



Enjoy indoor comforts outside in a custom-made gazebo.

## Gazebos bring indoor comfort outside

(ARA) — For busy folks who don't have the time or the know-how to transform their outdoor space into a cozy garden room, outdoor structures like gazebos are a dream-come-true. Homeowners are turning to gazebos to transform their backyards into stylish outdoor living spaces, complete with indoor comforts.

Chet Beiler, owner of Amish Country Gazebos, agrees.

"People today want a covered retreat that adds distinction to their outdoor living areas," says Beiler. "They are looking for a focal point for their landscape, a way to upgrade their current deck, a special spot next to the pool to get away from the hot summer sun."

Gazebos have been a backyard staple for centuries. From ancient times, Egyptian and Roman gardens were a focal point of entertainment and leisurely activities. Today, these architecturally and aesthetically pleasing outdoor escapes are an extension of your living space — providing enjoyment and cool breezes on sultry summer days, a serene retreat, a relaxing nook to cuddle with a favorite book, and a charming yet functional room for entertaining.

Beiler says the first thing to consider before installing a gazebo is space and scale. "The larger your outdoor area, the bigger the gazebo you should install," he says.

"Decide if you want your gazebo to be a focal point in a corner of the yard, a poolside bungalow, or a great room with kitchen and dining areas. That will help you determine the best shape and size to suit your needs."

These current gazebo trends help you achieve the look and function to fit your needs:

### ■ Eye-catching

When it comes to landscape design, a gazebo is the finishing touch as an accent or backdrop in any landscape. Select a spot that draws the eye to the gazebo and creates a focal point of interest.

When selecting a gazebo, try to keep a unifying theme such as the same color or style that is consistent with your home's architectural design. Continue this theme by matching the roofing tiles with your home's or consider using materials or a "motif" that connects the gazebo to the house: wrought iron ornamentation, a shell or pineapple motif, the use of slate, or native stone.

### ■ Poolside paradise

Escape from the hot summer sun is just one of the many reasons people install gazebos. Poolside, they provide ample shade, a place for relaxing with the family, or to entertain friends. Add some

curtains that can be pulled for privacy and you have an instant 'changing room.' Add a splash of color with gorgeous floral and plant arrangements, and your pool is transformed, rivaling the best resorts, in your mini "tropical paradise."

### ■ Deck or patio enhancements

Adding a gazebo to an existing deck or patio is a great way to expand your living space without breaking your budget. Today's new outdoor rooms are being used in traditional ways for living space or for dining and cooking, complete with kitchens, ceiling fans and mood lighting.

Today's gazebos are great for multi-tasking spaces; serving as offices or recreation rooms by day- and intimate dining rooms at night. Trendy homeowners are wiring their gazebos for computers or flat screen televisions, or adding mega grills for entertaining.

### ■ The great room

The biggest trend in outdoor living is living large outdoors — literally. Outdoor rooms are clearly reflecting our indoor trends, with gazebos leading the way as the new "great room." Homeowners are installing very large gazebos, such as 40-foot rectangular options, which offer enough living space for a kitchen with a grill and refrig-

erator, a table for eight, and a few oversized chairs. It's the ultimate outdoor room with all the indoor comfort and style today's homeowners demand.

To create your perfect gazebo, visit [www.amishgazebos.com](http://www.amishgazebos.com) where you'll find design ideas to build a virtual prototype. Select from an array of designs and extra features.

These gazebos are hand-crafted by Amish carpenters and are available in either wood or maintenance-free vinyl. Starting at \$1,695 they are a priceless investment with a life-time guarantee.

Call 800-700-1777 for a free 40-page idea book filled with photos of dozens of home gazebos in real backyards, design tips and a complete collection of gazebo styles and accents.

## Inexpensive, eco-friendly green lawn care

(ARA) - Times are tough. The household budget is tight, and you are bombarded with the expectation of being green. Plus, you want a nice lawn. Are being eco-friendly and green compatible with a nice lawn? Yes, when you make use of some easy tips.

### ■ Mowing

A few easy maintenance procedures will help your mower last longer, saving you money, and give you a clean cut for a good-looking lawn. Change the oil, clean the air filter and remove debris from the air passages around the engine. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for this cost-saving maintenance.

Sharpen the blade every four to five mowings. A sharp blade cuts leaves rather than shredding them. This helps in two ways. First, a cut leaf heals quickly, resulting in an appealing, green lawn. Shredding leaves results in a pale lawn that is prone to disease. Second, a sharp blade cuts faster and easier, saving both fuel and time.

For northern lawn types such as Kentucky bluegrass, fescue and ryegrass, mow only to 2-1/2 inches. Mowing height varies for different grasses in Southern lawns: 1-1/2 inches for bermudagrass, 2-1/2 inches for St. Augustine grass, and 1 inch for centipede grass. For all grasses, only remove up to one-third of the height of your grass. Mulch your clippings and leave them on the lawn. This recycles nutrients back to the lawn and reduces the use of valuable landfill space. Both these actions are very eco-friendly.

### ■ Fertilizing

Returning clippings to the lawn does not replace all the nutrients used for growth. To keep your lawn green and healthy, supplement these clippings with a slow-release nitrogen fertilizer. "Universities recommend using slow-release nitrogen for lawns," says Mike Archer of Milorganite. "Eco-friendly Milorganite 5-2-0 contains over 85 percent slow-release nitrogen."

"Recommended nitrogen rates are also dropping," he adds. "Using Milorganite, with its non-staining iron, will help give lawns the deep, green color homeowner's desire, making up for using less nitrogen. Iron greens lawns without causing growth. This reduces mowing frequency and water use."

### ■ Seeding

Select seed varieties that are eco-friendly. For the central and northern parts of the United States, fine-leaved fescues, especially the newer varieties, give you a great looking lawn. By their

nature, fescues are water misers and require only low amounts of fertilizer. Fescues have improved to the point where they are used on many sports fields.

### ■ Watering

Irrigation is probably your largest single lawn care expense. To help save money, plant turf varieties such as fescues that are water misers. Irrigate to rooting depth. Frequent, shallow watering promotes shallow rooting. Shallow rooting results in lawns that are not drought resistant.

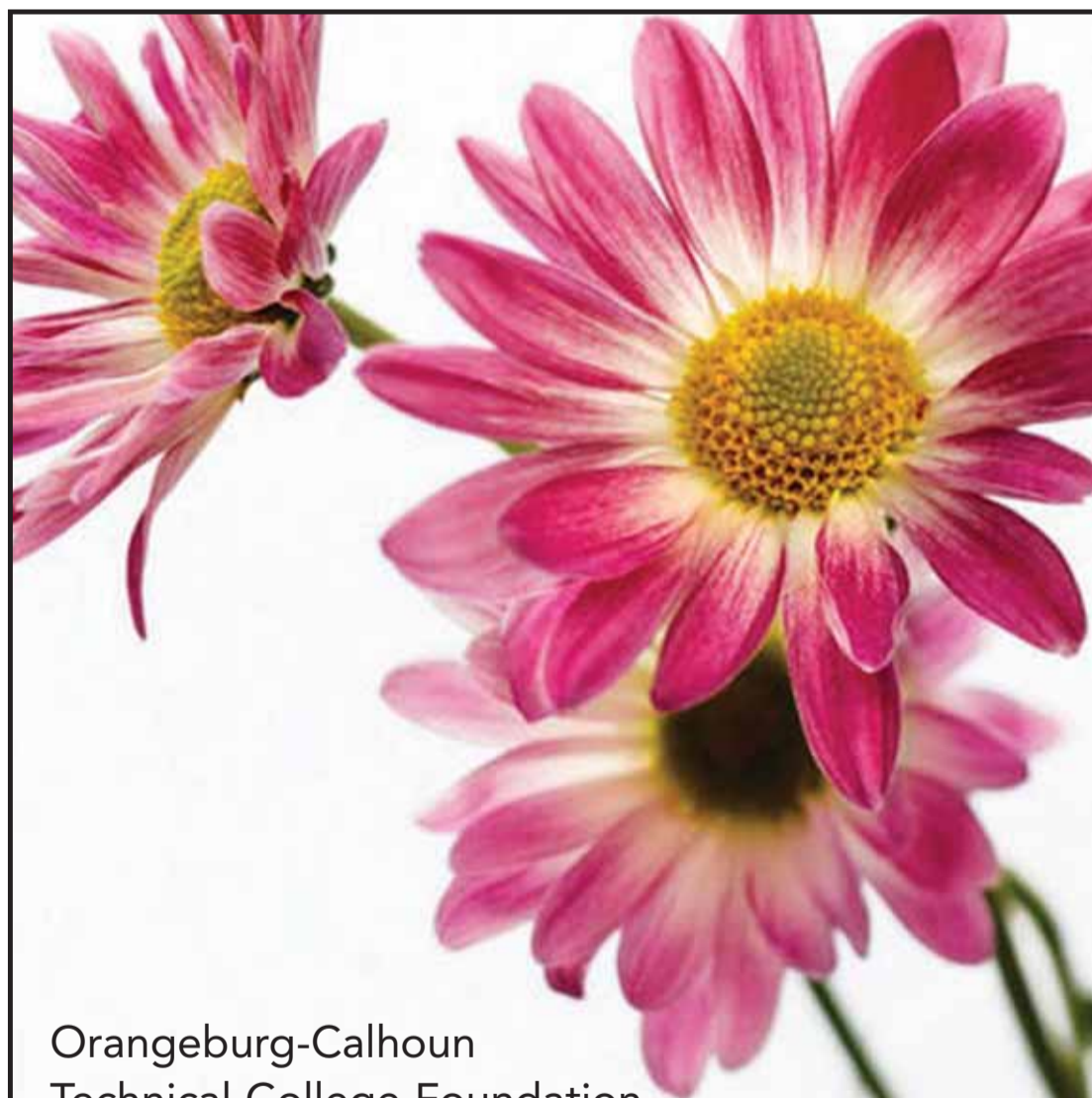
### ■ Pest control

Eco-friendly pest control is possible. Through a process called Integrated Pest Management, IPM, you make several eco-friendly decisions. First, you decide how much of a pest your lawn can tolerate without causing damage. Second, you choose an eco-friendly way to eliminate those pests your lawn cannot tolerate. Third, you raise plants that tend to be pest resistant. Each region of the country has different pests. Contact your local county horticultural agent for IPM tips for your area.

### ■ Native plantings

Another way to reduce the cost of your maintaining your lawn is to introduce native plants in your back lot, out of the way areas. This eco-friendly practice provides food and cover for wildlife. "Use an eco-friendly fertilizer such as Milorganite 5-2-0 to establish these areas," Archer advises. "Milorganite's slow-release nitrogen is gentle on slow starting native plants." Many nurseries and greenhouses sell native plants and can give you advice on those that are best for you.

**CrossCreek  
Clearing, LLC**  
Heavy-Duty  
Underbrush  
• Clearing  
• Mulching  
• Stump Grinding  
Residential & Commercial  
843.560.0073



Orangeburg-Calhoun

Technical College Foundation

## SPRING BRUNCH

Featuring a lecture and demonstration by accomplished gardener, columnist, & television personality

Amanda McNulty

Wednesday, May 7, 2008

10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

OCtech Math and Science Center

TICKETS GO ON SALE APRIL 1ST

Call 535.1424 for more information

3250 St. Matthews Road, Orangeburg, SC 29118  
803.535.1224 • 1.800.813.6519 • [www.octech.edu](http://www.octech.edu)

# Kubota

## has a new home at

### Pioneer Farm Equipment

#### Agricultural Dealer For over 30 years

HWY 301 North • 803-536-9411

1-800-849-9412



\*All the Kubota Wholegoods have 0% financing for 42 months  
FOR QUALIFIED BUYERS

# Kubota