



LIFE AT HOME

DECOR • DOMESTIC ARTS • RENOVATIONS • RENTALS • RESALE

EDITOR: PAMELA FIEBER 403-235-7299 FAX: 403-235-7379

WWW.CALGARYHERALD.COM

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 2008

YVONNE JEFFERY'S FRONT YARD MAKEOVER: AFTER



PART THREE IN OUR GARDEN MAKEOVER PROJECT: THE FINALE

THE GREAT GARDEN MAKEOVER

Imagination, and ibuprofen, turn a plan into reality

YVONNE JEFFERY
FOR THE CALGARY HERALD

There is, I have discovered, a fine line between cunning and crazy. This past spring, I devised a cunning plan. In order to move my home's yard from bland to beautiful — something I hadn't accomplished in earlier years due to the pressures of work and time — I would declare my intentions in public. Having an all-too-public deadline, and an ongoing DIY Chick blog on calgaryherald.com, I would have no choice but to forge ahead and finally get these projects done.

The projects? Walkways,

raised garden beds, raised veggie beds — and oh, the small matter of a back deck off the house. It all seemed so... do-able. At first.

Spring dawned, and summer stretched lazily ahead, offering countless weekends of pottering about in the garden. In my mind, the completed vision involved English cottage garden blooms adapted to Calgary's climate. Flowers would spill from window boxes and artistically placed containers, bees would delight in the nectar-filled flowers and I would be found on the deck with a suitably tropical libation in hand.

Which does not explain why, five minutes before the Herald's Christina Ryan arrived to take

the "after" photographs last week to match my "before" pictures, I was on my hands and knees, cutting stray grass and weeds out from between the

front sidewalk blocks. Flowers were barely poking out of two lonely little containers in the front, and the English cottage garden was more like a sparsely populated prairie.

That's where the "crazy" part came in.

Saner people than me, I've discovered, approach this kind of task on a project-by-project basis. As in: let's build the deck this year, and then tackle the

ALSO SEE

■ More project details

G2



YVONNE JEFFERY'S FRONT YARD MAKEOVER: BEFORE

Photos, Yvonne Jeffery and Christina Ryan, Calgary Herald

CALGARY HERALD
.com

ONLINE FEATURES

Follow Yvonne Jeffery's yard makeover project online.

it was August — and I was staring down both a self-imposed deadline and the season's first frost.

So, one last push, and here it is — the sort-of-completed list. In fact, all the major projects are done, but they left little time for the nicer touches like pots and window boxes. (I'm consoling myself by thinking of the fun I'll have next spring.) Budget limits meant that the plants in the flower beds are still at early stages — so I'm looking forward to watching them fill out over the next two growing seasons (and avoiding the temptation to fill the beds with plants that will have to come out later because there won't be room for them). And the other finishing touches — building frames for the rain barrels, repainting the porch and garage trim, and power-washing and sealing the fence — well, those are on next year's list.

SEE MAKEOVER, PAGE G2

AROUND THE HOUSE

Grout that looks as good as your tile

SERVICE • Toothpaste dribbles, lipstick smears, mould, ground-in mud and dirt: install tile and it's almost guaranteed that within months your clean grout lines will be soiled with the above household hazards and more. And, as anyone who's ever tried to tackle that mess with a toothbrush knows, a little elbow grease most certainly does not go very far when it comes to grout-scrubbing.

Which is why we were excited to hear about Advanced Grout and Stone. The new Calgary company specializes in cleaning and resealing the sanded grout lines around tiles, whether they're porcelain, ceramic, quartz or travertine. The business promises to make your tile floors, counters and backsplashes look like new through an environmentally-friendly cleaning process that uses high-pressure steam instead of harsh chemicals.

Go to advancedgrout.com for more info.

Canadians can now order from CSN Stores

WEBSITE • Canadian cyber-shoppers may want to set aside some time online this weekend to suss out that trendy chocolate brown-and-pink nursery bedding set, or a seven-piece JA Henckels knife block, or any of the other 999,998 home furnishing and decor products available at csnstores.com.

CSN Stores, ranked among the top three U.S. retailers of home furnishings and housewares, is now welcoming shoppers north of the border after reworking its shipping logistics to make it hassle-free for Canadians to order online. The company has also reduced its shipping surcharges.

Canadians can shop for well-known branded products ranging from bar stools to bedroom sets, in price ranges to fit any budget.

No more eco-guilt over renovating

RENO • Here's a new idea for your next reno: instead of renting a heavy dump bin to collect the building scraps, think about buying a Rhinobag. These sturdy collapsible dumpsters come in two sizes — giant (1.3 metres by 1.3 m by 1 m) and mid (89 centimetres by 89 cm by 122 cm) — and are available for sale at The Home Depot, Rona, Canadian Tire and Home Hardware locations in Calgary.

Just fill it up with shingles, tiles, drywall or whatever else you're ripping out (no paint, batteries, oil or fluorescent tubes, please), then call Rhinobag's 1-800 number to schedule a pick-up. The giant bags can hold up to 1,497 kilograms; the mid-size bags up to 907 kg.

DI-Yers must pay the cost of the one-time-use bag (\$39.95 or \$29.95), plus a collection and disposal fee. Go to rhinobag.com for details.

— Compiled by Lisa Kadane, Calgary Herald



That sodding machine

PROJECT: Using a gas-powered sodcutter to remove the sod from future veggie beds, flower beds and walkways.

COST: \$70 for machine rental

TIME INVOLVED: Two people for four hours

CHALLENGES: The machine's weight and size created a love-hate relationship immediately — I loved the result, but hated turning corners and loading the machine.

TIPS: Laying out the cutting lines on the sod with spray paint worked really well, providing both a visual preview of the design and an outline along which to cut.



If you build it, they will come

PROJECT: Building a 3.6-metre by 4.5 m deck off the back

COST: \$1,300 for lumber and supplies

TIME INVOLVED: Three people for two eight-hour days for the build, plus one person for another five days spent planning, adding the steps and lattice, and sealing the surface.

CHALLENGES: The sheer terror involved in taking on a project that none of us had ever tackled before.

LESSONS LEARNED: Cutting cedar lattice panels is my least favourite job — they whip up and down, have staples in all the wrong places, and break off when stressed.



Making molehills out of mountains

PROJECT: Having five cubic yards of garden-mix loam delivered, to use for the raised veggie and flower beds.

COST: \$300, including delivery and fuel surcharge.

TIME INVOLVED: Ordering delivery was the quick and easy part; moving the dirt was just endless.

CHALLENGES: I needed a rototiller to break up the tough soil before adding the good stuff, and worked to get it off the front lawn before the rains came and turned it to horribly heavy mud.

LESSONS LEARNED: Take Advil before you start shovelling.

www.samsluxuryhomes.com

Marketing your home for all it's worth.™

RE/MAX
HOUSE OF REAL ESTATE



Valley Ridge, \$595,000 — 24 Valley Stream Close, SW 2178 + 1001 SF, 3+1 bedroom with prof. dev'd basement. Sprawling master suite with sitting area, private veranda & air-tub w/ heated seats & custom-jetted shower in ensuite. Rec room, games area w/ wet bar, 4th bed & 3pc bath in bsmt.



Killarney, \$595,000 — 2603 25A Street, SW This 1568 SF 2-storey boasts rich hardwood, crown moulding, island-style kitchen w/ slate tile flooring & granite counters. Barrel vault ceiling & stone-faced f/p in great room. Vaulted master w/ rain shower & jet-tub ensuite. Private rear yard w/ mature trees.



West Springs, \$897,000 — 13 West Cedar Point, SW Brand new executive family home: 2967 SF, rich hardwood floors, soaring ceilings, crown moulding, granite counters, stainless appliances & large vaulted bonus room. Sprawling master suite with 5 pc steam shower ensuite and private veranda.



Upper Scarboro, \$995,000 — 2420 Sovereign Crescent, SW Over 4500 SF with amazing ridge views on a pie lot! Rich hardwood floors, open floorplan, comfortable master suite with private balcony and steam shower ensuite. Self-contained nanny suite in basement, natural stone patio in large rear yard!



samcorea

403-870-8811