

Rocky dig

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DIG 11

garden of the week

Family room moves outside

By Julie Hutchinson

SPECIAL TO THE ROCKY

■ **What:** Cheesman Park garden of Steve and Anne Heinz; garden winner of the Associated Landscape Contractors of Colorado Excellence in Landscape Award

■ **Contractor:** Wendy Booth, Ivy Street Designs

■ **Type:** Backyard perennial shade garden

■ **What makes this garden special:** In warm months, the backyard becomes the Heinzes' family room with a seating area, fountain and cooking center. "We spend as much time out there as anywhere," Steve Heinz said. "You could call it an outdoor living room."

■ **Biggest challenge:** This garden is in a very urban location west of Cheesman Park and the small dimensions were challenging. "It's too small for the typical grass yard where you can play," Heinz said. The design successfully integrates the Heinzes' need for outdoor living space with places for landscape plants.

■ **Highlights:** Heinz discovered he could grow plants not often seen in Denver because of the heavy shade in his backyard, along with soil thoroughly amended with compost during construction. "It's a microclimate: very secluded and sheltered,"



A rhododendron blossom brightens the shady backyard of Steve and Anne Heinz.

Heinz said. "We amended the soil for rhododendrons and a lot of the other eastern plants and ground covers. I just wanted to see if I could grow those things here."

■ **What they like best:** "In spring it's pretty spectacular because there are a lot of blooms on the perennials and the woody landscape plants," Heinz said.

■ **Final thoughts:** The Heinzes always watch to see when the magnolias will bloom, crossing their fingers that late frost will not nip the buds, which usually open mid-April.



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The backyard design provides plenty of room for landscape plants as well as a cooking area and dining room. Brick pavers mark pathways through the plantings.