



Patio doors have come a long way from the aluminum sliders that once did little more than gain access to outside.

'Sliders' high on reno list

By Maggie Calloway

Once you have decided to invest in making your outdoor space more inviting, there is one item that should be right up there on your list.

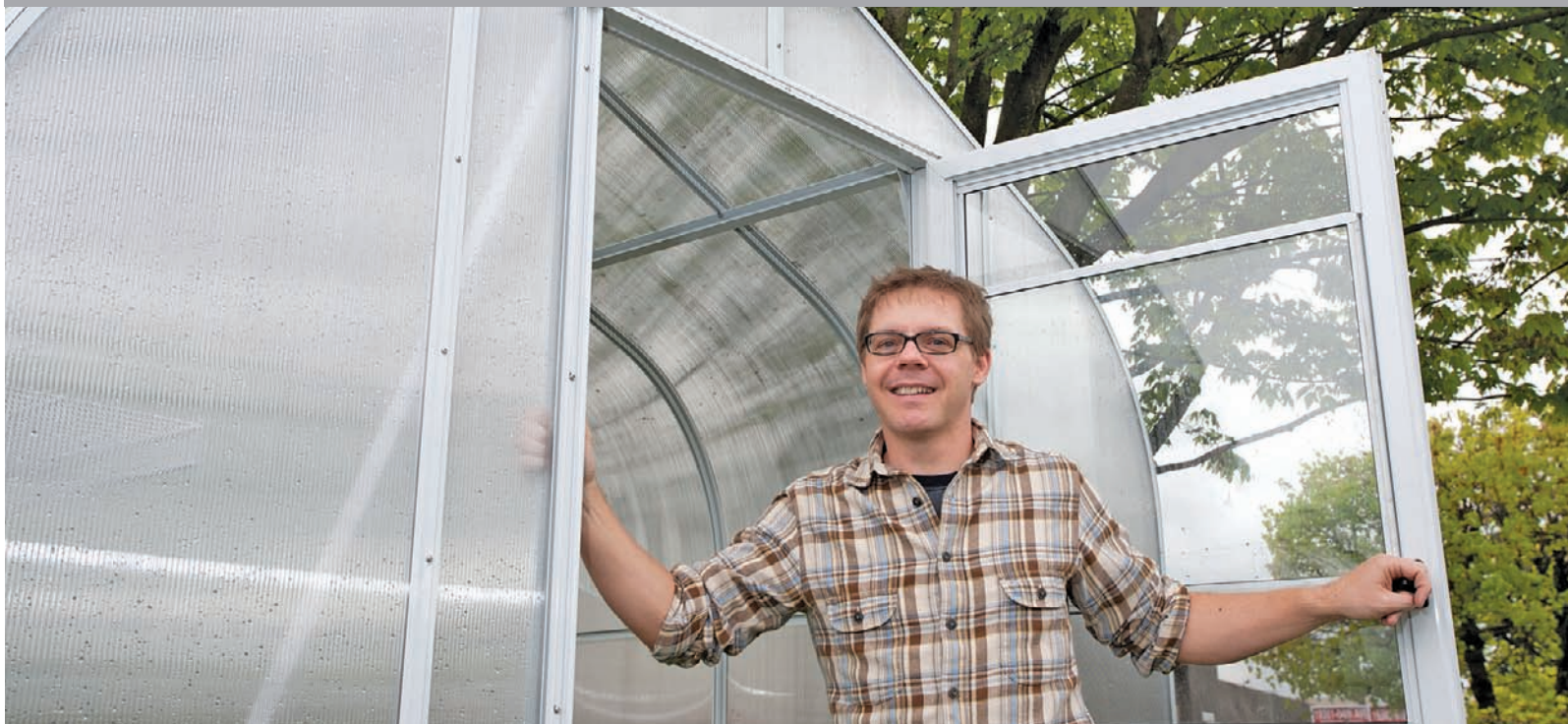
To make the transition from your interior to your new outdoor room, the choice of doors can make all the difference. Loewen is a well respected lead-

» more page.4

May 2011
 PRODUCTS »
 QUALIFIED TRADES »
 EXPERT ADVICE »



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Kyle Exner of B.C. Greenhouse Builders suggests an 8' by 8' greenhouse for the starter gardener, but warns if you plan to add on in the future, you have to keep that in mind when placing your greenhouse.

Martin Knowles photo

Garden room no longer a pipe dream

Greenhouses are great yard additions, perfect for growing vegetables and other plants year-round.

By Maggie Calloway

Lurking deep in the heart of most gardeners is the dream of installing a beautiful greenhouse in the back garden.

Many have visions of growing vegetables year-round, volumes of spring flowers and plants ready for planting, and a place to just generally

putter around even on those grey, drizzly days.

Considering buying a greenhouse entails much the same decision-making process as home renovations. Just how are you going to use this new addition: are you really planning on becoming self-sustaining in the veggie department, are you dreaming of turning the back 40 into a mini botanical garden, or do you just enjoy growing your own vegetables and flowers from seed and want a place to protect delicate plants and shrubs though the winter?

These are all important questions which need well-considered answers to avoid investing in a building which turns into an expensive white elephant.

Now that you have thought through why you want a greenhouse, you need to be realistic about your climate. Do you live in a spot subject to high winds or heavy snow? Let's face it, life is not all sunshine and roses but sometimes long periods of ice and snow, which means your greenhouse needs to be able to withstand such extremes.

One needs to consider these pesky details before taking the plunge.

Kyle Exner, of B.C. Greenhouse Builders, is an expert who has very definite ideas on what it takes to pair the perfect greenhouse with the

» more page.13

renOVATION Awards presented

By Kerry Vital

The Greater Vancouver Home Builders' Association has announced the winners of its second annual renOVATION Awards.

At the awards dinner held on April 15, the GVHBA handed out awards honouring excellence in home-renovation design and construction. The program featured 65 finalists in 26 categories, and was presented by FortisBC.

"The quality of the work done by our renovators was superb," says GVHBA President and CEO Peter Simpson. "It was a night of celebration."

Burnaby-based TQ Construction and Kenorah Construction & Design of Delta were the big winners of the night, coming out with six awards each. They were followed by Surrey-based My House Design/Build Team with four awards, and Best Builders of Delta, North Vancouver's CCI Renovations and New Westminster's Interminde Design with two awards each. Single awards were won by Build-Pros Construction of North Vancouver, Klondike Contracting, Level One Maintenance and Maison d'être design-build, all of Vancouver.

Interminde Design was also

» more page.15

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Thinking of enjoying the benefits of natural gas?

Quadra Homes offers high efficiency and lower homeowner expense at Yorkson Creek townhomes in Langley



Something exciting is happening in Langley

Quadra Homes has been building quality homes in British Columbia for more than forty years and has earned their reputation as a company with integrity.

The Townhomes at Quadra's Yorkson Creek are built to high standard and are offered at a good price. Features, which would normally be upgrades, are included in the competitive price.

Wonderful kitchens include granite countertops and deluxe wood cabinets. A stainless steel appliance package consisting of a side-by-side fridge, dishwasher and microwave is included in each home. A gas range, which is the dream of home chefs, is also included.

"A gas dryer is a very compelling component of our townhome package because in the Lower Mainland, using a gas dryer costs about 11 cents to dry a load of clothes. This compares to between 14 cents and 20 cents when using an electric clothes dryer" says Shawn Bouchard of Quadra Homes.

This exceptional quality continues throughout the rest of the home with genuine hardwood floors, nine-foot ceilings, natural gas fireplace; all in a central Langley setting with good access to public transit.

Now, homebuyers will realize even more value as a result of a very interesting collaboration between

Quadra Homes and Fortis BC. These two British Columbia-based companies have collaborated to make the townhouse section of Quadra's Yorkson Creek project hit a high environmental standard EnerGuide 80.

"We collaborated with FortisBC on a natural gas pilot program for a number of reasons, including cost savings, unlimited hot water supply, the comfort of a high-end Carrier multi-speed furnace plus the tremendous advantages of gas dryers, stoves, barbecues and fireplaces. After reviewing all these considerations and the EnerGuide 80 rating for the home, we knew this package was a winner" said Quadra Homes Vice President, Paul DaDalt.

For the homeowner this means the monthly cost of running the home is greatly reduced. An added bonus for the first time buyers is that they can obtain a credit from CMHC because this is an EnerGuide 80 project.

Quadra Homes worked with a Certified Energy Advisor to determine the least cost path to a more energy efficient home using natural gas appliances for space heat and domestic hot water. This study was an important first step in ensuring that the project would achieve EnerGuide 80 rating even before construction.

Once the studies were complete, decisions were made to install Navien

gas powered hot water heaters. These on-demand water heaters eliminate the need for a standard hot water tank and the energy needed to maintain water temperature. The Navien, powered by natural gas, boasts the industry's highest efficiency rating at 98% which means low operating costs. This water heater also provides hot water at a very high gallon-per-minute (GPM) flow rate, which is very convenient for homeowners.

The safety of the natural gas powered Navien system is enhanced by dual microprocessors that continually cross monitor performance to assure proper operation at all times. These microprocessors also maintain the steady hot water temperature.

The second recommendation of the FortisBC study was the installation of a high-efficiency gas furnace. Quadra installed the Carrier Performance 96 Gas furnace. This furnace is aptly named as 96 cents of every dollar spent is going toward supplying usable heat to the home.

The care taken to include high-efficiency natural gas powered mechanics and appliances, coupled with high insulation, means the new owner will have a home which is warm and comfortable for the family, respectful to the environment, and costs less to run.

Be sure to visit Yorkson Creek located at 208 Street and 82 Avenue in Langley.

It is a winner all-around.



Shawn Bouchard of Quadra Homes shows the small space used to produce all the heating and hot water needs for each townhome.



Hiring a BCSA licensed contractor to perform gas renovations is a good way to protect your family and your home

Renovations done without permits can seriously hurt the resale value of your home . . . or worse, your family's safety. The best way to protect your family and your home is to hire a BC Safety Authority licensed contractor with the appropriate permit.

A licensed contractor not only ensures safety practices are adhered to, they can help make sure the job runs smoothly. The contractor can obtain the permit on your behalf and manages the inspection process plus they can correct any deficiencies.

A good contractor has the training and expertise required to do the job well and safely. And they employ people who are qualified and bonded. If you wish to "do-it-yourself" and have sufficient knowledge and ability to do the work, you may apply for a permit, provided that the work will be done on a single-family fully detached dwelling that is, or is intended to be, your permanent dwelling. It must not include one or more self-contained suites and no person is being paid to do the work.

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For peace of mind we recommend you hire a licensed contractor. Use this checklist for to make sure they:

- Hold a valid BC Safety Authority Licence
- Provide references
- Have liability insurance
- Are covered through WorkSafeBC
- Provide warranties on all work and materials
- Submit the written quote with:
 - Total cost of work
 - Timeline: start and end date of work
 - List of permits and the costs (i.e. electrical, gas, building)

After hiring a contractor they must provide a:

- Copy of each permit before beginning work
- Copy of the final declaration

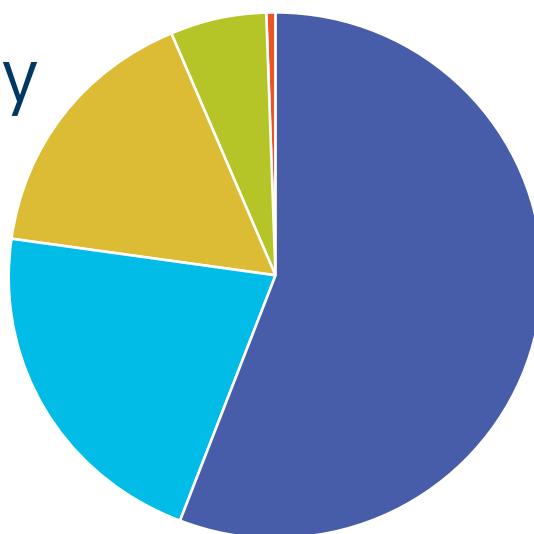
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Patio doors add ambiance

» from page.1

er in the well-defined area of windows and doors. With over 100 years of experience in production and design, they have come a long way from church pews and bee-keeping equipment. The decision to specialize in windows and doors has allowed them to embrace new technologies while staying true to a long tradition specialization.

Loewen's Matt Penner says, "We have some beautiful choices available today to fit both the style of your home and add to the ambiance of your outdoor space.

"At Loewen, we strive to provide our customers with the world's most inspiring windows and doors - but as we inspire, we must also build reliability into everything we make."

We are all familiar with the classic French doors, sometimes referred to as terrace doors; traditional terrace doors hinge in the middle so that one panel is fixed and the other operates.

By contrast, French terrace doors are hinged on the outside to allow both doors to operate from the middle.

If this is your choice of

door, make sure you decide in advance which way you want the door to swing: inside or outside.

Sliding patio doors are still around, but wooden doors that function like large moving windows are more popular than the traditional aluminum version. These striking doors are a huge improvement on the shuddering aluminum doors of yore.

Those of us who are dedicated viewers of all things related to home design have seen the bifold terrace doors which, when folded back on themselves, virtually disappear.

The bifold allows you to create a feeling of spaciousness by joining the interior and exterior living space. When closed, bifold doors provide privacy and protection while allowing unobstructed views.

A fairly new system on the scene is the Loewen LiftSlide. This system allows expansive glass panels, some weighing up to 850 lbs., to roll smoothly and easily.

The LiftSlide doors glide, with just the touch of a hand, on almost invisible stainless steel tracks, again allowing a blurring of the division between the interior and exterior space.



Patio doors from Loewen are available in several styles, including French terrace, bifold and LiftSlide.

Submitted photos

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Gardens go Down to Earth with a spiral design

A beautiful garden will be enjoyed for years, but must be carefully done so as not to appear gimmicky.

By Maggie Calloway

Every now and then, if we are lucky, we have our breath taken away with a sight so striking and so stunning, we are mesmerized.

That is how I feel about this Vancouver garden designed and executed by Down to Earth Landscapes, and it comes as no surprise they are the recipient of major awards, both local and national.

I had a long chat with Marcyn Ward, co-owner of Down to Earth Landscapes along with Peter Schradi, about this unique garden.

"When we started this project we had some very specific requirements for the terrace area in the rear, which are the stone spirals," Ward says.

"Our client asked that her garden, which she would mostly view from her deck, be fabulous from that angle.

"I had a photo of a wooden plinth in a spiral shape and always wanted to design a garden based on this design, and here was the perfect project."

One of the requirements was that the garden look great from above, and had to have closed stone access from the deck into the garage.

Down to Earth also had to include an area for a downstairs tenant, and the homeowners have two dogs so a doggy wash area was also important.

"We also made provision for a future water feature; the east side of the back terrace has a spiral that is shaped to allow for a specific pre-chosen water feature," Ward says.

"On the west side the spiral is more expanded and it is big enough for two big comfy chairs and a small table."

The trick with a controlled design like this is to get it just right and not to over do or over play, says Ward. With too much tweaking the elegant can become gimmicky.

The front garden had an existing landscape done by the builder, which was taken out with the exception of a magnolia tree. The tree was in good shape but required pretty radical structural pruning. The home is beautiful to look at with the magnolia tree, so it was decided not to build a complicated garden with lots of colour. The decision was to keep the front just



green with broadleaf evergreens.

"We used two kinds of boxwood. One is the true dwarf boxwood, which we used to develop the lines of the spiral. The other is a form of boxwood called Green Mound - a broad low mound which stays low and dwarf," says Ward.

Down to Earth Landscapes did lots of drawings, working out how they were going to develop the spirals but most of the work was done physically setting up on site and then moving lines.

As the garden came together it was viewed from every angle to maximize the view. It was important that as you approach the front door, or walk from the door to the street, you see the spirals.

The homeowner is ecstatic with the magical finished garden and so are strangers who wander in off the street. Cars stop on the street and occupants can't resist wandering the front garden.



This garden, created by Down to Earth Landscaping, is loved by both the homeowner and passersby. The owner says she has seen people wandering around her front garden admiring the landscaping.

Submitted photos

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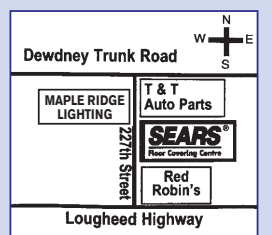
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Outdoor furniture a great way to accent your living space

By Maggie Calloway

The garden is looking fabulous, the deck or terrace has been given its spring cleaning, the family is looking



forward to spending lots of time with each other and friends enjoying the outdoors, but ... those old rickety chairs and plastic cushions are just not making the grade. You want style and function; you want pizzazz!

With more and more families investing in their outdoor space and spending more of their free time at home, people are starting to design their outdoor living space with as much care as they did their interior space. In response to this strong trend, the manufacturers have stepped up to the plate.

Outdoor furniture is moving away from heavy furniture, such as teak, in favour of beautifully designed, high-styled, lightweight furniture.

Chinz & Co. have always been on



People are using their outdoor spaces more and more, according to accessories retailer Chinz & Co. A newer trend in outdoor furniture is lightweight and highly styled.

Submitted photos

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the design edge and their selection of outdoor furniture and accessories is no exception. Maren Vanoene and Joyce Steven are both designers with Chinz.

"Clients are looking for modern, contemporary and good quality furniture," says Vanoene. "They want to be able to leave their garden furniture outside year-round rather than wrestling heavy furniture undercover at the end of the season. They want easy care, which means being able to wash down the furniture with soap and water and have it look great."

Vanoene also says that lighter colours are on trend. "It used to be clients wanted very dark furniture but now more natural colours are emerging. Also, this furniture looks great inside as well as outside. If you need more seating for guests (inside), this would not look out of place."

"Outdoor lighting is as important

as interior lighting," says Steven. "In a seating area an outdoor rug can tie everything together and there are some beautiful rugs available now. Lanterns with candles are very effective and romantic in the evening. Pots of colourful flowers or grasses planted in a black container look very striking. Whatever your taste there are many designs to choose from"

If you are planning to furnish your outdoor space and don't know where to start, take photos from different angles and lots of measurements and take them with you when you go shopping. Stores such as Chinz & Co. have designers on staff who would be delighted to help you pull together a great look.

We live such busy lives and maybe the pull of a beautiful outdoor space will entice us to stop, put our feet up and relax with friends and family.

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Solar energy can be harnessed even on a cloudy day, according to Terra Mechanical's Jason Delos Santos.

Martin Knowles photo

Harnessing the sun

Solar power, especially in summer, can be an energy-efficient way to heat and power your home

By Maggie Calloway

With summer coming up, the sun will come out and homeowners may want to start looking into solar power to power their homes.

One problem with solar power in B.C. is the prevalence of rain much of the year. There are huge variations in available solar energy between summer and winter, roughly equaling four times more sunlight in summer months.

Another hindrance to installing residential solar in B.C. is the current low cost of electricity and the high cost of installing solar panels.

"For an average home to put in a system the cost is around \$8,900. A typical 2,000 square foot home is looking at \$6,900 to \$8,900," says Jason Delos Santos, principal with plumbers and gas fitters Terra Mechanical. However, he assures homeowners that even in rainy B.C., it's possible to keep your power on.

"Even on dull cloudy days there is still some solar activity it just means the tank on the grid pulls more electricity and the reverse is true on sunny, cloud free days," he says.

For a homeowner, installation of a solar panel system has to be a philosophical decision rather than a cost-saving measure.

"The typical payback for an \$8,900 system is seven years after which you can look forward to much-reduced hydro bills for as long as you live in the home," says Delos Santos. While this seems like a long time, experts

say converting to solar energy can happen one step at a time, and starting with solar power to heat hot water is a logical first step.

"With the installation of a solar hot water system you can achieve 60 to 70 per cent of [what] an average family needs," says Delos Santos.

"If homeowners are interested in installing hot water solar systems in ... Vancouver this is a great time to make a decision because there are incentives in place," he says.

The City of Vancouver is offering \$3,000 towards the cost of a solar hot water installation, says David Ramsle, Sustainable Development Program Manager for the City of Vancouver.

"We are giving this incentive to the first 30 homes which qualify."

Some spots are already filled, so space is limited.

"We want to make this as easy as possible," Ramsle says. He says the city relaxed height restrictions, so homeowners are no longer penalized for an overheight solar installation.

While the program was originally only for new home builders, Vancouver has extended the project to include homeowners as well, and is working with Solar BC, FortisBC and carbon-management solutions provider Offsetters to provide the subsidies.

Only residents of Vancouver can qualify for the program.

Homeowners interested in installing solar water projects should go to Solar BC's website at www.solarbc.ca for info and a list of approved installers.

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Painted wood floors a change from carpet

Painting wood floors can be time-intensive, but spectacular.

By Maggie Calloway

Have you ever thought about pulling up your carpets and then painting your wood floors? Scary thought?

I did just that six years ago. Not only was this pretty radical but I had new pine boards laid everywhere in the house, except the kitchen and bathroom, then painted them white.

People thought I was mad until they saw the finished floors...then they swooned.

This is not for everyone, especially white floors which take a bit of maintenance (what with pets and welly boots), but if you love the look or if your floor boards have seen better days, it may be a way to go.

Game to have a go? A little preparation is in order. You need to sand the boards a little to give the paint something to hang onto; then make sure you remove all dust. Give the floor a primer coat, matched to the type of paint you plan to use, then dry thoroughly. Lightly sand again and get rid of dust. Now comes the fun part.

Your first coat should be quite thin and applied with a brush. Don't be tempted to use a roller as they leave a stippling pattern, which is not the look you want. Allow the floor to dry for 24 hours then apply two more thin coats, allowing each coat to dry for a full day. It is best to put off dragging furniture or walking across the newly painted floors in your Manolo Blahniks for at least four weeks to give them a chance to harden.

Farrow & Ball, a company with a reputation for superb paint with a wonderful choice of colours, including heritage, has excellent floor paint. All their paints are water-based, eco-friendly and low or minimal VOC.

The great thing about their floor paint is it can be used on surfaces previously painted in an oil-based finish, which is enormously helpful if you have old paint on your floors.



Farrow & Ball have a range of paint colours for painting your wood floors, with white being a very popular choice.

Submitted photos

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Summer is the perfect time to get rocking



Summer is the perfect time to start on those landscaping projects you've put off for better weather.

By Maggie Calloway

This is the year. This is definitely the year you are going to build those beautiful retaining walls you have drooled over for years, along with the paved terrace, driveway and pathways. Your garden is going to be a thing of beauty, with a bit of determination, correct product and great advice.

It would be the stuff of nightmares to have a large truck arrive, drop a great pile of stone in your driveway, and leave you with no idea where to begin.

Fear not, there is help at hand.

Metro Vancouver is fortunate to have a company like Northwest Landscape & Stone Supply.

In business for more than 30 years and with a long reputation of servicing both the trade and the homeowner, Northwest can answer any question you throw at them.

But first, you need to do some homework. What are you trying to achieve? What is your budget?

Even if resources don't stretch to completing the job this year, you should spend time working out the entire plan.

Once you have a good idea of your goals, you'll need decide the order in which each job should be carried out.

Northwest has a great website to help you do a professional job (www.landscapesupply.com).



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Planning on building a Drystack wall or laying a flagstone patio, with or without mortar? The website walks you through each project, starting with a checklist of what you will need to complete the job. Next, a tutorial on how to calculate materials needed and very clear diagrams and instructions are there to make your completed project exactly what you dreamed.

"The company started with the owner, Don Fraser, selling railway ties from his garage then moved to the property on Byrne Rd in Burnaby many years ago," says Northwest's David Nelson.

"He gradually added products as the demand grew and here we are today. The next step was buying up basalt quarries up along the Squamish/Whistler corridor, which still harvest today."

Nelson's advice to homeowners planning on building a drystack wall, which are recommended up to three feet high, is to first make a base of gravel which helps level the ground and assists drainage.

Stacking the stone is easy, but make sure you use the one-over-two method. This makes sure the seams are not in a straight line, which is not only unattractive but creates water channels.

Halfway up the wall you need bond stones, which are longer stones that front the wall as the other stones, but reach further back into the bank to anchor the wall.

As you begin to stack the wall, working from one end to the other, you must slope it back toward the high ground, or "batter the wall." With this slight leaning back, the bond stones and gravity all contribute to producing a solid wall.

Another hint is to place landscape fabric behind the wall, which stops mud coming



The addition of stone walkways, paving stones or retaining walls contributes to a gorgeous new look to your property, according to Northwest Landscaping & Stone Supply's David Nelson.

Martin Knowles photos

through the wall and spoiling the look.

"It's great when customers come back and show us photos of their beautiful completed projects," says Nelson.

"Large boulders are very popular, either as a focal point in the garden or as part of a larger setting.

Northwest uses boulders from their own quarry, and don't do any blasting.

"These fall off the mountain naturally, some are 4 to 5ft across some with the moss and lichen still in place ... We are very proud not to blast or bore into the mountain side; we let Mother Nature take her course and harvest what she sheds.

"We are also very careful not to handle the harvest more than necessary. This maintains the natural look of the stone without claw marks, etc. from overhandling."



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It's time to start those backyard renovations

Ruth Olde of Blasig Landscape Design has tips for homeowners considering a backyard renovation.

By Maggie Calloway

The weather is warming up, fingers crossed, and the backyard is looking a little...tatty.

The budget is limited but with the family wanting to spend more time at home enjoying being together eating, playing and relaxing, what to do?

The first thing you should do is get the family together and decide how you plan on using the space.

Is basketball on the agenda? Putting green? Large veggie garden? Does the family want an outdoor eating spot under spreading tree branches, or are you just looking for a spot to put the barbecue?

Next you have to decide on style, and that means keeping in mind the style of the house. If you live in a Tudor-style home it's not to say you are pre-destined to only install a Tudor garden, a la King Henry the Eighth, but let's face it, a desert-style garden underneath Tudor beams is going to look a bit like it dropped from outer space.

A nod to water preservation would not go amiss in today's world. Seed your lawn, if indeed you must have one, with grass seed developed to grow slowly and with a reduced need for constant watering.

Native plants, of which there are a great selection these days and more every year, make a great deal of sense.

Like every commodity, the more the demand the greater the variety and availability. With more and more



Renovations to the backyard can be time-consuming, but are worth it in the end. Prospective renovators should consider how they plan to use the backyard before starting any projects, says Ruth Olde of Blasig Landscape Design and Construction.

Martin Knowles photos

communities introducing water meters it makes sense, not just for the pocketbook but for the environment, to choose plantings with an eye to sustainability.

Ruth Olde, a partner with Blasig Landscape Design and Construction, has some great advice for homeowners.

"A major thing to keep in mind when planning an overhaul of the garden is what the view will be from inside the house," says Olde.

"An arbour is a great addition to the garden but placement is key. It can be anywhere from the edge of the patio and beyond, keeping in mind if you put it on the lawn it could be awkward to mow around. A well-constructed arbour, in the right place

can be used to frame the garden just like the frame of a picture."

She also suggests homeowners think of the garden's effect on light – inside and outside your home.

"Keep in mind the beautiful new arbour could be a disaster if it throws dark shade into the house, so consider both the interior and exterior views," Olde says.

If you're feeling a bit overwhelmed, Blasig offers a wonderful service. If you send them photos of your garden space, measurements and wish list, they will send you a made-to-measure landscape design you can implement as time and financial resources allow.

For information, check www.blasig.com.



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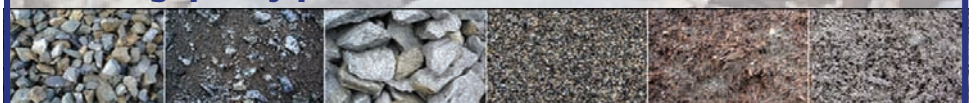
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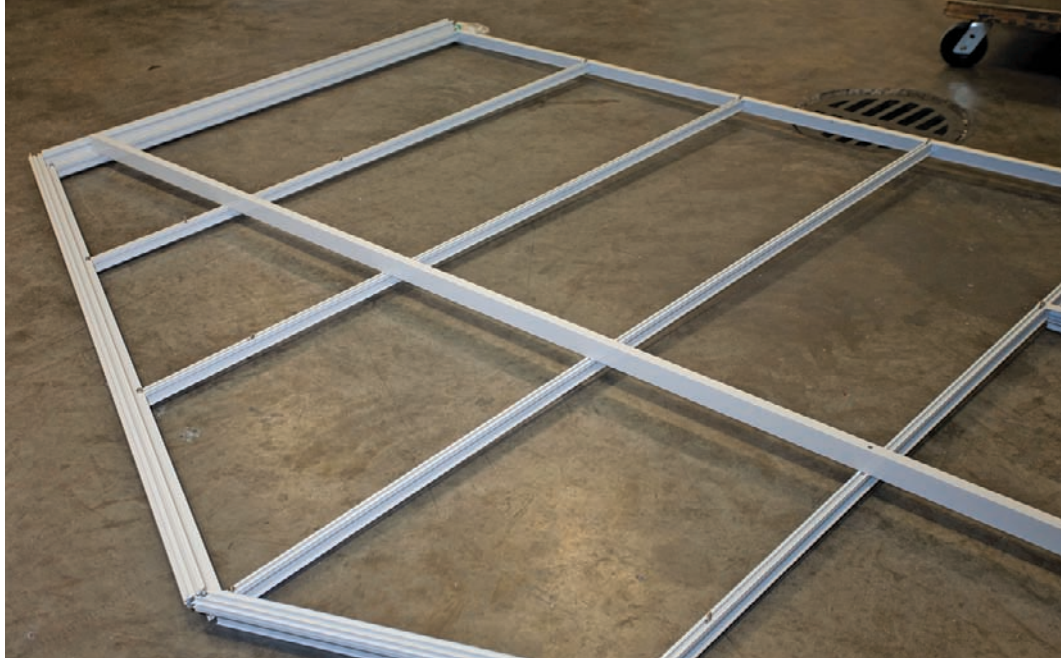
“Do they want a productive greenhouse that’s going to be the easiest possible greenhouse to grow in, or are they looking for a greenhouse which will be a showpiece in the garden?” Exner said.

“If the goal is a greenhouse which will add value to the property and look fabulous with hanging baskets and flowers, we would steer them towards a glass greenhouse but if the primary focus is on, say, food production we would steer them towards a polycarbonate greenhouse.”

Other practical details also come into play – do you need a building permit in your municipality? What is the best location for your greenhouse? If you’re looking for the best spot, keep in mind that the optimal position is with the longest side of the greenhouse facing south. Six hours of available sunlight in the winter is ideal.

Find out what kind of foundation is suitable for your location. If you choose concrete you are committing to a permanent site, whereas a wood frame foundation permits both the ability to move the greenhouse if necessary and the possibility of extending the structure’s length in the future.

Flooring is another decision; if you leave the soil as is, so as to grow directly in it with tomatoes for instance, keep in mind that if your tomatoes get a disease, you have a problem that may take a couple of years to resolve. Gravel is a popular choice as it is easy on the feet, can easily be installed and is easy to maintain. A concrete floor, as mentioned ear-



lier, is a more permanent choice that can be maintained just by hosing off into a drain. All are good choices which need to be thought through in advance.

“A good starter greenhouse is an 8’ x 8,” says Exner.

“This is much better than a 6’ x 8’ because it gives two 32-inch wide growing benches plus a 30-inch walkway so you are not cramped.”

Exner warns that if you are planning to add onto your new greenhouse in the future, you will need to keep that in mind when you’re building the original structure.

Gardeners who would like a larger greenhouse but are concerned about the cost of heating a big space can control the area being used at any given time in the growing season by installing a temporary wall. This allows just a section of the greenhouse to be

heated, say early in the season when seeding. As you start potting up and require more space, the temporary wall can be gradually moved to accommodate your specific needs.

At the other end of the season, a temporary wall allows you to section off the greenhouse to keep tropical plants safe over the winter in one section and keep plants dormant in the other. The heat spillover from the tropical side is enough to keep your dormant plants from freezing.

If you are looking for a space in the garden which expands your living and entertaining space, a garden room may fit the bill.

“Our garden room greenhouses are the ultimate in glass houses. These are definitely estate greenhouses,” says Exner.

“We make them a fully functional growing or living/growing space meaning you will



Gardeners who would like a larger greenhouse but are concerned about the cost of heating a big space can control the area being used at any given time in the growing season by installing a temporary wall.

Martin Knowles photos

have active ventilation and exhaust system and motorized ridge vents. We use different gauges of tubular aluminum frames to give them a wider profile; they look like they are wood beams.”

This means that, along with stainless steel fasteners, there are no maintenance issues, he says.

“Typically, garden rooms are all glass, although we have produced some with polycarbonate roofs for both insulation and shading,” Exner says.

“But now, with the high performance soft coat Low E glass available, all-glass garden rooms work well.”

If you are a gardener, installing a greenhouse is the ultimate, so enjoy every minute of it for years to come.

For info, visit www.bcgreenhouses.com.

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innovative steering system that offers a tighter turning radius to be able to efficiently mow around obstacles, such as garden beds and shrubs, without using the reverse motion. This means that in many instances you do not have to get off your tractor to complete the job manually.

For open areas, a tight turning radius is important as it allows users to quickly turn around and mow parallel to the last mowed swath in the opposite direction.

Tractors with a large turning radius require more time and more use of the reverse gear to properly position the unit for parallel path mowing.

Turn Tight™ Technology is unique to models of Craftsman yard and garden tractors and is a great choice for homeowners as it offers the maneuverability of a zero-turn tractor but in a comfortable, compact design that is easier to learn to drive and better on hills.

The new Turn Tight™ Technology is available exclusively at Sears Canada.



Restoring this old house a labour of love

Bill Farrand always loved the little farmhouse he saw every day on his way to work. It took until 2005 for him to make the purchase.

By Maggie Calloway

Have you ever thought about rescuing an old derelict farmhouse? Maybe a grand old dame of a house that needs a lot of TLC? Well fasten your seatbelt because you could be in for a bumpy ride.

The story of Bill Farrand and the 1910-era house he turned into a much-loved home is one of inspiration, determination, and love. This house, which Bill was strangely drawn to for years, turned out to have previously unknown connections to Bill's family over the last hundred years.

The house was built by Charles Feedham in the early part of the last century in South Surrey, but the connection to the Farrand family started in New Westminster.

The Farrand family came to New Westminster in the 1880s. When Bill was doing research into his family history he discovered that Charles Feedham lived very close to his great-grandfather in New Westminster, which was then a small town. Then in the 1890s they both lived in Burnaby, again very close neighbours.

For years, as Bill drove back and forth to work, he saw this little farmhouse set back in the trees and he always thought it was an interesting house.

In 2005, he saw a for sale sign. Feeling he couldn't afford the house as it was sitting on a sizeable piece of property, he didn't consider making an offer. Within a week a sold sign appeared, which put an end to any possibility.

However, this was not the end of the story. "I found out the person who had bought the land, with house, was an old ... friend of mine. I still had his phone number so I called and we got together," Farrand says.

"The buyer planned on sub-dividing the property so a deal was made for me to buy the house and one lot and then move the house about 50 feet onto its new, permanent spot.

"This house which had intrigued me for years was now mine."

Farrand moved into the house, in its original location and condition, to provide security and to get a good feel for the bones. Once it came time to move the house, he had to move into rental accommodation and get the house ready for its journey.

Once moved, a new foundation had to be built before the house was lowered into position. Next, work commenced on the carriage house/garage with its large suite on the upper floor so Farrand could move back on site.

Now that the house was firmly on a new foundation, the real work began. The house is not huge, as was the style in early part of the last century. Two floors are only 625 square feet each but because a new foundation was necessary, Farrand was able to expand the lower floor to the exterior dimension of the veranda which turned into a generous 1,000 sq. ft.

What was originally a cellar with a ceiling you would bang your head on, became two bedrooms, two bathrooms, a laundry room and a family room.

"The main floor has the kitchen, the entrance, the living room and dining room. What were originally four little rooms has been opened up," says Farrand.

"Upstairs there are two bedrooms and two bathrooms."



The farmhouse was built around 1910, and was originally quite small. Homeowner Bill Farrand was able to expand the lower floor from 625 square feet to 1,000, and moved the house from its original location by about 50 feet.

Photos submitted, and photos by Martin Knowles

B.C.'s top renovators celebrated

» from page.1

named RenoMark Renovator of the Year – Small Volume, while TQ Construction was named RenoMark Renovator of the Year – Large Volume.

“Our winners were absolutely delighted with the recognition,” Simpson says. In fact, My House Design/Build brought their clients to the awards dinner, and then brought them up on stage with them to receive their awards.



“The smiles were pretty wide on the homeowners’ faces,” Simpson says.

“FortisBC was extremely excited to once again be the presenting sponsor of the reNOVATION Awards,” says Dan Noel, regional energy solutions manager at FortisBC.

“We look forward to combining the strengths of the GVHBA and FortisBC to help the residential construction industry in the Lower Mainland achieve innovative and successful results when it comes to their projects and energy requirements.”

Awards categories included kitchens, bathrooms, green renovations, accessible renovations, condominium makeovers, heritage restorations and outdoor living spaces.

“Next year we plan to add a custom-home component,” Simpson says.

“It will recognize some of the spectacular custom homes in the Lower Mainland.”

Winners were selected by a panel of renovation contractors from Nanaimo, Victoria, Kelowna and Richmond, Wa., and a Whistler interior designer.



The My House Design/Build team won four awards, and brought the homeowners up on stage with them to receive the awards.



TQ Construction won six awards, including Best Kitchen and Greatroom Renovation and Best Bathroom under \$20,000.



Kenorah Construction won six awards, including two for best bathroom renovations and Best Kitchen \$80,000 to \$119,999.



Dan Noel, regional energy solutions manager for FortisBC, speaks at the awards dinner.



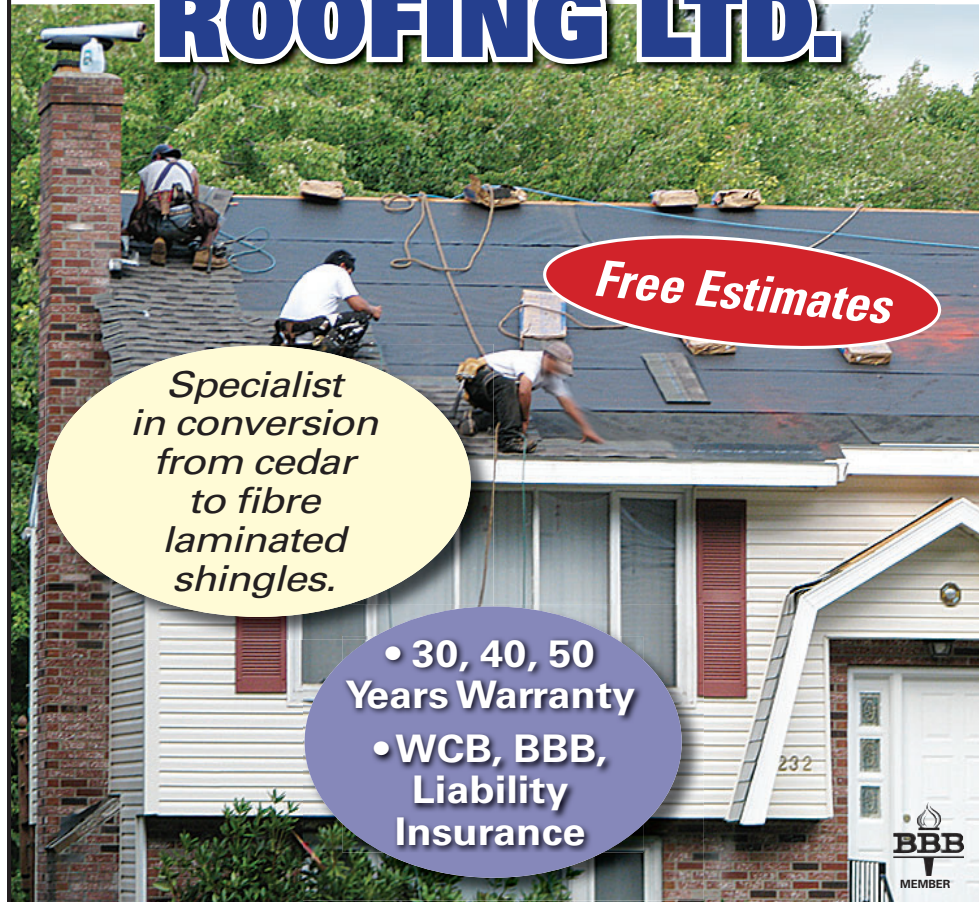
Best Builders was the recipient of two awards, for Best Renovation between \$400,000 and \$599,999, and Best Renovation between \$600,000 and \$799,999.



The My House Design/Build team was the recipient of awards for Best Green Renovation and Best Heritage Renovation, among others.

Martin Knowles photos

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