

Sand, sweat and tears: The gritty art of repairing drywall.
BY BOB TEDESCHI



Doormats that greet you stylishly when you come in from the cold. BY RIMA SUQI

Home

The New York Times

IN THE GARDEN

ON LOCATION
Jackson, Wyo.

Brown Is The New Green

Many Californians are facing the reality that in the arid West a water-gobbling swath of lawn is no longer realistic.

By STEVEN KURUTZ

Yolanda Muñoz was leading a double life, water-wise.

As an accountant for the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District, in Monterey, Calif., Ms. Muñoz heard grim predictions of water shortages and rationing as the state's continuing drought intensified. But each night, she returned to her home in an older neighborhood on the peninsula, which had a lawn so large and lush she and her husband, Ed, put in a bench.

"We had a beautiful parklike setting," Ms. Muñoz said. "It had a lot of curb appeal. I hated to give up the lawn."

Still, it seemed like the only responsible



WINNI WINTERMEYER FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

Yolanda Muñoz replaced the green lawn in front of her house in Monterey, Calif., with drought-resistant plants to help save water.

thing to do. How could she continue to justify this profligate use of water in the face of such widespread shortages?

Contemplating life without a lawn, she moved through the stages of grief, from anger ("I want this lawn!") to bargaining ("We thought about doing a design where half the lawn would be saved and half ripped out, like a kidney shape") to depression ("I felt it was kind of hypocritical of me") and finally to acceptance ("We contacted Hill and Dale," a local landscape architecture firm).

Four months ago, Ms. Muñoz replaced her guilty pasture with a mix of drought-tolerant plants and non-thirsty boulders and gravel. In place of the daily sprinkler rinse, she now has a water-conserving drip irrigation system. She is slowly adjusting to the native look, she said, scattering wildflower seeds that will sprout this spring.

With rainfall at below-normal levels for several years, and streams dry and reservoirs critically low, particularly in northern areas — even after the storms at the end of last month — many Californians are facing the reality that in the arid West the

CONTINUED ON PAGE D4



In designing a house for Clay Heighen and Debra Caudy, above, Larry Pearson, their architect, took their requests for outdoor space seriously. "I decided to make the entry to the home an outdoor room rather than a porch or foyer," he said.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY TREVOR TONDRO FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES



Throws That Are A Throwback

Airline blankets designed by Alexander Girard for the glamour days of travel. Page 3.

Roll Out the Snow Carpet

The coldest room in the house can sometimes be the most welcoming. Page 6.

ON LOCATION

Jackson, Wyo.

Roll Out the Snow Carpet



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1. The furnishings in the outdoor room were chosen to withstand the elements, but Dr. Heighten and Dr. Caudy bring the cushions and the Moonlight pendant lamp from Aldo Bernardi indoors when they're not in residence.

2. The hanging fixture just inside the front door is a Random Light by Bertjan Pot for Moooi.

A couple wanted their home to be open to the great outdoors. Their architect took them at their word.

By RIMA SUQI

"This is where we want to be" was the first thought that Clay Heighten and his wife, Debra Caudy, had when they stepped off the plane at the Jackson Hole Airport eight years ago. As Dr. Heighten said, "Those mountains really make an impact."

Dr. Heighten, 57, a physician-turned-entrepreneur, and Dr. Caudy, 56, an oncologist, live in Dallas with the youngest of their four children (the other three are grown), and were in town visiting a business associate of Dr. Heighten's who had built a house with an enviable view of the mountains. But then, Jackson is virtually surrounded by mountains — the Teton

Range to the west and the Gros Ventre Range to the east — so it's hard to avoid having a spectacular view.

It wasn't long before they were looking for a house of their own here. Despite the recession, however, inventory was low and prices were not. "We saw a lot of tired log cabin homes," Dr. Heighten said. "And none were what we wanted."

What they wanted was a house that took full advantage of the outdoors. What they got was one that did that to an extent that may have surprised them. But then they took the unusual step of delegating almost all the decisions to their designer.

After buying a five-acre lot for \$1.2 million in 2011, they more or less turned it over to Larry Pearson of the Pearson Design Group in Bozeman, Mont., whose firm had a 5,400-square-foot home built and furnished for them in just 16 months, for about \$4 million, Dr. Caudy said.

"Larry really just sort of took over this

whole house," she said. "We let him have the control."

To the extent that they gave Mr. Pearson direction, Dr. Heighten said, it was limited to general requests. "We wanted the home to blend with the outside," he said. "We wanted to be able to leave the doors open, and walk in and out. And have living areas outside."

Mr. Pearson took them at their word. And in place of a formal entry hall, he substituted an outdoor room.

Of course, it has a fireplace, something that comes in handy when the weather is frigid and the snow is knee-deep, as it is in Wyoming during the winter. And there are sliding barn doors, in case it gets too windy, which isn't uncommon, either.

But what's a little discomfort when you're surrounded by this kind of beauty?

As Mr. Pearson pointed out, "The entry actually has the best view in the whole house."

It also has a floor that's often covered in snow, but that doesn't seem to trouble his clients. Then again, they moved in last fall, so this is their first winter, Dr. Heighten said: "We don't have that much experience."

He added: "I think in January and February, we won't use that front area that much. But we've been out there in late October, when it was 25 degrees. And we had a fire going and the blankets, and it was great."

The furniture was chosen to withstand the elements, although he said that he and Dr. Caudy do bring the cushions and the pendant light in when they're not here.

For her part, Dr. Caudy seems philosophical about the challenges of outdoor living in Wyoming.

"The home is art, in and of itself — that's what people say: It's a piece of art," she said. And "of all the rooms, people love that front deck."