

WOOD Worker

Sportscaster Jim Rose puts his carpentry hobby to good use.

BY JOEL REESE

You'll forgive sportscasting legend Jim Rose if he seemed a little tired last year. In addition to his day job as a sports anchor for ABC7—a position he's held since 1982—Rose was also putting in crazy hours doing cabinetry work for his vacation home in Saugatuck, Mich. His routine: Wake up before sunrise to toil on his project in the garage, head over to Channel 7 for the daily eight-hour shift, then come back to the garage and work until well after midnight.

"It was mind-boggling how much work it was," recalls Rose, who lives in Logan Square. "But I don't do anything half-speed. I do everything full-speed, all day, every day."

In the end, Rose built more than 30 cabinets, shelves and other pieces for the spacious home where he and his wife, Lakesha plan on retiring eventually. The extensive carpentry work included planning the cabinetry, buying the lumber (birch plywood and poplar, for the DIY experts out there), cutting, sanding, painting and driving the finished products to Michigan. Rose, 65, began his woodworking hobby as a member of what is now the Boys & Girls Clubs of Providence, R.I., and he has stayed active ever since. In fact, he sees the construction work he did on the Swan House, a charitable effort that created a home for a single mother and her family in 2007, as one of his top lifetime achievements. "I worked on a bulldozer. I helped pour the concrete. I did everything I could do," Rose says. "It was the most meaningful work I've ever done." But now he can bask in the beauty of his vacation house, knowing his hard work paid off.

"My wife and I love the house and what we accomplished," he says, "but if I was to ever build another home, I would definitely not try to construct an entire home of cabinets and shelves in 10 months—while working a full-time job."

From top: Floating shelves offer a natural contrast to the crisp white kitchen setup; Jim and Lakesha Rose's expansive vacation home in Saugatuck, Mich., which was designed in 2017; the couple with their dogs.

PHOTOS BY KATRINA WITTKAMP