

LakeNorman

M A G A Z I N E

Living through **ART**

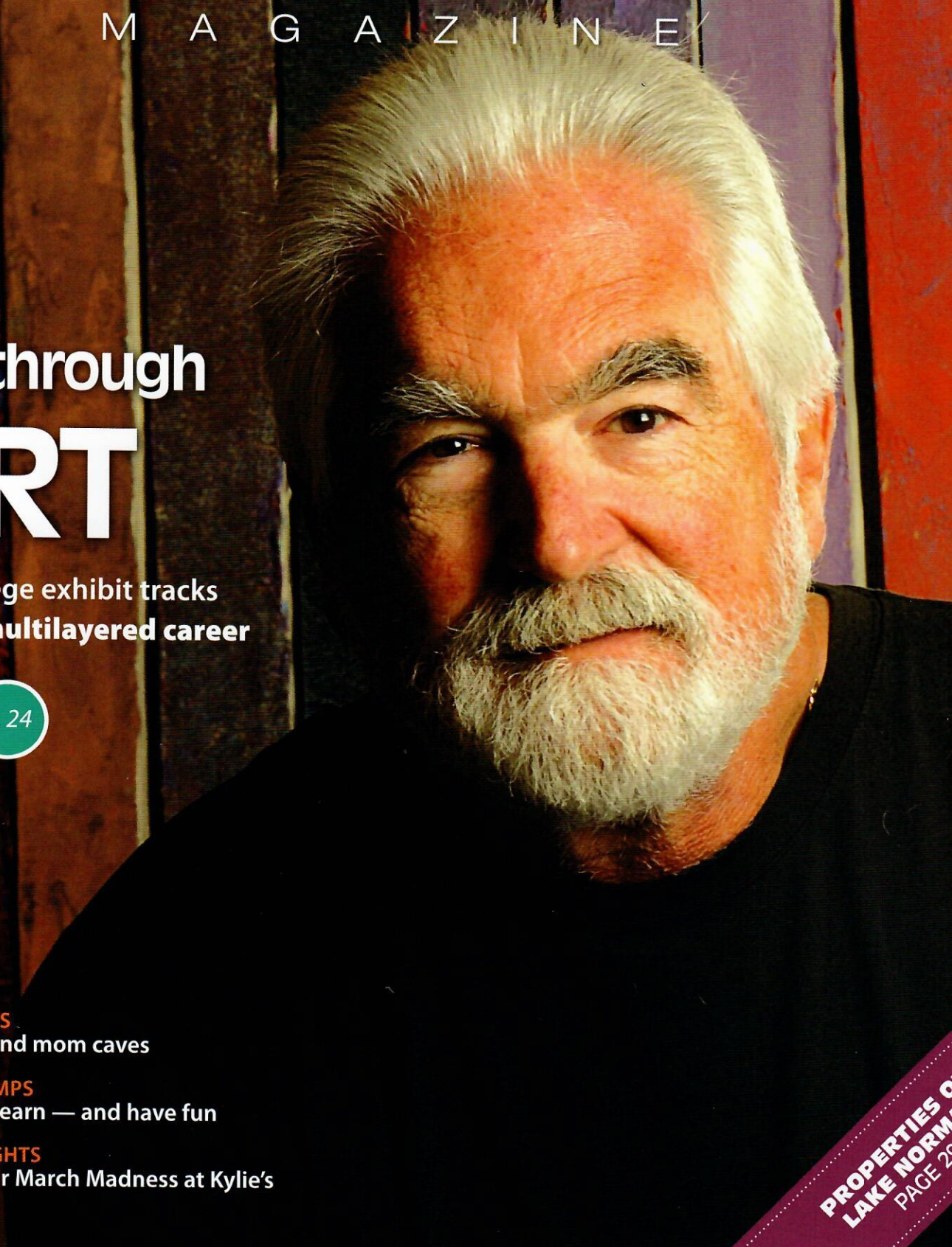
Davidson College exhibit tracks
Herb Jackson's multilayered career

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STORY ELISABETH ARRIERO
PHOTOGRAPHY JEFF WILLHELM

PERSONAL SPACE

Homeowners are increasingly carving
out "man caves" and "mom caves"
for individual pursuits

After 30 years of marriage, Jeff Carter has made a lot of concessions. Most of his house is decorated in his wife's favorite colors. He's had to forgo watching a couple of football games because his wife's favorite show was on. And he's had to share the space for his movies and gadgets with some of his wife's knickknacks.

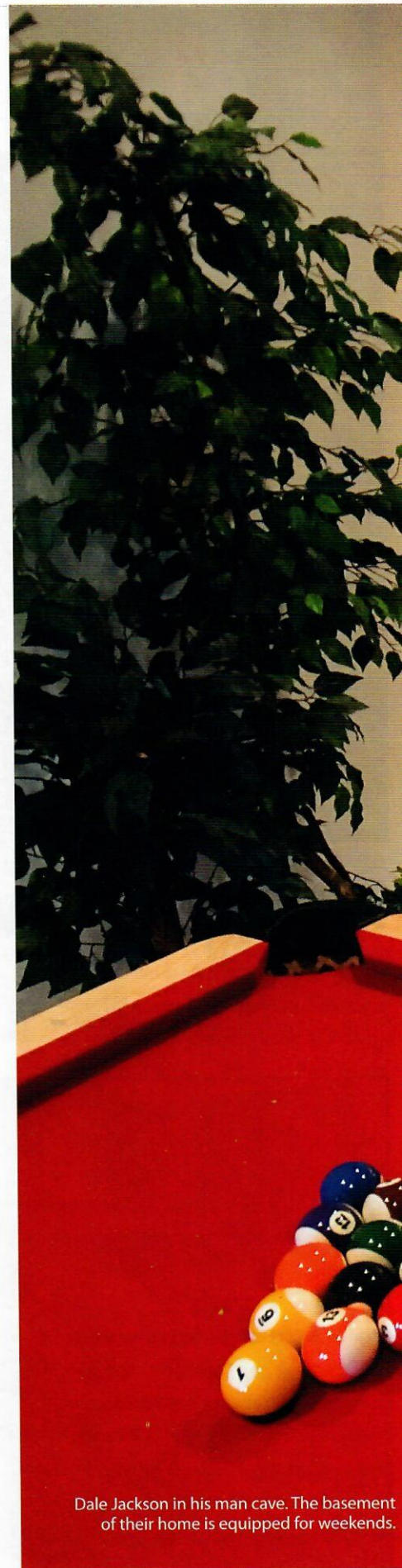
But there's one part of his Cornelius home where Jeff reigns supreme: his man cave in the basement.

There, Jeff can kick up his feet and watch his favorite movies in the couple's eight-seat home theater and watch hours of NFL football on Sundays. He can play pool and serve scotch on the rocks to his buddies. The basement is Jeff's place to be his own man.

"The entire house is blue and yellow. His basement is brown and beige and animal prints. It's very masculine," says his wife, Denise.

Man caves and the female equivalent, mom caves or she caves, are a relatively modern trend, although the idea of having separate living spaces has been around for centuries, says Starr Miller, president and principal designer for the Davidson-based Starr Miller Interior Design.

During the Victorian era, women and men lived in separate quarters. Men occupied the library in their spare time while women retired to the parlor.



Dale Jackson in his man cave. The basement of their home is equipped for weekends.





Patti Jackson took over the casual dining space of their home for her jewelry creation.

“The women are looking for a place where they can get away and be creative.”

JENNY PIPPIN
PIPPIN HOME DESIGNS

“The parlor was specifically decorated to a woman’s taste while men’s taste was dictated by the library feel,” says Miller.

But during the early 20th century, everyone scaled back their living space because the two world wars brought sacrifices. By the mid-20th century, the woman’s space had become the kitchen.

“Women today are wanting their own space where they can decorate any way they want to,” says Miller. “And men have their caves where they can do the same.”

Jenny Pippin of Pippin Home Designs says today’s she caves or mom caves tend to take up less space than man caves. The space is generally devoted to such activities as arts and crafts, yoga, meditation and reading. Man caves are usually much more involved and can include everything from a built-in bar to a pool table, she says.

And while she caves usually feature subtle hues and softer materials, it’s not uncommon for man caves to have a lot of leather furniture and bold colors, says Miller.

“The women are looking for a place where they can get away and be creative,” says Pippin. “With the man caves, the men want a place to get away from the rest of the family and have the guys over and smoke a cigar and watch some sports.”

In many cases, couples are designing their caves in existing homes, meaning that their seldom-used dining rooms, living rooms and guest rooms are getting facelifts.

‘We can do whatever we want’

When Patti and Dale Jackson moved into their townhome in Huntersville’s Skybrook

community, the couple decided they wanted their dream home to include separate spaces for their personal interests.

Patti, who has an artistic eye, designed Dale's man cave in the basement. One of the first things she decided was to use a red and black color scheme in honor of Dale's alma mater, the University of Nebraska at Lincoln.

In the space, Dale has everything he would ever need for manly pursuits: the University of Nebraska dartboard, the pool table, the leather plush chairs, the flat-screen TV mounted to the wall, even a mini-fridge stocked with beer and soda.

"I think people need their space now and then," says Dale. "It's really given me the privacy for when friends come over. We can go down there and watch a game and do whatever we want without bothering the women upstairs."

On the first floor, Patti has transformed the couple's sun room into her own art studio, where she can leave out the thousands of beads for her homemade necklace collection without worrying about someone being offended by the mess. After all, it's her space and she can leave it however she wants to, she says.

Patti says that while she can't say whether the spaces have made the couple's 25-year union any stronger, they certainly haven't weakened it.

"It's nice that we're at a place in our lives where we have this little extra space," she says.

Ironically, the separate space for personal hobbies means the couple is spending more time at home together.

"A lot of times in the past, he would go out with his buddies to a sports bar," said Patti. "I think it actually keeps people in their own home more when you have a place where you can go be yourself and feel comfortable." **LNM**

→ Tips for designing your cave

From Patti Jackson of Skybrook in Huntersville:

- Consider what that person's favorite colors or sports teams are.
- Consider how you're going to use the space and make sure it has good functionality.
- Remember, you're living with it for a long time. Make sure you like everything you're putting in there.
- Have a game plan for what you ultimately want to put in the space.
- Create a budget and stick to that budget.
- Don't feel like you have to rush to buy everything in the space overnight.

To some, it's a beautiful sofa.



To us, it's a place to sit, read, relax, lounge, unwind and cuddle.

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