

Backfill

Yonder Underdome

Glenn Young's 3,000-square-foot home is for sale. It's yours for \$1.6 million, if you can find it. Not the money, the building. Hint: The front door is just off the man-made pond (1), under the lawn, and through the 120-foot tunnel (2). The home consists of five interconnected monolithic dome units, buried in an excavated

hole 200 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 30 feet deep (3).

Young built the home for himself back in 2000, over a period of about 16 months when he was constructing domes for other clients. He's no longer in the dome business — not for lack of clients, but because it conflicted with his other ventures.

Although Young had to give up on his original plan to pull in some natural light (leaks were too big a risk), the interior gains a sense of the outdoors from the whimsical trompe l'oeil scenery covering the walls (4). A mechanical ventilation system delivers filtered fresh air.

According to David South of the Monolithic Dome Institute, underground domes enjoyed a surge in interest in the years leading up to the Y2K computer nonevent, fueled mostly by people's fears of lawlessness and looting. Young says he simply liked the idea of preserving a pristine home site.

Monolithic domes are built around an inflated PVC air form, insulated with a double layer of closed-cell foam, then solidified with rebar and shotcrete. Their relatively low construction costs and proven resistance to direct tornado hits have made them popular for schools and other public buildings. For more information, check out monolithic.com. — *Dave Holbrook*

