

HOME ON THE RANGE

Landscaping elements at a Rochester home evoke a Western motif

BACKSTORY: When these homeowners moved from Colorado to Michigan and bought this property near downtown Rochester about five years ago, they demolished the home that was on it and built anew (AZD Associates Inc. and Watson Custom Builders). "They moved here to be near their grandchildren, but still wanted the landscaping to feel like where they had come from in Colorado, where they had a 1,300-acre working cattle ranch," explains landscape designer Ryan Youngblood, of Rochester-based R. Youngblood & Co.

FENCE ME IN: A rustic fence discovered on the property was used as art. "It reminded the homeowners of their ranch, so we showcase it in the backyard," Youngblood explains.

TREE-MENDOUS: Adding to the few trees that were already there, Youngblood's team brought in a dozen or so new trees.

GO WEST, YOUNG MAN: Youngblood used a variety of large stones, boulders, and plants that would evoke the West, including yucca ("very Western and very drought-tolerant"), as well as a lot of natural, free-flowing species, including hameln grass and Russian sage.

IN THE LIMELIGHT: Youngblood and principal designer Kurt Schaus chose a limelight hydrangea variety because of its durability and long bloom time, as well as its winter aesthetics.

COLOR CUES: Red canna and purple-pink coneflower add zest to the layout throughout the season, while large redbud trees announce spring with vibrant purple-pink blooms.

DIVINE DISGUISE: Boston ivy grows on a wall next to the property that's the backside of a manufacturing plant no longer in operation.

GIDDY-UP!: "The homeowners had sculptures of two bucking colts, and that was our jumping-off point — where to place them for maximum viewing." You can see the sculptures straight through the front door all the way to the backyard, where they stand with the found vintage fence as a backdrop."

PLANTER'S PUNCH: Custom-made planters of corten steel feature agave, and "we like to use asparagus fern and licorice plant," says Youngblood, who relies on team member Andrew VanHarken to oversee planter displays. ryoungblood.com. — *By Megan Swoyer*

