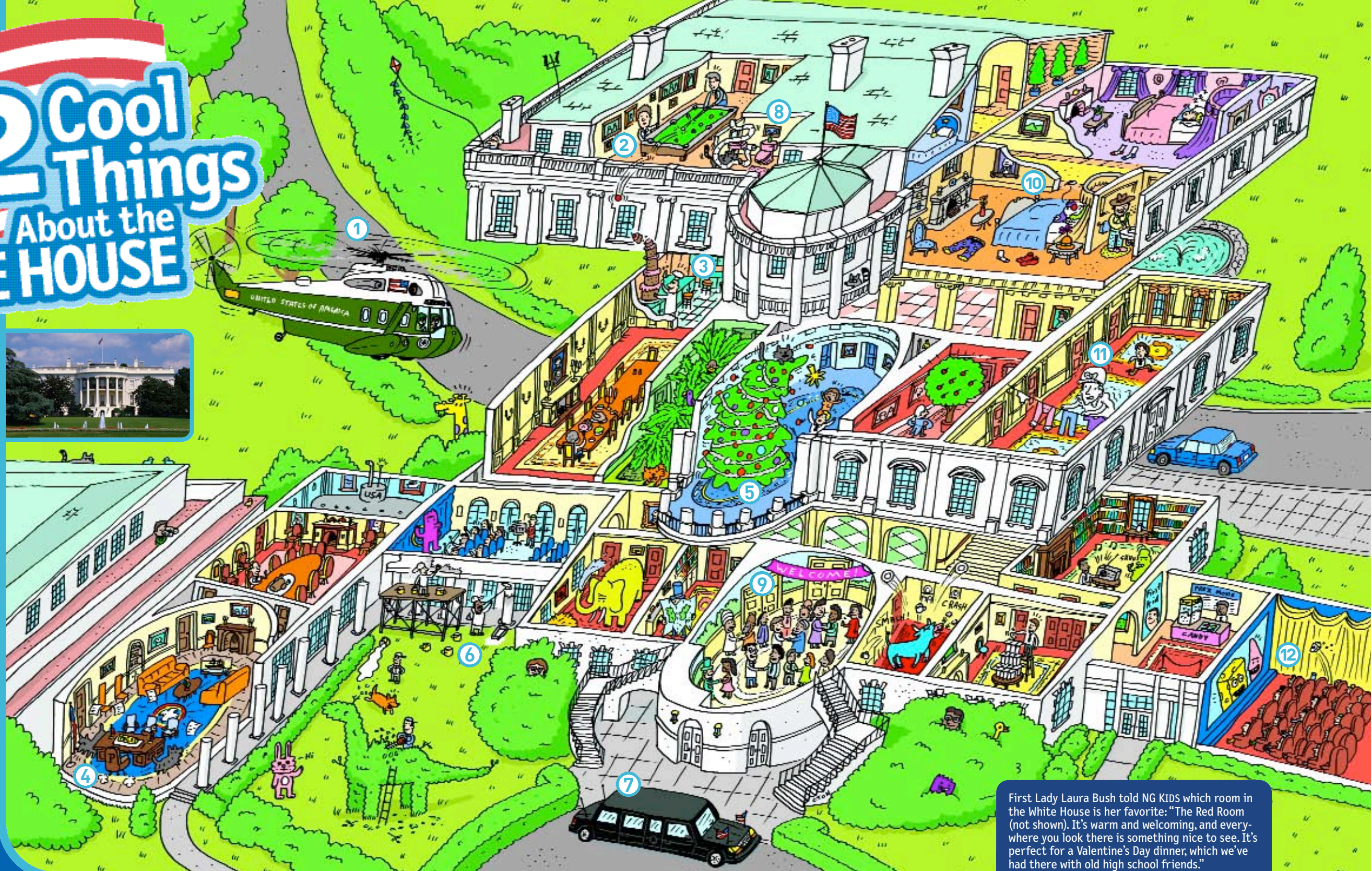


12 Cool Things About the WHITE HOUSE

BY C.M. TOMLIN

Only a few families know what it's like to live in the White House, but NG KIDS got inside access. Here are 12 reasons why it rocks when the White House is your home.



COSTA CRUISE LINES / GETTY IMAGES (WHITE HOUSE); CTON (ART)

1 The President doesn't have to wait in an airport. Whenever he flies, a helicopter called Marine One lands right on the South Lawn of the White House to pick him up. The helicopter takes him to an Air Force base, where he walks right onto his plane, known as Air Force One.

2 Like sports? You'd love living in the White House. It has a basketball court, tennis court, indoor bowling alley, swimming pool, pool table, putting green, and horseshoe pit.

3 If you want a midnight snack, somewhere in the White House there's one waiting 24/7. The White House has five kitchens—a main one on the ground floor, an upstairs kitchen for the family, an underground one for the staff, one for guests, and a pastry kitchen just for desserts. With five chefs on duty, the food staff can prepare dinner for 140 people and snacks for more than 1,000.

4 The President's desk used to be a ship. In 1852 the British ship H.M.S. *Resolute* was abandoned in the Arctic Ocean and later found by American sailors. After the United States returned it to Great Britain, Queen Victoria made part of the wood into a desk and gave it back to the White House in 1880.

5 Holidays at the White House are always fun for kids. On the Monday after every Easter, an Easter Egg Roll is held on the South Lawn. During Christmas the First Family holds a special party just for kids. The White House Christmas tree is usually almost 20 feet tall!

6 There's no helping Dad paint the house at the White House. Workers use 570 gallons of paint to paint the outside. A tower of 570 gallon-size cans is taller than the Statue of Liberty!

7 How'd you like to ride to school in *this*? The President is picked up in "Cadillac One," a special limousine that's driven only by Secret Service agents. It's so safe that no one will even hint at what kind of security devices are installed in the car. All we can tell you is that only Secret Service agents can open and close the doors. The limo is even flown overseas when the President travels!

8 You probably won't wait for a bathroom at the White House. It has 35 of them, 15 of which contain bathtubs or showers.

9 Some wallpaper in the White House is older than your great-great-grandparents! The wallpaper in the Diplomatic Reception Room was designed when Andrew Jackson was President more than 170 years ago.

10 If you're a guest at the White House, you might sleep in the Lincoln Bedroom. But Abe never slept there—it was his office. The Queens' Bedroom is named because of the many queens who have stayed there.

11 Some claim the White House is haunted. Legend has it that President John Adams' ghostly wife, Abigail, hangs laundry. Other people say they've glimpsed Lincoln's ghost pacing the floor. One tale even tells of the ghost of Dolley Madison shouting at workers about to tear up her rose garden.

12 The First Family never has to go out to the movies—the White House has a 59-seat theater. The President sees movies with family and friends, sometimes before the flicks open at the box office.

First Lady Laura Bush told NG KIDS which room in the White House is her favorite: "The Red Room (not shown). It's warm and welcoming, and everywhere you look there is something nice to see. It's perfect for a Valentine's Day dinner, which we've had there with old high school friends."