

SUBMITTED PHOTOS

Before, two decks, shown above left, and overgrown plants made up the Ryans' backyard in Lake Oswego. During excavation, shown above right, the decks were removed and a curved area was outlined for the new rock wall.

## Patio: Ryan says the patio is her favorite room in the house

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ral stone — curves are just the way to go. They just wanted a more natural, informal look," Larson said. "Most people want that natural, peaceful feeling for their garden."

The wall also serves as an element to solve drainage and erosion problems. Before, water from the upper portion of the yard had no where to go and cascaded onto the decks below.

Now, the water is soaked within a hidden French drain behind the wall and funneled to a lower elevation. In other words, the natural waterfall is now caught before water can build up behind the uniquely shaped wall.

"The Ryan's backyard had potential. Mike and Ana, from the start, were receptive, flexible (and) tolerant. I think they wanted something truly custom and of high quality," Goddard said.

To create a wall that would not only serve functionally — as a buffer from water runoff — but also as a focal point, Goddard created a design that incorporated both, with an Oregon twist.

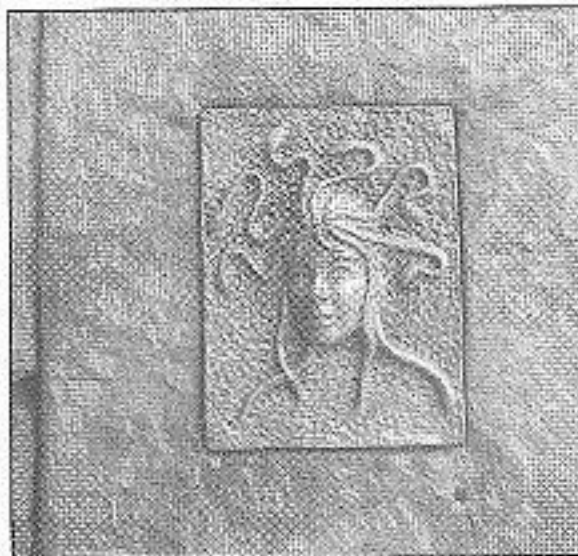
"The Ryan's wanted some vivid color for their wall," Goddard said. "We used five different types of stone from Montana and some of the pieces were very difficult to shape. There was the practical issue of

total cost, so we decided that some of the local basalt would keep the cost down and give the wall a Northwest flavor."

Each rock within the wall was hand-carved to fit and mortared on the backside out of view, said Larson. Goddard created changes in elevation on the wall for added interest and added three small ledges in the corner — a perfect spot for seasonal greens or candles.

"The shelves and niches were one of the many design elements that spawned during the building process. They were actually a trade for some massive feature stones we had discussed earlier in the project," Goddard said.

With stone works throughout the Portland-metro area as well as at Timberline Lodge, the his-



STAFF PHOTO / VERN UYETAKE

With the homeowner's permission, Matt Goddard inserted his signature Medusa symbol in the rock wall, something he's done at several completed projects.

toric Stadium High School in Tacoma and fireplaces in Hood River, Goddard's craft is custom designed for each space. The Ryan's wall is uniquely theirs and now the livelihood of the backyard space.

Just next to the patio area, a small number of sandstone and limestone rocks created a staircase leading to the upper part of the yard. The marigold rocks look almost metallic as the sun hits them.

"I love when the sun hits them in the morning," Ryan said.

And from several rooms in the house, the Ryan's have views of the backyard — and that was the idea.

"When I design a garden, it's very important to see what it looks like from the interior. Ana wanted wildlife and relatively

low maintenance," Larson said.

"The plants — some natives — attract wildlife, primarily birds, and beneficial insects. Also, a birdbath, and some rocks with a natural depression on top hold water, which attracts the birds too."

Above the steps a shady pathway with stepping stones and shrubs will thrive with little care. Before this area was avoided but is now used as a mini-park. Ryan said she is excited to spend her first summer within the new backyard.

"I'm out here a lot; my youngest is also out here a lot too — with friends, running around the path and on the wall (while playing) with action figures," Ryan said.

At night, lights on a timer illuminate the wall and beckon the Ryans into their new space — which blends classic elements with functionality.

"It's my favorite room in the house," Ryan said. "It's a nice, private backyard. It's really peaceful. And I don't have to dust and vacuum it."

For more information about Savant Garden Design in Lake Oswego, visit the Web site at [www.savantgardendesign.com](http://www.savantgardendesign.com). For more information about Poetry in Stone in Portland, visit [www.poetryinstone.com](http://www.poetryinstone.com).