting, free-flowing spaces suited to easy modern living are possible in existing bungalows and ranch houses, if you approach them freshly. Recycling what we have already built is more sustainable than carving into a meadow." **Tina Govan**

## GOODALL

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1E

"house," referred to by the family as the "Tatami House." Tatami is the traditional Japanese floor mat made of woven straw. The flooring covers the master bedroom in this space, where there's also a bath.

In contemporary American culture, most bedrooms are designed for maximum privacy, but Govan's design uses the Japanese concept of creating spaces that can be private or public. A window seat cabinet provides easy storage of the futon bed, and sliding shoji screens give privacy.

"The ability to open this private bedroom up to multiple uses — yoga or a stage for kids — is the key to making this small house feel spacious," Govan said.

The same approach is applied to the bathroom, which doubles as a hallway. Sliding glass doors in the shower allow views to the backyard and access to the sauna and hot tub.

The "heart of the house," the interior patio, is also a space of versatility. It has areas for seating and eating, a small office and space for storage and laundry. Each function has its corner, but is open to and overlaps with the other areas. A small loft overlooking the patio provides attic access, but is also a retreat and a play area.

"From up there my sons love to test out paper airplanes, shoot Nerf guns, hang stuffed animals and throw down baskets tied on ropes, pulling objects up and down as they saw a shop owner do in Turkey," the architect said.

Govan's design concept is built around flexible or "soft" boundaries between spaces. The approach allows rooms to expand and contract, and accommodates a variety of uses. Such homes, she



## the bath

The bathroom in the "Tatami House" also serves as a hallway to the bedroom. A pair of sliding glass doors allows access to the backyard. A cast-in-place concrete wall continues as a garden wall, extending the shower and bathroom area to the adjacent bathing/sauna garden. The laundry closet, next to the bathroom, is hidden behind plywood panels that slide up and down.

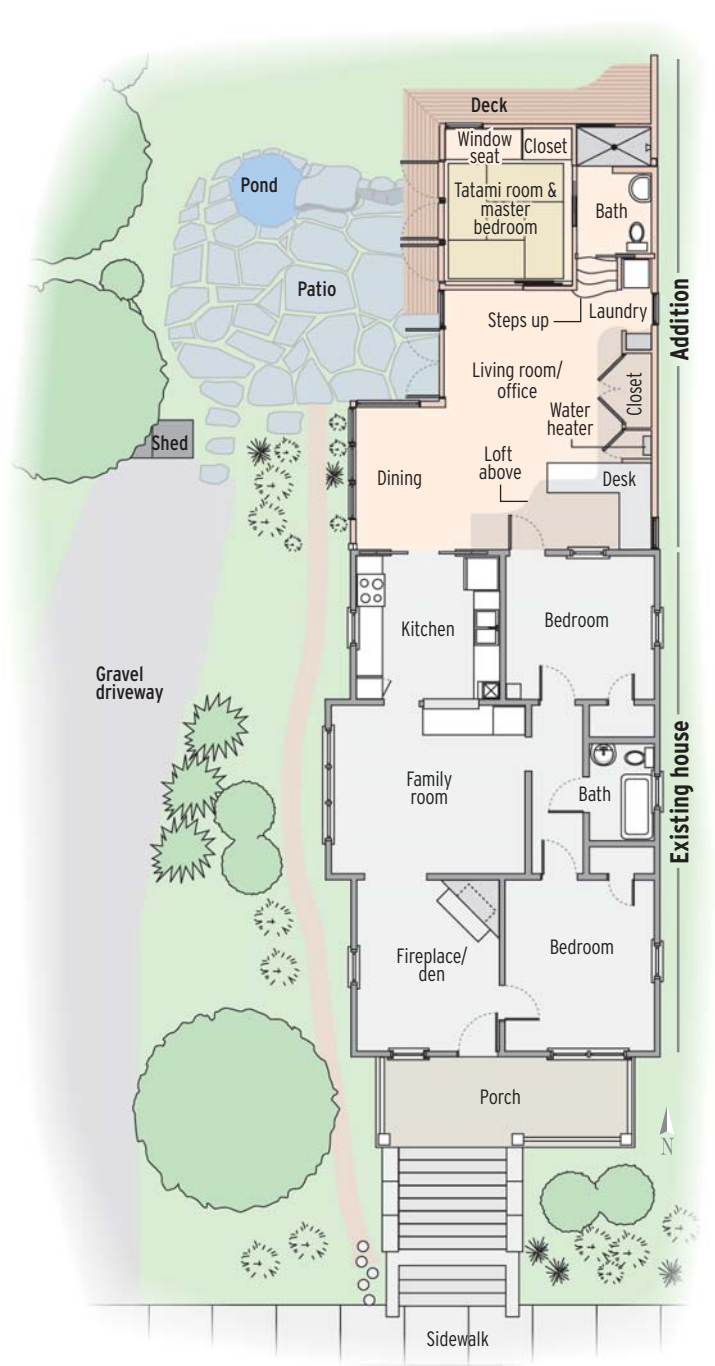
explained, "allow a family to be together yet separate. They can be part of the same space, but be engaged in very different activities. This makes the space feel bigger, is more efficient, and makes people feel less isolated."

Flexible or "soft" boundaries can be achieved with various touches — varied ceiling heights, alcoves and window seats, partial walls or storage walls, low and high windows, as well as sliding panels and pocket doors. Other architectural strategies, such as views through other rooms and "borrowed views" to places beyond the house lot, can expand spaces. Floor level changes and high places overlooking other spaces create a separate yet integrated feeling.

Sitting in Govan's cozy, yet spacious living room, you can see many of the above mentioned strategies at work. The ceiling is high, following the gable roof. The loft places you above the main room, while it creates a lower ceiling for the office and storage wall area. The Tatami House, raised a couple of feet from the main floor, feels like an alcove to the living area, and its window seat is an alcove within an alcove. Windows, including a clerestory, bring light into the space from many directions. Wood slats over the laundry area filter the light from the bathroom skylight into the living room. The space spills onto the exterior patio through large glass doors. The concrete floor does the same, lending to the seamlessness of indoors and outdoors.

The architect, noted the Home of the Month selection panel, "took a bungalow and stepped it into this century."

Architect Georgia Bizios, FAIA, is director of the Home Environments Design Initiative at the College of Design.



## the plan

The renovation and site plans for the original house and the addition make good use of every bit of space on the tight site. East facing windows on the existing bedrooms as well as the new office and laundry areas expand the interior space by five feet taking advantage of the five-foot required setback.



Tina Govan



## the tatami house

Tatami mats (the traditional Japanese mats are made of woven straw) cover the bedroom floor. The space is separated and connected to the living areas through a sliding shoji screen. The window seat makes a cozy alcove and the cabinet below the seat provides convenient storage.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JAMES WEST/JWEST PRODUCTIONS

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