

## The 'Zig': Unique landmark hits 10

By Laurel Goddard, information officer

Imagine having the opportunity to choose your office location based on its view... that you selected from the top of a scissor lift.

That's just what Marc Turteltaub, president and chief executive officer of The Money Store, for which West Sacramento's ziggurat-shaped office structure was built, did. It's one of the many anecdotes shared by Ed Kado of Sacramento, the architect for the unusual building—now a decade old—that is today the headquarters of DGS.

Kado and his firm, E.M. Kado and Associates, made their mark with The Money Store years earlier, when he was tasked with renovating an old midtown complex that once housed the American Can Co. The Money Store, then a fledging firm of only 30 people, was one of that building's first tenants. He did some design work there for Turteltaub's company, and the rest is history.

Eight years later, when the burgeoning Money Store was looking for a new headquarters to house its 3,000 employees, it again turned to Kado... AFTER conducting a national search for a big-name architect to take on the project, and rejecting the selected firm's designs. Kado attributes this to the good rapport he developed



PHOTOS BY KEN HUNT

earlier with Turteltaub, who he describes as “very down to earth,” artistic and having aesthetic sensitivity.

Turteltaub subscribed to the ancient principles of feng shui, a Chinese geomantic practice in which a structure or site is chosen or configured to harmonize with the spiritual forces that inhabit it. Many modern enthusiasts claim that feng shui is the practice of arranging objects (such as



With its backdrop of the downtown Sacramento skyline, the Tower Bridge and the river, the Ziggurat building is a favorite spot for photo opportunities. Here, **Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger** delivers a bill-signing press conference.

furniture) to help people achieve their goals, and that it has an effect on health, wealth and personal relationships.

The words “feng shui” literally translate into “wind” and “water.” Architectural designs that follow feng shui practices often incorporate features that direct the flow of various energies. This includes money flow, which is drawn toward water, in feng shui theory. This is why walls were constructed in certain odd places in the building – to symbolically keep the money from flowing straight through to the river behind it. For example, one of these little barricades is erected right outside the Ziggurat’s back door, forcing those wanting to access the river walk to go all

the way around it. Another is erected behind the main lobby security desk. Kado also incorporated additional natural elements to complement the feng shui features: a two-story high fountain with cascading water falls at the front lobby; a wide-open atrium (rumored to echo sounds nearly 45 times) that floods the building’s lower interior with daylight; and walls dressed with Minnesota limestone.

When DGS moved into the building in 2001, it did so to consolidate its various offices that were scattered throughout Sacramento’s downtown. At the time, the Ziggurat was the only available leased space that would fit the department needs and house its more than 1,500 employees. 🌿



PHOTO BY LAUREL GODDARD

### What might have been:

The model (above) for the Ziggurat building’s original design depicts 12 stories, each one jutting out another 10 feet from the one below. The final story meets the river’s edge. It was rejected in favor of a symmetrical design. The architect suggested a pyramid-type shape which represents stability. It was agreed, according to architect Ed Kado, that “something between stubby and pointy” would work best, and the Ziggurat was born.

VIDEO BY LIZ GRANSEE



**Video:** Visit the “secret” room.

### Inner sanctum no more:

Affectionately known as “The Secret Room,” it no longer is, as Ziggurat guests are often treated to quick tours of this hideaway, which starts at a bookshelf with a wall panel that’s actually a hidden door. It leads to an Antoni Gaudi-inspired room made of metal lathe and plaster walls to resemble the flowing, sculpted stonework often used in the Spanish Catalan architect’s structures. It also has a spiral staircase topped with hand-carved cherrywood pieces designed to resemble dinosaur vertebrae, which also emulates the visceral, skeletal, organic quality of Gaudi’s works. Ziggurat architect Ed Kado (right) holds a single piece to show what they looked like in raw form – he found a local artist to sculpt all of them. Although empty now except for some stored items, it also sports a dining deck with river views, a full-size bathroom with shower, a loft and a cave-like nap room.

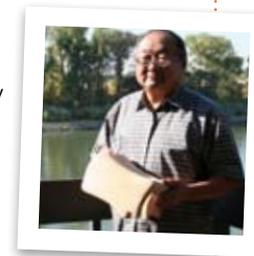


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