

# the Grassette

TERRE VISTA LLC

**W**hew, what a month. On one hand I am glad that May has drawn its last breath, on the other hand the excitement was all worth the extra effort. Kolby's graduation was one of the proudest days of my life. His speech was inspiring; he will be my candidate in 2028. However, it is a speech I almost did not see, modern technology led us astray and another technology saved the day. For Christmas my mother-in-law received a global positioning system (GPS). So by unanimous decision we selected her to lead the pack of cars through the hills and dales of the Arkansas countryside. Now, I have been to my son's school several times but each time I was following someone else and they went a completely different way each time. I figured how we could go wrong with a GPS; well I was soon to find out. Instead of typing in the address of the school my mother-in-law put in the name of the town, Elm Spring, AR. We left our hotel at 10:00am sharp which should have been plenty of time for the fifteen minute trip. About 10:20 I began to get a little worried because I was not recognizing anything, well there was a good reason for this, we were lost. We came to a dead end street, I saw my mother-in-laws tail lights brake, she paused for what seemed like an eternity. I knew something was wrong; I

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grabbed my cell phone and gave her a call. She said that The GPS said that we arrived at our destination, if our destination was a flat open field we were indeed there, unfortunately our destination was the Auditorium at Ecclesia College. I then grabbed my reliable form of technology and Gave Emily, Kolby's fiancé, a call she detected the frustration in my voice and she gave her phone to a friend of hers that knew these back country roads, where was John Denver when you need him. Anyway I described where we were and he told me that we were only about five minutes away, which was good because it was now 10:30. I squealed my tires and he talked me in, we hit the parking lot and we all began the sprint to the auditorium. We got there just in time and Emily greeted us and she put us in our seats.

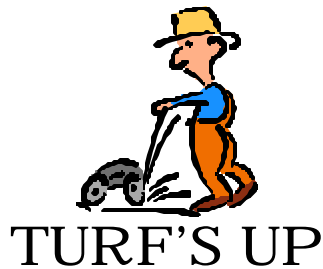
The next week end was the wedding and the forecast was for rain all week, which is fine unless of course you are having an outdoor wedding, which we were. Well the weather picked a great week to be right because indeed it did rain all week and the wedding had to be moved indoors, Emily was clearly disappointed but she came to the realization that all her planning was for not, she took it well and realized that the bigger picture was more important, a pretty mature reasoning for a bride I thought. Emily and her mother did a great job in the back up planning as you

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would have never known that the wedding was to be outdoors.

Our next big event was Alex's graduation. We had family in from all over and it went off without a hitch probably because we had nothing to do with the planning, we just had to attend. The day before the graduation we had a big graduation party for both our graduates. We had almost fifty friends and family over and it was a great time. It is especially gratifying to sit around and listen to people tell you how wonderful your children are. Now as parents it is our job to make sure that our kids are well grounded but once in a while it is a good thing to her it from other people.

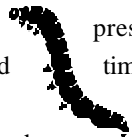
Our fourth and final event was a Memorial Day family reunion and memorial for our Great Aunt Jodie. Family came in from Arizona, New Mexico, Florida, Arkansas and the rest were from here in Wichita. Aunt Jodie was truly one of a kind she was short in stature but she made up for it with her larger than life personality. I can truly say that she was one of my most favorite people in the world, she was always positive when she had no business being positive and she always had a big smile on her face. She reminds me of a Hollywood star of the 40's and 50's, she was always dressed to the nines and she was always wearing one of her many hats. We will miss her greatly!



Well in March I advised that we do not water as we had plenty of winter moisture and things were looking very good. By the time April came we were in a mini draught, so my obvious advice for May was to water and water often. Now because of my recommendations May has started off extremely wet. So with June's arrival I leave the advice to your best judgment, however, please keep in mind that June is typically our wettest month in Wichita. With all my past wrong predictions/advice I feel that I am now qualified to be a local weatherman. I have been a little behind for our second round of fertilizations I hope to have them caught up in the next two weeks or so. Our lawns are looking fantastic, in fact, I have never seen a better group of lawns than our customers.

## Bagworms

Now is the time to start checking for bagworms. We usually expect bagworm hatch when the catalpa trees are in full bloom, which started about a week or so ago. Normally we recommend homeowners wait at least two weeks after seeing their first bagworms in order to allow all the young to leave the bag before treating. However, if young bagworms are causing damage, it may be necessary to treat immediately. Wait another three weeks and again check for living bagworms. If the young larvae are present in significant numbers, treat a second time. Let me reiterate; with normal populations of bagworms we only need to treat once. Bagworms are very easy to control as long as you treat for them early.



Also it is time to be on the lookout for sod webworm appears as a small white lawn moth zigzagging low over the lawn. Birds pecking in the grass or lots of small holes where they have been hunting for insects in the soil is also a sign of an insect problem. For these and other above-ground pests, use Hi-Yield Turf Ranger or Bayer Complete Insect Control which contains both grub and surface insect controls. The earlier you apply the proper product, the more effective it will be. typically our wettest month in Wichita. With all my incorrect weather advice as of late I now feel that I am uniquely qualified to be a full fledged weatherman.

## Watering Houseplants While on Vacation

We are approaching the time of year when many people take their vacation. In the rush to get everything done before leaving, don't forget your houseplants will probably need watering while you are gone. The best alternative is to have someone water them for you. However, if this is not possible, there are alternatives.

1. Well-plants can inside a plastic up the bag by wooden dowels or similar to keep off the leaves. sure the enclosed



watered be placed bag. Prop using something the plastic Make plants will

not receive full sun as heat buildup may cook them. Bright, indirect light is best. Plants should keep for about a week with this method.

2. This method requires an old dish drying rack, a bathtub in a bathroom with some natural light and some shoelaces. Place the drying rack upside down in the tub and add several inches of water. Push one end of a shoelace through a drainage hole on the bottom of a pot and into the potting soil of your houseplant. The other end of the shoelace dangles into the water. What you have made is a wick system that will replace water in the pot as the plant uses it. Plants can last a couple of weeks if you have enough natural

light.

3. There are numerous commercial products that can be used to automatically water houseplants in your absence. The advantage of these products is that the houseplant does not normally need to be moved. All require a reservoir from which water is either siphoned or pumped to individual houseplants. Houseplants should last as long as the water holds out.

## Excessive Rain Can Cause Yellowing of Plants

In Kansas we often see chlorosis (yellowing) of plant leaves due to high pH soils making iron unavailable. But there can be other causes that result in similar symptoms. For example, we have received so much rain in certain parts of the state recently that plants are unable to take up the nutrients needed to maintain a good green color. Fortunately, chlorosis due to wet soils will correct itself when soils dry. Plants should regain their color when more normal weather returns. This is especially true when it comes to annual flowers, I have seen this happen many times and I also have used a water soluble fertilizer to help correct the problem.

## Flooding Damage

Waterlogged soils push out oxygen that roots need to survive. Every living cell in a plant must have oxygen or it dies. Some plants have mechanisms to provide oxygen to the roots even under saturated conditions, but most vegetables and flowers do not. The longer these plants are subjected to saturated soils, the more likely damage will occur. Usually, as long as water drains within 24 hours, the impact on plant health is minimal. However, shallow, stagnant water under hot, sunny conditions can literally cook plants, reducing survival time to as little as a few hours.

**Vegetables:** Is it safe to eat produce from a garden that has been flooded? Standing water should not cause a safety problem as long as the aboveground portions of the plant remain healthy. Do not use produce from plants that have yellowed. Also, using produce flooded with water contaminated with sewage (lagoon) or animal manure also can be dangerous. The safest approach is to discard garden crops that have been in contact with such water. Certainly, leafy vegetables should always be

discarded. However, you can eat tomatoes, peppers, eggplants, sweet corn, squash, cucumbers, and similar vegetables that develop after the waters have subsided as long as the fruit is not cracked or soft. Always wash vegetables thoroughly before eating.

**Lawns:** Under the cool conditions of early spring, turf grasses often can survive several days of flooding. However, during hot, sunny conditions with shallow, stagnant water, lawns may be damaged quickly, sometimes in a few hours. This situation often occurs when shallow depressions in a lawn allow water to pool. Note such areas and fill in with additional soil once the waters have subsided.

**Trees:** Trees differ markedly in their ability to withstand flooding. Some trees have mechanisms in place to provide oxygen to the roots of plants with water-saturated soils, and others do not. However, most trees will maintain health if floodwaters recede in 7 days or less. It also helps if water is flowing rather than stagnant because flowing water contains more oxygen. If the roots of sensitive trees are flooded for long periods of time, damage will occur including leaf drop, iron chlorosis, leaf curl, branch dieback and, in some cases, tree death. Another danger of flooding is the deposition of sediment. A restrict oxygen to the roots. If possible, remove deep layers of sediment as soon as conditions permit. This is especially important for small or recently transplanted trees.

Try to avoid additional stress to the trees this growing season. Ironically, one of the most important practices is to water trees if the weather turns dry. Flooding damages roots, making the root system less efficient in making use of available soil water. Timely watering is vital to a tree's recovery. Also diligently remove dead or dying branches that may serve as an entry point for disease organisms or insect pests. The following information on tree survival came from the U.S. Forest Service.

Flood-tolerant trees can survive one growing season under flooded conditions: Red maple, silver maple, pecan, hackberry, persimmon, white ash, green ash, sweetgum, sycamore, eastern cottonwood, pin oak and bald cypress.

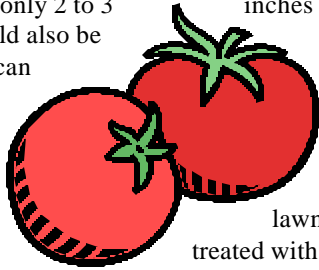
Trees moderately tolerant of flooding can survive 30 consecutive days under flooded conditions: River birch, downy hawthorn, honey locust, swamp white oak, southern red oak, bur oak, willow oak and American elm.



# Mulching Tomatoes

Soils are warm enough now that tomatoes can benefit from mulching. Tomatoes prefer even levels of soil moisture, and mulches provide such by preventing excessive evaporation. Other benefits include weed suppression, moderating soil temperatures and preventing the formation of a hard crust on the soil. Crusted soils restrict air movement into and out of the soil and slow the water infiltration rate.

Hay and straw mulches are popular for tomatoes but may contain weed or volunteer grain seeds. Grass clippings can also be used but should be applied as a relatively thin layer - only 2 to 3 inches thick. Clippings should also be dry as wet clippings can mold and become so hard that water can't pass through. Also, do not use clippings from lawns that have been treated with a weed killer until some time has passed. If only homeowner type weed killer has been applied, clippings from the fourth mowing after treatment may be used. If the lawn is commercially sprayed and a product containing quinclorac has been applied, the clippings should not be used as mulch.



Here is my newest very best version of guacamole. I am always tinkering with this but right now I think that this is my best version so far.

You will need:

- 5 ripe avocados
- 3 cloves garlic
- 2 tomatillos
- ½ med onion
- Juice of 1 lime
- 5-10 jalapeno slices (to taste)
- Cilantro (to taste)

Salt & pepper to taste

The night before I use my food processor to finely chop onion, garlic, lime juice, tomatillos, jalapeno, cilantro salt & pepper, refrigerate.

The next day scoop out the avocado in a large mixing bowl, mash with a fork, I like mine a bit on the chunky side. When you get the avocado mixture to the consistency you want add the mixture from the night before, stir well and serve with your favorite tortilla chip. I like to heat my chips in a 350 degree oven for about five minutes and then serve immediately. Sometimes I will add a few chopped up tomatoes to the guacamole but most of the time I leave well enough alone.



## June ToDo's

1. Fertilize warm season lawns.
2. Wichita Garden Tours start look in the Eagle for locations.
3. Keep an eye out for bagworms.
4. Kansas Grown Farmers Market from 7 am to noon every Saturday @ the Sedgwick County Extension Service.
5. Keep pinching back mums until July 4<sup>th</sup>
6. Deadhead roses and geraniums, remember geraniums are heavy feeders so try to feed them at least once per week if you want to keep up the flowering production.
7. Plant more tomatoes for a September crop.

Watering



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