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Happy New Year

By Arthur Navarrette
Executive Care Landscaping

I hope everyone had a good Christmas and a good New Year. We all tend to celebrate it a little differently, but ultimately it is a time of celebration. Hopefully you spent time with family, friends or reading a good book. I personally love reading the Bible and maybe going for a hike or skiing. Since I am still healing from my back surgery, I cannot do either of those activities, but for those of you that can, I am most happy for you.

Winter is a more difficult time to find work for my men, however this winter has been busy for us, which I am grateful for. Thank you for your business. We landscape year around and always take the necessary precautions whether it be winter or summer.

The job we are featuring was completed this last November, so the plants are still quite small, but it will be a great job to keep track of. It took us a month to complete with four men. This yard is larger than it appears in the photos. We also did some work in the backyard, but it was not a complete redo like the front. We mostly added plants where there were spaces and redid the drip irrigation. Bonnie, my client was very pleasant to work with. She let me know what was

important to her but left most of the design and plant selections to me. She had a bad experience working with a prior landscaper and wanted to be sure that it wouldn't happen again. I assured her that it will never happen with Executive Care.

Prior to starting the job, I discussed with Bonnie that we were going to remove all the plants but leave the trees. The plant selection prior was awful. I have never seen so many Liriopes planted in a yard. If you google it, you will see it is a small dark green lily type plant. It is great in small amounts and favors shade not the sun, therefore many of their tips were burned. This front yard has afternoon sun. Whoever did this did not know their plants nor had any idea of design. Maybe they just didn't care, but I am not happy when I come across jobs like this that were planted 3 to 5 years ago. I would much rather replace a landscape that is old and or overgrown. The newer landscapes cause the owner to doubt us as well. As the saying goes, one bad apple can spoil the whole bunch and building confidence back takes a bit. We must assure the client that we do not work like that. That is why I write these editorials, so the client already has a read on me. I publish our jobs so that they have the

confidence that when they hire us, they will get a great landscape. I am the only landscape company owner that consecutively writes and publishes throughout the year.

Landscapes are not cheap, and the cost is determined by what we are doing and how large the area is. Let me give you an example. If a job costs approximately \$30K but the money available is \$24K, we have several ways we can deal with it. We accept credit cards and use Square. If that is not an option, we can complete the job in phases. This might mean we do the lights and mulch later, or the client can do the mulch and save on the labor.

We will probably be the most expensive company, like I have said many times, but we are more thorough, which saves the customer money in the future. We will amend the soil which adds cost, we will create mounds giving depth and definition to the landscape, which also adds cost, and then we add boulders. I like to use very nice boulders. They are super colorful but twice the weight of moss rock, which in my opinion is unattractive, especially after the moss burns off. All boulders are sold by weight, so these being quartz based do add cost to the estimate, but they add so much to the landscape. With us, you will not have poor plant selection. You will have

beauty throughout the season and a sense that you paid a fair price for a job well done. These are some reasons as to why we are pricier than most, but you really get something for your money that you will be proud of. We have done landscapes without doing mounds or boulders to fit into the client's budget, but it is not my preference. I would much rather the client use square, but that is not my decision to make. We do it because I want my clients to get the right plants so that they can enjoy their yards for years to come. It makes such a difference when you come home and see your front yard or go into the backyard. The beauty created by the plants just calms our soul and it gives us peace, and who could not use more peace in their life?

Gardeners, not much happens in the winter months unless you planted a winter garden. Kale, Broccoli, Sweet Chard, and Cabbage are just some of the vegetables we are harvesting right now.

Until next time, Blessings to All.

Arthur



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