

# Homes & Gardens

presented by:



Rako suggests using stain-

less steel or hot-dipped, galva-

nized nails, bolts and washers.

basements is not having ade-

quate head room," said Rako.

"Check the head room where

Rako, if there is a post —

floor above.

leave it. It's supporting the

the beams are." And, chuckles

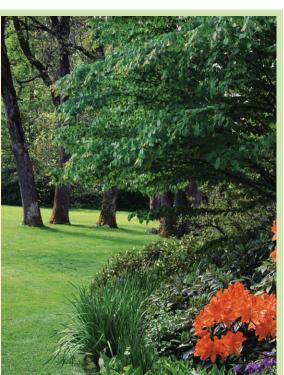
"The biggest problem with



Does your neighbor have the Worst Turf on Earth?
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Fifth Third Bank is teaming up with *ThisWeek Community* Newspapers and Mix 97.1 to bring you the Worst Turf on Earth Contest.

See inside this section for details.



## New trends in basement refinishing

By SUZY WEINLAND Spring Homes Contributor

In need of more useable space but don't want to add on to your existing home? Consider your basement.

Today's basement refinish is more than just white or gray paint applied to cinderblock walls and concrete floors. Today's basements are an extension of your home.

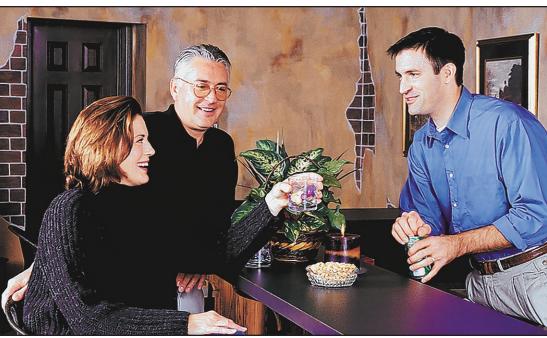
According to Joe Poland, owner of Joe Poland Construction in Johnstown, anything goes when it comes to today's basements.

"The biggest trend I've seen is putting in half-baths, full-baths, direct-vent fire-places. These are gas-burning fireplaces that vent out the wall so you don't have piping going up the roof.

"Thirty years ago you nailed studs to the block, put dry wall on it and put cheap indoor-outdoor carpet. Homeowners today are putting in more upgraded materials," said Poland.

Dan Rako, vice-president of the Stonehenge Company, builders of new residential homes, condos and offices, said, "All the basement finishes we do are very similar to the upstairs. Kitchens, wet bars, apartments, saunas, gymnasiums, built-in TVs, movie theaters ... anything you can think of upstairs you can do in the basement, especially the movie theaters because there is no light coming in. I've even done workout facilities and built lockers."

A very recent and revolutionary upgrade in flooring is a "tongue-and-groove" sub-



floor system called DRIcore that is available at several area home-improvement stores and sells for around \$1.50 a square foot. The underneath looks much like the "prong" part of an egg carton that allows "breathing space" between the concrete and the installed floor, which eliminates moisture problems and helps keep floors warm and comfortable in the winter. DRIcore can be topped with carpet, tile and laminate any flooring you'd use in the rest of your house.

Rako said, "Basement concrete is covering up gravel.
And, it can be uneven. You may want to create another floor on top of that, but you can lose head room." He mentions that DRIcore isn't very thick, so you only lose about an inch of headroom.

And ceilings are now dry walled and made to look like the rest of the home, with a variety of lighting choices available. "You can make your basement look more like livable space," said Poland.

As for the walls, there is a do-it-yourself wall system available through Owens Corning. But, Poland said, "You still can't beat studs and dry wall." Then you can insulate, paint and make it look — and feel — just like the rest of your house.

While a basement refinish is definitely the kind of work you can do yourself, Poland and Rako suggest calling in the professionals for electric and plumbing. Both must be up to code and safe for you and any future residents.

"Basic framing and insulation is relatively easy," said Poland, "but the treated wood out there today, which use to be treated with arsenic, is now treated with a chromium base for water and bug-proofing. This treatment has a reaction and corrodes typical nails and fasteners."

## 1. Waterproof first. Paint existing walls with a dry-

1. Waterproof first. Paint existing walls with a dry-lock paint. For basements with occasional water problems, consider a French drain around the inside perimeter. Make sure your sump pump is in good operating order. Also check the outside of your house and ensure good grading and drainage.

Simple steps to

- 2. Create a "fire egress." If adding a bedroom, there must be an escape window (this is a national code and an Ohio building code). There must also be a way to get out of the window and the window well.
- 3. Hire professionals for plumbing and electric. For safety and resale value, use licensed contractors, get a building permit and have the jobs inspected.
- 4. Before installing dry wall, consider the ceiling type and whether you'll need soffits to surround heating pipes. Make sure that you have enough lighting. Make provisions for telephone and cable.
- 5. Don't adhere dry wall or flooring directly to existing walls and floors. Frame the basement to create air space between the block and the finished wall. The same goes for the floor.

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### Ornamental grasses

Attractive and functional tools for landscape design

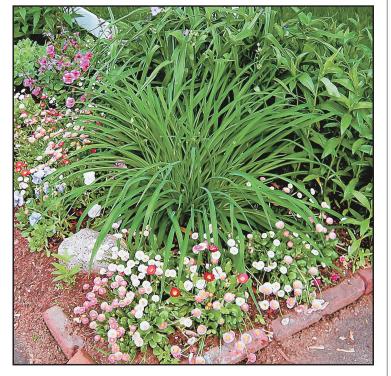
By SUSAN OLDHAM Spring Homes Contributor

The wide varieties of colors, sizes, shapes and textures make ornamental grass an interesting addition to the usual assortment of plants, trees and shrubs that are widely used in landscaping. Landscaping grasses are durable, reliable and require little maintenance. In fact, ornamental grasses may flourish in poor soil where other plants won't survive.

Grasses can function as a vertical element in gardens where trees or shrubs are impractical. They also add movement and rustling sounds to an outdoor space — even during the winter months.

The local popularity of ornamental grass is largely due to its versatility and ability to withstand the extreme climate changes that characterize central Ohio. There are a wide variety of ornamental grasses that will add creative touch to any landscaping project — and like any landscaping project, thoughtful planning is important

Ornamental grasses grow in



two different ways.
Understanding the way that
the different grasses grow can
prevent a lot of frustration.
Some varieties of ornamental
grasses are rhizamatous.
Rhizamatous grasses spread via
underground stems, or runners, and make excellent
ground covers.

Other varieties form in clumps. These clumps will

increase in size, but the grass will not become invasive.
Clumping types will require division every few years, which helps to keep them attractive and healthy.

Choosing the right variety of grass for each landscape project is an important decision and may require the advice of an See ORNAMENTAL GRASS

05/11

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DUBLIN VILLAGER, PAGE C3

### SPRING Homes & Gardens

A special advertising supplement to ThisWeek

May 11, 2006

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Oakland Nursery was founded in 1940 on Maize Pike in Columbus. The nursery was relocated in 1950 by its founder, Gustav Reiner, to its current location on Oakland Park Ave.

In 1990, Oakland opened another retail complex in the city of Delaware and in 2005, a complex in the city of Dublin. The Columbus, Delaware and Dublin retail complexes combined make the meaning of the motto "23 Acres of Gardening Pleasure" a reality.

Since 1940, Oakland Nursery has been serving the gardening needs of central Ohio. They have grown by exceeding the expectations of clients and



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Oakland Nursery is central Ohio's four-season garden destination, with one-stop shopping

for distinctive garden art, exquisite home décor and giftware and pottery. They offer seasonal and year-round gardening supplies, including holiday decorating needs, such as live Christmas trees, wreaths, greens, poinsettias, ornaments.

special seasonal events. Oakland Nursery provides customers with planting and delivery services. In addition. customers may call 614-268-3834 for details on landscape design services, 614-268-3444 for more information on irriga-

gifts, holiday collectibles and

tion services or 614-268-9466 for interiorscape services.

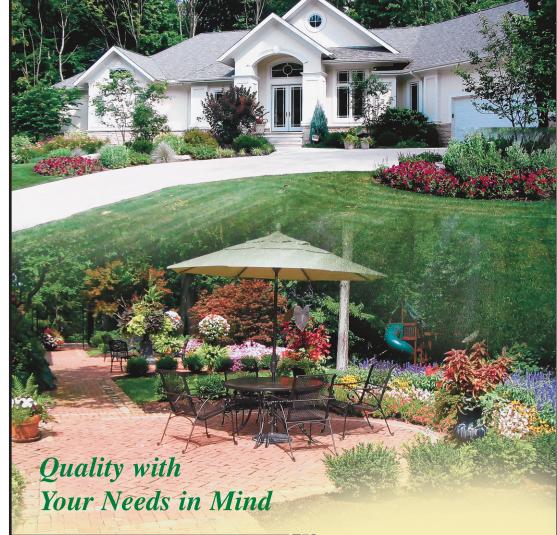
A horticulturally-trained staff is waiting to serve you. Co-presidents Paul S. Reiner and John Reiner invite you to visit between 8 a.m. and 9 p.m. Monday through Saturday and

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ply of plant material for Mom. Select from colorful annuals, trees and shrubs, tropical house plants, water plants, perennials and thousands of hand-potted roses. Can't decide? Give Mom an Oakland Nursery gift certificate, available in any amount.



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#### **ORNAMENTAL GRASS**

Continued from previous page

expert. Some things to consider when choosing a variety of grass are height, color, water availability and spacing.

A rhizamatous grass will do well where it has a lot of room to grow. Loriope is an example of a rhizamatous grass that grows well in central Ohio. "Loriope is a good selection for erosion control," said Ron Talk of Talk Landscape Design, Inc.

But there are better choices for landscaping smaller areas. "Some areas do not have a lot of room for a large-growing shrub, so the best thing to use is a dwarf fountain grass or a blue fescue," said Talk.

Temperature is also a variable when determining which type of ornamental grass to use a yard or garden landscape. Cool-weather grasses grow better in cooler weather such as central Ohio's. The cool-weather grasses also require division more often than the warm-sea-

son varieties. Calamagrostis, or feather



reed grass, is one variety that will grow well in drier areas. This cool season, clump-forming grass is a popular choice for landscaping projects. Some varieties of grass that grow well in central Ohio are "Blue fescue, feather reed grass, fountain grass and variegated ribbon grass," said Talk.

According to Talk, ornamental grass can be planted any time — as long as the ground is

"The best time to buy grasses would be in the late spring when new growth comes up," said Talk. Except for cutting

back the foliage in late winter and dividing the grass in the spring, there is very little maintenance required to grow healthy grass.

Ornamental grasses often change colors throughout the year, which provides multi-seasonal interest. They can be used in containers, as accents, and around ponds. Functioning as barriers to hide unattractive home appliances, "grasses can be used to screen electric boxes or air conditioners," said Talk. "They also make great borders for walkways, herb gardens and formal plantings.

"Small grasses are used around ponds for color and soft texture," said Talk. Grasses also pair well with perennials and can be used in container gardening. Many of them can also be used in fresh or dried floral arrangements. Bottom line: The versatility of ornamental grasses makes them attractive and functional tools for landscape design.



Does your neighbor have the

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#### Go to www.thisweeknews.com

to register and upload a photo. Nominations accepted through May 24. You, our readers and listeners will choose the Worst Turf on Earth by viewing photos online and voting May 27-June 8.





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