

Award-Winning Transformation



Using Rosetta to create an “extension of the home”

## THE CHALLENGE

When Tom and Michelle McEldowney decided they wanted to re-do their heavily wooded backyard, they wanted to completely transform the landscape.

Part of the renovation included turning the McEldowney’s basement into a walkout, which required extensive retaining walls. They also wanted to create an outdoor kitchen, bar, dining area, and fire pit patio and to renovate an existing water feature. “What I really wanted was to create an extension of my home,” Michelle explained.



**PROJECT:** McEldowney Residence  
**CUSTOMER NAME:** Michelle and Tom McEldowney  
**LANDSCAPE CONTRACTOR/DESIGNER:** Going Green Landscapes and Lawn Care  
**MANUFACTURER:** Oberfields, Inc.  
**PROJECT LOCATION:** Powell, OH  
**WALL INSTALLER:** Going Green Landscapes and Lawncare  
**YEAR BUILT:** 2009

(continued on reverse)

Award-Winning Transformation

THE SOLUTION



“The goal was to create a useable and functional outdoor living space for entertaining, utilizing all existing space, as well as to add access to basement,” explained Joe Chiavaroli, owner of Going Green Landscapes and Lawn Care in Columbus, Ohio. “The challenge was using new products, attacking various grade changes and utilizing those elements to create a functional and aesthetically pleasing outdoor living space.”

One of the first issues Going Green had to tackle in designing this project was creating the walkout basement. The homeowner wanted the walkout to blend in with the rest of the house and outdoor living area so that it looked like it wasn't new, but rather like the house had been originally designed that way. This request led Going Green to choose Rosetta Hardscapes Outcropping Collection to build the retaining walls.

“When Oberfield's started producing Rosetta, we found it worked out really well for us with what we try to do for retainage, plus it had the natural stone look,” Chiavaroli said.

The elevation change from the front of the house to the back patio area down to the walkout basement patio also created design challenges. In the end, Going Green designed three separate levels for the project—the patio area for the walkout basement, the dining area, and the kitchen/bar area which contained two tiers.

For access to the different levels, Going Green incorporated Rosetta dimensional steps. These steps blended with the retaining walls and also with the natural stone incorporated in the kitchen design and basement siding, tying the two levels together. They chose Rosetta steps because they are cast in molds taken from natural stone—giving them the look and texture of natural stone, but with dimensional consistency which makes them ideal for safe and durable staircases.

“Rosetta cut way down on the man hours for installing these walls,” Chiavaroli said. “The savings is in the installation. It would have taken four or five guys to sort, cut and install natural stone but with this, you just need the equipment and one or two guys. It's a manufactured product so it fits together a little nicer than natural stone and cuts down on detail work.”

Due to the massive size of each block, the retaining wall did not require reinforcement, which saved Going Green even more man hours.

“You see so many different projects these days with really straight, square walls. What made our project dynamic was that there weren't clean lines. That's what I love about the wall—it's different. It's got a soft tone to it, yet it's sophisticated. I don't think the project would have the impact that it has had if it would have been straight retaining walls and square-type appearance,” Michelle said.

In total, Going Green installed 320 face feet of Rosetta Outcropping stones along with a Rosetta waterfall and pond feature. When completed, Going Green also put in many shade tolerant, low maintenance native perennials, and annuals and shrubs for a mix of fall color.

THE OUTCOME

“When my friends walk into my backyard, all they can say is ‘oh my god.’ From what it was then to what it is now... You just can't really put it into words. It's amazing,” says Michelle.

The project was awarded the grand prize in the third annual Ultimate Backyard Challenge Contest sponsored by Oberfield's, Inc. in 2009. The contest invited area landscapers to enter a project to be judged based on the project's use of space, creativity, workmanship, construction details and overall impression. The required elements included the use of Oberfield's pavers and an Oberfield's retaining wall product. Optional elements included fire elements, landscape lighting, an Oberfield concrete countertop or an outdoor kitchen.

“A high level of craftsmanship can be seen throughout this project. The details of the Rosetta walls, the drain, the backsplash and other finishing details demonstrate a commitment of quality by the contractor,” said contest judge Steven Maravich, ASLA, of Kinzelman Kline Gossman Studios.

