



Fostering Regional Development, Design &amp; Construction

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Design/build private

# One of a kind

This building offers a unique look to attract visitors looking for a unique pet

BY NIKI SWANK

Summit County animals in need gave thanks when the \$2.5 million One of a Kind Pet Rescue Adoption Center opened in November 2010. Located on Main Street in Akron, the 8,750-sf building replaces the former 1,400-sf building located a tenth of a mile down the road. Georjette Thomas, director of Organization Advancement for One of a Kind Pet Rescue, explains the center is located on 2.2 acres and replaces an old bowling alley that was an eyesore. “It’s a huge improvement for the community and animal welfare in Summit County,” she says.

The design stage began during fall 2009 when weekly meetings were held with members of the design/build team from Bialosky + Partners and Regency Construction Services, the owner and the end-users. The staff of One of a Kind also visited PAWS Animal Rescue in Chicago, which is supported by Oprah Winfrey, and gathered some ideas for the new building design. The architect then worked with the

owner to come up with new ideas about functionality, such as the use of concrete floors to make cleaning easier and a glass room that allows viewers to watch cats play. “It’s a functional space for the cats,” says Thomas.

”Bialosky took the functionality and turned it into artform,” adds Thomas. The new building features many new design concepts that were tweaked throughout the design process. Animal facilities have high demands, including floors that are nonabsorbent and easy to clean, animal enclosures with no cracks or crevices to hold dirt (think industrial cutting boards), air exchanges and ventilation distribution, sound control, and moisture and mold resistance. In this case, the building goes beyond to add elements that make the animals themselves an attraction.



The shelter is a showcase for animal activity.

PHOTO COURTESY SHOOTING STAR PHOTOGRAPHY

# Keep it clean



One of the hardest things to accomplish in animal care is cleanliness. The One of a Kind shelter uses a wet vacuum system from Aqua-Air that was developed for the restaurant industry; it saves labor and water, as it uses much less water to keep the facility clean and takes less time to clean. A vacuum wand is attached to a central vacuum system and hair, spilled food and urine are immediately removed, without spreading. Cleaning chemicals and disinfectant are piped through the wand, and then rinse water is vacuumed up, leaving the area dry for the pet.

Everything that is picked up by the wand is removed from the building using wet cyclonic filtration and exhausting to the outside of the building, sending the dirt and debris down the drain and odors and humidity out of the building. This system also reduces cross contamination and allergy triggers, as well as moisture buildup. The system can also be used dry.

Says Bruce Lavoie, owner and president of ABL Electric & Innovations LLC, which installed the system, "This project was unique because all the existing interior walls were cement block, so he had to work with his vendors to develop a means of mounting the inlet ports in the block walls." The result is a cleaner home for the animals at One of a Kind. **BXM**

## Designed for effect

The end result of the Bialosky design is a dramatic single-story building with a high pitch to the roofline that provides a grooming area, a behavioral training room, glass viewing rooms for cat/dog adoption and a 35-ft high vaulted structure that includes most of the retail area.

The focal point of the building is the vaulted "cat habitat," a steel framed structure with aluminum framed windows. The pink glass was chosen by the architect and contrasts nicely with the black anodized aluminum frames. "We incorporated a unique glass product by Vanceva, is a custom shade of pink made with interlayers in the glass," says Paul Clemens of VIP, which created the effect. In addition, Clemens also explains "the windows are individual trapezoidal aluminum frames customized and fabricated in our shop."

"The double helix stair cat habitat is unique for this type of facility," adds Paul Deutsch, principal architect at

Bialosky + Partners. "It is prominently located at the corner of the building most visible from the street. This, and the height of the building at this corner, serve to draw patrons into the facility."

Thomas explains, "The main consideration was the animals who will occupy the facility. We wanted them to become better-adopted animals based on their environment. It was also important for the retail area to contain a third of the building and also to dedicate space for a vet room."

The new building features a large activity room that will have several purposes, Thomas said. It will allow a newly hired behavioral trainer to conduct classes for the public and train dogs that have been rescued. Also, a limited number of slots for dog daycare will be available, Thomas said. Both functions are new, and all profits will funnel back into the rescue, Thomas added.

Behind the scenes, there is space to keep newly acquired and vetted animals





The staircase entertains kitties while attracting passers-by to come, watch, and adopt.



Animals get individual treatment in clean, safe and enjoyable surroundings.

Photo Courtesy: Regency Construction

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– Paul Deutsch, principal architect, Bialosky + Partners Architects, LLC

quarantined, as well as a cat and dog birthing area that will allow mother dogs and cats to have privacy and care with their puppies and kittens.

Retail and full-service grooming, now expanded from bathing and nail trimming, help support the organization mission. One of a Kind’s \$1.3 million loan financed the internal construction, built specifically for cat and dog habitation.

The rear exterior of the pink, black and white building offers outside runs for dogs that are accessed by guillotine doors at the ends of their suites. This allows dogs to have access to the outside in the cold winter and in the hot summer. “A portion of the outside runs has a pavilion to keep the animals from being exposed to the elements,” says Thomas. She explains the site also offers an acre-sized outside play area for the animals, featuring a private fence and pavilion.

### Smooth sailing

The construction process was smooth, taking place from April through November 2010, after demolition of the bowling alley in January. The design/

builder explains it was a challenge to balance the needs of animals with the needs of humans.

“We worked with an outstanding group of contractors on this project, so the challenges were minimal on all fronts,” says Julie Nader, project executive from Regency Construction Services. The team is proud of finishing the project on time and on budget, while meeting the owner’s expectations and vision for the facility at the same time.

“I’m proud of accomplishing our goal: to design a building that will be better for the animals,” says Thomas. She says that construction of the new center will allow the organization to adopt out more animals and focus more on their wellbeing before adoption. The center has the ability to expand at the site in the future, although that is planned at this moment.

One of A Kind Pets Rescue is a non-profit organization founded in November 2005 and funded by private donations. The organization is dedicated to saving animal lives, rescuing pets in imminent danger of euthanasia, spaying/neutering and adoption of homeless animals into appropriate, loving homes. **BXM**

## Project specs:

### One of a Kind Pet Rescue

**Owner:** Assisi, LLC, One of a Kind Pet Rescue

**Architect:** Bialosky + Partners Architects LLC

**CM:** Regency Construction

**Cost:** \$2.5 million

**Size:** 8,759-sf

#### Vendors:

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**One of A Kind Pet Rescue Project**

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