



Johnson's Garden Talk

Lawn and garden information for the friends and customers of Johnson's Garden Centers

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Sure ... We Can Do That For You!

Dennis Strole, *Johnson's Landscape Designer*

Landscaping has evolved tremendously since I first got started in this business in the late '70s. Gone are the days of two upright junipers on the corners of the house. Gone are the days of shearing every plant into a globe or a cube, the thought of which puts fear into the heart of every man. Gone, for the most part, are the rectangular beds, replaced by sweeping, curvilinear shaped bedding areas, designed to soften the right angles of the house.

A cry for "low maintenance" now echoes from every customer I meet. And although most homeowners have less time to work in the yard, many are making the time to do more landscaping.

While most homeowners address the front yard first, their best efforts are often concentrated in the back yard. The key elements of screening decks and patios for a little privacy, yet maintaining that certain view to a focal point ranks high on most lists. We seem to spend more time in the back yard and are willing to invest more time and money to create an environment that is relaxing, attractive and easy to maintain.

Several things have been introduced over the last 15-20 years that allow us this luxury. Dwarf and petite-size plant lists are becoming longer every year. Their attributes include greater color selection during the spring, summer and fall, accompanied by smaller, easier-to-maintain mature sizes. Pond kits have been developed that take the guess work out of creating a soothing water element within the garden. Concrete block wall stones that look more like real stone have made building retaining walls much more user-friendly. Low-voltage lighting systems have improved not only in selection but in quality.

Luckily, for my job security, not everyone wants to design or install their own landscape. The overall appearance of a landscape designed by a professional is still appreciated, especially by those who have tried it themselves.

The cost of installing a couple of shrubs in the wrong spot could have paid for a one-hour on-site consultation with one of our designers. We can save you money and frustration by correctly spacing shrubs and trees to allow for future growth.

In the landscape department we're often asked, "Do you do _____ (fill in the blank)?" The answer is almost always "yes." And as far as installing ponds, patios, retaining walls, pathways, nightlighting and landscaping ... sure ... we can do that for you!