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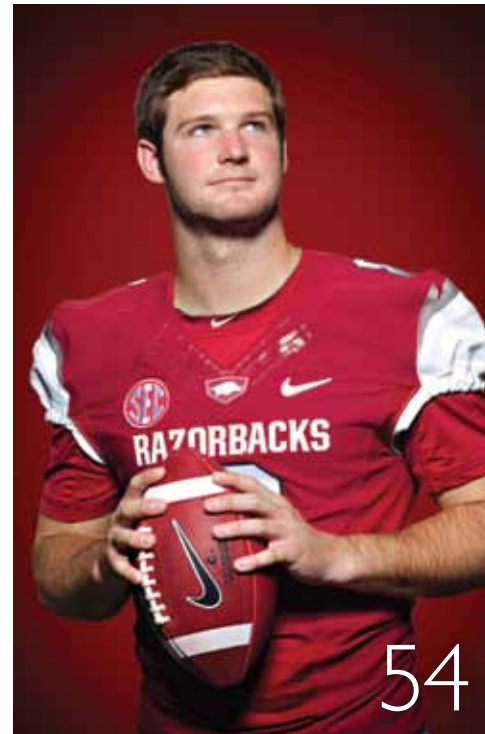
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Special thanks to Arkansas Flag and Banner for letting us dismantle a flag pole for the photo at right



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(FROM LEFT) PHOTOS BY WESLEY HITT; DERO SANFORD; WESLEY HITT



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# A Man Cave by Any Other Name

JONESBORO MAN PUTS TECHNOLOGY TWIST ON RETREAT

BY TAMMY KEITH | PHOTOGRAPHY BY DERO SANFORD



In the world of man caves, Ryan Heringer is the king. The head caveman. The big bear. Next door to his 5,000-square-foot home on a Jonesboro golf course is his separate two-bedroom, 4,000-square-foot “man cave.”

One might call that a man house. “Man cave,” he says.

It has all the bells and whistles and latest technology that he could find, which, as owner of Sound Concepts, was child’s play for him.

“I’ve been doing this for ten years. I put all the coolest things in my house,” he says.

The showroom of the place is the soundproof theater with seating for twenty-eight—including thirteen luxurious leather seats—and a solid onyx bar in the back with LED color-changing tape lighting around the edges and underneath that creates hundreds of color combinations for a wow factor. The main attraction is a 160-inch curved screen for watching one of the thousands of movies in Heringer’s collection.

It’s more like a man mansion.

“Man cave,” he insists.

Heringer, thirty-three, gave his interior designer, M.G. Meyering of Jonesboro, carte blanche to create a masculine retreat that is comfortable and stylish.

“I did the technology and gave him full rein



The main room of Ryan and Sarah Heringer’s 4,000-square-foot “man cave” features a state-of-the-art kitchen, sprawling sectional sofa, game tables, four TVs, and a wet bar with wine and beer fridges and a margarita machine.

of the decorating,” Heringer says.

“I picked out everything from what you think you would pick out down to the door hinges,” Meyering says. He worked closely with the builder, Marty Hesch of Hesch Construction in Jonesboro.

Meyering says he wanted a marriage between old and new. “My whole goal was to give it a real Southwestern flair, and I think we really accomplished that with the colors we chose,

the plaster technique, the wooden beams that went up, and stain choices. I also needed it to be cosmopolitan—somewhere between the Manhattan penthouse and Santa Fe villa hanging off the cliff.”

The ninety-bottle wine chiller and a humidor provide a cosmopolitan air; the cotton-plantation murals in one bathroom leave no doubt the owner is an Arkansas boy, born and bred.



Meyering came up with the idea to lay tile horizontally on one bathroom wall to mimic wooden slats, but also leave open spaces for the murals, painted by Cheryl Draper, Sarah Heringer's cousin.

Ryan bagged the deer and fish trophies hanging in almost every room, and they share the walls with state-of-the-art, crisp LED televisions that can show up to eight shows (i.e., games) at a time.

One of Ryan's niches is creating automated homes, where everything from the window shades to the music can be controlled with the touch of an iPad or iPhone. He's created magic in modest to multimillion-dollar homes.

An iPad is never far from Heringer's fingertips, and on the kitchen television, he shows baby Ryan Wesley II's bedroom, in the main house, making the then-empty crib fill the television screen. He can show sixteen camera locations, inside and outside. Heringer can talk at length about the features of his automated man cave and home, pointing out technology that is "cool" and "super cool," in his words.

The game room has a squash-colored suede sectional, a game table that doubles as a dining table, a pool table, and a shuffleboard, all furniture he sells in his business. The kitchen's maple cabinets

were given a custom green paint-and-glaze treatment, partnered with a glass-tile backsplash, granite countertops, and a white farm sink (it's that marriage of country and cosmopolitan again).

Heringer pulls open deep drawers to show every snack known to mankind, and drinks are on the house with a margarita machine.

A foyer/lobby for the theater has reclaimed wooden floors from the bottom of the Mississippi River that were purchased through a local flooring company.

Friends gathered for a movie can fill a bucket with popcorn from the machine and reach into a case for a classic candy bar before entering the theater. Heringer created two digital poster boards by customizing televisions and installing them vertically to show movie posters and play trailers, and one of his in-house programmers wrote the software code. "Nobody else has that in Arkansas, that I know of," he says.

Heringer showed Meyering a photo to inspire the *Star Trek* look of the theater, and the mission was accomplished with acoustic fabric in geometric shapes that covers the walls and hides speakers.

A faux ticket booth completes the setting.

"I designed that ticket booth because that was part of the playfulness and whimsical part of having

a place like this built, where you can go and do nothing but relax and play games," Meyering says.

Two bedrooms, connected by a jack-and-jill bathroom, are available for overnight guests—one decorated with soft greens and the other awash in soothing grays.

Hunters can store their gear in a bedroom's cedar-lined closet—"you've got to have all your man-cave stuff in one spot"—that also has a washer and dryer.

A few family photos are displayed in the bedrooms, including a picture of Heringer's father, Al Heringer III, as a teenager in military school.

Another framed photo on a dresser is of Heringer and a hunting buddy. Wait. A closer look shows a pretty face peeking out from behind hunter orange and camo. It's his wife, Sarah, whom he had just started dating, and she killed two deer that day.

"She was just trying to impress me," Heringer says.

A fully equipped outdoor kitchen that can accommodate forty people is a sweet setup for Heringer, who loves to entertain and is an excellent cook, his wife says.

Asked if there's anything he left out, Heringer says he wishes he'd included a golf simulator.

Darn. Maybe it is "just" a man cave.



This page, top: Wood-look tiles give this bathroom the look of an outhouse, with "peepholes" depicting Old South scenes painted by Sarah Heringer's cousin, Cheryl Draper. Above: One of two bedrooms features a hunt closet, complete with washer and dryer. Opposite, top: The 13-seat theater looks like the bridge of a space ship. Below: The concession stand in the theater's lobby.