Rod Essick ’83 designed his own NC State basketball hall of fame—with one wall devoted to 1974 and another to 1983, the years when the Wolfpack won NCAA championships.

TAKE A PEEK INSIDE THE HOMES OF SOME FANS WHO SAY THERE’S NO SUCH THING AS TOO MUCH RED AND WHITE.

Some Wolfpack fans buy an NC State Christmas ornament and maybe a block-S throw pillow. For others—well, that’s just not enough. Bedrooms and bonus rooms turn into showcases for Wolfpack memorabilia, an old tobacco barn becomes a pack house of a different kind, and even a bathroom gets the full red-and-white treatment. We asked readers to send us photos that reveal their NC State-themed decorating skills, and we heard from folks who invited us into their homes to see what they’d created: the perfect spot to watch a big game, host a family gathering, play with the kids or just get away from it all.

Photography by Ted Richardson • Interviews by Caroline Barnhill ’05

Rod Essick ‘83 designed his own NC State basketball hall of fame—two walls devoted to 1974, and another to 1983, the years when the Wolfpack won NCAA championships.
Rod Essick ’83
Supervisor, US Airways
Harrisburg, N.C.

THE SPACE: An addition to our home that has an NC State-themed hallway, bathroom and main room. No bare spots on the walls—it’s packed with memorabilia. I started it in 2008. It took months of customizing it, adding surround-sound speakers, painting many coats of red. I didn’t finish until 2012.

COOL STUFF: Team pictures of the 1983 and 1974 championship teams. Signed basketballs from both teams. Magazines from the ’74 championship season, and a Final Four program and Sports Illustrated for the 1983 games. Four different pennants: the Liberty Bowl, Tangerine Bowl and Peach Bowl—and I found a pennant from the late ’40s and hung that up, too.

NOTABLE DéCOR: The bathroom has an NC State toothbrush holder and soap dispenser, an NC State shower robe hanging up and a custom toilet seat cover with an NC State logo. The NC State carpeting is by Milliken. I have a red and white loveseat I had to special-order from California.

TRADITIONS: No one likes to be at the house when I’m watching the Wolfpack—I get too upset. I am very superstitious. I’m always trying to find the perfect setting. . . . I switch chairs, sit on the floor, trying to find the right spot for the team to score.

MY WIFE THINKS I’M A NUT ABOUT IT. I DIDN’T LET ANYONE OTHER THAN MY SON SEE THE ROOM UNTIL I WAS DONE. SHE NEVER SAW IT UNTIL IT WAS TOTALLY COMPLETE. I WAS SCARED THAT IF SHE SAID SOMETHING NEGATIVE, IT WOULD DESTROY ME. BUT SHE’S HAPPY THAT I LOVE IT.
Grey Blackwell ’92
Freelance Animator
and Illustrator
Oxford, N.C.

The space: A barn on the family farm that was once a “pack house” for tobacco. It sat idle for some time. … We knew we wanted to make it a true Pack House (in the other sense of the word) so we began collecting memorabilia. There’s a kitchenette, bathroom and a main room with a fireplace.

Cool stuff: NC State Coke bottles from the ’83 championship. Old photographs of Jim Valvano. Life-size cardboard cutout of Chuck Amato ’69, ’73 med.

Notable décor: On the outside, it’s pretty unassuming—we didn’t paint it red or anything. Still rustic. But inside it’s really fixed up. It’s very homey.

Traditions: We always get Bojangles’. We get it for tailgating at home games and then we kept up the tradition by eating it in the Pack House.

Reactions: My wife is a Carolina grad so she wasn’t too happy. We’re a house divided—we say it’s too much red in there.
Michael Harrell ’95  
Accountant  
Amy Harrell ’95  
Department Chair at Nash Community College  
Nashville, N.C.

THE SPACE: A 1,000-square-foot playroom (with two kids, the floor is often cluttered with toys). We used to have an office that was our NC State room, but after we moved and had a bigger space, we decided to make the playroom NC State-themed.

COOL STUFF: A piece of the floor of Reynolds Coliseum. An NC State Santa, bobblehead dolls, an NC State Barbie, stuffed animals, towels, blankets. An NC State putting green for the boys (ages 10 and 6). By the time they were 2, they could sing the alma mater.

NOTABLE DÉCOR: It took four coats of paint to get the right shade of red, (“NCSU Red” by Glidden). If you want a snack, we’ll serve it on an NC State chip-and-dip container. Cold? We’ll give you an NC State blanket. Need to go to the bathroom and wash your hands? We have NC State washcloths.

REACTIONS: “That’s a whole lotta red.”
THE SPACE: Bonus room filled with memorabilia. We’ve been accumulating stuff since we’ve been out of school. For Christmas, that’s what people give us. It was never even a decision about whether or not we’d have an NC State room—it was more like, “Where should it be?”

COOL STUFF: Lots of autographed stuff and pictures of us with players. Jay has a picture with Jimmy V from when he was at basketball camp years ago. Jay’s favorite thing is Sidney Lowe’s home jersey for the home games during the ’83 season, signed by him. One of the rarest things we have is a complete set of NC State china produced in the 1950s, on display in our dining room.

NOTABLE DÉCOR: An NC State pool table, red chairs, custom NC State curtains. During Christmas time, we have a 9-foot Christmas tree that we put in the State Room, and every ornament on it is NC State themed.

JAY MOSIER ’00
Project Manager
AND ELISA MOSIER ’98
Biotech Sales
Raleigh

“IT WAS NEVER EVEN A DECISION ABOUT WHETHER OR NOT WE’D HAVE AN NC STATE ROOM—IT WAS MORE LIKE: ‘WHERE SHOULD IT BE?’”
Allie Wells, 16
daughter of Wendy Wells ’86
Wilson, N.C.

The space: My bedroom. I wanted my room to be happy and be my favorite place, a place where I feel at home—and what better than the red and white from NC State? My room is my state.

Cool stuff: Basketball signed by Coach Mark Gottfried and the 2011–2012 team. A pair of red-and-white tennis shoes signed by Scott Wood ’13 when he threw out the first pitch at an NC State baseball game. (They were Allie’s tennis shoes; she was wearing them when she went to ask Wood for an autograph.)

Notable décor: Huge block-S logo painted by Mom, plus wall border of Scott Wood trading cards.

Mom says: It’s unique that a high school girl would be such a diehard fan and love the university so much that she wants to have her room like that. . . . It’s not a den/playroom—it’s her bedroom. Most girls are private about their rooms; she loves showing it off. I was the only one worried about it since I was afraid she would change her mind, being a teenager. She hasn’t.

Jimmy Crenshaw ’78
Dentist
Warrenton, N.C.

The space: I lived in Bagwell and I had lots of good friends who lived in that dorm—and a lot of good memories. I decided to turn the basement into a glorified dorm room to watch the games. It’s evolved over the past 15 years as I’ve added new stuff to it.

He calls it: Dr. C’s Wolf Den. Most people around here know me as Dr. C.

Cool stuff: The red pool table is actually from the old NC State student union. It’s not a nice mahogany table or anything, but it has special meaning. Two limited-edition coach’s portraits, Norm Sloan ’51 and Jimmy V cutting down the nets. Only 250 copies were made of each, and I have the serial number “1” for each of them.

Notable décor: Floor is painted light gray with red, white and black confetti particles in the paint. Red carpet plus an NC State rug. The stained glass with a wolf head was a gift from a friend who had it specially commissioned—it’s one of a kind.

Good times: During the 2012 NCAA tournament, me and another buddy from college who lives in the area invited all our old friends from Bagwell to come watch the games.

You can see more great photos of these and other Wolf Dens—or submit photos of your favorite red-and-white room—at www.alumni.ncsu.edu/wolf_dens.