



Architect Jim Poteet turned an electric blue 40 by 8-ft. shipping container into this contemporary guest house with an 8-ft. wide patio.

## Shipping Container Guest Home

"Most of the time when people re-use a shipping container in Texas, they turn it into a hunting shack, a tool crib or maybe storage on their farm," says Jim Poteet, an architect from San Antonio, who turned an electric blue 40 by 8-ft. container into a very contemporary guest house.

Poteet's client for the unique project was Stacey Hill, an artist and mother of two girls, who wanted to turn a shipping container into a guest house and oversized playroom in her San Antonio back yard. Hill paid less than \$6,000 for the container and had a crane place the bright blue 320 sq. ft. metal box in her yard.

"Stacey lives in an artist's community so she wanted a unique design that was inviting and vibrant yet simple and functional," says Poteet. His design for about 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s of the container is an open living area fronted by floor-to-ceiling windows and a sliding glass door that maximizes light and air flow. Spray foam insulation keeps the home cool in summer and warm in winter. "The inside is insulated like an oversized Coleman cooler with 2 in. of foam," Poteet says.

The bathroom is 4 by 8 ft. with an electric composting toilet and an open shower. It has a non-slip epoxy floor and the walls are red sheet metal. A 10-ft. section on one end is used for garden tools and storage. Entrance is gained through the container's original

double-wide access doors, which still have the I.D. numbers on them.

Covering the structure is a rooftop garden that absorbs sunlight and collects rainfall. Gray sink and shower water from the home can be used to water plants. There's an air space between the platform and the roof to provide a barrier that conserves energy for cooling. A small energy-efficient air conditioner is used only on the hottest Texas days. "It stays very comfortable inside," says Poteet.

The container sits on a base of telephone poles. An 8-ft. wide patio is made of plastic from recycled soda bottles and the exterior light fixtures were made with blades from an old disc plow.

Hill says her container house is a great escape because the space is pure, uncluttered, wonderfully sunlit and has a great view of her garden. Getting the design approved in the city of San Antonio required several planning meetings, but Poteet says, "anyone who lives in the country or a small town, where restrictions are less of an issue, could easily do something like this."

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## Dwarf Calf Survives Despite Odds

"He looked like a midget weightlifter," Donald Schwartz says about a dwarf calf, George, born last June 11. The tiny calf has livestock experts puzzled since dwarfism is extremely rare, and dwarfs usually don't survive.

Schwartz and his wife didn't think George would make it either, at first, so they bottle-fed him when they found him. Schwartz got up at 1 a.m. to feed him again. But after he helped him up, the calf went to his mother for food. Her low bag proved to be the perfect height.

A couple months later, George is doing okay. His short legs are his most distinctive feature compared to other calves his age. The dwarf calf is only 20 in. tall from hoof to shoulder.

"When he gets up he's a little stiff. He tries to bounce around. He has a different walking style that seems stiffer," Schwartz says.

George has little potential as a market animal, but there has been interest from a petting zoo. Since the calf wasn't born dead and didn't have an elongated jaw that's common to dwarfism, it's possible that George's size is just a deformity.

But the state veterinarian is interested in why a registered Simmental bull and



Dwarf calf is only 20 in. tall from hoof to shoulder.

mixed breed black cow had a dwarf calf — something that has been culled from herds since the 1950's.

The Simmental Association sent Schwartz a DNA kit to see if either or both of the parents had a gene that caused the dwarf trait.

"I just have to figure out how to get some of the bull's tail hairs," Schwartz says.

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The 500 plows in Elmer Schneider's yard represent nearly every brand and every type. The only common feature they all have is steel wheels.

## Giant Plow Collection One-Of-A-Kind

Elmer Schneider really does have all the plows he could ever want. The 500 plows on display in his yard represent nearly every brand and every type, including hillsides, flip-over and a type out of Canada with long narrow bottoms. The only common feature they all have is steel wheels.

"I quit collecting at 500," he says. "I probably have half a million dollars invested in them, including paint and restoration costs."

The plows didn't cost Schneider that much, at least at first. Most were headed for the scrap yard and smelter. Once he set a few out on display, people started calling with leads or with a plow to sell or trade.

"I would trade some birdhouses I make for a plow or find something else to trade," he recalls. "I've gone as far as 500 miles for a plow."

Schneider would power wash each one and then paint it with the plow's brand paint. "I'd paint them in their original brand colors, using authentic brand paint," he says.

Schneider also repaired plows that needed it. Often the wheels were the first to go, as they would sink into the ground. He kept parts on hand and fabricated others.

His favorite, if he had to pick one, is an Oliver breaking plow. While he has trouble explaining just why he collected them...he's glad he did.

"The oldest one is probably from the 1920's, nearly 100 years old," says Schneider. "If I hadn't collected them, they would have all gone for scrap, and all that history would be lost."

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Most of the plows were headed for the scrap yard before Schneider found them. Once he set a few out on display, people started calling with a plow to sell or trade.