



Green Light for Green Home

Local Race Car Driver Jump-Starts Ecology-Friendly Dwellings

Amateur open-wheel race car driver Shairon Beale is no stranger to going the distance as she competes against men on and off the track. An Australian native, Beale spent many years in Asia before ending up in Scottsdale, where she is excitedly awaiting her pending Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) platinum certification green building status on her home. There are several different levels of LEED green certification, and platinum is the highest level.

Beale's green concepts come from her childhood in Australia and Asia. She has been familiar with water conservation from an early age, including having to share bathwater as a child.

"In Australia, the country areas are very

prone to drought, so rainwater tanks are set up to collect precious rain to water the cattle and to supply the homestead," Beale says. "In Asia, however, torrential rain every day for months—water was collected to wash cars, footpaths, and clothing. This saved pennies for the locals."

Beale's designs reflect her love of antiques and architectural salvage. She patterns her designs after Asian culture—she says that Asians are always creative in recycling anything. Her inspiration for her designs is Australian green architect Glen Murcutt; Beale read all his material and borrowed his aboriginal philosophy "to touch the earth lightly."

After her move to Austin, Texas in 1989, she started a house-remodeling business.

"It rang in my soul each time I started a new project," Beale says. "It was always natural for me to reuse old doors, windows,

porcelain sinks, and things purchased at Habitat for Humanity and various junk stores. I have been fortunate enough to save several beautiful old homes from demolition by keeping important history intact."

From 2000 to 2007, she designed one home on Chesapeake Bay in Maryland, passing her spare time indulging in what she lovingly calls her "dark side." She began racing open-wheel formula cars around the United States, Canada, and New Zealand. In late 2006, she moved to Scottsdale and began to miss her creative side. After driving 10,000 miles up and down the streets of Phoenix and Scottsdale, she purchased a beautiful half-acre property with a '70s rancher sitting on it. She completely redesigned the floor plans, researched building green, and visited the city for building codes and restrictions.

When Beale moved to the desert, she