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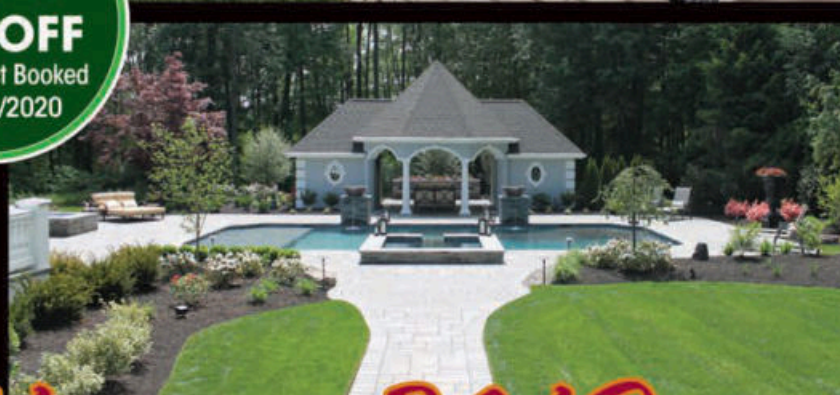


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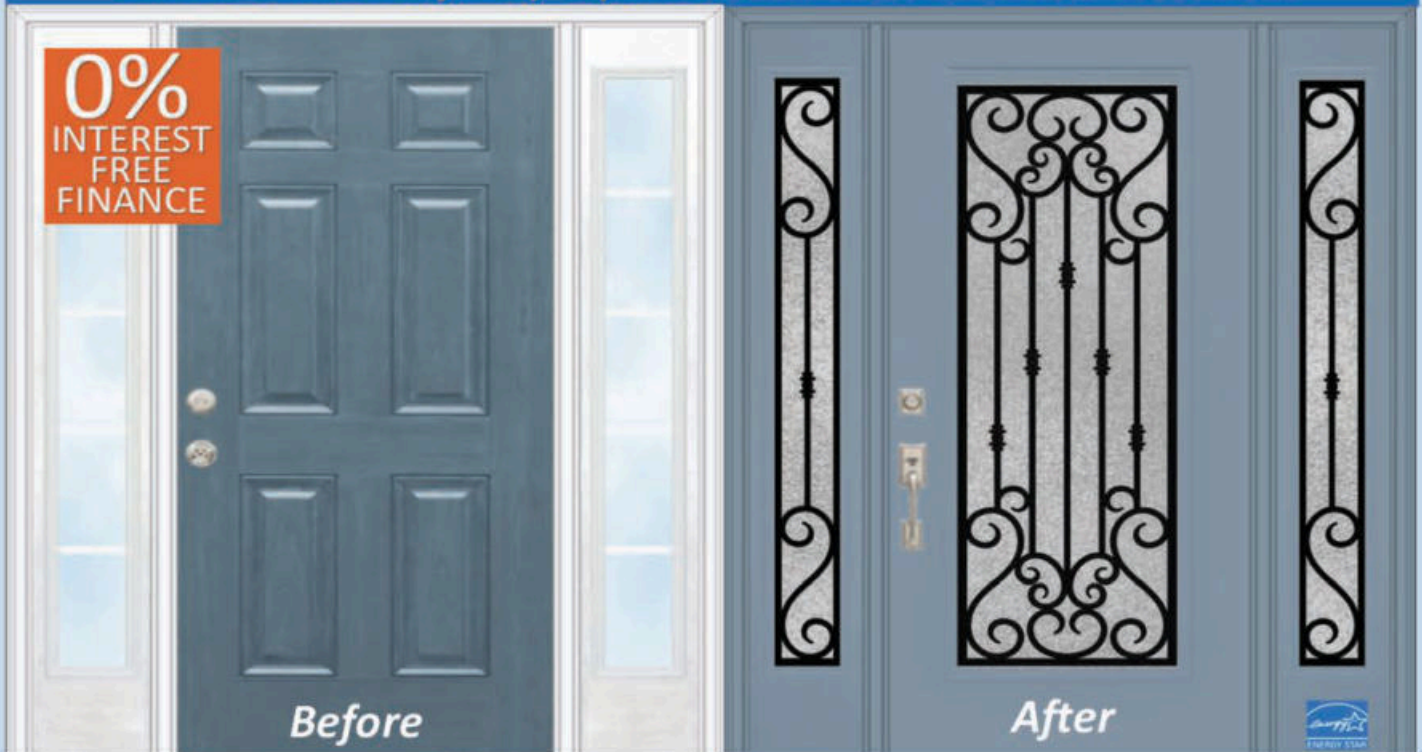
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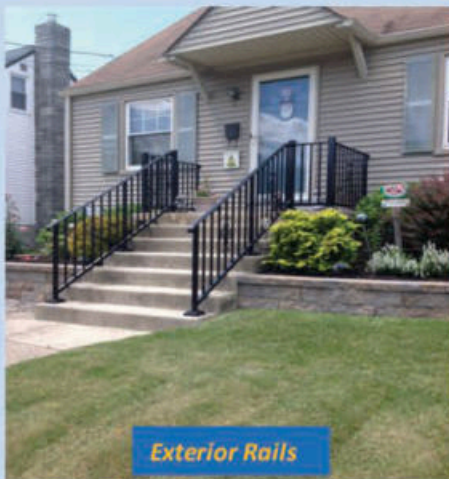


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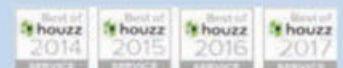
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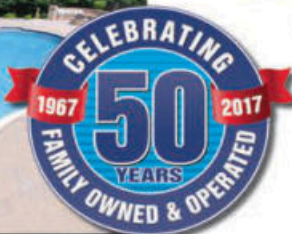
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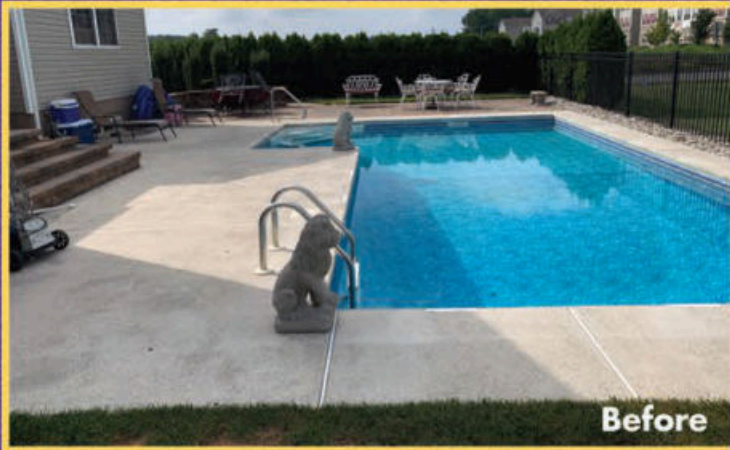
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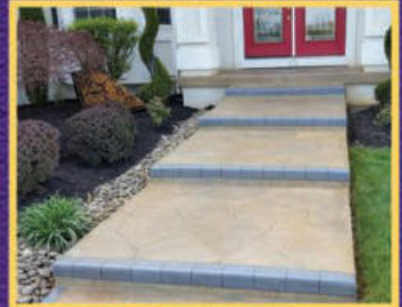
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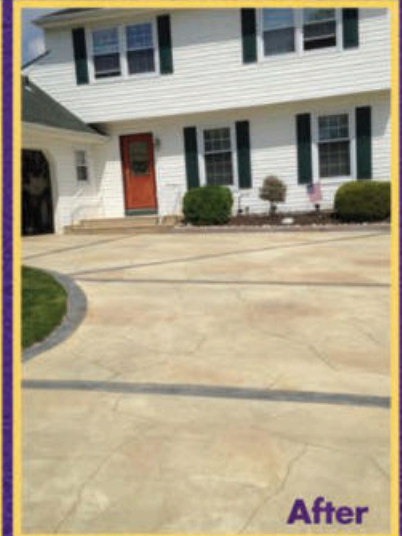
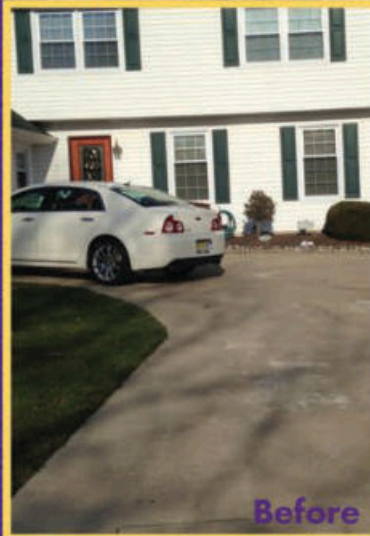
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National Sales Office:

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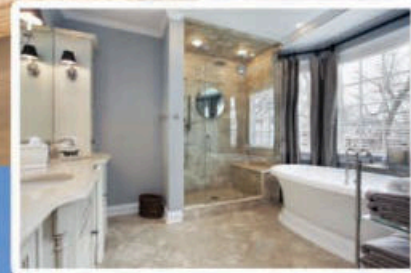
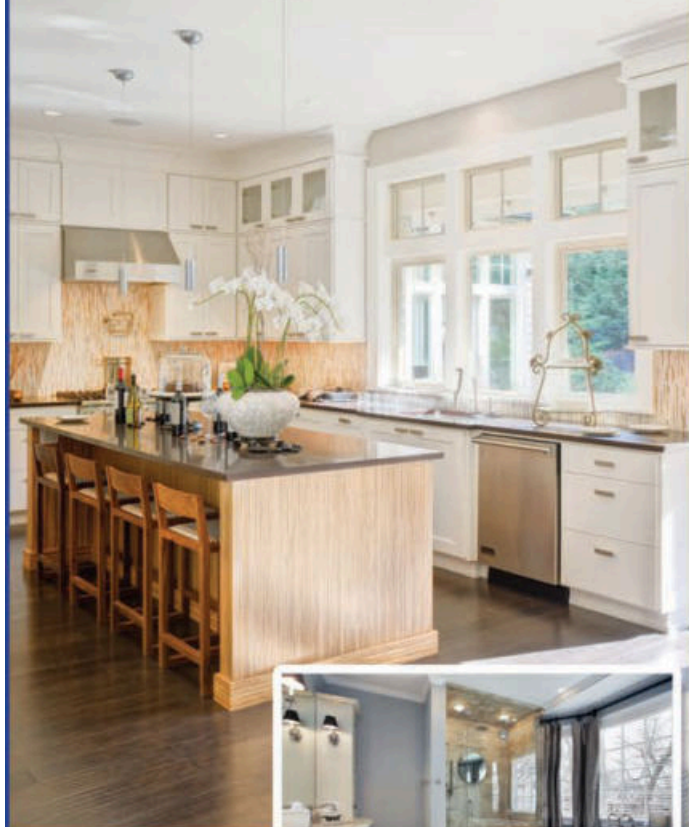
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A large, curved swimming pool with bright blue water is the centerpiece. A white slide curves down from the upper right into the pool. The pool is surrounded by a stone deck and landscaped with various plants, including ferns and small trees. A set of stone steps leads up from the pool area. In the background, there are more trees and a patio area with outdoor furniture and umbrellas.

Under these circumstances, having a pool to splash around in is even more meaningful than ever.

A MODERN

Homeowners with older pools are updating them with amenities like **sun shelves, water features and slides.**

TOUCH

BY MATT COSENTINO

It is quite understandable for homeowners to have envy for neighbors with stunning pools in their backyard, even during normal times. But with the COVID-19 pandemic severely limiting entertainment options these days, the jealousy factor will surely be multiplied this spring and summer.

Vacations have been put on hold if not completely canceled, certain parks and community pools are off limits for now and walks around the block count as a special treat. Under these circumstances, having a pool to splash around in is even more meaningful than ever.

"[Some] beaches are closed—who knows when they're going to open up again—and when they do, people might not want to be next to each other," says Dominic DiCesare, general manager at Blue Haven Pools & Spas by Calvitti. "Everybody's life has changed and things are starting to go back to how they were 50 or 60 years ago. People are not running around; they're not doing travel sports [with their kids]. I think people are going to just hang out at their house."

With that being the case, now might be the perfect opportunity for those with an existing pool to do an update and bring it into the modern era. Amenities like water features, sun shelves and spas can all be added to make it even more enticing.

We spoke to several of the experts to learn more about the popular add-ons their customers are looking for and how feasible these projects are.

Making a splash

Homeowners who had pools installed 10 to 15 years ago may not have included the bells and whistles that are common with today's pools. For that reason, many companies have seen an uptick in renovations in which these amenities can bring an extra wow factor to the backyard.

"The last couple of years that is growing in popularity," says Mike McCool, general manager of Swim-Mor Pools & Spas. "Rather than just doing the straight coping/tile/plaster renovation, people are adding sun shelves, spas and raised wall water features with sheer descents. They're modernizing their pools to incorporate everything the new pools that are being built now have. All of the stuff that can be done to a new pool can be done to an existing pool."

Along with raised walls with sheer descents, other trendy water features include deck jets, fountains, cascades and waterfalls. These come at different price points to fit most budgets.

"The biggest add-on that we do is water features," says Rich Cording Sr., the founder of CLC Landscape Design. "People like to add waterfalls to an existing pool to jazz it

up. We do all kinds of waterfalls, from very naturalistic to very formal."

McCool adds that while some water features, like a raised wall, are rather straightforward, others can get pretty complex.

"Waterfalls can be added, but you still have to get a plumbing line to it, which is usually the trickiest part because the backyards are already finished," he says. "They've built the patios and they've built the walkways and they may already have a fire pit area, and you have to get a pipe from the equipment to wherever the waterfall is. Sometimes it's undoable."

Plumbing also becomes a concern when adding a slide to an existing pool.

"You have to cut up the concrete walkway where you're going to place the slide. You need about 13 feet in length on the walkway and you have to anchor it down," says Derek Blasker, vice president of operations at Pool Designs Inc. "You also need a water line, because in the middle of the summer when it's boiling hot outside, you don't want to go down a plastic slide without water—it will burn your legs. But a slide is certainly a good option."

"A sliding board as part of a waterfall package is doable," DiCesare adds. "It's easier on a concrete pool; that structure on a fiberglass pool or a vinyl liner pool is going to compromise those types of pools. In a concrete pool you can add that stuff fairly easily."

Sun shelves—an area to lounge inside the pool or let young children play—have almost become must-haves in recent years. Those renovating an older pool often request sun shelves, although this kind of project does come with challenges.

"A sun shelf can be added after the pool is already in, but it's way pricier to do it after than it is while you're building it," Cording says. "If you're going to add a sun shelf to a concrete pool, you would have to empty the pool and build up layers of concrete to get to that level and epoxy it on, and then you would replaster and everything. To do it in a vinyl pool, you would have to redo the base underneath and then replace the liner."

Spas are also an expensive addition—almost double what they cost during original installation, according to Blasker. But he is currently adding one to an existing pool for a customer, who is excited to have the new feature.

"If you're going to add a spa, you have two options: you're either going to have a standalone spa or a spill-over spa," he says. "If you're just adding a hot tub that's self-contained, that's easy. You just pour yourself a [concrete] pad, lay it on top and it's all contained inside of itself."

"If you're going to try to incorporate it into your existing pool by making it a water feature

Choosing the Right Fence to Surround your Pool

When installing a pool, it's always fun to think about design elements like sun shelves or slides. But an important feature that should not be overlooked is the fence that must surround the pool or yard by law. There are several different styles to choose from and certain requirements that must be met.

"It varies by state and there are a few that are more strict than others," says Kelsey Gilinger of Montco Fence & Superior Structure. "For the most part, it really depends on the style of the fence. A lot of customers think it's just the height that matters, but different styles have different features both horizontally and vertically, so each style has its own code."

Mark Patrick of FenceUSA explains that many local municipalities adopt the national pool codes set forth by Building Officials and Code Administrators, or BOCA.

"Gates need to swing out away from the pool area; the latch has to be 54 inches above grade, or ground level; and the fence has to be at least 4 feet high," he says. "The interesting thing is, there are rail and picket space requirements too. You can have a 100-foot high fence and it wouldn't necessarily pass



pool code if it's climbable. It depends on how far apart the horizontal rails are."

Both Gilinger and Patrick estimate that about half of their customers choose to fence in just the pool area, and the other half put the fence around the entire backyard.

"It really just depends on the money they want to spend, the layout of the house—if they have enough room to just enclose the pool—and if they have dogs or babies," Gilinger says.

That decision will also impact the type of fence the client chooses.

"If you're just doing it around the pool, you're probably going to order an ornamental aluminum fence or a spaced vinyl fence that you can see through. You're not going to want to put up a wall around the pool," Patrick says. "Others who get a pool want to put a fence around the whole yard because they want some privacy from their neighbors. People are going to be walking around in bathing suits and they might not want people watching them. So they would get a privacy vinyl fence or a privacy wood fence."

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A MODERN TOUCH

that's going to spill over into it, you have to crack up all of the concrete where you're going to put the spa, and then you have to trail a line all the way back to the pool equipment so you can get a return to fill up the spa. You also have to replumb the area with a new valve and cut all the lines, and sometimes that's not too easy to do."

Simple ways to add pizzazz

If the cost and construction process of sun shelves or spas sound like too much of a stretch, there are other ways for homeowners to update their pools.

"To give the pool a little more of a wow factor, you can switch out the standard lighting with LED lighting that has built-in light shows. That is a quick, inexpensive addition," DiCesare says. "Obviously, the saltwater systems are very popular now, but we also do a lot of UV Ozone systems to treat the water. There is no chance of anything growing in the water at that point because that's how bottled water is purified. ... These are fairly inexpensive upgrades to most pools."

Blasker also recommends LED lighting and suggests another cost-effective element for an aging pool.

"If you have an old fiberglass pool that is looking a little faded on the top above the water line, you can add a nice, 6-inch tile perimeter all the way around," he says. "That will spice it up a lot by giving it a nice pop of color, and it's an easy, one-day job. You drain a little bit of water, maybe two inches, put silicone on some tile and you have a brand-new looking feature on your pool."

Entertainment options for the kids can be found in today's marketplace as well.

"Not many people are adding diving boards anymore, but dive rocks are very popular," Cording says. "That's something we get called about often. They're usually about 18 inches high and people can jump off them into the pool."

"S.R. Smith came out with a slide this year that folds up and

comes with its own [dolly]," Blasker adds. "You just wheel it out when you want to use it and hook up a garden hose to it. You don't have to cut up your concrete or run a water line to it. If you have small kids, it's a good slide."

No matter what amenities a homeowner is looking to add, the professionals encourage them to call their pool companies early to get on the schedule. While new construction projects may be up in the air due to the pandemic, renovations are still moving forward at a quick pace.

"We're getting a lot of calls for renovation work, so people are looking to get their pools updated either with coping and tile, adding new features or adding equipment," DiCesare says. "It should be a fairly busy year for that type of work." **H&H**



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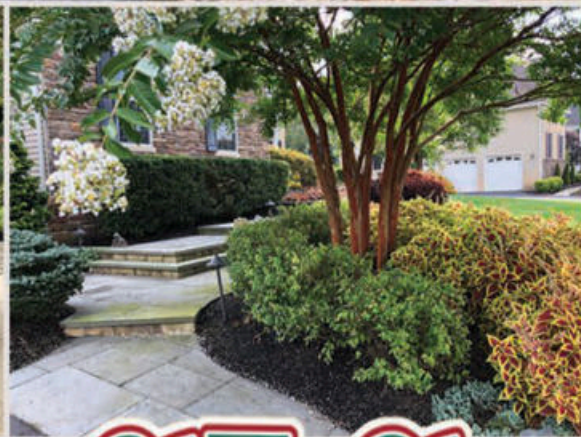
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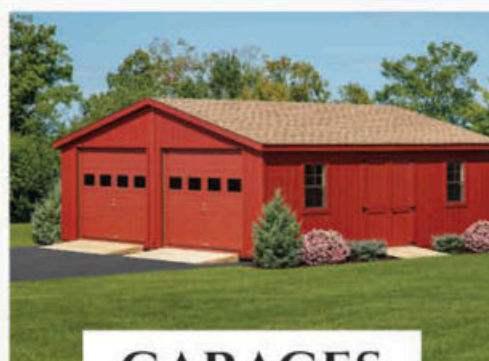
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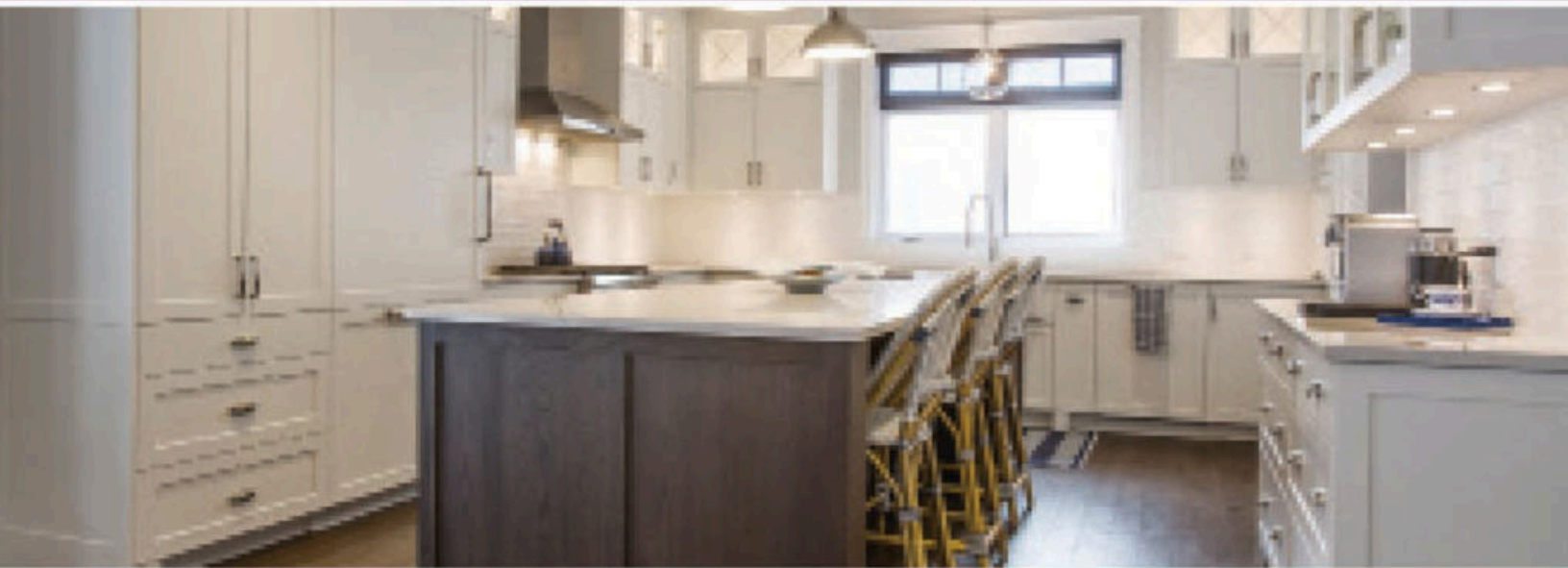
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Del Val Pools & Spas

by Sydney Kerelo

Jump into the summertime fun with a beautiful new pool perfect for the entire family. Splashing in the water, playing games and creating memories that will last a lifetime is the focus of Del Val Pools & Spas. With over 35 years of experience, they are the perfect match to bring amazing family memories this summer season.

Bryan Hull, partner at Del Val Pools & Spas, has created a team of efficient, hard-working employees consisting mostly of his family and friends to bring dependability and incredible service to the South Jersey area.

House & Home spoke with Hull about how family oriented his business is, the latest pool trends, and what to expect when it comes to budgets.

How is Del Val Pools & Spas family-oriented?

Something that makes us very unique in our line of work is the family aspect that we bring. My mother worked in the business and when I was in high school I would work every summer for the business and I stayed with it from there on. My brother and I eventually took over, retiring our mother and we have been operating it ever since then. Our wives work with us, our sons, cousins, nephews and friends, the list goes on and on. We have a great family feel here.

What are the latest trends in pools?

Saltwater pools are trending a lot recently; everyone is going toward it over chlorine pools. They are actually one of the best



Bryan Hull, partner

things that you can do for the pool, especially if you put in an automation series of chemicals, it makes it not too harsh to endure. You are basically having a computer run your pool and there is an automatic vacuum which is one of the best things to have because vacuuming the pool is not fun. Watching a robot do it is a lot better. We also have been doing a lot of sun decks for gunite pools which is the little lounge area where you can put Adirondacks and have a nice lounging wading area. People like the color-changing lights; the very vibrant pool colors glowing are a really pretty addition.

What is the best option when it comes to purchasing a pool?

We do above ground pools and inground pools—custom gunite and custom vinyl liner pools. Our above ground pools are made of a steel wall with a polyresin frame; the frame is made out of plastic but the wall is steel so that it doesn't rot. Then it has a vinyl liner that holds the water. When you are choosing an inground pool, gunite is going to be your top product because you can get the most creative there and it's by far the strongest. Gunite pools allow for more freedom, you're going to be able to add the sundeck feature, a custom swimout into the deep end, and all

kinds of other unique features. While vinyl liner pools are more custom, they are great for fun in the sun family pools if someone is on a budget and looking to be all in.

What should a buyer expect from the budget?

The upfront charge for a saltwater generator pool is going to be more expensive than a chlorine pool, at least by a couple thousand dollars on top of the pool but your annual cost drops significantly. It really pays you back within two to three years. Gunite pools are going to be more expensive as well because they require more work but they are more durable. We offer warranties as well on all of our pools. The steel construction for the inground pool is going to have a double lifetime warranty and the gunite construction is going to have a lifetime warranty on the bowl. A lot of our above ground pools will have a 50-year warranty with them.

How is your customer service center?

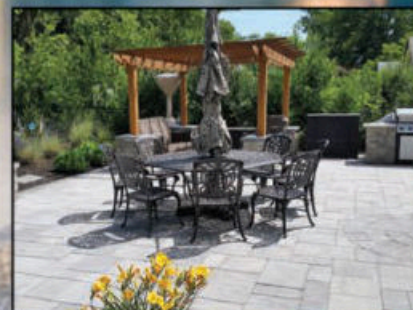
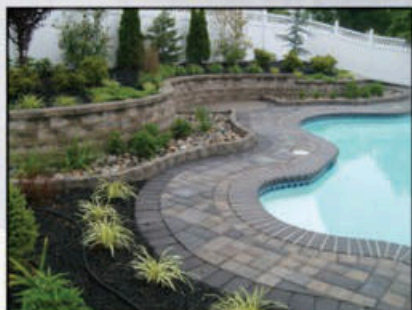
We service everything that we sell like all kinds of makes and models of heaters, filters, pumps, etc. We have 17 trucks on the road and all of our workers are very experienced and we have a pretty extensive service department. All of our employees are always continuing their knowledge, we send each person out for training. **H&H**

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Matteo Family Kitchens & Flooring

by Sydney Kerelo

With social distancing rules in place, more people are spending time at home. Children are being taught remotely and parents are working from home, encouraging homeowners to reassess their home needs.

House & Home spoke with Steve Matteo, co-owner and store manager of Matteo Family Kitchens & Flooring about how the new normal is going to change the way homes are seen.

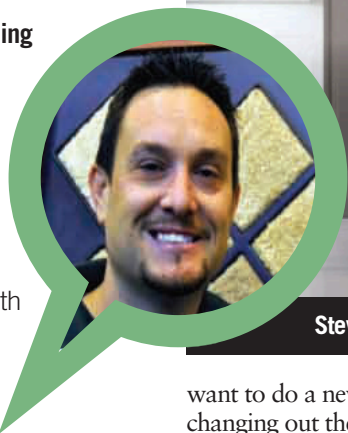
Why choose Matteo Family Kitchens & Flooring?

We are a family-owned business where each customer is going to be treated like family when you come in the door. You're not just a customer, you're our friend—we want to explain things to you and give you the best bang for your buck. When you come in to design a kitchen or a bathroom, we have the majority of the items that you need to make that happen. It's not just designing a kitchen of your dreams or keeping it exactly the same and just making updates—it's also supplying the countertops, the sink, the faucet, the handles, flooring, the backsplash tile. We have coordinated all of that and we offer it all in our store.

What were some new projects that you were working on in the beginning of 2020?

A lot of our residential customers wanted to make a change to their homes. They wanted to upgrade it and make it more suitable for their family by either taking the dining room wall out and making one big eat-in kitchen or change the home around because it was a basic spec house in a development of 500 homes and everybody's kitchen looks exactly the same.

We get excited to work with clients who



Steve Matteo, co-owner and store manager

want to do a new project kitchen, maybe changing out the master bathroom with a big soaking tub and a small stand-up shower to a big walk in shower—make it something a little bit more useful. We're upgrading it, we're giving them something that they truly wanted in a better way: more storage, more countertop space, more of an open floor plan so that they can have their friends and family over.

With everyone spending more time at home, what are some changes homeowners are going to make?

We have seen that since a lot of people are home, families are spending more time together and they are noticing little things like wanting to upgrade the carpet, adding in an office, expanding the bathrooms or making the home more livable to encompass more family values.

I have been dealing with one customer who is taking two big windows out of their dining room, moving their dining room into their formal living room that they never use, and creating a bar in their house for their friends to come and hang out. They have a nice backyard with a pool so they're going to take the windows out and put a sliding glass door in and we're going to build them a bar for them to have people over and just enjoy

being at home with their friends and family.

Do you expect to experience a large boom in work when things begin to go back to normal?

Yes I do. Normally in the summertime, people are spending money on their outside patios and decks but now I think they are going to be upgrading [the interior of] their homes and creating more livable space. I still think patios and decks are going to be very big, but I think more people will be using their vacation money to do more work on their house.

What areas of the home do you think will be the most popular to redesign?

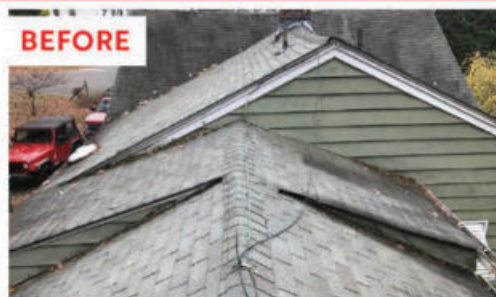
There's going to be a lot more people transitioning to working from home. We already do a fair amount of home offices, but I think we will do more. Also people will want more storage and upgraded cabinets, maybe with drawers. The master bathrooms will be upgraded since everyone is home. They will want to make the bathroom more of a sanctuary, some place you can get away and just have a little piece of your Zen room. I think the trends coming in from the end of last year to the beginning of this year have been getting rid of fiberglass and instead installing a nice new tub and tile walls, beautiful tile niches—things like that. **H&H**

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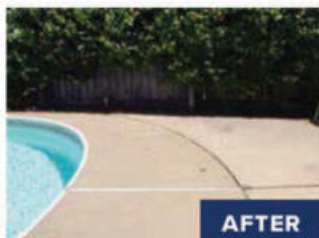
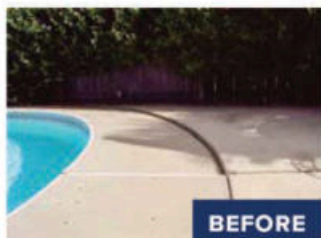
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Amiano & Son Design-Build

by Liz Hunter

As an award-winning, family-owned company in business for more than 50 years, Amiano & Son Design-Build knows how to adapt in challenging times. From kitchen and bath remodeling, home additions, exterior improvements and even outdoor living, Amiano & Son Design-Build brings homeowners' hard-earned projects to life to make their spaces enjoyable for years to come. Despite the current situation, the company continues to consult with clients while honoring the social distancing guidelines in place.

"As a small business, we've had to change how we're working but the priority was to keep our clients' projects running as some of them are living in partial spaces until the project is done. We also want to keep our employees working and making their paycheck," says Wendy Amiano, marketing and client relations. "We're such a tight-knit group and used to being together, but we've been utilizing a lot of social media and video chats to connect and keep spirits up. Lou [Amiano], the owner, has been active in shopping for hand sanitizer, masks and bandanas for the team."

We spoke with Amiano and her daughter Sophia, design consultant, about how Amiano & Son is using technology to get the ball rolling on projects and the other safety measures in place.

How are you conducting initial appointments with prospective customers while everyone is under a stay-at-home order?

Sophia: We have two options for customers—one is a virtual appointment and the other is a private consultation in their home. When they call us, we ask which option they are more comfortable with. For virtual appointments, we would want them to send photos of the space they would like us to work on

so the consultant can get a good look at things. If they are comfortable with an in-home consultation, the consultant and designer would wear the appropriate safety gear and keep the distance required. Once in the home, we're better able to see the space, check load-bearing walls if needed or other elements of the home.

Your showroom has a great selection of products. How are customers able to see what is available?

Sophia: Joe Clymer, our design-build specialist, conducts the second appointment with customers, and again we have the option to do this virtually or in a private showroom meeting. This meeting would entail the range of the project, costs, next steps, and we can do this with a virtual Powerpoint with Joe sharing his screen with the homeowners, also walking them through the product and material selection in our showroom. We also have a virtual tour that is available via email to all potential customers.

For those who may be interested in a private walkthrough of the showroom, we are adhering to all guidelines for sanitation and safety. The front door is wiped immediately whenever someone comes in or out, whether it's a client or a delivery. Samples are wiped down after being handled, and we have a UV air purification system circulating in the building. The full showroom is deep cleaned once a week as well. We also maintain 6 feet between the customers, which we realized is typical of what we normally do and easy to follow.

EXPERTISE: HOME REMODELING



Wendy Amiano, marketing and client relations
Sophia Amiano, design consultant

What have you done to keep current projects on track?

Wendy: We are following the five-person limit set forth by the state in each home we're working on to be mindful of social distancing. Communication has been so important, but we were already working on a cloud platform, which is updated daily with project progress photos for everyone to view remotely and all documentation and communication is saved in one place on this platform. Our team has had two or three social distancing meetings with designers, salespeople and production to discuss how jobs are going.

Why is this a good time for homeowners to start planning projects?

Sophia: Now is a great time to start on outside jobs with a quick turnaround, like roofing, siding and decking, or outdoor living spaces. For indoor remodeling projects that we start planning now, many of them won't begin construction until late summer after we go through all of the steps, and hopefully by then things have calmed down and we could get right to work.

Wendy: It's important to get busy with the design because homeowners might not be aware that townships are on delays or limited schedules, which affects the length of time to obtain permits and inspections. Homeowners may also be motivated by the low-interest rates banks are offering for financing. Some banks we work with are offering zero percent financing and no payments for 6 to 12 months to help get through the pandemic. **H&H**

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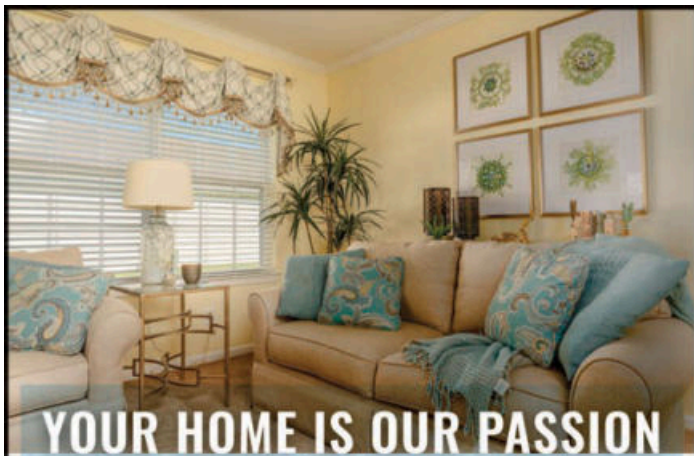
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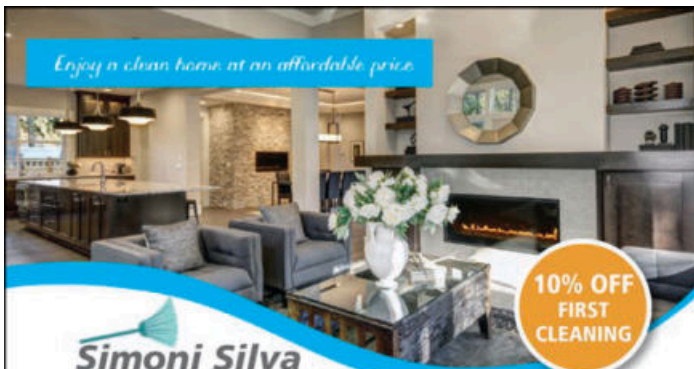
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Define YOUR SPACE

From natural stone to a wide variety of pavers, experts discuss the endless hardscape design options to make your outdoor oasis a reality. *by Julie Shannon*

Spending time together outside is a common occurrence for families, especially in the warmer weather that we are entering now, but even more so since the COVID-19 pandemic started. With all this time outside, homeowners may be thinking about redoing a walkway or patio, or starting a brand-new project from scratch.

One of the first things to decide on is the hardscape design. From decorative structures such as benches and stones to practical structures such as patios and walkways, there are a wide variety of materials to choose from in many different styles to make your front and/or backyard look like it was taken right out of a magazine.

House & Home spoke with experts who discussed all the materials available, what homeowners should be mindful of before starting a project and other elements to help complete the space.

Jarrod Nyce, owner of Nyce Crete and Landis Block & Concrete, says one of the ways hardscaping can define your space is by creating privacy.

“You can use hardscaping to build up, drop down or even to close off a defined area,” Nyce says. “Privacy walls to seating, or knee walls are also ways to define your outdoor living space. Combined with landscaping, you could make your area as private or open as you wish.”

Vic Fiore, owner of Magnolia Home Remodeling Group, says in

many cases manufacturers can produce a retaining wall that can coordinate with other hardscape areas of the project.

When it comes to other areas, such as patios, walkways and driveways, Fiore says his clients are choosing pavers for the cost and functionality.

“The technology and design of these paver products can give you a look similar to natural stone,” he says. “Sometimes it’s a lot more functional. Pavers from 20 years ago were very basic, and today



Upper photograph courtesy of Keystone Decorative Concrete; Lower photograph courtesy of Magnolia Home Remodeling Group

they have a wide range of colors, textures and sizes. Years ago you might have been limited to a few basic sizes, only 6 by 6 or 6 by 9, but now there are large slabs. There are some very interesting shapes and a lot of natural-looking textures, so it's a very durable, long-lasting product, with little or no maintenance and it's fairly easy to install for most contractors—especially in the Northeast. It's a more forgiving install with different stages of climate, temperature and other related factors.”

In addition to these benefits, Fiore notes the wide variety of colors pavers offer. “The colors are unbelievable and the design possibilities are endless. You could do multiple borders, use different shapes and sizes and blend them together,” he says.

John Fossett, project manager with Turpin Landscaping Design/Build, says more of his clients are going with Pennsylvania bluestone, either in a pattern or irregular style.

“There are a few different kinds,” he says. “There are a lot of brown colors throughout Pennsylvania bluestone and some blue. With the full color there’s more of a mix of blues, grays and earth tones; sometimes even brown or rust. That is a pretty common stone we use.”

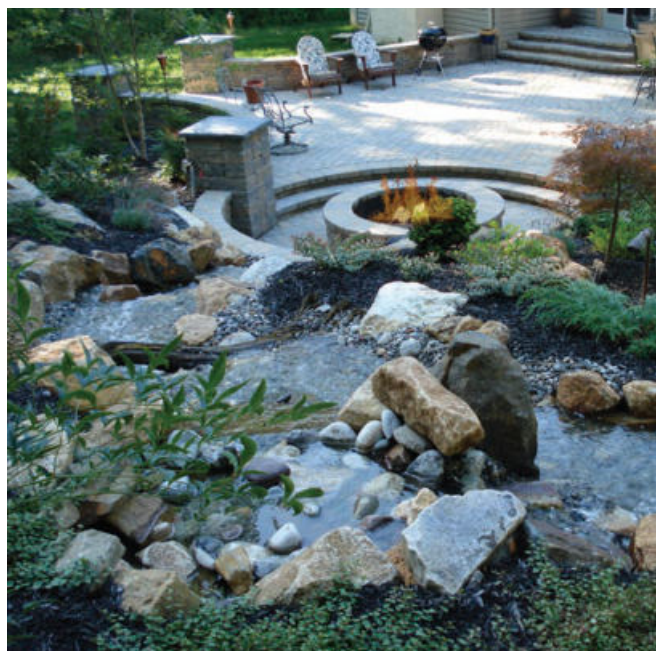
Fossett says bluestone is natural-looking stone and is very durable, which is important for its longevity. “[Bluestone] is quarried right out the earth, so it’s not going anywhere,” he says.

Whether the homeowner is looking for a more traditional, rustic or modern look, there are materials that suit everyone’s style and taste.

“We carry two different styles across most of the lines, pavers and retaining walls,” Nyce says. “Renaissance, which is more rustic, and kingscourt/splitface, which is more traditional. The more modern look is large format, which means they are larger than normal pavers and cover more area. They come in many different patterns from wood planks to large garden steps.”

Materials such as river stones, crushed stone and mulch can frame areas to give a decorative, completed look.

“We have also done a combination of flagstone and gravel,” Fossett says. “We can do large spaces in the irregular flagstone patios, and have large joints where we put river rock and basically we glue the mix in the river rock called Gravel-Lok, so you can have decorative gravel on the patio.”



Photograph courtesy of Turpin Landscaping Design/Build

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Certain materials work better in specific areas in the backyard, such as an inground pool for example. “We offer epoxy flooring, granite coating and a quartz flooring system called Graniflex—they work really well around the pool deck,” Anthony King, owner, Keystone Decorative Concrete, says. “Graniflex is durable, crack resistant and has a whole different look. It has a salt-and-pepper look and also comes in a lot of different colors.”

“Pavers and travertine are what we commonly use around pool decks because they are designed to stay cool in the sun,” Fossett says.

A trend Steve Compton of CKC Landscaping is seeing with his clients is coming back to their homes for a second or third phase to install the exact materials and finishes they want. He says he’s already had three projects where he went back to the property much later to complete phase two with the goal of creating the ultimate outdoor living experience.

“One example is we planned a high-end project two years ago.



When we were hired, we put down the foundation and footings for future phases. We installed steps and a flagstone patio,” Compton says. “Earlier this year we went back and added all of the vertical elements—custom natural stone, pillars, walls, fireplace, custom railings, lighting and landscape. We

could have given them all the components in phase one, but would have had to sacrifice material and gone with the lower-cost alternative. This client wanted all high-end finishes and it’s a compromise they made to get it done over 24 months. It’s marrying budget with aesthetics of materials and the overall plan.”

Before any materials are chosen, Compton says there is one thing that is the most important part of these projects, and the majority of homeowners don’t think about—stormwater management.

“From the consultation on day one, right off the bat I ask myself these questions on the homeowner’s

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property,” he says. “Where does water come from when it rains? Where are the roof drains? Where is it coming from over the terrain, and how do I manage that so it’s not changing the natural course of water flow and also not going to damage or undermine the work we will do?”

Compton says figuring this out before starting a project will stop potential major problems from happening down the road.

“It’s very important,” he says. “All of a sudden there is moved earth and potentially there is water coming through your backyard that never did before. We figure out how to tighten these problems

before the project begins.”

Of course, there are many finishing touches to an outdoor living project that truly complete the space. “Pergolas are a great way to throw shade or block the sunlight without being under a roof,” Nyce says.

“A popular item to make it an inviting space is a fire pit, which can be made in coordinating colors by paving stone manufacturers,” Fiore says.

With endless options to make your outdoor living area a one-of-a-kind space, now is the time to make the rest of your moments in quarantine and beyond with your family more fun and memorable.

“In our current environment, people have been forced to stay home,” Nyce says. “We have been promoting outside living spaces for years so this is what people are looking for and designers are providing.” **H&H**



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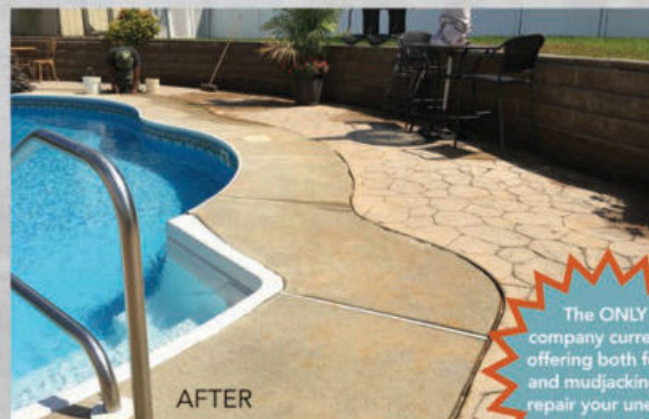
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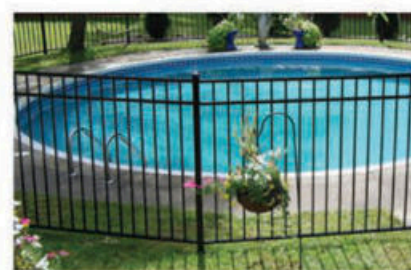
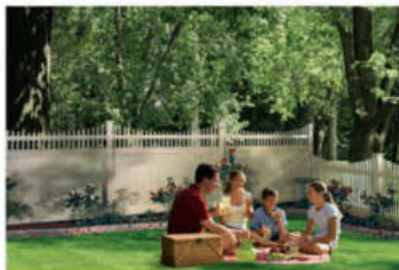


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David Fisher and wife Lisa stand with circa 1790s Gottschalk Clock repaired by David Fisher

What made you want to start or be part of this business?

My wife Lisa and I started our careers in different fields working for a large corporation. My wife was an ad executive with the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and after I finished serving in the Army, I went into the electrical project management field for PECO Energy in Philadelphia. In 1988, Lisa and I were married and moved to Moorestown. At that time we

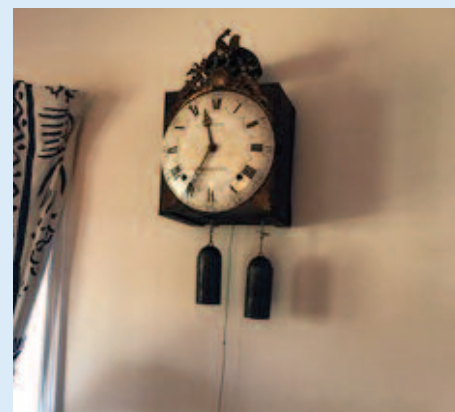
cared for my late mother-in-law, who was a stroke patient. My father-in-law, a WWII Navy veteran, sadly had passed away. When we were brainstorming one evening, my wife's mother suggested that since her daughter knew about antiques and that I repaired clocks, we should try that as a family business. Then our beautiful daughter Lauren was born and we thought that we would open a clock shop in the area so that we could be closer to home. With my wife's knowledge of antiques and American history, coupled with my clock repairing skills, we moved forward and opened Antiques & Clocks in Cinnaminson. Both of us retired from corporate life and started building our business. We really enjoy what we do. So here we are almost 30 years later. We watched our daughter grow up, graduate college and marry her teenage sweetheart. They bought a beautiful home and now we have a beautiful granddaughter who is the light of our lives. We always believe family comes first.

What makes your family business unique?

It would be the fact that we work in a field that deals with people's heirlooms and family history. Today, in what is called a throwaway society, our customers defy that stereotype. Our customers care about their clocks because many grew up with them and they carry memories of their families' story. We recently repaired a woman's antique clock that was her great, great grandmother's wedding present. We have many customers who are extremely happy when they see a clock that was in their family, working again.

What are some challenges you've faced working with family members?

My wife and I balance our work and our



family lives well. Our daughter and son-in-law work for other companies in the marketing and technology fields. They do help us with technology when we need it. My wife and I try to have lunch at least two times a week to discuss the business and our approach to different scheduling issues that might arise. We always enjoy running the business together.

What are the advantages and/or what do you find rewarding about working with family members?

We are a very close family and have lived through many wonderful milestones together. Our family business enriches our lives both personally and professionally. We both get to do the work we enjoy and that is a huge advantage. My wife handles marketing, scheduling and clock maker historical research as I repair the clocks. It is also rewarding to see the happiness our work brings to others.

What is your favorite thing to do together as a family outside of work?

We love to spend time with our daughter, son-in-law and our beautiful granddaughter. We play tennis together, go to family sporting events together and sometimes even vacation together. **H&H**

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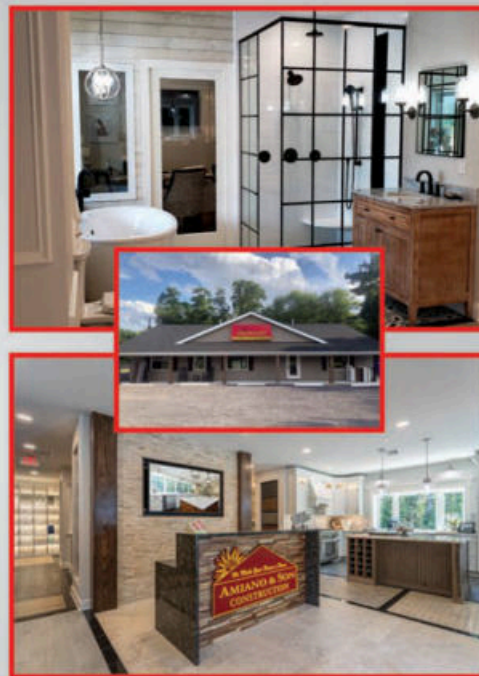
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Mental Landscape

SURVIVING STAYING AT HOME

by Michael Pasquarello, Degreed Landscape Architect, Elite Landscaping



country, even the world, finds itself within the confines of “home,” the population is trying to find ways to cope with social distancing. Outdoor living, landscaping and gardening have all proved to be invaluable assets to get us through these unprecedented times.

Governing bodies throughout the country have deemed landscape companies as essential businesses as the ever-tightening economic interaction continues on and allows them to proceed with operations. Lawns are still able to be manicured, fertilization/insecticide applications applied and the planting of flowers, shrubs and trees continues. There’s something about still being able to connect with nature and appreciate it in all its beauty that reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression, decreases stress and strengthens one’s sense of well-being. The fact that this has been recognized by the “powers that be” will enable all of us to get through this and keep our sanity.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS

The balance of physical and mental well-being is an attribute that outdoor living can help in achieving. The implementation of these outdoor spaces can create areas of calm contemplation to reduce overall stress, leaving one in a more comfortable state of mind. The use of plant material, which appeals to the five senses, along with soothing audio, all add to this healing experience. Active family social interaction within these environments creates another dimension to the overall achievement of mental wellness. The same healing gardens that are seen in health care institutions can be recreated on a residential scale and lead you “well” on the way to reaching absolute Zen.

On a smaller scale, container gardens can become a project providing individuals, and even families, a chance to interact and promote increased physical activity while stuck at home. Sometimes when space is limited much can

A few months ago I found myself writing about the landscape/outdoor living trends to expect for 2020. That was the beginning of January and outdoor living was a mere glimpse from a frosty window. Now we are well into May, and wow, who would have thought our lives would have been put on hold by an invisible enemy targeting humanity itself. As the

still be accomplished with the use of decorative container gardens. The days of terracotta pots are long gone and bold colors and designs are available in ceramic, stone and composite. These planting vessels are a great way to add accents of color to your outdoor entertainment space. Cobalt blues, chartreuse greens and crimson reds may seem a bit loud for the more timid gardener, but can provide that little extra pop of needed color. Annual plantings are typically reserved for these container gardens and are removed at the end of the season. An easy way to create added interest is to include plantings of complementing colors, but contrasting textures. The use of grasses/sedges along with flowering plants and trailing vines will create your own personal mini landscape. Edibles are also a great addition not only for their nutritional value, but for the aesthetics of the flower/fruit they produce as well. Nothing is better than fresh-picked herbs and vegetables while dining al fresco on a mid-summer’s night with friends (hopefully) by the time we get to that point.

Connecting with others is the name of the game in keeping a healthy outlook on life. Even if the substitute for “others” is Mother Nature. Let being outside and tending to your garden be your best remedy to ensuring mental well-being on a day-to-day basis. Most importantly, let family be the other. Keep calm and garden on! **H&H**

Michael Pasquarello is a degreed landscape architect with Elite Landscaping. Email him at MPasquarello@EliteLandscaping.com or call (856) 753-1944. Visit EliteLandscaping.com for more information.



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