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Lifestyle

SECTION



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Disease-resistant plants, such as Knockout roses, are time savers in the garden. MARIAN ST. CLAIR/CONTRIBUTOR

Less yard work, more living



Marian St. Clair
Gardening

It's been just more than a year since my husband, Tim, and I pulled up stakes from the suburbs and moved to the neighborhood of Marshall Forest, just a

stone's throw from downtown.

In that time I've made only slow progress establishing a garden, since most of my efforts have been directed toward the inside of the house.

Surprisingly, I haven't missed working in the garden every day, or even every week. I don't yearn to get my hands in the dirt as much as I would have supposed, or have any sense of deprivation when I see other people's carefully tended landscapes.

Why? I'm not 100 percent sure, but I have at least two thoughts on the subject.

First, we chose a home that's open to the outdoors, with large windows that overlook the Reedy River and a park-like hillside beyond. We're immersed in nature here, frequently grabbing binoculars to observe the red-tail hawks that nest nearby and the blue heron that occasionally sweeps up and down the watercourse. Recently, we even spied a couple of river otters.

Though I'm rarely outside, I never feel closed in. I'm captivated by the changing seasons and varied wildlife just beyond our windows. Most days, that's enough.

Second, Tim and I moved because we were ready for a change. With children grown, we wanted to re-evaluate our habits and lifestyle. While our lives were family-centered, I could indulge in my greatest pleasure — gardening — just by walking out the back door. Now I want to do things that take me further afield.

Plus, my ideas of what I want in the garden have evolved. At first, I was committed to the notion of a full array of plants and thoughtfully designed spaces, but lately I've begun to question myself.

In the process of moving, we both decided to make life easier by letting go of things that we didn't use or need. We donated clothing, recycled books, pared down the number of kitchen gadgets, and gave the boot to a slew of sentimental knickknacks.

It makes sense, then, to simplify the gardening process too.

I considered my last garden low maintenance. I headed off problems by choosing disease-resistant plants. I cut labor by grouping plants with similar requirements. I mulched more so I weeded less.

The key to even less work is to find more ways to work with nature, not against it. Gardening is a modification of the natural



To compensate for the living room's length, the Hargraves opted for barrel chairs grouped around a circular coffee table instead of the traditional sofa arrangement. PHOTOS BY OWEN RILEY JR./STAFF



The Hargraves bought an inexpensive scarf on a trip to Thailand and had it framed as a memento of their trip.

IN LOVE WITH THE '60s

COUPLE UPDATE ERA'S CLEAN LINES, SOOTHING COLORS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

By Cheryl P. Allen
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John and Pat Hargrave really loved their '60s-style contemporary ranch house in Ohio, so in the mid-'90s when they moved to Greenville because of John's marketing job, they brought their clean, contemporary style with them.

Their two-story home in Pelham Falls features earthy tones, modern furnishings and accessories and abstract artwork.

Family pieces like an old chest and a rocking chair that once belonged to Pat's parents add personal touches.

They've made changes and modifications here and there, but "our sense of style is trapped in '60s contemporary," John said.

The dining room offers a prime example with its small-scale furnishings that include an oak buffet with a marble inset. Pat, a retired music teacher, loves pottery and

uses it to accent the dining table. "I like that every piece is individual and adds color," she said.

Framed Georgia O'Keeffe prints and a floral painting by their son tie in with the dining room's neutral color scheme. Carefully chosen framing is a good way to make artwork stand out, Pat said, adding that it doesn't matter if the artwork is inexpensive. "Good framing enhances everything," she said. "I think it kind of defines that piece and it focuses the eye. And of course, the frame is part of the art."

A framed scarf featuring a Picasso print decorates a wall along the staircase. The frame's goldleaf finish provides a nice contrast. Pat said she bought the scarf for about \$5 while visiting Thailand.

"I love it," she said. "My parents did the same thing but their scarf was expensive."

"We were trying to get away from the poster look," John said,

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Pat Hargrave says she loves pottery because each piece is unique.

STYLE

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noting that they've framed everything from posters and sketches to photographs and fabric. Many of the pieces link to memories of trips.

Downstairs, for example, there's a pen and ink sketch of a forest that the couple picked up in Montreal and another of sunrises at Stonehenge and Glastonbury they got in England.

Abstract pieces throughout the house add just the right pop of color and texture. The breakfast area showcases an abstract oil on canvas by local artist Gaffney Jarrell that the couple commissioned to complement their newly renovated kitchen.

The kitchen renovation is one of several projects



John Hargrave built a gazebo for his wife, Pat, and these 60-plus steps that lead to the Enoree River. OWEN RILEY JR./STAFF

John has tackled since he retired. "I've been retired for about a year and a half, and I can't sit still," he said.

With the help of interior designer Beverly J. Thompson, the couple remodeled the kitchen to include quartz countertops, a glass tile back-

splash, hardwood floors, new cabinet doors, lighting and new appliances. John handled the lighting and the floors, and the rest was done by professionals.

"Not being an engineer, most projects I really don't put down on paper prior to starting," he said. "Now, the down side of

that is in buying material, you don't buy the right size and you have an atrocious scrap rate.

"On the other hand, depending on how resourceful you are and the project you're taking on, those scraps can also come in handy. I'm continuously revisiting the scrap pile to see if I can find the right size piece for one of my projects."

No doubt some of that extra wood lying around was incorporated into "The Great Boardwalk

Project." It includes a gazebo and a boardwalk with more than 60 steps John built leading from the back patio down a steep back yard overlooking the Enoree River.

"There was nothing back here. It was all natural," John said. "I did the staircase in sections. I built a temporary platform to build the stairs and then once I had the stairs lined up, I built this permanent platform underneath them so I actually built it the wrong way,

from the top down rather than from the bottom up."

The gazebo was what prompted the project. When they moved to Greenville, he promised to build his wife a gazebo like the one they had in Ohio.

It took a little while to fulfill his promise, but it's been a favorite leisure spot for his wife ever since.

A custom made sign hangs on one of the beams: "Pat's Gazebo. Promised 1995 and built 2011."



**Burning Feet?
Electric Shocks?
Pain & Numbness?
Pins & Needles?
Creepy Crawlies?**