

A little over a year ago, we added a gas fireplace to our living room. Our furniture and other accessories are placed in relation to the fireplace making it the focal point of the room. Somewhere I read that a fireplace can add to a home's resale value. Although we are not in the market to sell our home, there is comfort in knowing that perhaps our fireplace has not only added to the aesthetics of our home but also to its monetary value.



For Rita and me, the real value of our fireplace is the ambiance that it creates. Snuggled together on a cold winter's night, its importance is not measured in dollars and cents. While the snow is flying and the wind is howling, indoors we bask in the soothing warmth of the flickering flames. As the old cliché goes, “We are snug as a bug in a rug.”

Selecting décor in one's home is a personal choice. This same rule applies to outdoor décor. Did you know that ornamentation in one's outdoor landscape can also add to the resale value of the property, especially if the ornamentation is practical? Outdoor décor is a personal choice, but sometimes there is a fine line between lawn ornaments and lawn litter.



For most homeowners, their landscape becomes their paradise. Through long hours of work — planning, planting, building, weeding, watering — one's paradise is created. Curb appeal is greatly enhanced by well-planned and well-placed garden décor. The first thing a potential visitor sees is the yard. Garden décor can easily define your home's overall style. Individuals who never see the inside of your home may determine your style based solely on the décor they see in your yard. A myriad of options for garden décor exist. They include sculptures, structures, lawn ornaments, and more.

A common perception of sculptures is that they provide refinement to a landscape. Today's sculptures are made of resin, concrete, or an assortment of metals. Many are free standing, while others are often a part of fountain or other



structure. What sculpture you choose for your landscape is simply a matter of preference.

Garden structures may include arbors, decks, patios, fire pits, pergolas, benches, tables, trellises and garden gates. Structures frequently create a focal point in the garden. They often separate spaces within the landscape.

Lawn ornaments comprise a large group. They may include pink plastic flamingos, birdbaths, gazing balls and a plethora of ornamental statues. To some people, whimsical lawn ornaments are the magical guardians of their landscape, and to others they are unattractive.

Many people attempt to give their landscape a theme. Developing such a talent is natural for some but a challenge for others. No matter what your skill level, make it a point to ask yourself, "How do I wish to feel when I am in my yard? How do I want people to feel when they visit my yard?" Strive to create a theme or a mood, one that might be peaceful, capricious or exotic. It is your choice.



While winter winds continue to blow, take time to plan your outdoor décor. Begin creating your garden paradise. You are limited only by your imagination. Have fun selecting your favorite yard accents. Who knows, some of that new décor may even add to your home's resale value.

By the way, I forgot to mention that our gas fireplace is practical and is controlled with a remote! Unlike a traditional fireplace, none of its heat is lost up the flue, and we all know how men love remote controls.