the can collector

What started as a teenage can collection turned into a beer-themed showcase.

35 years in the making, more than 800 bottles, 600 cans, 100 signs, and 75 steins comprise Randy Cliff's breweriana collection .

Randy Cliff began collecting soda cans—then beer cans and signs—as a teenager in 1975. But fatherhood, and home moves in the early '90s put his collection into storage for almost 20 years. Fast forward to 2007: Randy's tastes had graduated to craft beers and

he began keeping one bottle of each to track brands he'd tried. His growing bottle display brought to mind his long-stored can collection. Randy says, "At first I thought I'd get it out to see what I had in order to sell it on eBay." But as he sorted the collection, he decided that, rather

than sell it, he would decorate his Chicago-area two-car garage with it.

Now cans line the ceiling rafters, and bottles line one wall, camouflaging the exposed studs. The glow of dozens of lighted signs reflects in the vinyl floor Randy added in 2012. (See

garage features

specs

TYPE: Attached garage

SIZE: 20×20' (400 sq. ft.)

CONSTRUCTION: 2x4 frame

HEATING & COOLING: Randy purchased a natural-gas ceiling heater at a home center. For cooling, he opens the door.

ELECTRICAL: Standard 100-amp service

LIGHTING: Incandescents supplemented by beer signs, and strings of Christmas lights on the rafters

ABOVE: Randy Cliff started collecting soda and beer cans way back in 1975. Using the collection as a decorating theme has led to his garage being known locally as "Randy's Garage Bar."

Natural gas powers the **ceiling heater** to keep this Illinois garage warm in the winter months.

Randy's **tools tuck away** among the collection.

Wired with cable, two **ceiling-mounted TVs** add to the barlike ambience and make Randy's garage a favorite hangout for watching hockey, NASCAR, and boxing.

Randy installed sheet **flooring** with help from family and friends. (See *next page*.)

A **chest cooler** and a **glass-door refrigerator** keep beer chilled and ready for the next event. The refrigerator stands atop a rolling storage cabinet and can be moved in winter to allow vehicles to park in the garage.

how he did it on *page 64*.) "I didn't think much about the concrete floor before, but the new flooring has really made a difference in how nice it looks," he says proudly. To make even more room for his collection, Randy screwed 1×4s to the bottoms of the ceiling rafters (the garage has a flat roof), forming shallow shelves. (See the photo on the *next page*.) He then tacked Christmas lights to the oppo-site face of the rafters to illuminate the cans with a soft, warm glow.

One of Randy's favorite finds is the Chevy Bel Air booth he discovered at a used motorcycle shop while ATV-shopping with his son. "He came home with a quad, and I came home with the booth," Randy says with a chuckle.

A bar with stools and two tables with chairs help the garage function as a party room. Turning on the two ceiling-mounted flat-screen TVs creates a sports-bar atmosphere. But the structure continues to function as a garage. "In the winter, we still park my wife's car in the garage and store two ATVs that normally get parked outside in better weather," says Randy.

Photographer: **Jeremy Cliff**

installing vinyl garage flooring, made easy

Sheet-vinyl flooring can add color and style to any garage. For his garage (*page 60*) Randy used G-Floor from Better Living Technology (bltllc.com), a manufacturer that will custom-print almost any graphic image on the flooring. Expect installation to take a weekend.

1 After thoroughly sweeping the floor and vacuuming all dust and debris, dry-fit the floor along a side wall of the garage with the sheet rolled out from front to back. Allow the ripples of the flooring to "relax" and flatten for a few hours. Position the flooring so that it overlaps the wall by about an inch.

2 Roll the flooring away from any obstructions that cannot be removed (such as garage-door tracks) and undercut them slightly higher than the thickness of the flooring. Remove any baseboards with care and reinstall them later.

3 Where you'll seam the flooring, roll out a second sheet overlapping the first by about 2 inches so you can cut them both later for a precise fit. Measure carefully to ensure the sheets run parallel to each other. Place heavy weights, such as a 5-gallon bucket half full of sand or water, on the flooring so that it will not shift.

4 After ensuring the floor has flattened and no folds or wrinkles appear in it, trim the floor around the walls with a utility knife. Change blades often to keep a clean cutline.

First sheet, folded back

5 Fold back half of the first sheet and apply adhesive, using a square-notched trowel recommended by the manufacturer.

6 Spread the adhesive with a paint roller that has been pre-loaded with extra adhesive. This ensures the roller does not take up adhesive but smooths out what has been applied with the trowel. Allow the adhesive to "flash" or dry according to the manufacturer's instructions before folding the flooring back into place.

7 Using a weighted roller, smooth from the center of the floor to the edges to force out any bubbles. Repeat Steps 5 and 6 for the second sheet. Then, follow the same procedure for the center halves of both sheets, applying adhesive to all but a 2'-wide section where the sheets overlap.

Top sheet

Bottom sheet

8 Snap a chalk line down the center of the two sheets where they overlap. Cut through the overlapping sheets simultaneously, using a utility knife, and a straightedge such as a framing square.

9 If the utility knife cannot cut all the way through both sheets, fold the top sheet back and finish the cut on the bottom sheet. Take care to cut along the score line so that the seam between the two sheets meets precisely without gaps.

10 Fold back the middle of the sheets to expose the unglued section of concrete. Apply adhesive, allow it to flash, and replace the flooring so that the edges meet. Smooth the floor with the heavy roller.

11 Apply the finish recommended by the manufacturer according to its instructions to protect the floor and give it a gleaming finish.