

{creating year-round outdoor spaces

BY ABBY VETTER



go with the pros

When it comes to larger outdoor projects, it's important to choose the right people. "Do your homework, and go with a seasoned professional," says Cory. Jason Cory is a Belgard Authorized Gold Level Installer, ICPI and NCMA Certified Concrete Paver and Segmental Retaining Wall Installer. His warranties are backed in writing by Belgard, ICPI and NCMA, and an industry first Five Year Workmanship Warranty comes with all of Dogwood Landscaping's hardscape installation services.

The weather's growing cooler, but that's no reason to hibernate indoors. Instead, extend your living space outward by creating charming, well-lit spaces that will provide cozy gathering spots all year round. How? We got the dirt from lawn guru Jason Cory, whose landscape firm, Dogwood Landscaping, was recently featured on the DIY Network's *Indoors Out*. "A few well-executed projects can turn your yard into your dream space—no matter the weather," says Cory.



Perfect the Patio. "For that perfect outdoor space, you'll need a patio that's built to last," Cory begins. Standard concrete patios, which can crack and weather, are a thing of the past. Cory also advises against texturing your existing concrete. "This may initially look nice, but it actually weakens the concrete," he explains. Paver patios are what Cory recommends. "Pavers offer more character and durability, and they come in an array of colors, textures and shapes to blend with an existing landscape." At half the cost and twice the strength of stone patios, a long-lasting paver patio lays the foundation for an inviting outdoor room.

Light it Up. "In the fall, when it gets dark earlier, most people aren't home from work in time to see their homes bathed in sunlight, but a house accented by outdoor lighting is just as welcoming," observes Cory. Placing low voltage outdoor lighting in trees is a noninvasive way to cast the perfect glow, and the energy cost is negligible. "Running 10 low-voltage outdoor lighting units is actually equivalent to running one 60-watt light bulb," he says.

Fire Away. A cozy fire in a fire pit or outdoor fireplace is a creative way to add natural lighting outdoors—while also exuding warmth on chilly evenings. And think of the s'mores! For more discriminating palates, a full gourmet kitchen surrounded by rich Brazilian hardwood flooring and roofing is the perfect outdoor dining environment.

For large parties, Cory's team has also constructed fire pits up to seven feet in diameter. "When you have an inviting outdoor entertaining area, the first place everybody heads is outside," he says. "A great space naturally invites more face time with the family and neighbors."

Put Family First. Family time was exactly what Cory had in mind when he designed his own outdoor living space. "My kids love water, so I included a waterfall. We want our kids to enjoy being at home and bringing their friends around," he says. "For clients, we've done everything from simple patios to pools to full outdoor kitchens, but, honestly, our most rewarding job is promoting healthy families." Now that's a worthy goal, regardless of the season.

For a free consultation on your yard's potential, call Jason Cory at 678-368-7000 or visit www.dogwoodlandscaping.com for information on his landscape design, installation and lawn maintenance services.

Photos of homes of Dogwood Landscaping clients; taken by Summer Adams.



FREE



Little Black Dress Discount: Score a FREE precut Belgard fire pit or a \$1,000 credit toward the fireplace/pit of your choice from Dogwood Landscaping with the installation of 500 square feet of paver or stone patio! Expires 1/31/11.

