

A photograph of a home with a fountain in the foreground. The fountain is a multi-tiered, ornate stone structure with water flowing from it. The home in the background is a single-story building with a red-tiled roof, stone accents, and arched windows. The scene is set in a well-maintained garden with green grass and various shrubs under a clear blue sky.

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Bulletin 2021

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First off, I would really like to thank the Las Cruces Bulletin for partnering with us on this great Home Improvement publication and everyone who participated in it. We truly value our friendship/partnership with you all! The committee members who helped put things together and make it happen Brian Crawford with Builders FirstSource, who has chaired several our Home & Garden Shows and continues to support the association, Christina Montanez, with Southwestern Abstract & Title Co. and our good friend Elaine Sasnow, with the LC Bulletin. I would also like to mention to all our industry friends about joining the Las Cruces Home Builders Association. Joining the association is the key to unlocking the potential of your business. You will meet other members with common interests that will allow you to exchange ideas, further your education, and help develop policies that will help your business thrive. Membership has the power to increase the visibility of your business and help you to develop the skills and gain the knowledge you'll need to succeed. This year our President, Ben Beard, with Red Cliff Homes, has continued our focus to education for our members with a free monthly education class, and by partnering with the Las Cruces Public Schools and getting our local youth involved in skilled trades. With this, I would also like to recognize our Membership Chair, Jessica Spires, with Las Cruces Abstract & Title Co., she is always looking for more ways to benefit our members! And, of course, to our Board of Directors, you ROCK! Thank you for your continued support for both the industry and the association!



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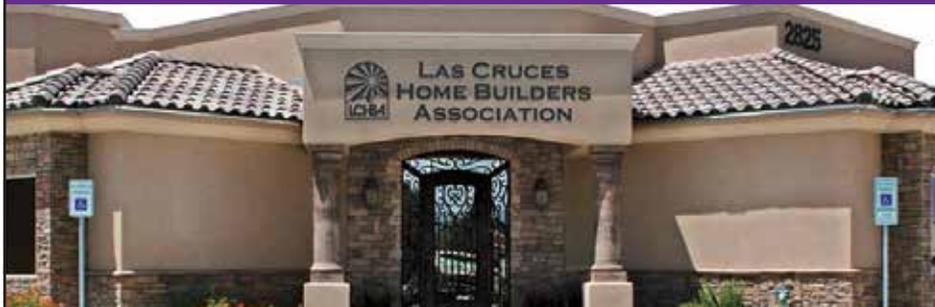
Our events that will be happening this year is our Casa for a Cause, formerly known as the Anniversary House, our Spring Golf Tournament, Showcase of Homes, the Jackalope Cup, Build My Future, and we are in the process of trying to put together a few more events that will benefit our members as well.

If you would like more information on any of the above, please contact me at 575.993.9288 or nicole@lchba.com. I would love to talk to you!

Nicole Black

Executive Officer

Las Cruces Home Builders Association



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Home, office, classroom? Pandemic drives homeowners to examine decor

For the 14 months since March 2020, Americans have spent more time in their homes since, well, since ever.

The pandemic canceled all our events and quarantined us in our houses.

All that time in our homes has had its benefits and its drawbacks, but in many ways it changed the way we look at our homes, even changed the relationship we have with them.

Many of us already had home offices but, sud-



RICHARD COLTHARP
From the Publisher

denly, through the magic of Zoom, those offices were on display for people to see.

Many of our homes became our children's classrooms as well.

“Home, is where I want to be, But I guess I'm already there ...”

— Talking Heads, 1982

And when we needed to get away, but couldn't, we found a part of our

own home to become our getaway. Maybe it was the patio. Maybe the porch, or

maybe an extra bedroom turned into a study.

Now, after we've re-assessed our living spaces, there's a chance to reform and re-shape them into our new, altered image.

In this Las Cruces Bulletin Home Improvement Guide, we offer several ideas for things you could do to your home. You may get some direct leads through these articles and advertisements. Or maybe the ideas will combine and create something new.

Even if you're one of the many people who has purchased a new home, or are about to, there are plenty of great ideas here on how to decorate your new address, from front to back, from bottom to top.

Home is indeed where the heart is, and pandemic or not, we all spend a lot of time in our houses.

We should make them look and feel like places where our hearts feel at home.

Home Builders' directory a great resource

By **MIKE COOK**

Las Cruces Bulletin

The membership of Las Cruces Home Builders Association (LCHBA) includes a lot more than just contractors who build new homes.

Need a plumbing contractor? LCHBA's directory includes 22. What about flooring? There are eight on the list. Heating and air conditioning? Choose from 16. Electrical? There are 19 to pick from. Carpentry work? There are 18.

There are painters, mortgage companies, landscapers, insurance agents, excavation companies, a framing contractor, real estate agents, solar products, stonework, roofing, security, utilities, welding, windows,

bathroom remodeling, accounting, drainage and ponding, concrete work, cabinetry, commercial banking and more in the listing.

Contractors complete an application process through the National Association of Home Builders to be included in the list and must be operating a business that is within the building industry, said LCHBA Executive Officer Nicole Black.

If you are thinking of a home renovation project, she recommends you check out the directory and choose from among the general contractors listed or one or more of the sub-categories to select the company that best fits your needs.

Because “the industry is doing so



PHOTOS ARE FROM WWW.MCGINLEY-CONSTRUCTION.COM

SEE **DIRECTORY**, PAGE 8 **A pool room is converted into a sun room.**

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LC builders offer quality improvement

By **MIKE COOK**
Las Cruces Bulletin

There are some great resources for home improvements listed on the Las Cruces Home Builders Association (LCHBA) website: <https://lchba.com/>. Just click on "Directory" at the top of the page. The directory has everything from bath remodeling and building materials to heating/air conditioning to roofing and windows.

But if you ask Red Cliff Homes founder Ben Beard, he will recommend that you consider buying a new home rather than fixing up an existing one.

You can "buy a home to

live in or a project to live in," said Beard, who is LCHBA president.

People who think they will save money on a do-it-yourself project don't realize how many trips they will have to make to home improvement stores, Beard said, or how many decisions they will have to make about the projects they buy – a garage-door opener for example.

As a builder, Beard said, "I'm not making people make that choice.



Ben Beard

COURTESY PHOTO

"I'm just going to include it."

Do-it-yourself and renovation projects can also be very expensive and create "dust and mess and things take

longer than they should," he said.

"You might as well buy a new home instead of fixing up an old home that has a problem," he said.

And right now is a great time to invest in a home or home improvement, Beard said.

"I think it's a fantastic

time," he said. "You can't beat the interest rates now. It's definitely the time to invest in a project."

If a home owner decides to go the home improvement route, Beard said the LCHBA directory is a great resources.

"We vet our membership every month," he said, which means the list is comprised of "excellent quality contractors." And, he said, LCHBA Executive Officer Nicole Black can answer any home improvement questions that homeowners may have.

Beard, who has a bachelor of science degree in construction management from Brigham



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BEN BEARD

SEE **RED CLIFF**, PAGE 6 Aguirre Drywall handing sheetrock in a Red Cliff Home.

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**RED CLIFF, CONTINUED
FROM 5**

Young University, has done a lot of home repairs and improvements in addition to new-home construction.

"I like to start from a clean slate," he said, starting with "a bare piece of dirt (and) you walk away a couple of months later with a new home ready for someone to live in for the next 50 or 100 years."

Beard said the Las Cruces home-building market "has stayed strong" throughout the pandemic.

"We were blessed," he said. Being deemed an essential industry by the state allowed local builders to continue working.

A "very significant part of our community relies on the construction industry," Beard said, including contractors, subcontractors,

RED CLIFF HOMES



laborers, builders and "a lot of families in Doña Ana County."

"Then you think about all the ancillary industries," he said, including real estate and home inspections.

And speaking of inspections, Beard said his "peace-of-mind guarantee" means his company will pay up to \$400 for a licensed, third-party inspection report to ensure "independently verified quality construction of your home."

Beard chose the name Red Cliff Homes for his business after returning

from a two-year mission for his church, as he and his family visited Lake Powell in southern Utah, according to the company website.

"When I saw the blue water and red cliffs again, that's when I knew I was home," he said. I still remember that feeling like it was yesterday ... that feeling, the excitement, the anticipation, the love. That is what I want each of our buyers to have about their very own Red Cliff Home."

After graduating from BYU in 2012, he moved to Las Cruces, working as a superintendent and

purchasing manager for a local builder before launching Red Cliff Homes in 2017.

Beard is partnering with LCHBA to enhance technical education in Las Cruces high schools, he said.

"We're seeking to bring technical education to our young people so that they leave high school equipped with the skills they need to get high-paying jobs in construction and other technical, hands-on career fields. Red Cliff Homes donates a portion of the sale of each of its homes to the Las Cruces Technical Education Fund.

Being a homebuilder is "a fantastic career path," Beard said.

Contact Red Cliff Homes at 575-323-1491 and info@redcliffhomes.com. Visit redcliffhomes.com.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF BEN BEARD

A Sherwood Cabinets representative performing a quality inspection in a Red Cliff Home.

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**DIRECTORY, CONTINUED
FROM 4**

well,” Black said, it may take a little time to find an available contractor.

If you're not sure what kind of renovation project you want, Black can help you figure out the best categories to look under.

Visit <https://lchba.com/> and click on directory to find the list.

McGinley Construction, Inc.

One great example from among LCHBA's listings is McGinley Construction, Inc., which Kevin and Connie McGinley started in 1978. The company can custom remodel your current home or build you a new one.

A former president of LCHBA, McGinley has been named builder of the year by both LCHBA and the New Mexico

Home Builders Association, and as remodeler of the month by the National Home Builder Association. He also is founding chairman of LCHBA's Remodeler's Council.

One of McGinley's most visible and impressive commercial remodeling projects is the work he did to completely renovate the historic Nestor Armijo House so it could be occupied by the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce in 2017. The house, at 1150 E. Lohman Ave., was built in 1870 and required great care in the renovation process.

McGinley said his prior experience with renovations at La Posta and other historic homes in the area helped guide work on the Armijo House.

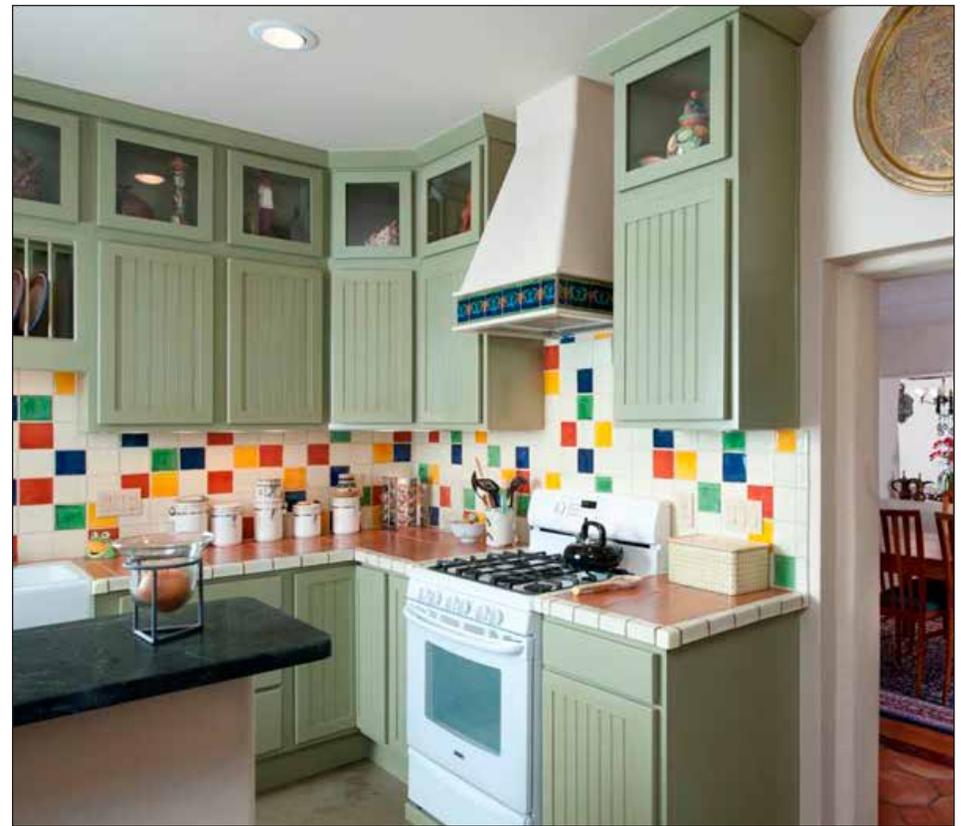
“Our team ... had the

highest respect for the home and took special interest in the property,” McGinley told LasCruces.com.

“We are proud of the longevity of our team of handpicked, skilled subcontractors,” McGinley said on his own website (www.mcginley-construction.com). “We have been working with many of these individuals for over two decades, bringing you added confidence that your home is in the best of hands.”

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Contact LCHBA Executive Officer Nicole Black at 575-526-6126 and nicole@lchba.com, or visit the LCHBA office at 2825 N. Main St.



A kitchen renovation.

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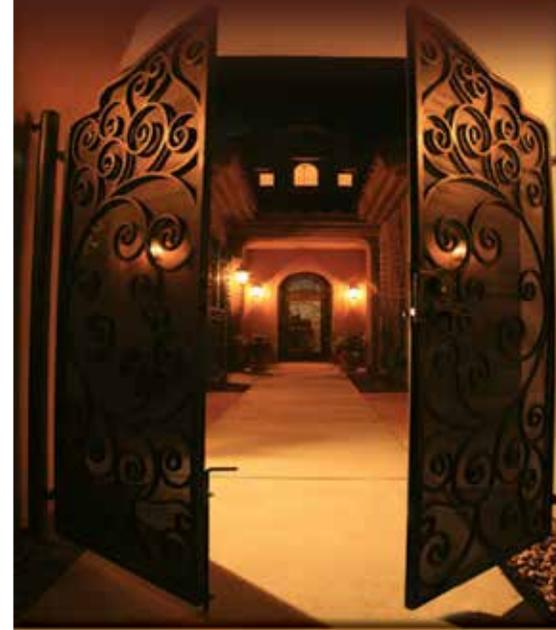
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The core function of Anthony Sosa Roofing is to serve Las Cruces and the surrounding areas with top quality and honest workmanship at a competitive price you can always depend on. “We focus on making every customer happy and we do what we say we’re going to do,” Sosa said.

Anthony Sosa Roofing & Construction is locally owned and operated right here in Las Cruces, employing anywhere from two to eight people, depending on current workloads. The business is open 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. Monday -Friday and reachable by phone, 575-288-5615 or email, asrroofcoat@yahoo.com. The website is www.anthonysosaroofing.com and their Facebook page can be found by searching Anthony Sosa Roofing & Construction.

“Covid-19 has affected us in the way we do things every day, of course,” Sosa said. “But we have found ways to still do the things we have always done by socially distancing, wearing masks, and sanitizing frequently.

“We would like to thank Las Cruces and everyone who voted for Anthony Sosa Roofing & Construction!”



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Solar screens can help your home stay cool in hot sun

By **RICHARD COLTHARP**
Las Cruces Bulletin

Ever notice how Las Cruces scramble in a parking lot to find the shadiest spaces?

People know how car windows can intensify the summer sun and how much shade can help.

The same thing happens to the windows on your home.

Unless you have an RV, you can't easily move your home under a shade tree. But Bobby Joe McTeigue has an even better solution: solar screens for your windows.

"As much as 80 percent of the heat in your home comes from the windows," said McTeigue, of McTeigue Solar Screens. His company's solution for



This before-and-after comparison illustrates the reduction of glare on your windows after adding solar screens.

the heat loss is Phifer Sun-tex exterior sun control fabrics, specially designed to block light and heat.

The attractive fabrics, which have a 10-year warranty, cover the entire window and can either match or complement the home's exterior colors.

By using the screens, "the University of Texas estimates utility savings

of 32 percent," McTeigue said. "Because the screens can reduce temperatures up to 15 degrees, you don't need to run your air conditioning as much."

McTeigue creates lightweight but sturdy aluminum frames to hold the screens, then mounts them on the windows. Mitred metal corners provide a solid frame and durability.

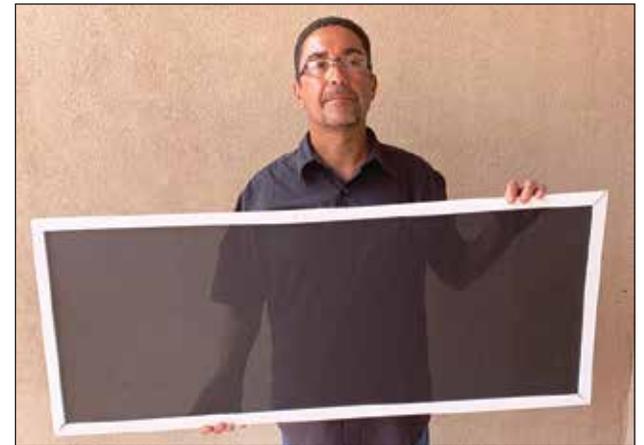
McTeigue can fit screens for arches and other unusual window shapes. There are six different colors available, from light to dark, to go with your home as you prefer.

There are more advantages in addition to keeping your home cooler.

"It also cuts the glare from the sun for your TV and computer screens," McTeigue said. "They also provide good daytime privacy. People can't see in, but you can still see out. And they protect furniture and drapes from sun damage."

They also protect your body from sun damage, which is why the Melanoma International Foundation has endorsed the product.

Depending on how many windows your home has, and the size and shape of the windows, an installation can cost as little as \$200 or as much as \$4,000. McTeigue requires half the payment at agreement and the second half after installation is complete, which typically takes about two weeks.



COURTESY PHOTOS

Bobby Joe McTeigue of McTeigue Solar Screens holds one of the framed screens that can greatly reduce heat and glare coming through your home.

Discounts are available for military members, veterans, teachers and first responders.

The screens won't mold or deteriorate and are easily cleaned with soap and water.

They are also printable. So if you'd like your company logo, your alma mater or your favorite sports team emblem on the screen, you can have it at your home or business.

There are screen options for sliding glass doors, as well as roll-down screens.

The roll-down screens can be indoors, or on a patio or pool area. It could be the ideal feature for gazebos or restaurants to block severe sunlight at certain times of day.

McTeigue can also create screens for mobile homes, RVs, campers or even car windows to block the sun for babies or pets.

"They can give your house a cleaner outside look and make you feel cooler and more comfortable inside," McTeigue said.

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Western Stoves and Fireplaces offers ideas for your backyard

By **DAVE BURGE**
Las Cruces Bulletin

If you don't want to spend a lot of money doing construction work on your backyard, Western Stoves and Fireplaces has a few quick ideas that can give your home a brand-new look and feel.

One of the most popular additions to a backyard is a Traeger pellet-burning grill, said Audree Smith, project manager at Western Stoves and Fireplaces in Las Cruces.

Traeger grills range from \$899 to \$1,499 and work like a convection oven, Smith said.

"They have a blower that circulates the heat around your food, so you get a real even cook," she

said. "It uses smoke to add flavor. You can bake in it, grill in it, cook in it and even do a little bit of a boil in it."

This is a quick way of adding a new wrinkle to your backyard and making the summer months that much more enjoyable.

"People want to go outside and use it," Smith said.

Traeger also has a web site, www.traegergrills.com, that has complete recipes including the type of pellets, sauces and rubs to use.

"They are really popular," Smith said. "Traeger is one of those brands that have a cult following."

Western Stoves and Fireplaces also carries

outdoor fire pits of different shapes and sizes that can give your outdoor area a different look and feel as well.

Prices range from \$899 and up.

The locally owned business also carries pizza ovens for indoor or outdoor use. Pizza ovens start at \$2,399.

These are just a few quick things homeowners can do to give their outdoor space an updated and fun feel for the summer, Smith said.

Western Stoves and Fireplaces is located at 1103 E. Lohman. Hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday, with occasional Saturday hours during the winter. Information: 575-526-5380.



BULLETIN PHOTOS BY DAVE BURGE

Traeger pellet-burning grills are a popular item that can turn your outdoor area into a more festive place to be.



Western Stoves and Fireplaces has a variety of pizza ovens that can turn your outdoor area into a fun place to be this summer.



Outdoor gas fire pits come in different shapes and sizes at Western Stoves and Fireplaces.



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Design trends move toward earth tones and textures

By **RICHARD COLTHARP**
Las Cruces Bulletin

“People want their homes to be simple, but warm and inviting,” Jan McClure said. “They want their house to feel safe, so they’re bringing some of nature inside.”

That explains why current interior design trends are moving toward earth-tone colors and textures.

McClure has spent her career designing interiors, representing furniture manufacturers, setting up visual displays for stores, and even writing about interior decorating. She currently represents Ashley Furniture, and does work for Ashley stores in New Mexico and El Paso. Up until last year, she’d seen it all.

Except a global pandemic.

And now she’s seen that. The extra time people have spent in their homes the last 14 months has instilled a desire to reduce stress and be more comfortable. That has led to increased interest in simpler, modern furniture and decorations.

“People want cleaner lines in their home to make it more peaceful and relaxing,” McClure said. “Grays were such a trend for the past few years, but now we’re seeing people wanting more browns, more earth tones since the pandemic.”

In addition to color changes, McClure said the pandemic has brought changes in the way people look at furniture. Since

our homes have served multiple purposes (offices, classrooms, workout facilities) during the pandemic, we’re seeking diversity in our furniture as well.

“People want bookcases that also serve as sofa tables,” she said. “Or desks that can also be an entry-way table. Or ottomans with storage.”

Due to disrupted supply chains, furniture can take as long as three to six months to arrive.

So while people are waiting on their furniture, they are sprucing up their living areas with accessories.

The earthy trend is continuing with accessories, McClure said.

Whitewashed clay pots, plants, rustic art and rugs are very popular.



COURTESY PHOTO

In the kitchens, “I see people changing out their hanging lights,” McClure said.

Out are the shiny, glossy pendant lights. In are wicker shades and Bauhaus styles.

Homeowners are going with lighter-colored cabinets on top, and brighter-colored cabinets on

bottom. People also are painting their cabinets.

The bedrooms are following the themes of relaxed, uncluttered and uncomplicated. People are changing out mattresses and getting new comforters.

“They’re getting rugs, making it very peaceful, nothing busy, not a lot of patterns,” McClure said.

“Outdoor living has become a huge trend because the space is wide open; it’s an empty box,” she said. “It’s a way you can expand your total living space. We’re also seeing sectionals in the outdoor space, firepits and almost anything you might find in an indoor living space.”

An important consideration, McClure said, in cre-

ating outdoor living spaces, is the position of the sun.

“You need to think about how the sun faces your furniture,” she said. “It’s different in summer than in winter.”

And while modern fabric technology is more weather and sun-resistant, the sun position is still important when considering heat, glare and other factors that affect the people who’ll be using the space.

No matter how you decorate or modify your home, the first consideration should always be the people living there, and how it can enhance their day-to-day lives, McClure said.

“Home is where memories begin,” she said. “And that’s become very important to people right now.”



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Wild Birds Unlimited can help you turn your yard into a mini-park

By **DAVE BURGE**
Las Cruces Bulletin

One local retailer can help you turn your backyard into a mini-wildlife refuge or park for your favorite birds.

Wild Birds Unlimited in Las Cruces sells bird feeders and the feed to go in them, bird baths, bird houses, decorations and other things that can help you quickly transform the look of your outdoor space.

The store, owned and operated by Kristi Lane, also has wind chimes that can give your house a nice airy, peaceful feeling.

"To attract the color and sound of birds to your backyard, you can provide food, water, shelter and a place to raise their young," Lane said.

"We have bird baths. We have feeders for all sorts of different types of birds in the area. All of our bird feed is made for birds in the region," she added.

Bird feeders can range from a shallow dish you put on the ground to the more elaborate, Lane said.

Wild Birds Unlimited



Bird baths can range from a simple plastic dish to stone.

also has parts you can buy to build your own bird feeder from scratch.

"We have all the parts. We can build it for you here in the store so you know what it will look like when you get home," Lane said. "It is really easy to set up in your yard."

They even have feeders designed for different species of orioles which migrate through the area in April and May.

Bird baths range from plastic to stone and come in a variety of prices.

"It depends on the look you want in our backyard," Lane said.

The store also has different houses designed for specific species of birds. They even have houses that can accommodate bats.

Even adding some na-

tive grasses and plants to your yard can make it more inviting for birds, Lane said.

"They nest in bushes," Lane said. "If you plant native plants in your yard, that helps birds out. It provides them shelter and provides them a place to raise their young. A lot of our birds aren't used to having trees with cavities for nesting."

One popular bird house has a flat area, three sides and a roof to provide birds with protection from wind and rain.

Adding a bird feeder, bird house or bird bath can give your backyard a quick and easy makeover, Lane said.

"It is something everyone can do, everywhere," she said. "Birds are everywhere. You can start small



BULLETIN PHOTOS BY DAVE BURGE

Wild Birds Unlimited sells a wide variety of bird feed, bird feeders, bird baths, bird houses and decorations that can help liven up your backyard.

and get bigger and more elaborate as you want to."

Wild Birds Unlimited is located at 2001 E. Lohman, Suite 130. Hours are 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday. Information: 575-523-5489 or www.wbu.com/lascruces.



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Got home landscaping plans?

Consulting a pro a good rule of (green) thumb

By **MIKE COOK**
Las Cruces Bulletin

So, your home improvement plans are focused on landscaping your yard, or at least part of it.

Do you know what kind of soil you have? Do you know what's buried in your yard – chunks of cement, nails, dead leaves or other junk? Are there grubs, beetles or other parasites?

What about slope? Drainage? Irrigation? Climate? Wind?

Do you know what kinds of trees or shrubs you want to plant? Which ones are adapted to the desert environment and are low-water and low-maintenance? How deep should you plant? What fertilizer should you use, and how much?

What kind of sod is best for your yard?

Do you know why boulders are important to landscaping? What landscaping rock to use, and

which color?

What about installing a rock wall or a fountain?

“There are a million and one questions you want to ask,” Desert Siren Landscape Design, LLC owner Erik LeDuc said. And often, a homeowner with no experience in landscaping won't even know the right questions to ask, let alone the answers, he said.

LeDuc's advice? Consult a professional to get all your questions answered, find a design that works for you and get the job done right the first time.

LeDuc and his wife, Caitlin, started Desert Siren Landscape Design in late 2019 and have completed a wide range of landscaping projects across the area's multiple climate zones.

The LeDucs work with their clients to create a master plan for every kind of landscaping project. They recommend a mini-



PHOTOS COURTESY OF ERIK AND CAITLIN LEDUC, DESERT SIREN LANDSCAPE DESIGN, LLC

Young plants will have a solid spring start to begin their growth before summer heat, and a substantial gravel depth helps to insulate against water loss.

mum budget of at least \$2,000-\$3,000, although some small projects like building and installing a raised garden box won't be that expensive.

The LeDucs have a lot of experience with xeriscaping and rockscaping, and they can advise you on a wide range of trees, plants and flowers that will thrive in Picacho Hills, the Telshor area, the North Valley or any other part of the community.

“I try to find what fits best,” Erik LaDuc said.

They can install a fountain or a complete irrigation system, lay a flagstone path and can turn an enclosed backyard “into an oasis,” he said. And, they can help create a low- or even no-maintenance, low water, colorful-all-year yard. And their work goes “far beyond just plants,” LaDuc said. “I love doing rock work and boulders.”

The LaDucs do much of the work themselves, but they also consult and subcontract with “other experts in the field,” he said.

In addition to a wide

range of desert plants, LaDuc said he is very fond of fruit trees, and many do well in the Las Cruces environment, including peach, pear, apple and quince trees as well as cherries and figs.

Contact Desert Siren Landscaping at 575-386-3316 and cailleduc@gmail.com. Visit www.facebook.com/DesertSirenLD.

County horticulture agent: Learn about irrigation, soil

Water is “the hardest concept for people to understand,” said New Mexico State University Cooperative Extension Service (CES) Doña Ana County Horticulture Agent Jeff Anderson.

A native cottonwood tree can take 250 gallons of water a day, he said. An ash tree can take 125 gallons. An Italian cypress can thrive on three-quarters of a gallon of water a day.

The kind of soil you have – sandy to clay – also impacts how much water you will use, Anderson said.

Desert adaptive trees and plants are the way to

go, he said, although that doesn't always mean ones that are native to the Chihuahuah Desert. The red push pistache, for example, is non-native but very drought tolerant, beautiful and a shade giver.

Anderson's advice to would-be landscapers is to do the research and find out what trees and shrubs best fit their plans, considering size, location in the yard, wind, shade canopy, irrigation and other issues.

The City of Las Cruces website, <https://azsf.az.gov/sites/default/files/files/forestry/ucf/Desert-Canopy-LCR-fact-sheet.pdf>, is a good place to start. The city even has a community forester, Jimmy Zabriskie, and a tree steward program. Visit www.las-cruces.org/CivicAlerts.aspx?AID=934&ARC=1385.

Home vegetable gardens

NMSU CES created the Seed to Supper program in 2019 in three New Mexico counties, featuring Ideas for Cooking and Nutrition (ICAN). Plans to

expand the program were interrupted by Covid-19, but CES is now offering a new spring online course that takes participants from planning a garden all the way to harvest. Participants can either enroll in a weekly course or take the self-paced course.

ICAN food system specialist Sally Cassidy said the Seed to Supper program also has a private Facebook group for participants, where they can share photos of their gardens and offer items to others in their area.

Cassidy said a common mistake people make when attempting to create container gardens is using regular garden soil instead of potting soil. Another mistake she sees is people not fertilizing their container gardens enough.

“Garden soil is not broken down enough to hold moisture well, and the nutrients are hard to access in containers,” Cassidy said. “I suggest starting really small. Grow something in a little pot, great creative and use things you have around the house to start.”

Cassidy also suggests starting out with growing lettuce, an easy vegetable for beginners to grow. Beginner gardeners should also spend time researching their potential new hobby, she said.

Visit https://aces.nmsu.edu/pubs/_circulars/CR457/welcome.html.

For more information on the Seed to Supper program or to register, visit <https://ican.nmsu.edu/seedtosupper.html>.



Red yucca flank a stickly Mexican Bird of Paradise amid stone designs. The regionally native plants produce vibrant blooms in red and orange hues, respectively.



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Metal Craft Plumbing
Derris Greene, Plumbing Vice President

Summer gardening? Guzman's has it all

By **MIKE COOK**
Las Cruces Bulletin

Petunias, geraniums, palm trees, oh my! Color Your World Guzman's Garden Centers have all kinds of hearty and beautiful flowering plants in a wide array of brilliant colors, rose bushes, herbs, hanging baskets, house plants, shrubs and trees for your summer garden.

They even have very colorful goldfish helping to show off their pond and tanks.

The staff can help you find what you need and give you advice on planting and care of your plants. They also have garden tools, along with gnomes, windchimes and many other outdoor decorative items, and outdoor patio furniture.

There are two locations: Color Your World Nursery, 540 N. Telshor Blvd. (575 521-0496), and Guzman's Greenhouse, 270 Avenida de Mesilla (575 523-1520).

Summer hours are 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Monday-Saturday and 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday.



BULLETIN PHOTOS BY MIKE COOK



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Before you dive into a pool, consider a hot tub or swim spa

By **MIKE COOK**

Las Cruces Bulletin

Thinking about how wonderful it would be to have a pool this summer but concerned about the cost of building and maintaining it and what the construction might do to your back yard?

Pool Tech Plus of Las Cruces co-owner Jay Jarden suggests you consider a hot tub or a swim spa instead.

"We have something for everybody," said Jarden, who opened Pool Tech Plus with partner Bryan Taylor in 2000.

A hot tub costs about \$9,000-\$15,000 to build and install and about \$20 a month in energy costs, Jarden said. And all you need is a concrete slab on a



PHOTO IS FROM WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/POOLTECHPLUS

patio or in your yard for a portable, free-standing hot tub to rest on, he said. Installation is done in one day.

A swim spa is larger than a hot tub and offers a large body of water with a current that blows at one end "so that you can swim in place," Jarden said. It offers hydrotherapy, swimming and aquatic exercise.

"A lot of people are choosing those over a

pool because they too install in one day," Jarden said, "you don't have to tear up the back yard, and it gets people swimming for about half the cost of a pool."

The monthly energy cost for a swim spa is about \$40, he said.

Pool Tech has five-six different sizes of swim spas, including the Michael Phelps signature model, Jarden said. The

most common size for a swim spa is eight feet wide by 15 feet long and four-five feet deep, he said. Prices range from \$25,000-\$30,000, which Jarden said is about half the price of an in-ground pool.

If you order an in-stock hot tub or swim spa model, he said, you could be using it within a month.

"We've got people who are competitive swimmers who have got a swim spa," Jarden said. "Some people buy them just to have fun."

Another advantage of a hot tub or swim spa over an in-ground pool is that, if you move, you can take it with you, Jarden said.

The best way to decide the hot tub or swim spa model that is right for you is to visit the Pool Tech



PHOTO IS FROM [HTTPS://POOLTECHPLUS.COM/](https://pooltechplus.com/)

Plus showroom, 2331 E. Lohman Ave., Jarden said. "Come to the store first, look at the products, get a budget in mind," he said. Then, someone from the Pool Tech Plus staff can visit your home for a free consultation before you place an order.

The company also has all supplies for inground and above ground pools, hot tubs and swim spas.

Pool Tech Plus is open

8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday, 9:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Saturday, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Sunday. Call 575-524-4633. Visit <https://pooltechplus.com/>.

For above-ground pools, visit or contact Discount Pools and Spas, 111 S. Roadrunner Pkwy., 575-523-4144. The business is open 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Saturday, noon-4 p.m. Sunday.

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Fighting weeds? Make sure the plants you want are thriving

Tips from NMSU weed specialist

By **MIKE COOK**
Las Cruces Bulletin

One of the best ways to fight weeds in your garden is to make sure your desirable plants are thriving.

The healthier the desirable plant is, the more space it takes up and the more robust its root system, said New Mexico State University Weed Specialist and assistant professor Leslie Beck, Ph.D. That makes it more difficult for undesirable plants – better known as weeds, and sometimes called pests – to germinate and grow in the same area.

Any strategy a home

gardener uses for controlling weeds should start with the correct identification of the weed or weeds he or she is dealing with, Beck said. Is it a Russian thistle? African rue? Field bind weed? Or one of many other undesirables found in local soils?

The NMSU Cooperative Extension Service (CES) has an office in each of New Mexico's 33 counties, and that's the best place to start for weed identification, she said. Beck is the director of NMSU's Plant Diagnostic Clinic, which is the next step if a county CES office can't find the answer.

The New Mexico De-

partment of Agriculture has a list of noxious weeds that are prevalent in New Mexico at www.nmda.nmsu.edu/nmda-homepage/divisions/apr/noxious-weed-information/. (Scroll down and click on "Noxious Weed Memo and List (updated June 2020).") The site can help you identify the weeds you have and other, highly invasive weeds to watch out for so you can prevent their spread.

Once you know what type of weed you're dealing with, you can begin an integrated pest management (IPM) plan to control it, Beck said. An

SEE WEEDS PAGE 20



PHOTO BY NMSU COMMUNICATIONS

NMSU Weed Specialist Leslie Beck and summer NMSU Cooperative Extension Service intern Patrick Kenney observe one of the weeds in Beck's demonstration garden.

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WEEDS, CONTINUED FROM 19

IPM might include pulling weeds by hand or removing them with a hoe, shovel or some other hand tool; using a pre-emergent and/or an organic or traditional herbicide; and/or installing mulch, gravel or some other type of groundcover.

An IPM can help you determine the best time to target weed management based on the biology



PHOTOS BY LESLIE BECK, NMSU

A dandelion flower

of the weed, Beck said. You will want to attack the weed when it is actively growing, she said, because that causes the most injury to the plant. And, “the younger they are, the easier they are to control,” Beck said.

In weed management, the goal is “to be more proactive and less reactive,” she said.

There are always weed seeds in the ground waiting for the right conditions – weather and seasonal conditions, rainfall and irrigation – to germinate, Beck said.

For example, weeds move more of their available nutrients to their root systems in late September and throughout October and November as they prepare for winter, she said. If you interfere with the root system at that point, there is a better

chance of destroying the weed.

“Weeds are always there,” Beck said. “It’s job security,” she said, and “it’s always interesting.”

Beck even has a weed garden that she uses to learn more about all kinds of weeds that her clients encounter.

Beck’s favorite weed? Bermuda grass.

It has “very obvious benefits” if you’re starting a lawn, she said, but is also a difficult-to-control undesirable if you’re not.

Here are some other weed-control tips from Beck:

- Check the bottoms of your shoes or boots and the laces, and the bottoms of your pants, including cuffs, after you come home from a hike to make sure you aren’t bringing seeds from some undesirable plant into your yard.

- Buy certified plant and grass seed to reduce the likelihood of undesirable seeds mixed in with the flowers, plants and grasses you want.

- Read the label and follow the directions for any pre-emergent or herbicide you use.

- Clean your lawn mower and shears between each use.

Beck received a bachelor of science degree in horticulture and landscape management in 2006 and a masters in agriculture specializing in golf course and turf grass management in 2009, both from Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas. She did post-doctoral work at Purdue University and completed a Ph.D. in plant and soil sciences at Texas Tech University. Beck came to NMSU in March 2015.



PHOTOS BY LESLIE BECK, NMSU

NMSU Weed Specialist Leslie Beck’s traveling demonstration weed garden, which helps her program attendees with hands-on identification techniques.

As the state’s CES weed specialist, Beck’s responsibilities include statewide educational programming in weed science for all cropping systems, NMSU said. Her long-term extension and research goal is to help individuals and professionals across multiple plant science disciplines and backgrounds to develop accurate, applicable, and effective weed identification and

management strategies to address issues throughout the state of New Mexico.

“I love interacting and helping people,” Beck said. “I can help them find a solution they can take back to whatever weed management issue they have.”

Visit <https://eps.nmsu.edu/leslie-beck.html>, <https://weeds.nmsu.edu/> and <https://aces.nmsu.edu/ces/plantclinic/submission-forms.html>.

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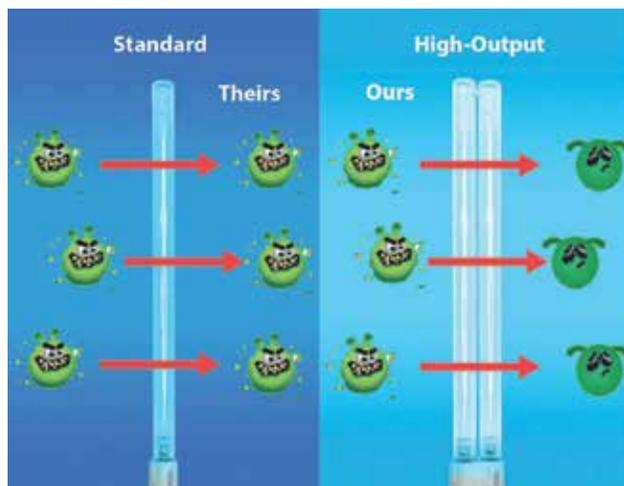
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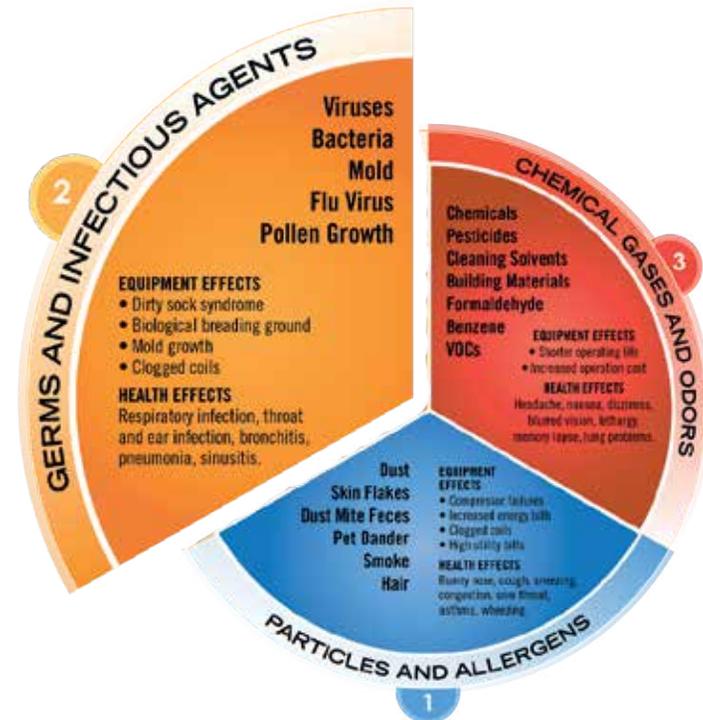
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This is home. Here's why.

Recently, a couple moving back to Las Cruces after 40 years away, stopped into Ashley Homestore to shop for furniture for their new residence.

They wound up talking with store owner Wanda Bowman about their needs, when all of a sudden, the husband looked up and said, "You're the same lady who sold us our first washer and dryer in 1975!"

Indeed, Wanda has sold furniture and appliances in Las Cruces since 1971, when she first moved to town with her husband, Bob, and their growing family. Since 2003, the Bowmans have operated the Ashley Homestore in Las Cruces, continuing the tradition of customer service and community involvement as they grow their business and develop loyal repeat customers. Bob passed away in 2013, but son Paul continues as general manager.

"Ashley has been rated the No. 1 product in America, and there's good reason for that," Wanda said. "They produce quality furniture and stand behind their products." For five decades now, the Bowmans have been active in the community, working with charitable organizations, and supporting New Mexico State University.

A perfect example of the Bowmans' civic-mindedness is the "All I Want for Christmas" program. Each holiday season, Wanda provides furniture for families who have faced hardships during the previous 12 months.

In addition, the Bowmans understand the needs of the Las Cruces consumer, active in the community, they work with customers to find the best values and ideal products to help houses become homes. For the Bowmans, and Ashley Homestore, this is home.



Wanda and Paul Bowman

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