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IDFAS

10 feet.

space.

flooring.

Bigger than a child's

playhouse but much smaller

studio apartment, the house

the 41-year-old built and has

lived in since 2003 features

metal roofing, exposed stud

interior walls and red oak

The house, which is on

backyard of his parents'

house, has electricity and

chooses not to use them.

running water, but Johnson

Instead, he showers at his job

each morning and lights the

place at night with the LED light from the front of his

bicycle. The house has high ceilings and a sleeping loft,

which make it feel more

Johnson, a technology

spacious, he says

wheels and is parked in the

than a typical Manhattan

The Kansas City Pet Expo

presented by No More Homeless Pets KC Located at the American Royal Center 1800 Genessee

These houses are little in a big way

May 6-7th, 2006 Hours: Saturday, May 6th 10am - 8pm

Sunday, May 7th 10am - 5pm Click here for more info



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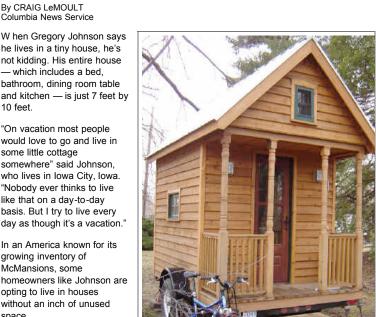
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Gregory Johnson's 70-square-foot house has electricity and running water, but he chooses not to use them. His tiny house includes a kitchen, right, and dining room table





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consultant, is the founder of the Small House Society (www.smallhousesociety.org), which has a small but growing mailing list of more than 200, including architecture firms and urban planners. The group's monthly e-mail newsletter offers tips on everything from housing code battles to homeowners insurance, two common stumbling blocks for enthusiasts.

Many owners of tiny houses are driven by a commitment to preserve the environment.

Fewer building materials are wasted in building small houses, they point out, and the houses use little energy.

The biggest hurdle in getting homebuyers to warm to the idea of tiny houses is that the dwellings are so, well, tiny. But proponents say the perception of spaciousness can be a matter of design.

"I get claustrophobic in big houses if they're poorly designed or too crowded," said Jay Shafer, who started the Tumbleweed Tiny House Co. and helped Johnson build his little house after building his own 70-square-foot home in 1997. "But I don't get claustrophobic in a small house as long as it's well made, unless there are too many people inside."

Tiny houses actually predate McMansions. Henry David Thoreau lived in a house near Walden Pond in Massachusetts that was just 150 square feet. After the 1906 earthquake in San Francisco, mini "earthquake houses" were built to house displaced residents, according to Lester Walker, author of *Tiny Houses: or How to Get Away From It All* (Overlook Press).

In the Carolinas, "pout houses" sprang up in backyards to provide spouses who lost a domestic argument a place to spend the night, Walker says. And in rural Texas, where the family ranch was inconveniently far from church, families would build tiny houses close to town for a place to sleep on Saturday nights, making it easy to get to Sunday services

According to Walker, the modern-day appeal of tiny houses is simple. "They're cute. They're little baby houses," he said. "You like puppy dogs and babies. It's the same thing."

Houses on steroids

Square footage of the average American house

1950 983

2004 2,314

Source: National Association of Home Builders

Gregory Johnson's 70-square-foot house has electricity and running water, but he chooses not to use them.

Tiny houses were built to house displaced persons after the 1906 earthquake in San Francisco.

Johnson's tiny house includes a kitchen and dining room table.

Photos from Gregory Johnson

Overlook Press





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