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Annenberg TV News

Architect Plants a Mini-Disneyland in his Backyard Garden

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An Anaheim Hills architect has planted Disneyland in his backyard. Take a train ride to Dave Sheegog's Disney-themed railroad garden.

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By Irene Byon

Thursday, May 31, 2012 | 12:54 p.m. PDT

All aboard the Casey Jr. Train and welcome to Disneyland! Well, not exactly. Welcome to architect Dave Sheegog's backyard.

"This is where the journey begins. Our trolley will pick up our little 3-inch tall guests and take them back to the backyard," Sheegog said. "We have Tarzan and Jane greeting our guests to the Castle Peak and Thunder Railroad."

The backyard of Sheegog's home is actually, a Disney re-creation. Castle Peak and Thunder Railroad is the name of his Disney-themed railroad garden. A nearly 1,400 square foot utopia encompassing five theme lands.

"It's Disney-themed, no piece of it is exactly from Disneyland, but little elements are. Believe it or not, people who build these things as if they are actually a working railroad," he said.

It starts from a jungle theme adventure land, where Indiana Jones and the Incredibles deck out in front of the Temple of Doom. Then, it's to Frontier Land, where the animal kingdom look upon Simba's birth. And there's a last stop to fantasy land, where Disney princesses greet you at Sleeping Beauty's Castle.

Castle Peak and Thunder Railroad has been Sheegog's 14 year long recreational recreation.

"We just needed to design a backyard, we moved into this house in 1994, and I wanted to design a yard. And then just as when the idea of the railroad came along, and then we added the Disney-theme, it just became what it is today, and year by year something is always added," Sheegog said.

The Up balloons are one of the latest in Sheegog's railroad gardens. He and his daughter hand-painted 1,500 balloons but it doesn't stop there, every time there's a new movie coming out there's a new project.

"Each piece as they're built I think it's my favorite at the time. Right now, the Tangled Tower is the project on the board and it's going to need attention," Sheegog said.

Every single structure in Sheegog's garden is a result of detailed attention. He references pictures from the film, then lays out the design digitally.

"If I can visualize something I can end up creating it; that comes a long with years of doing this sort of thing. But as anyone knows it's the details is what makes something," he said.

You might be wondering what his wife, Frances, thinks.

"I did not realize how expansive it would be It's very over-the-top, but I love it, we both grew up right near Disneyland, we both worked at Disneyland and so we both really love the park," Frances Sheegog said.

"Some hobbies, I say how can anyone ever get excited about that, but the more you get into their world, you see why they're excited about it and you get drawn into it," Dave Sheegog said.

So being part of Sheegog's world leads to a journey, where the destination is the happiest place on Earth; at least in one backyard. Irene Byon, ATVN.

