

Would you like to have a water garden in your yard?

By **TERRY MCPHERSON**
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

A water garden is a fun addition to your yard and maybe even get the sound of running water. A small water garden is easy to build and you can either just have plants in it or you can have goldfish and koi as well. There are a few things to consider to start with. First you must have your yard enclosed. Second, do you have pets that seem to like to get in water. Do you have other critters that visit your yard, skunks, raccoons, cats and large birds. If you are only interested in having plants in your water garden, then it is not going to be much trouble. But if you want fish then you have to plan carefully. One thing some water garden owners do is put netting above and around the water garden to protect their fish. This of course then adds to your maintenance, since in Fall you will have to clean a lot of leaves off it. So, consider these types of things as you decide if you want to go forward with your water garden.

Next consider your yard and where in the yard you might place a water garden. As always, location, location. Do you want it in a corner, or on back fence with things around three sides of it. Some people put it in center of yard and able to move all around the water garden. Most convenient for almost everyone is to check out sturdy polyethylene ponds, spillways and other items at Home Depot or other supply stores. If you only want to have plants in it then you do not have to get too big. But if you want fish, you need more space. It is nice that with

go around my water garden and they were delivered to my driveway. I used 4x12x6 patio wall bricks. You can select the color to work in your yard.

This is my finished water garden. It is about 8' wide and 16' long. The corner pond is about 24" tall and larger pond is recessed so it



is about 18" tall. I used two of the large ponds from Home Depot that I ordered. I used garden wall bricks to build walls and then capped them with the white stones. I have one pump in the bottom pond

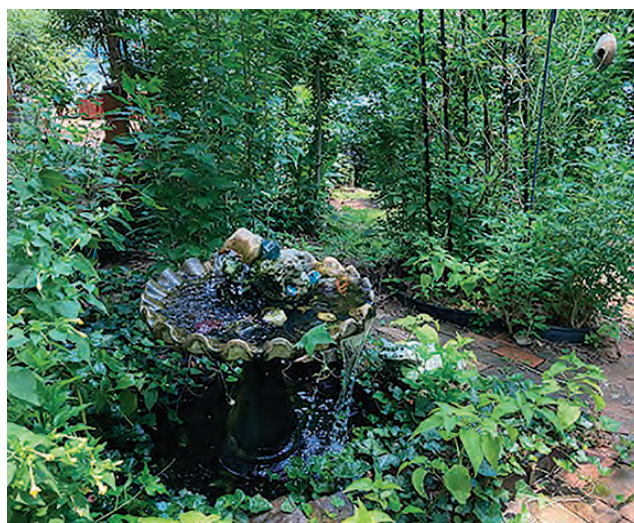


and it pumps water to the top pond. Then it flows down the overflow to the lower pond. I am using a Kodiak 165 gal pond that has a lip for it to flow into another pond. I have a St Croix 275 gal pond for the bottom pond. Both about \$350 each. I use a Beckett 900 gal pump for about \$100. A filter, UV filter and skimmer for the water system will cost more when you decide what you are



today's options you can shop online and order and have the pond, pumps and other things delivered right to your home. So, you do not need a truck to haul things home. I even ordered the patio wall bricks to use to build a wall to

going to use. Also, if using one pond or two, you need an overflow. You do not want water overflowing your pond liners and washing out under the bottom of ponds. I drilled a 3/4 inch hole about 1-2 inches down from the top of



This water feature of a fountain with splashing water and lots of greenery shows what can be done on a limited budget. It was created from a small plastic swimming pool, an old birdbath, some shade cloth, a cheap pump and iron ore rocks. It is not deep enough for fish but is a soothing sound and a lovely focal point. It's been in our yard for 20+ years and we still enjoy it. Photo by Penny Hawkins

the lower pond. I put it where I could hide it. Then put in a fitting and on the outside of pond, ran a hose to a safe place for water to run into yard without washing out under my ponds.

You need to decide how you are going to filter and provide power for the pumps. You CANNOT run pumps

with extension cords. I ran a circuit that mounts on the fence and under the edge of pond and behind the retaining wall so you cannot see it. You need a GFI plug. When building and putting things together, you need to make sure to run your water line inside walls but not under the liner. I also ran power cords outside the liner and on top of the wall bricks but hidden. Easy to replace when time comes.

Don't be in a hurry as you start. You want the area leveled if you are using the plastic ponds. Also consider if you are going to dig a bit as well. Get the walls

built and set pond liners in and then see that they are level and walls in close to support liner. Fill to test how they fit the walls and how they sit on ground. Leave overnight for settling. Then use the pump you bought to empty the ponds.

Use sand under the pond liners to finish leveling and support all the bottom of the liner. Fill again and test how the top lip of pond meets your walls. Then finally fill ponds. Treat for taking out chlorine and then leave pond running a couple days before adding fish and plants. I found buying plants in a pot at one of the water garden stores better than buying roots and such online. Also, I found buying fish at water garden stores better too. The ones in pet stores are pretty small. I do buy all my chemicals online and fish food online. Depending on size of fish, you need to feed flakes or pellets. Feed twice a day what they will eat in 3-4 minutes. I also put in auto feeders in case I am not home. You need to check a few times a day that water is running. You need to top up water every week or so depending on weather.

My pond is available for viewing by appointment to get ideas and see how it all works. Email me at terry51@txoutlw.com.

Construction work begins on new Good Samaritan facility in Rusk

By **JO ANNE EMBLETON**
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Three months after announcing an adjustment in plans for a new facility to house the Rusk Cares – Good Samaritan program, officials are starting construction at 190 W. 2nd St.

"As most people know, our buildings were falling down around us. No heat in the winter, no hot water and maybe some coolness in the summer from the older-than-me air conditioner, so excitement cannot even describe how we all feel about having a new facility to work in," said Good Samaritan board president Barbara Jelley.

Local contractor Keith Sunday said workers began pouring concrete for the main building early morning on June 15, with hopes of beginning erection of a steel-frame building the following week. The main building, which will serve as site for food storage as well as house a thrift store that helps fund the food pantry operated by Good Sam, is 50-by-120 feet, and will feature a 30-by-50-foot protected drive-through, a 6-by-40-foot porch and a 10-by-22-foot ramp, created from locally sourced materials, Sunday said.

In March, a wooden train depot that served as a food storage site for the program was moved off the property, with volunteers transferring contents to nearby shipping containers. Other outbuildings also were

removed from the property, with a wood-frame building currently housing the Good Samaritan Thrift Store repurposed as a donation center



where volunteers can process items, Jelley said.

Initial plans called for construction of a new facility across town at a 245 S. Pinecrest St. site, but estimates based on a project designed by engineering students from UT – Austin, combined with the cost of needed infrastructure, were not economically feasible,



and would instead push plans for the much-needed project further down the road than desired.

Now, she said, "we will be able to expand our hours and days to better serve our neighbors. Return to a Client Choice Food Pantry, where clients have the opportunity to select their own food for their families. Add new Programs and a Client Resource Specialist to help identify and address other needs that our clients may have. And our clients will be able to walk around our expanded thrift store and not have to turn sideways to get through it."

Weather challenges aside, construction of the 6,000-square-foot building could be completed later this year, with programs operating at the new site soon after. Meanwhile, a capital campaign continues, ensuring the project is quickly finished.

"People out there really care about the community and when they have the opportunity to give back, they really do their best," Jelley said. "We could not do what we do without the community's support. We are 100% volunteer and all monies go directly to supporting our vi-

sion of a community that has food for to-day and hope for tomorrow."

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