



Photos courtesy of Daphne Hawk | Hawk says she relaxes on her patio from March to December, using propane heaters and the fireplace when it gets cold. "It's just what I envisioned," she says.

Transforming backyard into an outdoor oasis

By Leslie Benson

DAPHNE HAWK OF Grove City turned to Angie's List last fall to find a reliable contractor who could tear down her family's run-down deck and create an affordable but luxurious entertainment space where she and her husband, Keith, could celebrate her anticipated electoral win as the new Jackson Township Trustee.

Six weeks and \$50,000 later, A-rated Hennessy Landscaping of Galloway had built Hawk an outdoor oasis. "If the house is messy and I have a drop-in visitor, I take them to the patio," she says. "They are so impressed, they forget the inside!"

Daryl Hennessy, president of the 11-time Super Service Award winning company, started from scratch on Hawk's project by tearing out weeds, uneven pavers and a broken fence. "I wanted to create an intimate space for her that didn't feel like a fortress," Hennessy says.

Working with only 600 square feet of usable space, he created a private courtyard by forming a natural barrier with evergreens in the back and a decorative wall of pillars and fencing beside her house. Hawk's patio remodel also includes an outdoor flat-screen TV,

pergola, stone fireplace, bubbling water feature, irrigation system, built-in grill with weatherproof granite countertop and hot tub.

"She didn't leave out any details," says Hennessy, adding that for the small space involved it was a "very extravagant" remodel.

More homeowners are creating outdoor living spaces such as Hawk's, says Tony Huckleby, owner of highly rated Evergreen Landscaping in Columbus. While features such as granite countertops, stainless steel sinks, kegerators and gas grills with tumbled glass are trends that are gaining popularity, these high-end luxuries don't come cheap. "If you tell a contractor to 'wow' you, you might not have the \$150,000 it would take for a super high-end patio," Huckleby says. "Be upfront about your budget!"

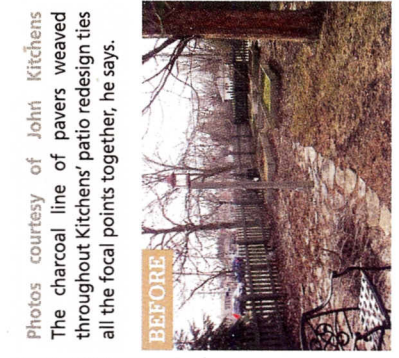
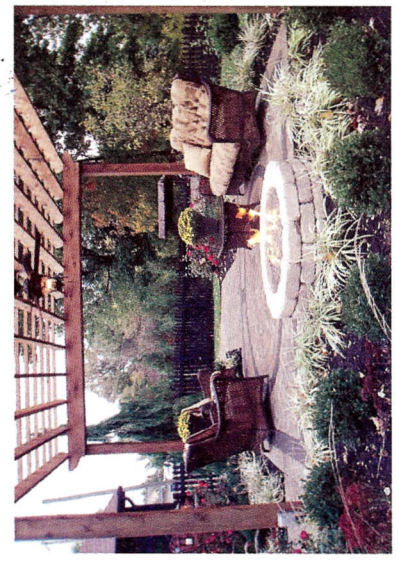
With a \$100,000 budget, John Kitchens of Gahanna hired Evergreen Landscaping to transform the backyard of his 1878 former schoolhouse into an English garden with enough

seating for 80 people. He and his partner, Rolf Hagton, host fundraising events at their home for a local non-profit organization. The highlight of the space is a 15-foot bar with a gas grill, sink, alcove for a mini-fridge and a kegerator. "We saved about \$6,000 by opting out of an outdoor fridge and instead investing the money we saved on marble countertops," Kitchens says.

Buying seasonal items off the shelf, rather than customizing everything, also keeps costs down, Huckleby says.

Hawk could have saved \$500 if she had demolished her old concrete patio herself, Hennessy says. Other materials that added to her bill were the pergola's fiberglass columns and low voltage lighting in the walls.

Despite going over her budget by 25 percent, Hawk says she loves her new space. And the 50 guests she entertained on election night were really impressed. "We could entertain many more people at the same time," she says. ☐



Photos courtesy of John Kitchens | The charcoal line of pavers weaved throughout Kitchens' patio redesign ties all the focal points together, he says.