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HEADLINE: LET'S EAT! City man wins Gault competition for a ManSpace

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NORWALK

By STEVE KOBAK

Hour Staff Writer

Each year, Richard Fuller waits for the soil in his front yard garden to warm up and plants vegetable seeds, but the newest extension to his garden grew with the help of an essay written by his wife, Carolyn.

Richard Fuller received a professionally landscaped garden as well as other improvements to the backyard of his Stuart Street home thanks to an essay that Carolyn Fuller submitted to the **Gault** Outdoor ManSpace Father's Day Competition.

"He's a good guy," Carolyn Fuller said. "It was easy to write about him."

In the contest, wives highlighted their husbands' qualities in an essay that was judged by officials from the **Westport**-based company **Gault** Stone and other community businesses.

The husband of the winner was provided with a \$10,000 "manscape," a **landscaping** makeover that was "designed to give the king of the castle a greater role in the family garden," according to a statement from **Gault**.

In her 250-word essay, Carolyn Fuller wrote about her husband of 40 years dedication to his children, grandchildren and young people in the community and also his affinity for his garden

She noted that her husband, a former Brien McMahon High School teacher and current teacher at Central High School in Bridgeport, "nurtures plants as he does his students."

Carolyn Fuller didn't think the family had a shot at winning the contest but the competition's judging panel thought otherwise.

"I couldn't believe it," Carolyn Fuller said. "He lucked out."

After winning the contest, the Fuller's backyard received a drastic facelift. Using donations from various community businesses, workers transformed the look of yard with a stone walkway, rows of flowers, a white fence and the centerpiece -- a silver Viking grill encased in stone.

The Fullers planned to fire up the grill today, cooking burgers and hot dogs for families and friends.

"We're going to christen it, and we're hoping to beat the rain," Carolyn Fuller said.

Richard Fuller said the grill is better than the oven inside of his house, and he hopes to spend a lot of time cooking in his newly redesigned backyard this year.

"It's fancy for me, but I'll get used to it," he said. "I'm sure I will be cooking outside a lot more."

Speaking while picking a fresh head of lettuce from his garden for his wife, Richard Fuller said the flowers are his favorite part of the new backyard and thanked his wife for his new digs.

"You know how wives are," he said. "They do things to give us guys a surprise."

Richard Fuller said his garden, which he calls his "pride and joy," is like a home full of children or a classroom full of students, and he takes pride in knowing he can nurture more sprouts into full-grown plants.

"I love watching the process of growing," said Richard Fuller. "It's like watching your kids grow."

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