

*From recycled-glass terrazzo flooring to daylighting strategies and refurbished furniture, the Make-a-Wish Foundation's Irving, Texas, headquarters is environmentally friendly in many ways.*

# WISHES COME TRUE

FOUNDATION CONTINUES TO GRANT WISHES TO CHILDREN AS WISHES  
ARE GRANTED FOR A NEW GREEN BUILDING IN TEXAS.

BY TIM WHALEY

North Texas has seen recently garnered attention with the development of a few grand-scale sustainable buildings, such as the new \$200-million 600,000-square-foot RadioShack campus in Ft. Worth, and the new Wal-Mart in McKinney. Additionally, the City of Dallas' Hensley Field Operations Center was granted Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold status in December 2005.

By contrast, the new Irving, Texas, headquarters of the Make-A-Wish-Foundation's North Texas chapter was not intentionally constructed to minimize the building's negative impacts on the environment. Yet from recycled-glass terrazzo flooring, to daylighting and refurbished furniture, The Wishing Place is eco-friendly in many ways.

As a non-profit organization that grants wishes of children with life-threatening conditions, securing in-kind donations of building materials was the main priority of the building's owners. Environmental sensibility was also on the minds of architecture firm BOKA Powell (Dallas) throughout the process, and this fact may warm the hearts of those who see green building as a crucial strategy in preserving the natural environment.

"It happened that when we identified what we wanted, several eco-friendly companies and product lines stepped up to donate," said Carly Herrera, designer with BOKA Powell. "We often face obstacles of lead time and pricing when we want to use eco-friendly products," she added, "but on this project, things fell into place."

Overall, the Foundation received \$2 million of in-kind donations and \$1.6 million in cash donations toward the construction of the new North Texas headquarters. BOKA Powell contributed their services, Las Colinas Land Limited Partnership donated the land, and general contractor Precept Builders committed to completing the entire interior of the building at no charge.

"This is the first time in my career I've seen anything like this done," said Sean Howell, project manager for Precept. "I was expecting an uphill climb but we have a great group of subcontractors who all donated their services and products."

The Make-A-Wish-Foundation staff enthusiastically embraced BOKA Powell's green building measures. "We weren't really aware of the possibilities of green building," acknowledged Berta James, director of program services for the Make-a-Wish-Foundation. "But we were delighted to discover that our architects included energy-saving, sustainable and healthier components into the building design."

## RECYCLED-GLASS TERRAZZO

American Terrazzo and EnviroGLAS Products of Garland and Plano, Texas, and Master Terrazzo of Hockessin, Del., donated the products and labor to create more than 3,400-square-feet of recycled-glass terrazzo floors for the Wishing Place.

"We could not have been more proud to contribute our time and materials to help such a worthy cause,"



said American Terrazzo President Brent Flabiano.

Stainless steel inlays of stars and inspirational words like *magic*, *hope*, *wish* and *strength* share the space with blue swirls and squares in the sparkly ecological flooring. Recycled mirror glass reflects wall and ceiling lights in the Wishing Tower, creating a magical experience for the children as they carefully consider and then voice their wishes.

Recycled-glass terrazzo is a creative solution to the nation's municipal recycled glass glut, combining multi-colored glass pieces with epoxy resin to create a durable and low-maintenance finish. Post-use glass terrazzo may contribute to resource and reuse, recycled content, local/regional material and indoor emitting materials credits within green building rating systems. Just as appealing as the floor's 40-plus year anticipated lifecycle is its appearance, which is creating quite a buzz with the Make-a-Wish-Foundation staff. "We are so happy with the floor," declared James. "It really makes the building." The low-maintenance requirements of the environmentally friendly floor will also reduce water, electricity and chemical usage.

#### REFURBISHED FURNITURE

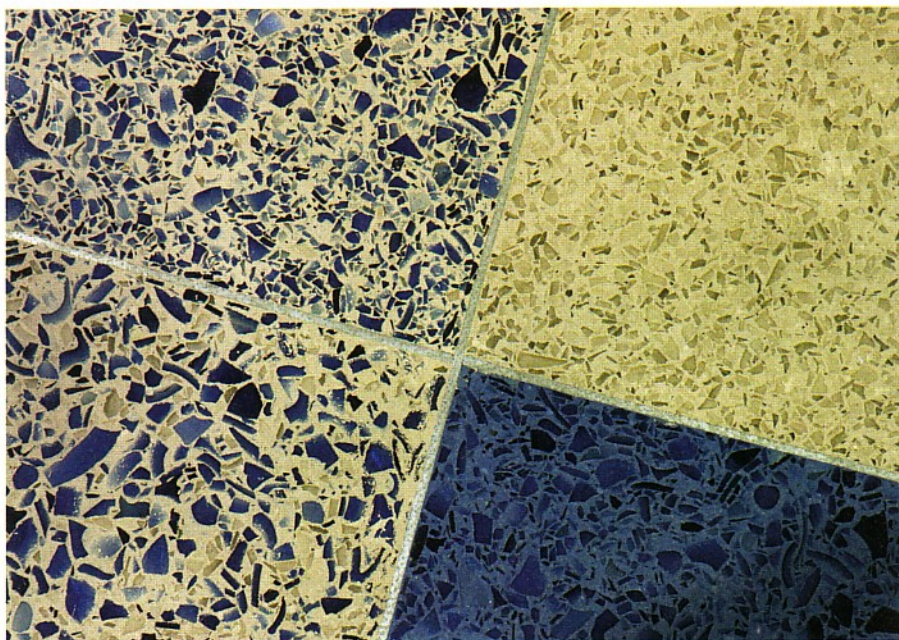
At least 80 percent of the furniture throughout the building is refurbished. Total Office Solutions of Dallas donated refinished and refabricated furniture for a total of 15 workstations, five private offices, two conference rooms, a break room and filing and shelving throughout. Company owner Michael Monette even donated his own personal office furniture for the office of the Make-A-Wish-Foundation CEO, Barry Smink. In another earth-conscious move, Total Office Solutions recently acquired 750,000 rubberized plastic crates for use in their

#### THE WISHING PLACE

FUNCTION: HEADQUARTERS OF THE MAKE-A-WISH-FOUNDATION'S NORTH TEXAS CHAPTER  
LOCATION: IRVING, TEXAS  
SIZE: 13,500 SQUARE FEET  
OPENED: DECEMBER 2005  
CONTRIBUTORS: BOKA POWELL LLC (ARCHITECTURE/DESIGN SERVICES), LAS COLINAS LAND LIMITED PARTNERSHIP (DONATED LAND), PRECEPT BUILDERS (GENERAL CONTRACTOR) AND

OTHER GENEROUS DONORS.

GREEN PRODUCTS INCLUDE: AMERICAN TERRAZZO AND ENVIROGLAS PRODUCTS FOR MORE THAN 3,400-SQUARE-FEET OF RECYCLED-GLASS TERRAZZO FLOORS; TOTAL OFFICE SOLUTIONS' REFINISHED AND REFABRICATED FURNITURE; SHAW'S ECO SOLUTION Q LOW-VOC AND RECYCLED CONTENT CARPET; AND AMERICAN STANDARD'S WATER-SAVING FIXTURES.



Low-maintenance requirements of the recycled-glass terrazzo flooring contribute to the sustainable aspects of the project, reducing water, electricity and chemical usage.

operations, eliminating the use of about 20,000 cardboard boxes per month. They used the crates to move in all the refurbished furniture for the Wishing Place.

#### DAYLIGHTING

The use of numerous windows, including an atrium in the center of the building, will reduce the need for artificial lighting and the heat it produces, saving energy in two ways. Indirect natural lighting, such as that provided by the atrium, is one of the most beneficial ways to light a space. Not only does it reduce energy use, but it also can be a boon to employ-

ees. It reportedly causes less eyestrain, visual fatigue, and fewer headaches than direct lighting from overhead fixtures. A walk past windows as opposed to a drab hallway can also reinvigorate an employee and make for a more productive afternoon.

#### ECO-FRIENDLY CARPET

Shaw Carpets, headquartered in Dalton, Ga. (a division of Berkshire Hathaway), donated just over 800 yards of low-VOC-emitting carpet for the workstation and office areas. Most of the carpet is comprised of 25 percent recycled content, and also is



designed to minimize the use of raw materials. Shaw provided four styles from its Eco Solution Q line – *Cycles, Evolution, Utopian* and *Culture* – in colors ranging from dark blue to tan to chocolate brown. Since these car-


pets are located where employees spend most of their time – in their workstations and offices – the low-VOC content could potentially reduce sick time and increase employee productivity.

#### WATER-SAVING FIXTURES

The building also features water-saving fixtures that restrict the flow of water to Texas standards of 2.2 gallons of water per minute at a pressure of 60 pounds per square inch for sinks, and for toilets, 1.6 to 2 gallons of water per flush. The toilets and sinks, manufactured by American Standard, were donated by US Mechanical of Winnsboro, Texas.

#### PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE BUILDING

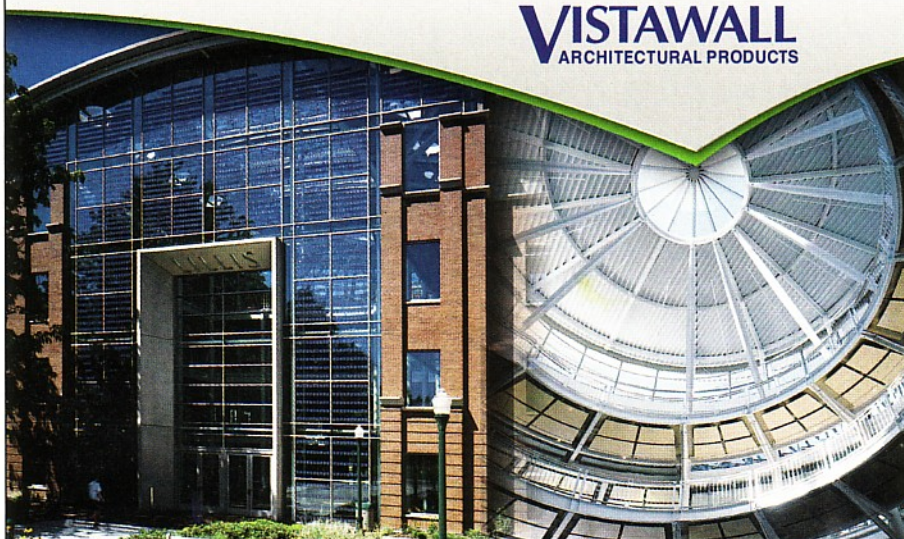
All of these green products and design elements combine to make the Wishing Place a fantastic awareness-builder for folks who otherwise might not encounter the concept. Through their interaction with EnviroGLAS and American Terrazzo, the Make-a-Wish-Foundation staff has developed a newfound interest in green building. Keen to promote their sustainable building with Wishing Place clients and guests, the three organizations are working to develop an educational brochure and permanent wall poster to be featured at the headquarters. There are also plans to hold educational tours, using the Wishing Place as a showcase for people interested in green building.

No, the Make-A-Wish staff didn't go after LEED certification. But, the recycled-glass terrazzo floors, daylighting, low-emitting carpets and water-saving fixtures will give visitors an instant familiarity with, and connection to, green building concepts. The Wishing Place will fulfill its mission of granting the wishes of children with life-threatening conditions, and, additionally, educate visitors about building sustainably. 

*Tim Whaley is the principal of EnviroGLAS Products Inc... converting glass bound for the landfill into elegant, durable, environmentally friendly hard surfaces and landscaping materials.*

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