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Glacier Blue® Architectural Topics & News

Monthly Newsletter

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Welcome to the August issue of our newsletter! In each issue we present you with interesting and informative articles about the various projects architects and designers are working on around the country. If there is a project you would like to share with us, please feel free to [contact us](#) and tell us about it. If you are chosen, we will feature your project in one of our upcoming issues of this newsletter, and highlight your firm as well. To learn more about our "high-end" cut-to-size Glacier Blue® Devonian Sandstone products, please [click here](#) to visit our website.

Landscape Designer of the Month: Parker Homescape



Parker Homescape is an award winning landscape design and construction firm with a reputation for excellence in all aspects of outdoor home improvement. The firm is located in Basking Ridge, NJ and also operates Parker Gardens, a family run, 14-acre garden center in Scotch Plains, NJ. For more than 60 years, the Parker name has become synonymous with helping to increase property values across the state of New Jersey. It is a relatively small and competitively priced firm that takes great pride in creating unique outdoor environments one project at a time.

Parker Homescape offers a comprehensive landscape division, which will take any project through all phases of development from consultation & design to construction & completion.

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The firm has been recognized as one of the top landscape firms in the United States and the Parker family has been honored by the White House twice and has received the American Association of Nurserymen's prestigious National Landscape Award. The firm has been written up in many local and national publications.

For more information visit:
<http://parkerhomescape.com>

Topic of the Month: Seasonal Color & Outdoor Ambiance



There is a way to create a soothing, luxurious atmosphere in a home so that those who live there feel almost as if they are on vacation in their own backyard. This is how Scott Parker of Parker Homescape used his expertise as a landscape designer to transform the outdoor space of a residence in Westfield, New Jersey.

What was once an overgrown piece of property is now a beautifully designed landscape with a curved patio, comfortable seating, lush seasonal plantings and mood lighting that lends an added ambiance to the spaces after dark. Aside from the landscaping in the front and back of the house, the hardscape design and construction, and the lighting, Parker also took care of the drainage work and sod installation.

When taking on a project, Parker bases his recommendations on the style of a house coupled with the customer's style and preferences. Parker explains, "If we have a customer who loves a certain style, we determine if it would work with their house and then we help them choose the style of the hardscape, the patio style, and the materials. Choices of materials can be paver stone, natural stone, or cultured stone like what you see here. We also help them decide if there should be a border on the patio or if we should cut the stone. If it's a winding patio, it can add a lot of visual interest to cut the outside. Sometimes it takes away from the aesthetics if we put a border on, but other times it looks really nice."

A client's color preference plays a large role in determining what the hardscape will look like, according to Parker. "We bring color samples to our customers to help them choose colors that they like. We're also very careful to ask people if they have any plans of redoing the siding or the shutters on their home because any color changes will dictate our selection of colors for the hardscape."

Color is also an extremely important element when it comes to choosing plant material for the landscape. For this project the plantings were selected to provide the homeowner with seasonal color any time of year. Parker explains, "A lot of people want this. They want four seasons of interest, so we provide that mainly through bloom time. In this case we wanted to give our customer seasonal colors from early spring into late fall. When one plant is done blooming, there is something else in that same area starting to bloom, so one follows another. What we also do is we choose two really nice colors that contrast really well that bloom at the same time. We might do a hot pink and a deep purple and put them near each other so you have a really nice contrast in color. The winter is when the evergreens and the broadleaf evergreens are important. The broadleaf evergreens range from true yellows to baby blues to varying shades of greens and really deep olive colors. So there is color all year round."

"Our customer preferred a pretty natural look, so we used flowering shrubs, evergreens and perennials that have a more natural stature to them instead of using very formal plantings. In the front yard we used

perennials such as astilbe, irises, and catmint. We also used Japanese forest grass, a flowering dogwood tree, a Japanese cutleaf maple tree, and flowering shrubs such as gold flame spirea. As far as evergreens, we used gold thread cypress, boxwood as a foundation plant, Montgomery blue spruce to frame the front staircase, and for some stature we also framed with dragon lady holly. In the back yard we put in a crape myrtle tree, various varieties of barberry, a Japanese aucuba, endless summer hydrangea, may night salvia, double knockout roses, and for a little bit of formality we used Japanese holly shrubs." To finish off the project, the yard was graded for proper water flow and new sod was installed to offer a nice contrast to the colorfully planted bed lines.

"To really top off the job we added landscape mood lighting for the front and the back, which gave everything a subtle, inviting ambiance."

According to Parker, the main challenge of the project was to coordinate the timing of certain aspects of the job with other work that needed to be done. Parker explains, "We had to work with an electrician and a sprinkler company and we had to coordinate the timing with each of them. For instance, the seating wall with the lights in it had to be completed before the sod came in, and the sprinkler company had to come in to install the sprinkler system before that, so we had to make sure that the timing was perfect. We also had to coordinate the delivery of the furniture because it could only be delivered after the patio was done but before the new lawn was put down."

All in all, the project was a success and the homeowner is thrilled with the end result. In their words, "We would like to commend the Parker Homescape staff for their excellence in designing a remarkable landscape, along with a complementing and gorgeous hardscape. We have received over a dozen complements from friends and family. They have completely won us over."

We hope you enjoyed our informative monthly e-newsletter. For questions, comments or more information, please e-mail or call us today.

Sincerely,

Liz Benton, Editor
Glacier Blue® Architectural Topics & News
Devonian Stone of New York, Inc.

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