



(left to right) Chris Franz and Jason Franz in the yard of Susie Wade and Rick Wade. The bamboo structures made by the Franz brothers.

— Photo by Charity Prater

Two brothers build unusual fence company

By Charity Prater

Three years ago, when Chris Franz and his brother Jason Franz started Portland Bamboo Company, their goal was to start a fencing company that was just a little bit different.

“We knew we wanted to start our own business,” said Chris. “We didn’t want it to be just another fencing company, but something unique.”

Today, Portland Bamboo Company offers sustainable, functional, and long-lasting bamboo features for both inside and outside the home. The company works on-site with homeowners to create bamboo arbors, trellises, fencing and privacy screens.

“We wanted to offer something different,” said Jason. “We wanted to make something beautiful and sustainable.”

Bamboo is a fast-growing plant, which means the same crop can be harvested every year, with low risk of depletion. Bamboo is also strong, long lasting and easy to maintain, with a natural beauty. The type of bamboo Jason and Chris use is solid all the way through, which adds to its strength and durability.

“You don’t have to seal it,” Chris said. “And it will last longer than a regular cedar fence.”

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About a year ago, through a mutual friend, Chris and Jason met longtime Northeast Portland residents Rick and Susie Wade. The Wades live in a small house that they've slowly added onto over the years. Recently, they began making improvements in their backyard.

"We knew we wanted an Asian theme," Susie said. During a meeting with Jason and Chris, the Wades came up with a layout plan for their backyard.

"We only tweaked the plans once," Jason said.

A few months later, the job was complete. Now, large walking stones lead through plants and trees. An eye-catching trellis sits straight ahead. To the right stands a privacy wall made from shiny Tamvong bamboo, replacing an old chain-link fence. Another privacy wall finishes off the L-shaped yard.

"I couldn't believe that the wall actually made this small yard look and feel bigger," Susie said. "I don't think we could have gotten a better use out of our space."

"We still want to add a water feature to it," Rick said, "but it is nearly finished."

Chris and Jason also covered the air-conditioning unit with bamboo, did all the rockwork and designed most of the plant placement as well. Total cost for the project: approximately \$8,000.

"It was well worth the cost," Rick said "We've hardly had to do any maintenance, besides blowing the fall leaves."

Portland Bamboo Company is located at 4330 N.E. 62nd Ave. For more information, visit www.portlandbamboocompany.com or call (503) 449-4225. ★