

THE MOUNTAIN WEST COMES HOME TO CHICAGO

Even though they couldn't spend their entire lives on vacation, one couple found a way to bring a bit of vacation back home with them.

BY DANIEL G. JACOBS MANAGING EDITOR

IF THE MOUNTAIN won't come to Mahomet, Mahomet must go to the mountain, or so goes the saying. Well, one couple, with the help of Grant & Power Landscaping, has done both.

The longtime Grant & Power clients regularly retreat to a vacation home in the beautiful and verdant mountains of Colorado, but the couple wanted to bring a little bit of that back to their North Chicago neighborhood. They'd already planted scores of quaking aspens but wanted a trickling stream flowing past their remodeled A-frame home leading to a pond and sitting areas.

Enter Grant & Power.

A large, once relatively bare lot was transformed into a Colorado mountain-style property with the addition of evergreens, quaking aspens, a variety of flowers and shrubs, and the longer than 50-ft. stream that drops about 10 ft. as it meanders its way past the home.

"It's amazing; it doesn't look like the same house," says Jan-Gerrit Bouwman, senior vice president of Landscape Architecture, sales manager and partner with the West Chicago-based Grant & Power Landscaping. "This project was pure synergy. Several of our company people were involved to create

what it is, and the clients were heavily involved."

Challenging logistics

It wasn't all smooth sailing, however. There were obstacles along the way, including buried utility lines that made placing and digging a pond challenging. And because the couple wanted a stream to run right next to their home, the company had to take extra care when installing the boulders to prevent damage. Carting the tons of heavy granite, aqua blue and Wisconsin boulders about 200 ft. from the road to build the stream, was challenging.





Grant & Power also installed a couple of natural stone bridges over the water feature, one of which was so large, a crane had to be brought in for proper placement. The water is cycled back using one of the largest pumps the company has ever used. The bridge also gives visitors a glimpse of the waterfall that drops the last few feet into the pond.

About 15 of Grant & Power's 90 employees — installation crews, designers, salespeople and a pond crew — were



involved at the site. The company has worked at the home for years and continues to do projects for the couple.

In addition to the stream, the company installed walkways, including one leading to the front of the home, a porch, a driveway, retaining walls, a patio and sitting areas by the stream.

The homeowners provided the entire vision for the project, which had advantages and disadvantages, Bouwman says. It made planning a bit more difficult because changes

Opposite. Grant & Power transformed a turfgrass-dominated view into a mountain-style vista.

This page. A 50-ft.-long stream provides a soothing sound and incredible views. Walkways make the landscape features accessible.

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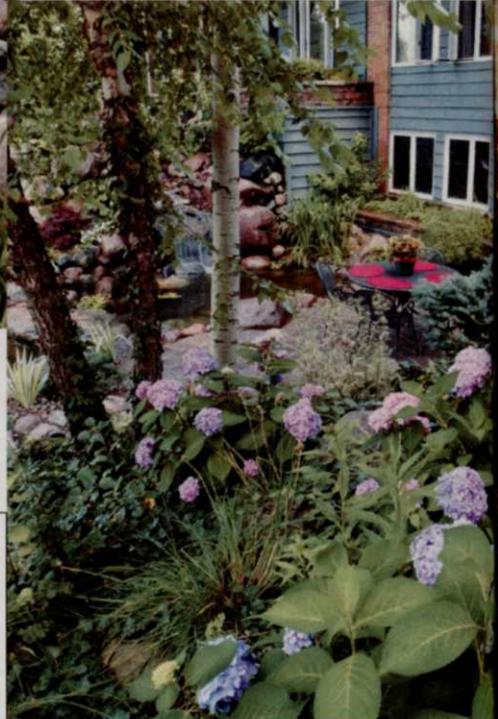
sometimes had to be made midproject. But the clients respected suggestions from Grant & Power.

"The customer is extremely important in this," Bouwman says. "He had the vision, and we were able to feed off of that."

For example, the central water feature originally was going to be just a



Above: You can follow the stream along its 10-ft. drop to the pond and landings. **At right,** hydrangas in full bloom compliment the other perennials, much of it installed by the owners.



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small pond, but it evolved into the 50-plus-ft. stream that drops down as it passes the front of the home. The owners wanted to see and hear the water from their home.

Grant & Power installed a series of steps and landings all along the water feature for the homeowners and their visitors to enjoy when the weather permits. Decorative concrete block walls were used to create planter boxes at the entrance to the home and along the foundation.

The homeowners spend much of their time and energy on planting gardens, but the crews from Grant & Power installed a number of plants to enhance the grounds.

Among the plantings were: Endless Summer Hydrangea, different types of hostas, astilbes, grasses and irises. There aren't many big plants because the property already had plenty of trees, perennials and ground cover, Bouwman says.

The project earned Grand & Power a merit award at the Professional Landcare Network's 39th annual Environmental Improvement Awards. **LMI**