Scott and Cheri Willett purchased their home in Parkview Meadows over 10 years ago. Cheri’s project list is never done. “I’m a project addict so I always have ideas in my head,” said Cheri. From changing fixtures, to changing carpet to hardwood, to repainting a room every few months, to adding a man cave in the basement, to adding a “sunset patio” in the side yard, and finally, the most extensive project – was to create an outdoor entertaining oasis surrounding a 20x40 in ground saltwater pool.

One of the first steps in creating the massive project was to design it. For years, the Willetts had been dreaming of a pool so they had lots of ideas. Cheri had been clipping pictures and kept them in a file. With the help of Chad Stockman of Stockman Landscaping, they were able to work together to take those ideas and pictures and develop a plan. It didn’t take long for Cheri to convince her husband, Scott, to move forward with the project.

As an avid outdoor grill master and someone who enjoys entertaining, the project quickly got his blessing.

The backyard palace started with many meetings between Willett and Stockman at the kitchen table and in the backyard mapping out all the details. The main objective was to create a pool and patio that didn’t look like it fell out of the sky with a few feet of concrete around it – it needed to look natural; like it belonged there. So using two iPads and paper and pencil, they poured over all the catalogs and clippings that Cheri had hoarded over the years to get some drawings on paper. Although the sketches were not to scale, the basic design was born.
Next, they took those rough sketches to the backyard. With string and orange spray paint, they began to map out the design to scale. Over the next few days, they tweaked the plans by “living” with the space as if it were already there. Were the steps in the right location? Was the space big enough to accommodate the seating areas? Did it look good from the deck? And the appropriate changes were made to get just the right design.
Building a project like this was much like building a house – many contractors were needed such as electrical, plumbing, excavation, construction, and landscaping. The Willetts chose Keith Hayes of Hayes Plumbing Inc. and Mike McDonald to install their pool because they had been referred by a friend and were pleased with the quality of workmanship and references. Coordinating with Stockman and Hayes, the team worked together step by step.

As with any project of this magnitude, it took several months to complete. "The most difficult part was waiting and living with the construction mess," said the Willetts. But the pool was being used throughout the construction which made the Willetts and their children happy. A few changes were made along the way like adding a water feature after seeing it at the Home Show.

"My favorite space is the outdoor bed that Scott and a good friend built. I saw one on vacation in the Caribbean and wanted to have the feel of vacation in my own backyard. And, where it's positioned is the best view of the entire patio," said Cheri. Other family favorites are the diving board, the fire pit seating area, and the lounge chairs for sunbathing.

And how does Scott feel about the project now that it's done? "I love that it turned out to be not just a pool patio but an outdoor living space that's used nearly year-round. We've enjoyed many times with our friends and family making memories that will last a lifetime," admits Scott. Cheri beams, "For me, it's more than just a pool. It's what makes going to work every day worth it. It's a place that we can all come together to enjoy each other and life's blessings. Although, construction can be a painful process, we'd do it over again! Our dreams have come true – it's no longer on paper – it's Wow!"

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