

Delaware

HOUSE & HOME

Volume 24, Issue 3

Spring

PLANNING GUIDE

A.W. Viohl

Combining
decades of
experience
with a personal
approach

page 7

TAKING CENTER STAGE

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PLANNING GUIDE

E&E General Contracting

As the company grows, it remains true to its roots of honesty, integrity and value *page 15*

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Archadeck of Delaware

Giving area residents the outdoor
living space of their dreams *page 21*



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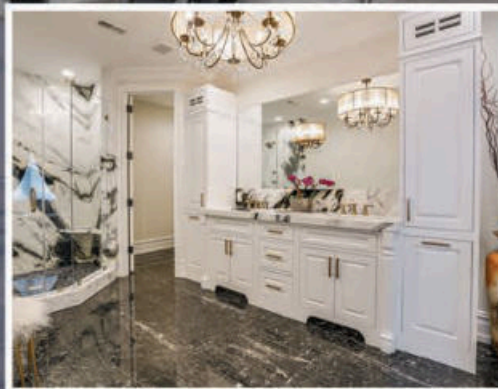
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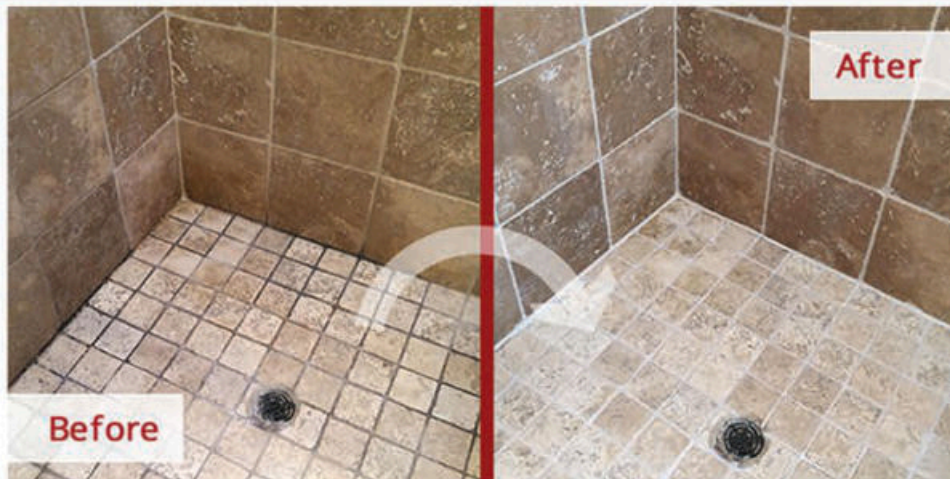
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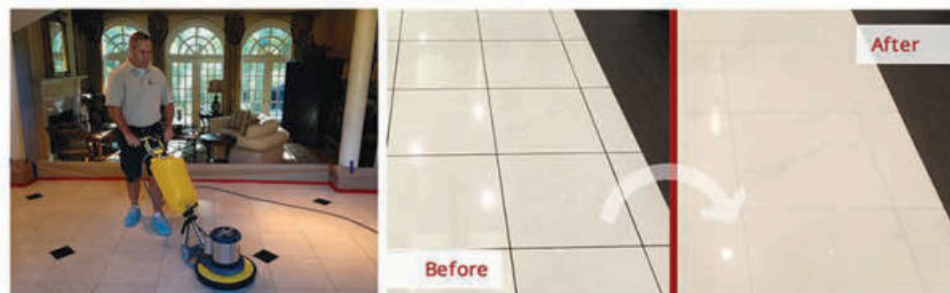
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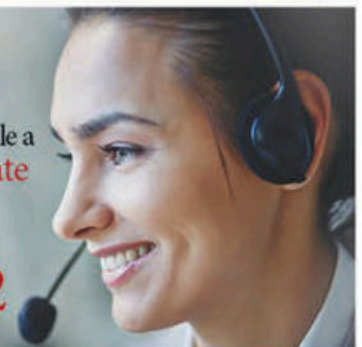


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8

contents

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>7 A Contractor for All Seasons
A.W. Viohl delivers high-quality remodeling projects all year long</p> | <p>16 Elevating Your Exterior
Transforming your home into a stunning showcase can be done any number of ways</p> |
| <p>8 Landscapes in Bloom
Now is the time to start readying your outdoor living space for the spring season</p> | <p>21 It's All in the Details
Archadeck of Delaware has the experience and the know-how to deliver stunning results</p> |
| <p>15 Breaking New Ground
E&E Contracting has expanded its services to better meet the needs of clients</p> | <p>22 Stylish Spaces
A photo guide to some of the latest trends in kitchen and bath remodeling</p> |



16

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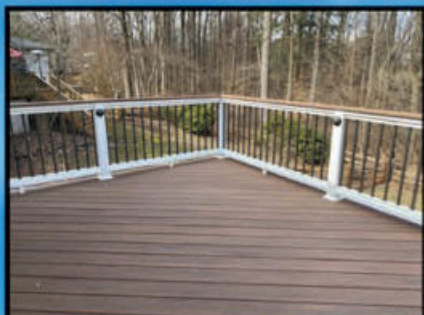
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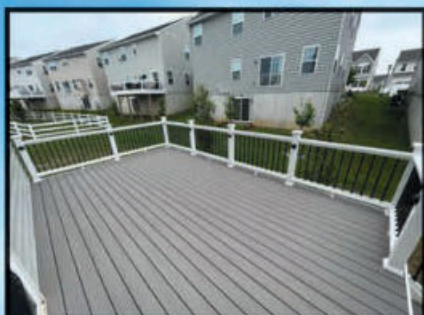


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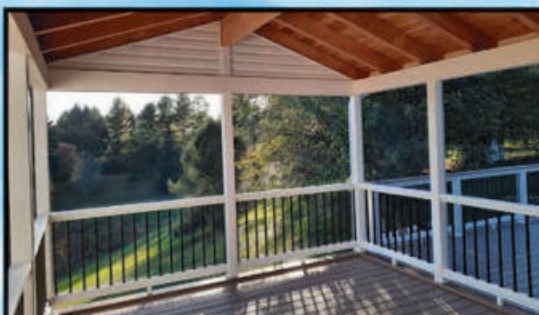
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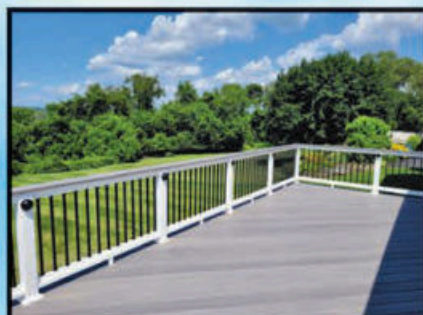
16' x 12' - Low Maintenance
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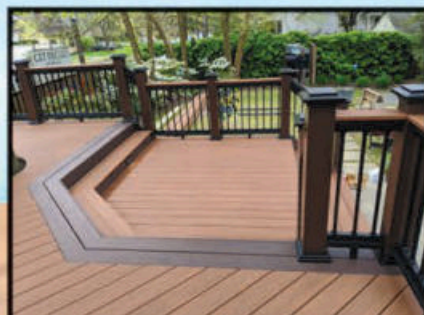
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National Sales Office:

HOUSE & HOME Magazine, LLC
700 E. Main St.
Norristown, PA 19401
Phone: 610-272-3120 Fax: 610-272-2805
Email: info@housemagazine.com

Regional Editions:

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Central Jersey HOUSE & HOME - NJ
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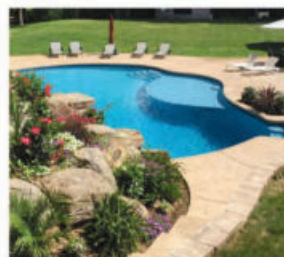


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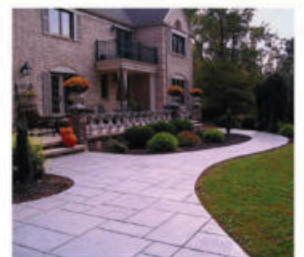
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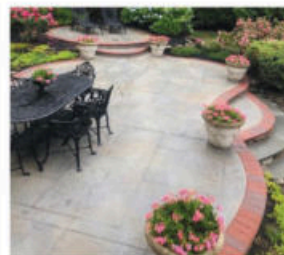
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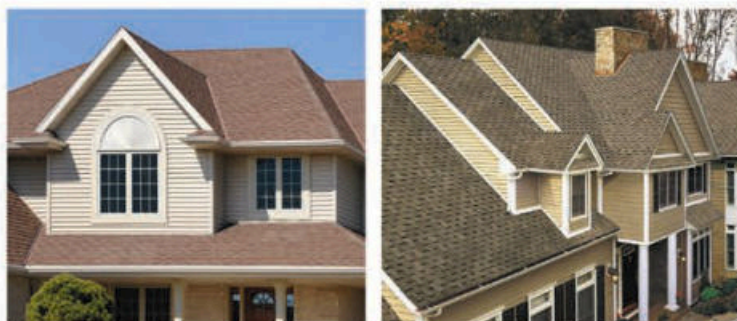
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A CONTRACTOR FOR *All Seasons*

The Delaware-based **A. W. Viohl Contracting** delivers high-quality remodeling and maintenance every month of the year, which means it's always the right time to get started on the interior or exterior project of your dreams. *by Madeleine Maccar*

Anyone who loves what they do will tell you that they don't do it for the awards and accolades: They do it for the personal satisfaction, like knowing that they made a difference, finding the work rewarding and fostering strong relationships along the way.

"By the time a project's over, our clients have become part of our family," says Andrew Viohl of A. W. Viohl Contracting.

Viohl founded the company that bears his name in 2008 and, since then, has diligently amassed a team of in-house professionals whose dedication to clients and a job well-done mirror his own, and whose talents come together to make the Delaware-based contractor a truly versatile, trustworthy indoor and outdoor service that can do it all.

"The guys who work with me are good buddies, we've been working together for a long time. We're like a family and we're family-oriented," Viohl explains. "We know what we're doing, and we know how to work to-

gether. We've been doing this for 20-some years, so we've pretty much seen it all."

And while Viohl appreciates the talent on his team and knows they're absolute professionals who can navigate any challenges that may arise along the way, the awards are a nice confirmation that the A. W. Viohl team is on the right track. Having been recognized as one of *House & Home* magazine's Best of the Best is one of the contractor's most recent honors.

"We're out there working as hard as we can, so it means a lot to all of us," Viohl says.

But Viohl and his team are never content to rest on their laurels. Whether it's renovating a basement, creating an addition, updating a kitchen or bathroom, repairing a deck or boosting the longevity of a roof, they aim for nothing less than the best for the homeowners who trust them with their interior and exterior remodeling goals.

"We're not rushing from one project to the next," Viohl promises. "Our focus is on you and your home, including finishing the job right."

And there's never an offseason for the year-round operation, which means they're not only scheduling projects for the spring but also breaking ground on a few now. It often comes as a pleasant surprise for clients who are planning ahead for the warmer months—or aren't about to let winter stand in the way of their renovation projects.

"I don't think you should react to a customer by saying 'Why do you want to do a deck now?' and I don't like turning down work: Whatever job people need done, we'll do it regardless of season," Viohl says. "We're always doing projects, even in January and February. On the other hand, we also have calls now to get on the books to start work three months out. That gives us time to get the production going, to get all the permits we need so come March, April or May, we're ready to go for them."

With the pandemic entering its third year and people still spending more time at home than usual, Viohl says that renovations and updates are just as in-demand as ever.

"People have these old wood decks with the boards falling through and loose railings, or they've had the deck for 15, 20 years and they're just tired of the maintenance for staining and sanding, so they want them updated with materials to achieve a maintenance-free result," he explains. "You still have to clean it because it's going to get dirty, but it's not like you'll have to power-wash it every two years or watch out for splitting wood and handrails splintering."

Viohl adds that features like composite decking boards and vinyl railings will ultimately save homeowners some money. "You won't have that extra yearly fee or every two years because you're paying someone to stain it or pressure-wash it."

The pandemic's influence on the supply chain is still causing some lingering delays, affecting the immediate availability of some materials, like grout in certain colors, cabinetry options and particularly windows. "Some windows can still take up to three months to be delivered," Viohl notes. But he says that A. W. Viohl's clients are generally understanding and realize the delays are just a part of construction right now.

Viohl diligently encourages open lines of communication, both with the homeowner and among his team. It ensures everyone is on the same page at every stage of the project while managing clients' expectations—because it is, no matter the project, always about making sure a customer is completely satisfied.

"A lot of the jobs we do are for repeat customers, so they've been there and know what to expect," he says. "They know that they're getting the quality work they're paying for. It's an honor when they hire us for repeat work, and we want to make sure they'll call us for their next job." **H&H**

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LANDSCAPES IN BLOOM

≈ BY CARLY MURRAY ≈



Mother Nature takes center stage during spring, and the right **landscaping and hardscaping** can create a blissful outdoor living space that allows you to experience the season like never before.

As an extension of the home, an outdoor area can tap into boundaries previously unexplored. The space beyond four walls offers opportunities to finally create the entertainment, relaxation or gathering area that couldn't fit inside the home, all while benefiting from both the special addition of and amalgamation with nature. Natural elements can not only elevate the appearance of an outdoor addition, but also provide the ambiance necessary to uplift the spirits of homeowners and their guests alike.

"I view the outdoor living space as an extension of the home and the client's personal style. The colors in the architectural details of the home are important when choosing materials and colors for the outside space; they don't have to be an exact match, but it will all flow together if the colors and tones complement each other," says Keith Frederick, owner of ELA Outdoor Living.

While the main attraction might be a water feature, outdoor television set or a

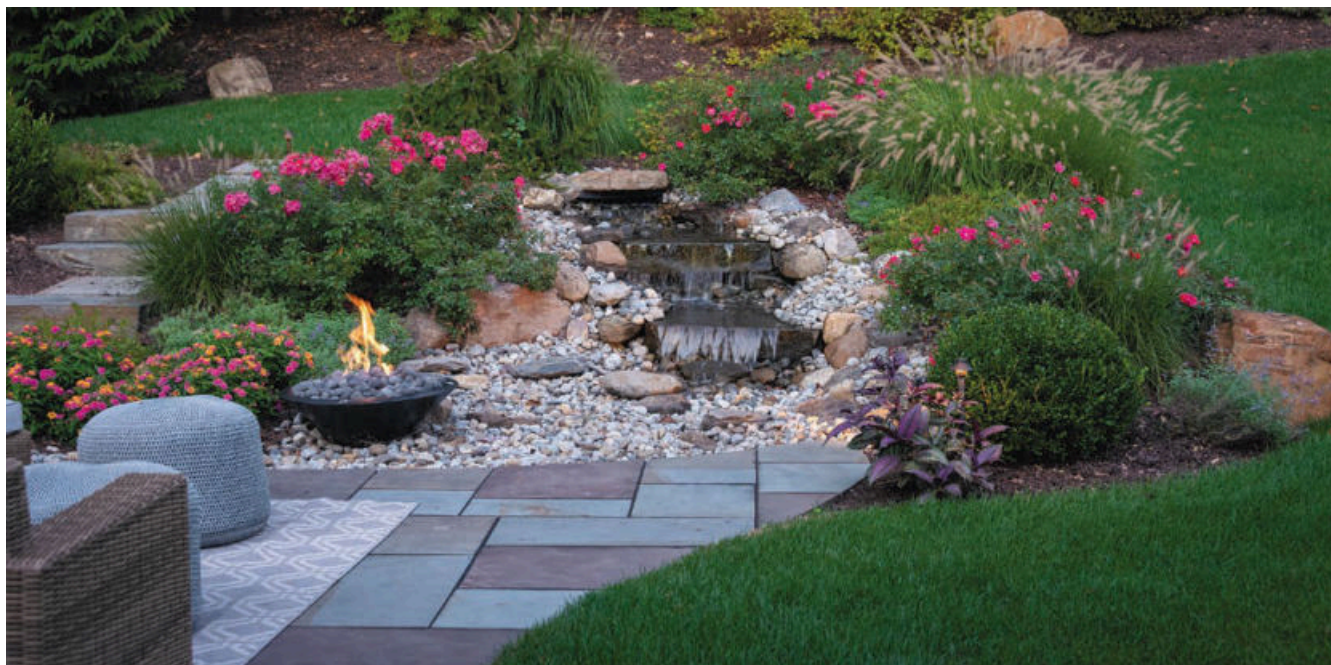


high-tech lighting and sound system, what truly makes outdoor living spaces special are the plants complementing them. Imple-

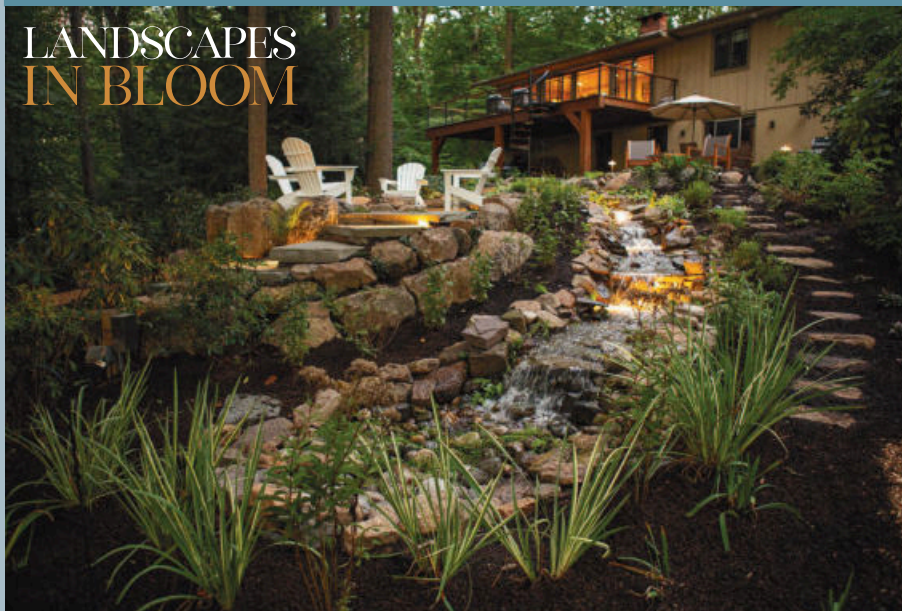
mentations to reduce an ecological footprint are trending most right now, both inside and outside the home. With such considerations, a cosmetic rejuvenation can give back to the earth to help create a symbiotic relationship. While spring is a fantastic time to enjoy an outdoor living space, it is always best to be conscious of how plants will interact with local native species and the changing climate.

"Everyone and everything is being affected by climate change. Therefore, my focus is to incorporate as many plantings into a design that can handle extreme temperature swings throughout the year and satisfy the aesthetic needs of the client," says Ronni Hock, landscape designer and owner of Ronni Hock Garden & Landscape. "It's a balancing act that's essential from my perspective. ... Beauty plus environmentally sensitive practicality seems to be the formula going forward."

Describing one of her favorite projects as an example, Hock explains how an intri-



LANDSCAPES IN BLOOM



cate home was customized to her client's specifications. This complete renovation of a contemporary home in a wooded area for a young family emphasizes the realm of possibilities in landscape design when using the natural surroundings to spark creativity.

"One of the client's principal concerns was to create a series of gardens with native plantings that would complement the location of the home and be safe for the children and pets," she recalls. "My intention was to create an 'inspirational journey' for the girls that would lead from the main house, through a woodland maze and into their playground near the lake."

Placement can make or break a final product. That's why it is vital to balance looks and utility while also envisioning these attributes from all perspectives: changing weather, night and day, and the relationship with both natural and manmade features.

"What's your priority? If you're cooking, you need an area for cooking, but you also need your traffic patterns to go to a social area where you can just relax—say, by a fire pit or a water feature," says George Mihalchick, owner of Ponds By George. "A lot of people don't really think about this, but it's your angle, your exposure to the elements like the sun. Is your dining area going to be right in the sun rays in the evening hours as the sun is setting?"

With any project that has an everyday impact, a household's unique lifestyle should be a significant consideration in determining what works best. Families with pets likely want to enjoy the outdoor living space alongside them, but they'll also want to take into account what popular plants are toxic to



I view the outdoor living space as an extension of the home and the client's personal style.

—Keith Frederick
Owner of ELA Outdoor Living



dogs or cats. While working with natural elements, carefully planning around all the living things that may interact with it can yield the best and safest results, while also providing new inspiration.

"At ELA, we have excellent horticultural knowledge and will always advise on which plants and shrubs are better for different

soil types, areas of the garden, if they're deer-resistant and, of course, whether or not they are a good choice if the client has children or pets," says Frederick. "Some things which might look beautiful are not a practical choice in reality for the local climate and the ways in which it is intended to be used."

Practicality and safety are two guiding principles when it comes to selecting from the many different types of water features, especially if an area is intended for small children to run around and play. Conferring with an expert can help narrow down that plethora of choices to best accommodate one's ideal scenario.

"The most popular water feature we do is called a pondless water feature, meaning there's a stream and you've got all these nice little waterfalls, and it's beautiful. You get the sound of water, you get sunshine, you get birds, your dogs can go in and your kids can play in it. But, it disappears into a gravel bed; it doesn't go into a pond and therefore it's totally safe," says Rich Cording Sr., owner of CLC Landscape Design.

Fire features alongside water features are popular ways to add a wow factor with contrasting elements, from a fire pit to sit around after getting out of the pool, to actually combining them in a fire and water bowl where both flow simultaneously.

"We call it living the lifestyle—even when you're inside and you look outside, you always see a water feature. That's your focal point. That's where people are going to gather. That's where the conversations are going to happen if you have seats by it.



Image at left courtesy of Ronni Hock Garden & Landscape. Image above left courtesy of ELA Outdoor Living



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LANDSCAPES IN BLOOM



And I can tell you that a fire pit will usually be by a water feature, because it's soothing, it's relaxing," says Mihalchick.

The best time to make the leap toward beautifying an outdoor living space is right now. With planning design, consultations and construction, there are permitting considerations to account for, as well. Knowing your town's standards and laws can minimize the potential for any hurdles moving forward.

"The sooner, the better," Cording affirms. "Everything in every town in North Jersey requires permits or what's called a zoning review. What normally used to take weeks is now taking months."

Any vision in home renovation these days can become a reality with adequate planning, expertise and time. Allowing the climate provided by spring to demonstrate the endless opportunities for an outdoor living space can guide you in making the choices



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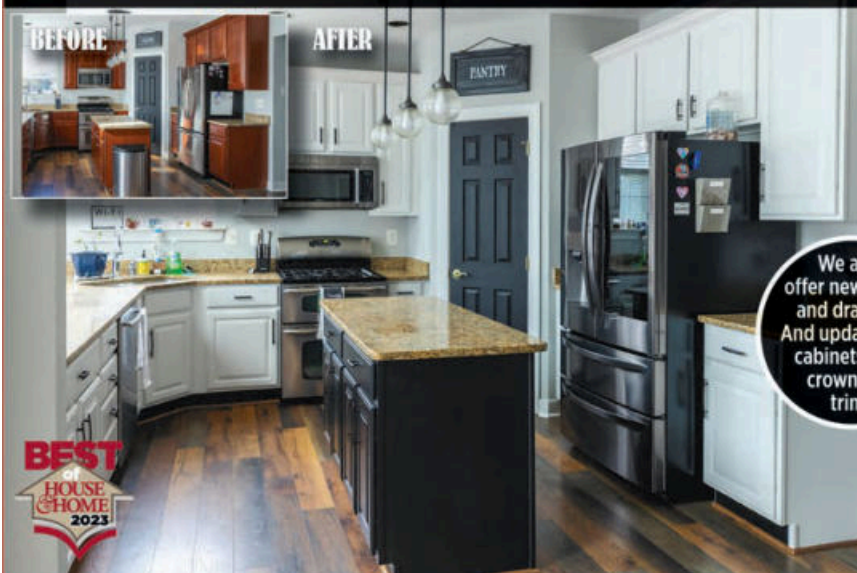
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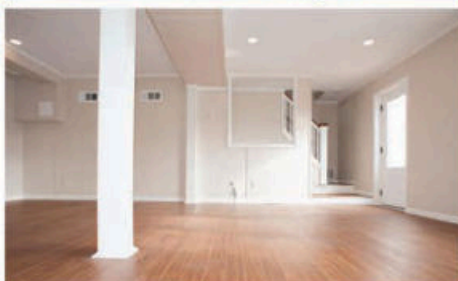
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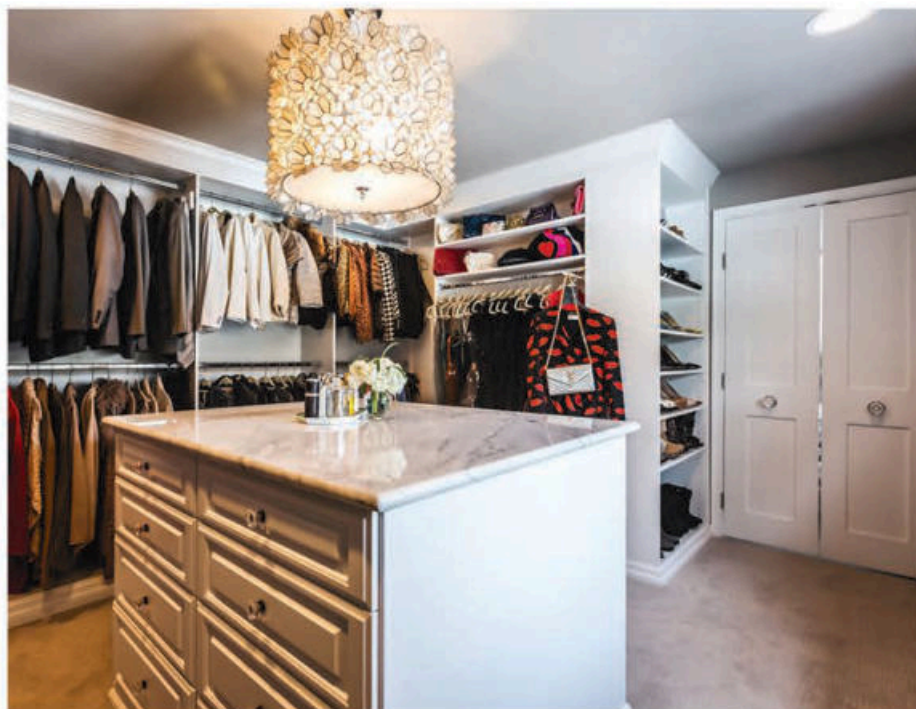
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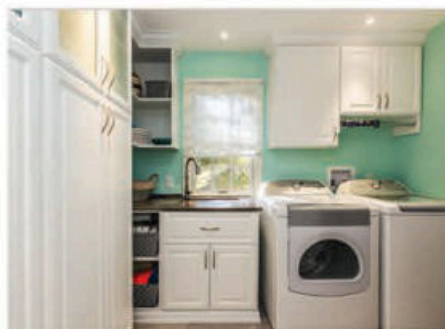
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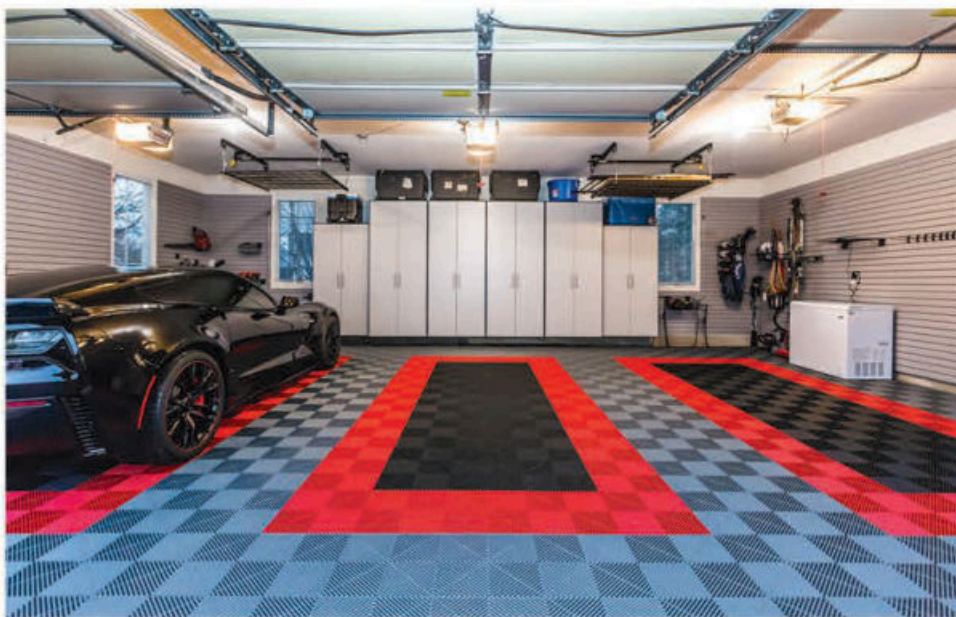
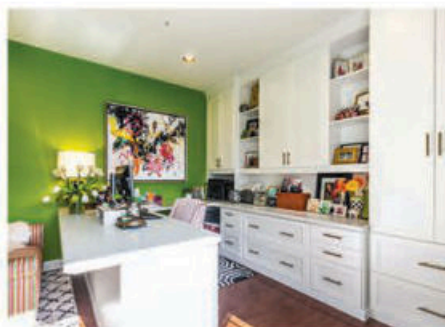
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Breaking New Ground

As **E&E General Contracting** continues to expand the ways it can beautify customers' homes, the company is excited to soon open a beautiful showroom where clients can visualize their projects.

To say that E&E General Contracting has experienced tremendous growth in recent years and built upon its already-stellar reputation in the home improvement industry would be an understatement. Founded as a siding company more than three decades ago by John Esh, E&E has reached another level under the direction of his sons, Michael and Matt, by expanding its offerings to a full range of exterior and interior services and including some of the most in-demand products on the market.

The evolution is only continuing with the creation of a new company headquarters in Gap, which the team moved into this past October. The 24,000-square-foot space will soon include a beautiful showroom that will enhance the client experience for homeowners looking to transform their residences with a spectacular indoor or outdoor project from E&E.

"We used to work out of the upstairs of an old dairy barn, so this is much different," says Elsie Beiler, hospitality manager at E&E. "Our new facility has 20 offices along with a shop space for our truck and tool storage, so it's a very large building. We're hoping to open our

showroom in April so people can come in and see all the featured products that we have and the services we can offer."

Those services include the company's original specialty—siding—using top-notch brands like LP Smartside or James Hardie. E&E can also add to a house's functional use or curb appeal with roofing solutions, stone veneer, energy-efficient windows, shutters, gutters and downspouts.

What really has changed since the early days of the company, however, is that E&E now has the ability to provide full-scale renovations, such as additions, kitchen and bathroom remodels, finished basements and outdoor living areas with all of the amenities. Utilizing the experienced and skilled craftsmen on its own staff along with qualified subcontractors like electricians and plumbers, it can deliver life-changing spaces.

"It really has grown from a siding business into a large company that can offer just about anything that you're looking for," Beiler says. "Much of the company's growth came as a result of homeowners asking us to consider



future or additional projects for them after having a great experience with us on a past project. It grew organically and led to us taking on a variety of services."

The new showroom will assist in starting those projects on the right foot by allowing homeowners to both draw inspiration from it and get educated on what might work best for their house. They can simply drop by or call to schedule an appointment.

"That's the big thing: People have ideas of what they want, but they don't actually know what it's going to look like," Beiler says. "The advantage of having a showroom where they can come in and look at all the featured products that we have and the things we can do with their home is that it helps them visualize the ideas they have. At the same time, it helps us to better understand what they're envisioning or looking for before a project begins."

Good communication is stressed throughout the process, with E&E making sure to heed all the wishes of each customer, being clear on all scheduling and timelines, and handling tasks like applying for permits.

"One thing we offer that's pretty unique is that we have a project manager assigned to every project that we start," Beiler explains. "There is one person assigned to oversee your project, to communicate with you and to hear your thoughts and questions throughout the project. Your project manager will be there from start to finish. If you as a homeowner are communicating with someone different every week, it is difficult to have that excellent project experience we are seeking to deliver."

Beiler, who has two brothers working at E&E on the window and siding crews, adds that the Esh family also genuinely cares about their employees and shows them the same first-class treatment they give to customers. John Esh is still in the office every day overseeing operations and helping his sons push the business forward with exciting ideas.

Homeowners who want to work with a company whose care and values are strong and established should reach out and begin a process that will not leave them disappointed. Give E&E a call today so they can discuss your dreams and accomplish them according to your desired timeline. **H&H**



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Elevating Your Exterior

by Kristen Jorgensen

TRANSFORMING YOUR HOME INTO A STUNNING SHOWCASE IS EASY WITH THE HELP OF A PROFESSIONAL.

siding, paint, lighting and other ways to liven up the look of your exterior with advice from some of the region's leading professionals.

Unveiling the Beauty of Stone and Brick Veneer

In the realm of home design, few elements evoke a sense of timeless beauty and sophistication quite like stone and brick veneer. These versatile materials have long been cherished for their ability to enhance the aesthetic appeal of any structure, whether it's a cozy cottage nestled in the countryside or a sleek modern residence in the heart of the city.

"You can transform your home with the timeless elegance of stone and brick veneer. Thin stone and thin brick veneer can add that earthy, yet elegant allure that full-thickness stone and brick provide at a cost savings," shares Michael Chadwick from Riverside Supply Company.

Crafted to mimic the natural beauty of authentic stone and brick, these veneers offer a stunning facade that enhances any architectural style.

"Thin stone and brick are made from extremely light and durable materials that do not add significant weight to your home while still offering the look of refined sophistication," Chadwick continues. "The versatility of the products allows for the material being used on the outside of the house to be introduced on some focal points in the interior of the home as well."

Once stone and brick veneers are installed, there is little to no maintenance. So whether you're looking to add rustic charm or contemporary flair, stone and brick veneers provide durability and versatility, creating a lasting impression for your home.

Your home's exterior is the first impression you give to guests and passersby, making it essential to ensure it reflects your style and personality. From the roof to the landscaping, every detail contributes to the overall aesthetic and curb appeal. Read on to explore the latest options in roofing,

Roofing: The Crowning Glory

The roof is not only a functional component of your home but also a significant architectural feature. Advances in roofing materials offer homeowners myriad options to enhance curb appeal while providing durability and energy efficiency. Traditional asphalt shingles remain a popular choice, but metal roofing, with its sleek appearance and longevity, is gaining tremendous traction.

"A roof is one of the most integral parts of a home, as it is one of the most critical lines of defense against protecting it from the elements," says Isaac Huyard, owner of Silverline Exteriors. "Metal roofing not only looks impressive from a design aspect, but is also very eco-friendly and incredibly durable."

Though metal roofing costs more than other materials, it offers better roof insulation, providing energy savings and a return on your investment, and can last for several decades.

"Metal roofing can last up to 75 years when installing a standing seam metal roof. It's worth the initial investment if a

homeowner has the budget for it,” says Huyard.

Global Home Improvement has also had great success over the years with the installation of metal roofs and recommends that option of its durability and aesthetic appeal.

“Asphalt roofing can show its age quickly,” says Adam Parnes, marketing manager for Global Home Improvement. “It may last 15-plus years, but typically after five it will show discoloration and staining. Metal roofing has no discoloration issues and will last longer and look better on your home. Metal slate roofing turns your boring asphalt roof into a dynamic and aesthetically pleasing focal point of your home.”

Siding: Style and Substance

Siding also plays a crucial role in protecting your home from the elements while also defining its exterior style. Engineered wood siding is an option Huyard highly recommends, specifically LP siding—or LP SmartSide—a type of engineered wood siding that mimics the look of natural wood but is more durable and resistant to weather, rot and pests. It’s made by Louisiana-Pacific Corporation and consists of wood strands or fibers bonded with resin and zinc borate.

“The core material is wood. However, it has undergone an extensive treatment process to enhance strength and resistance to some fungal elements and moisture,” explains Huyard.

Another emerging trend is the use of board and batten style, which combines the natural beauty of a more traditional farmhouse look with the low maintenance of engineered materials, providing a timeless style with modern convenience.

“Wood siding that consists of narrow vertical strips or battens installed over a flat base or board is known, logically enough, as board and batten, or batten board. It has been popular for centuries on the exterior of houses, and has since become a trendy way to add visual interest to the exterior of the home,” says Vic Fiore of Magnolia Home Remodeling Group.



Paint: Adding Personality

A fresh coat of paint can instantly transform the appearance of your home, breathing new life into tired exteriors. When selecting exterior paint colors, consider the architectural style of your home and the surrounding landscape. Neutral tones like beige, gray and taupe are timeless choices that complement a variety of architectural styles, while bold hues like navy blue or forest green

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can make a striking statement.

“The industry is still seeing clients opt for lighter color homes—whites, creams and neutral tones—whether

when painting or selecting siding materials,” Fiore says.

Fiore also points out how certain details can add further visual interest to your home’s façade. “You can also add stone veneer to the trim areas of the home for an extra pop of character. It really adds an upscale look to the home.”

Lighting: Illuminating Your Home’s Beauty

Outdoor lighting not only enhances the safety and security of your home, but also adds both ambiance and drama to your exterior space. From sleek wall sconces to dramatic uplighting, the options for outdoor lighting are virtually endless. Consider installing pathway lighting to guide guests to your front door or highlighting architectural features with strategically placed spotlights. For a touch of elegance, add string lights or lanterns to your porch or patio, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere for outdoor gatherings.



“We will never lose the trend of homeowners wanting to spend more time outdoors when the weather gets warmer, hence the continued popularity of decks, porches, patios and pergolas,” says Fiore. “Adding ambient lighting to those areas creates a more inviting feel and allows the homeowner to enjoy the space after dusk.”

Landscaping: Adding the Finishing Touches

No exterior transformation is complete without attention to landscaping. Thoughtfully designed landscaping can enhance the overall curb appeal of your home, framing it like a work of art. Start by assessing your yard’s layout and consider incorporating a mix of trees, shrubs



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and flowers to add color and texture. Define your outdoor spaces with hardscaping elements like pavers or stone walls, creating visual interest and adding functionality to your landscape. Don't forget to maintain your landscaping regularly to keep it looking its best year-round.

Your home's exterior is a reflection of your

style and taste, making it essential to invest in upgrades that enhance its curb appeal and overall aesthetic. From roofing and siding to paint, lighting and landscaping, there are countless ways to elevate the look of your home's exterior and create a stunning showcase that you'll be proud to call your own. By incorporating these latest options and trends, you can trans-

form your home into a welcoming retreat that leaves a lasting impression. **H&H**



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It's All in the Details

by Matt Cosentino

Dave Lyons and his team at Archadeck of Delaware have the experience and know-how to give customers a beautiful outdoor living space built the right way.

As someone who has been around the construction industry for most of his life, Dave Lyons can often look at a finished project and tell right away if it was built properly and if the contractor followed all of the appropriate codes. This superpower even shows up when he is off the clock, much to the chagrin of his wife and family.

"We'll be out somewhere and I'll look at a structure and say, 'Well, that wasn't done right,'" Lyons shares with a laugh. "And they'll say, 'Stop it—we're supposed to be out to dinner!'"

Although Lyons' attention to detail might irk his loved ones from time to time, it is nothing but a benefit for the clients of his thriving outdoor living business, Archadeck of Delaware. Specializing in decks, patios/hardscapes, screened porches and sunrooms, along with all of the in-demand amenities, the company combines the local knowledge of Lyons and his staff with the backing of a national corporation that has completed more than 100,000 projects worldwide.

Lyons himself has extensive experience with both the design and construction aspects, having started at a young age. He regularly tagged along on jobs with his father, a general contractor, and later worked for his family's hardware store while building decks in his spare time. Lyons eventually became the lead project manager for a major residential construction firm before leaving to start two companies of his own: Archadeck and DNA Siding & Roofing.

Bringing clients' backyard oases to life is particularly rewarding for him.

"It's not really a job for me," Lyons says. "I'm not doing this to get rich: I'm doing it to be happy in life. It's gratifying to be able to help people, to solve their problems and to fix things that nobody else seems to be able to fix."

At Archadeck of Delaware, the process starts with Lyons personally visiting a client's home. That is different from many other companies in the industry, which rely on slick salespeople who don't know the first thing about actually constructing an outdoor project.

"Usually the first appointment is for us to find out if we can be a good fit for each other," he says. "This is a project that's going to take some time, so we need to be able to work together. I spend roughly an hour with the customers and I take detailed meas-

urements, I do a sketch, I show them some pictures of work that I've done before, I have a short presentation about the company, and then I talk to them about budget so we can agree on what they want me to build and what they can spend. From there, we will meet again, look at more detailed drawings and look at the proposal, and they'll be able to make a decision."

Along the way, Lyons will make suggestions about the best materials, design ideas and deck size, while staying true to the financial commitment the customer is willing to make. He handles all of the permits, will provide 3D drawings to be presented to a homeowner's association, if applicable, and can offer several financing options.

In addition to his vast experience, he regularly attends Archadeck's national conferences where he is able to compare notes with other franchise owners while meeting vendors and deck board manufacturers to learn about the latest trends in the industry. One that he feels strongly about is the use of steel framing, whether for wood decks or the more common composite variety.

"The advantages are it's lighter and stronger, you have fewer posts and you can get a longer span," he says. "The disadvantage is that it costs more money. It's difficult to sell that to a client because it's an upgrade that will add \$6,000 to the project. I think it's the way things should go, but it's probably going to take some time to catch

on. It's just like when they first came out with composites—a lot of people were still putting up wood decks. Now, for every nine composite decks, there might be one wood deck that we do."

Most of Archadeck's jobs nowadays also include a combination of either a deck and a patio or a deck and a screened porch. Lyons' experience as a roofer proves to be beneficial when a shade structure is added or the space essentially

serves as an extension of the house.

Whatever type of project a customer is looking for, they can rest assured knowing that Lyons and his team are committed to delivering top-notch results that will stand the test of time.

"My satisfaction comes from making sure that the jobs are built correctly," he says. "Our goal is not necessarily to be the cheapest company in town, but to produce a high-quality product." **H&H**

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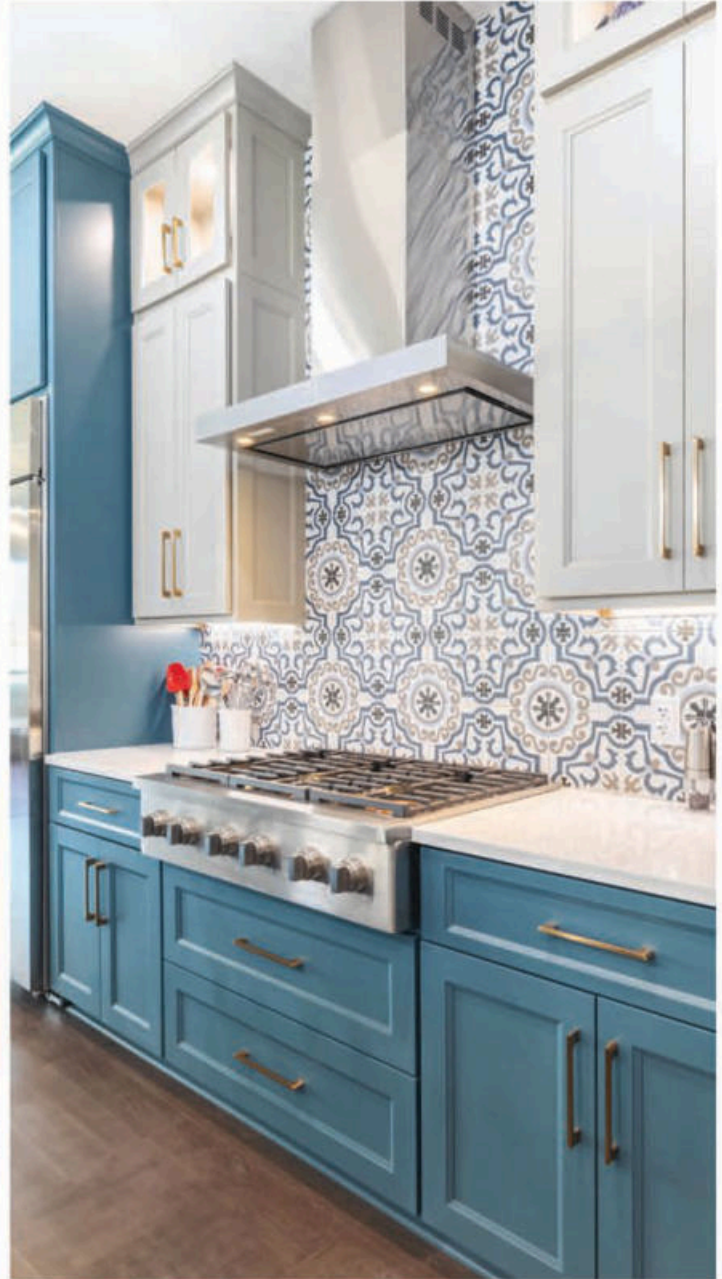
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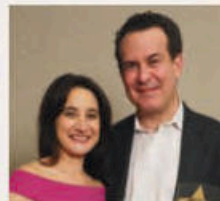
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