

HOME&DESIGN

A lush garden scene featuring a stone fire pit with a waterfall, a hammock, and outdoor furniture. The fire pit is made of stacked stones and has a small waterfall on the right side. A hammock is strung across the background, and there are several outdoor chairs and a table in the middle ground. The garden is filled with various plants and trees.

SAY AH HH.....

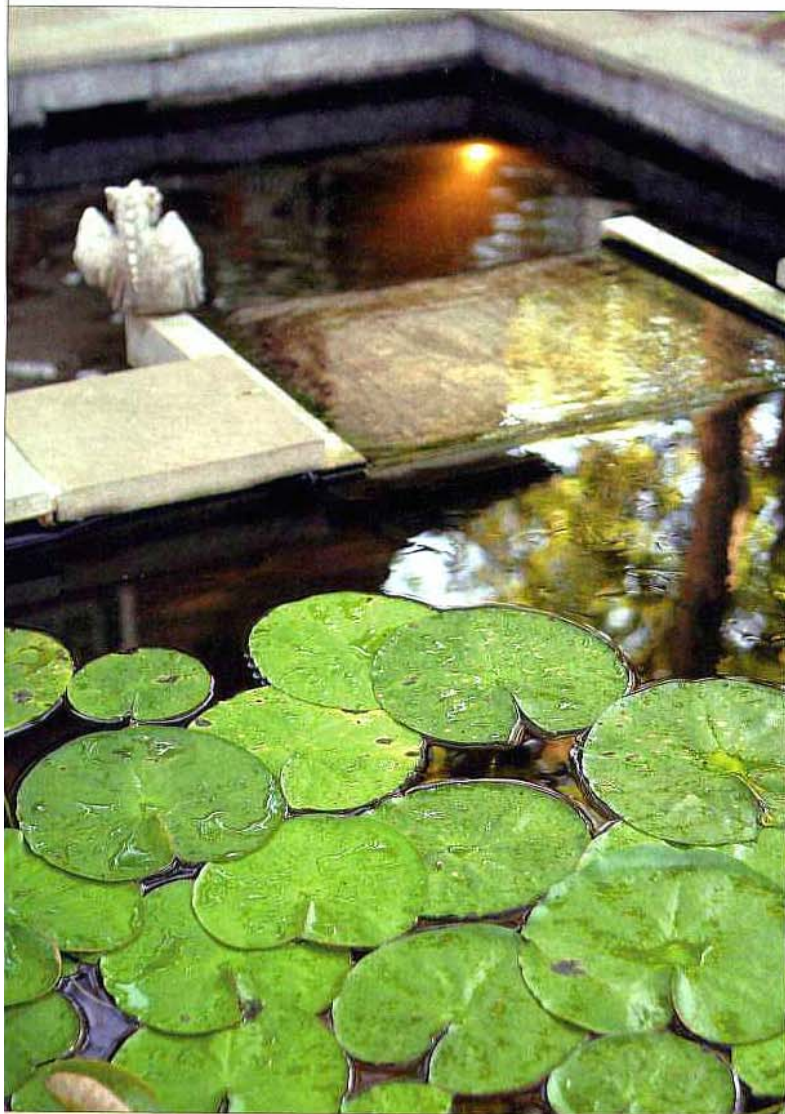
A BUYER'S GUIDE FOR
THE GREAT OUTDOORS

GET IT TOGETHER! ORGANIZE YOUR CLUTTER

KIDS CAN GO BONKERS IN BLOOMFIELD

VOLUME 3 | ISSUE 2 | MARCH 2007 III

COVER STORY



- 6 A Breath of Fresh Air: The Exterior** Last month, we doled out advice on how to shop for the inside of your home. Now we face the beast of nature head on. Get ready to "take it outside."

On the cover and above: The area behind the Ferndale home of Brian Rankel and Dan Jones, owners of B&D Garden Design Inc. in Ferndale, cannot truthfully be called a backyard. Sure, it's got its fair share of greenery. But with a dining area, a sitting area, a reclining (in a hammock) area, a koi pond with its own waterfall, plus a gargoyle or two, it can only be referred to as what it is – a fantasyland. *Cover photo and above by Daniel Lippitt*



7 The Software

A beautiful lawn and garden isn't as easy as a bag of grass seed and a hose. Local experts weigh in on recent trends, and give you some advice on how to make it easy being green. *Photo by Daniel Lippitt*

10 The Hardware

Once the sod roots and the flowers start to bloom, you're going to want somewhere to sit and admire the wonder of it all. So here are some ideas on how to get the most out of your outdoor space. *Photo by Daniel Lippitt*

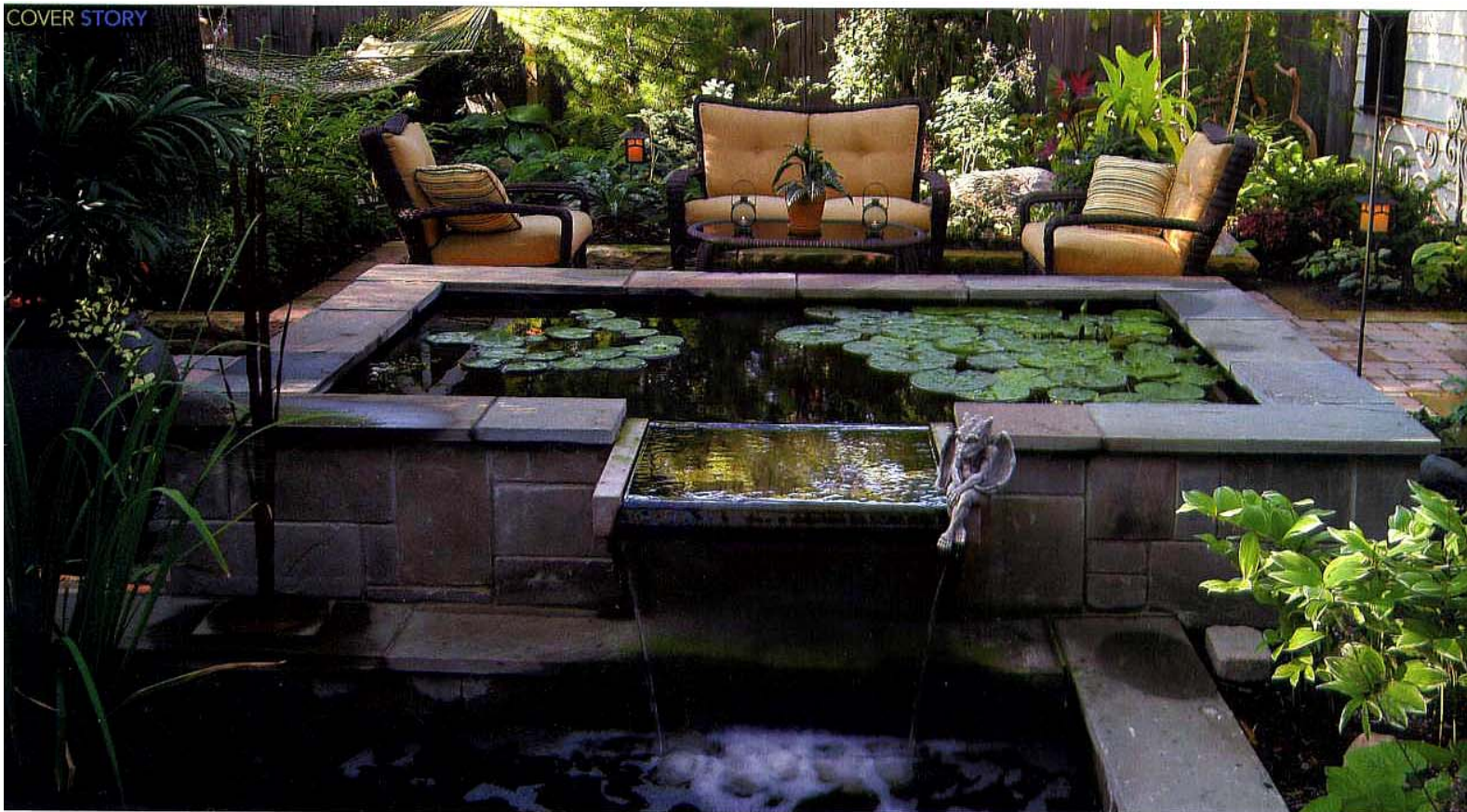


- 13 The Peripherals** So now that you've got the basics down, let's talk extras.

CONTENTS

- 16 Q&A Session** Professional organizer Elizabeth Hammond shows us that "a place for everything and everything in its place" can be more than just clear plastic boxes and a lot of willpower.
- 20 Happenings** Classes, events, fundraisers and more
- 22 Spaces** Think your kids play rough? The Arslanian family found an unbreakable way to tackle their three-headed hockey monster.

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A charming example of a koi pond in the self-designed backyard of Brian Rankel and Dan Jones of Ferndale. Photo by Daniel Lippitt



"so most require watering every day." And for those who crave something more decorative than plastic containers, metal moss-lined hanging baskets are the ideal solution.

Ponds

"The difference between koi ponds and garden ponds," says Dave Assemany, owner of The Aquarium Shop in Royal Oak, "is that garden ponds are more decorative, with lilies and waterfalls, but with a koi pond, the focus is the fish." Fish or no fish, Assemany believes ponds create a calming effect.

"The sound of the water moving is very soothing," he says. "And the filtration of ponds has come a long way, so they're easier to maintain."

THE HARDWARE

Decks

Anyone with a wood deck knows well the hassles of maintaining a beautiful finish and keeping the wood protected. But

"FOUNTAINS ADD A SOOTHING SOUND, WHICH SETS A TRANQUIL AND CALM OUTDOOR ENVIRONMENT, GREAT FOR QUIET TIMES AND PERSONAL REFLECTION."

Steve Scholl, owner of Killer Decks in Wayne, says composite decks may be a better choice than traditional wood. Made of plastic and wood mixed together, composite decks won't split or crack, he says.

Furniture

It might be time to replace that old patio furniture. The latest offerings in outdoor furniture are not only beautiful but more practical than their predecessors. Maintenance-free materials, such as aluminum, "are lighter than traditional metals, yet still sturdy," says Lou Mascolo, owner of Gardenviews in Northville. Another plus, he says, is that aluminum won't rust.

Lighting

Great outdoor lighting creates the perfect synergy between nature, beauty and practicality. It can enhance gardens, fountains and landscaping, as well as highlight architectural features of your home. And aside from being visually pleasing, lighting also provides safety. Today's options include low-voltage lighting that can be controlled by an automatic timer, solar lighting that requires no wiring and motion sensor lighting that operates only when motion is detected.

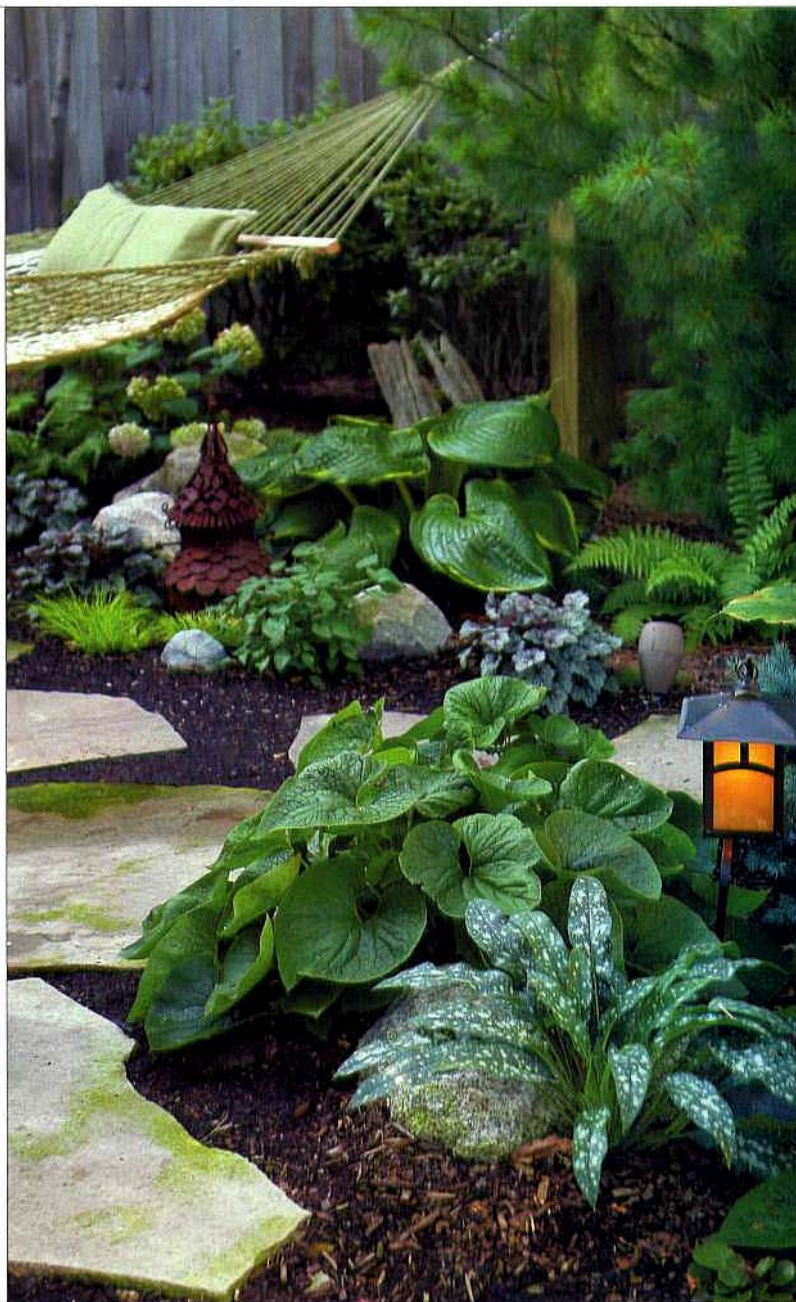
Gazebos and Arbors

Gazebos and arbors add architectural interest to your outdoor surroundings. They also create height in a yard where most plants and flowers are low to the ground. Gazebos offer a shady spot for entertaining or an impromptu reading nook with a built-in breeze. Arbors offer visitors a warm welcome to an area of the home where the grass really is greener.

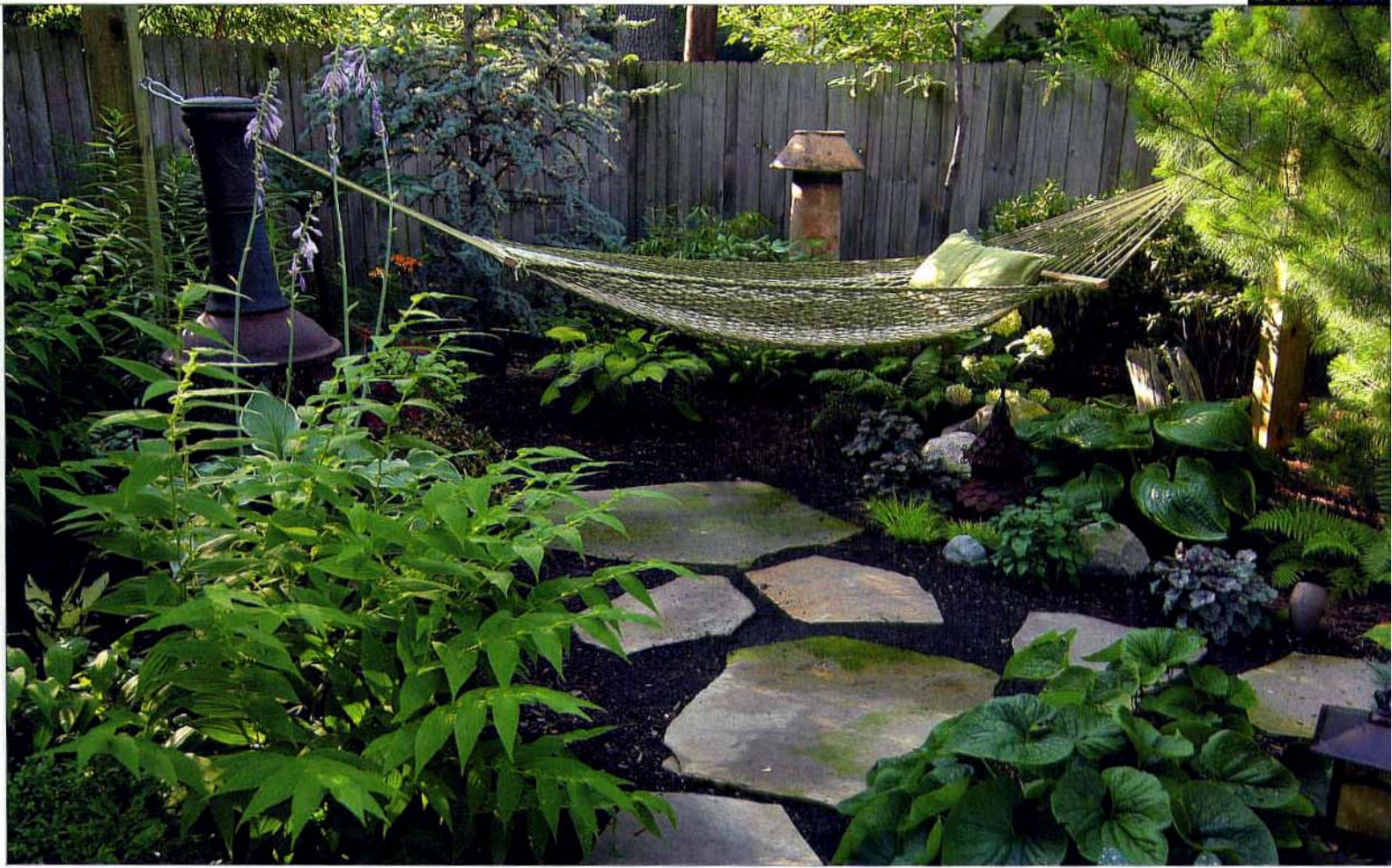
Fountains

"Fountains add a soothing sound, which sets a tranquil and calm outdoor environment, great for quiet times and personal reflection," says Linda Vespa Yugovich, merchandising manager for English Gardens. "The subtle cascading of water also makes for a dramatic focal point in a yard, which adds ambiance when entertaining outdoors."

Fountains can be a focal point in a yard, garden or front entryway, Yugovich says, or they can be tucked into a flowerbed or garden for a pleasant surprise. Since fountains require a power source to run the pump, though, be sure to consider electricity when selecting a location.



The Ferndale backyard of Brian Rankel and Dan Jones, owners of B&D Garden Design Inc., features myriad varieties of trees and grasses, as well as stone walkways, metal and stone sculptures and outdoor lighting. Photo by Daniel Lippitt



Facing page: J.W. Christmas & Associates of Milford created this stone water feature. Flowing water can add motion and sound to an otherwise static landscape. Photo by Gene Meadows® Above: A relaxing corner in the backyard of landscape designers Brian Rankel and Dan Jones. Photo by Daniel Lippitt

THE PERIPHERALS

Firepits

Firepits are not only a great source of heat, they also create an inviting area for social gatherings. According to Jennifer Sypeck, director of trend and product development for Smith & Hawken, "the heat of a firepit allows people to extend the amount of time spent outside into the evening and it also extends the seasons. The chill of a spring or fall night is quickly dulled next to a roaring fire," she says. Some firepits even do double-duty, such as one with a chrome grill that becomes a barbecue or one that can be converted into a coffee table when not in use. And when the weather is too warm for a fire, Sypeck suggests filling your firepit with ice for an instant beverage bucket, or adding some sand and candles for a beachy ambiance.

Grills

Nothing beats the smell of an outdoor barbecue. For entertaining, grilling also involves the least amount of fuss and muss. Grills today come in a wide variety of shapes and sizes – and in all price ranges.

Playground Equipment

Don't forget about the kids when it comes to outdoor recreation. Whether it's a tire swinging from a tree or an entire jungle gym, incorporate something into your plan for the little ones to enjoy. Now there are even miniature houses designed especially for children to have a place to call their own.

Bird Feeders

John Schaust, chief naturalist for the Wild Birds Unlimited chain of stores, says bird feeding is a fun, relaxing and easy hobby to enjoy. "It's also a hobby that invites color into your backyard," he says. Hanging a simple tube feeder in a tree can attract bright yellow goldfinches, while a wooden hopper feeder can attract the bold red color of the Northern cardinal. As for new products, EcoTough recycled feeders come in a variety of styles and are made from milk jugs which won't crack, rot or fade. They come with a lifetime guarantee and keep milk jugs out of landfills, too.