

the Grassette

TERRE VISTA LLC

May is finally here. I have looked upon this month with place much anticipation and much apprehension. As you all know by now Kolby is getting married and graduating within seven days, two major steps. But in typical Kolby fashion he is totally unaware of what is going on around him. To give you an example he even forgot his birthday until I called him to wish him a happy birthday. In fact, we no longer go through Kolby with anything of importance; we either text or call Emily. Emily like Stephanie keep the Burcham men in line and on time.

This past weekend friends of ours had a wedding shower for Kolby and Emily, we were all invited, I always thought that showers were a “girl thing” but now they are all inclusive. Anyway we all took turns going around the room telling our favorite Kolby memory. When it was all over I had several people come to me and tell how wonderful a job Steph and I did raising such a fine young man. I told them “you can lead a horse to water but you can’t make him drink,” meaning as a parent I can lead him to take the right path and I can give all the right advice but if he chooses not to listen then so be it. That is why I feel that a good amount of credit lies at the feet of Kolby, he chose to listen and follow our parental wisdom; one down and two to go!

MAY 2010

I was talking to a customer the other day and she asked me how my family was and I blurted out, “we could not be any better.” Then I had to quickly catch myself because the cynic in me was afraid that if I admitted that all was well then it would surly bring down some kind of curse. I try to be an optimist but I have been around long enough to see rapid demise in otherwise positive situations. But then I remembered that I am not in charge and I quickly told my customer that “we are extremely blessed.” When so many others are jobless, hurting, and looking for answers I am most thankful for my faith and my family without these two I am afraid that I too would be wringing my hands in fear. Things will get better and I am sure that full economic recovery is just around the corner, America’s best days are still ahead, and I refuse to believe any other way.

With all the good news that I have been having I did receive some disappointing news this month. I found out that two of my favorite TV shows will air their final seasons this year, “The Hills” and “24.” Now many of you can understand “24” but I can see many of you scratching your head about “The Hills.” I watch the Hills with my two teenage daughters and I find full of “teachable moments” the trick is to disguise the message so they do not realize that they are learning, it is a great trick that I picked

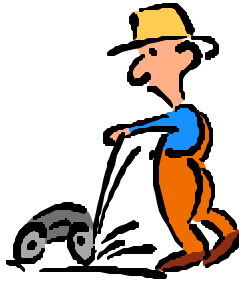
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up in my twenty-three years of being a parent. We have a good time and we enjoy each other’s company, I love the fact that my two daughters still love spending time with their father for I am acutely aware that soon they will be on their own and some other young man will take my place, as it should be.

Even “24” has it faults terrible acting, over acting, and this season, poor writing. With all its faults I am still tuning in each Monday night at 8:00 pm to watch my hero, Jack Bauer after all I love his cousin, Eddie’s, line of clothing. The show is my escape from reality; if only for an hour. I feel that with our sports heroes taking a beating, although at their own hand, we need people in our society that we can look up to if only in fiction. My other great love is politics and I dare any of you to name a politician that deserves “hero status.” So of course I turn to Hollywood to find my hero, how ironic is that? I choose to find my hero on the fictional side of “Hollyweird” because God only knows if there is a hero on the reality side of the place, except for of course my friend Jeff who has lived and worked for the past ten years in the “belly of the beast.”



Turf's Up



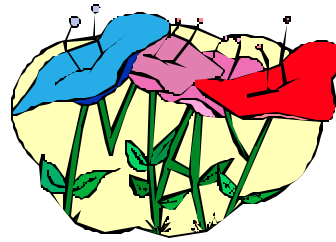
Well the last newsletter I was recommending not to worry about watering because we had plenty of moisture this winter. Well as of right now we are in a mini spring drought, so I am now recommending that you get your irrigation systems fired up. Remember to only water about 3-4 times per week; rotor heads deliver adequate amounts in 20-25 minutes. Spray heads deliver adequate amounts in 10-15 minutes. Also keep in mind that a lawn only needs about 1 inch of moisture per week to maintain a healthy growing habitat.

We will be applying our second round of fertilizer this month and we also be spraying for any broadleaf weeds that we may find. Speaking of spraying, I absolutely love my new ride-on sprayer and it is working better than expected. The only hindrance thus far has been the wind, so far in April we have only had 3-4 days of winds below 15 mph. The state board of agriculture mandates that there will be no spraying of chemicals when winds exceed 15 mph and with the fines reaching \$1,000 and the state looking for money you can bet your sweet (insert word here) that I will not risk the fine.

All in all our lawns are looking nice and healthy and I feel that this has been one of the best springs I have seen here in Kansas. The redbuds, pears, and crabapples were absolutely spectacular; it is a shame that they only last about a week or two but I guess that is what makes us appreciate them even more.

In a week or so, usually around the second or third week in May our cool season grasses will start sending out long stalks with seed heads at the top. This is perfectly normal the only reason why I am bringing to your attention is that the stalks are often very “woody” and no matter how sharp our blades are these stalks just do not

cut smoothly, so sometimes it leaves an appearance of unevenness in the lawn, this only lasts for a week or so.



May To Do's

1. Plant Herbs
2. Prune spring flowers & shrubs after blooming.
3. Mulch plants to conserve water.
4. Plant annuals
5. Remove leaves or dig & divide spring bulbs after leaves yellow.
6. Pinch back new growth on chrysanthemums until July 4th.
7. Visit Kansas Grown Farmers Market on Saturdays at the extension service (21st & Ridge) 7 a.m. –noon.

Inspect Before You Buy

The best insurance for having a great garden is to start with healthy, disease-free plants. How can you tell if you are purchasing healthy, disease-free plants?

The first step is to go to a garden center where you have had great luck in the past. The next step is to carefully inspect the plants you intend to buy. Avoid plants that look sickly and off color.

Buying plants on sale can be risky unless they look vigorous and healthy. You never know what disease or insect problem

you might be bringing into your growing location or if you will ever get rid of it.

Check the entire plant, including foliage, stems, and roots. Foliage should have good color – frequently green, although plants come in all colors. Avoid plants that have symptoms of leaf spotting, mottling, and leaf yellowing or scorching. Look closely into the foliage and flowers for the presence of insects such as aphids or thrips. They can cause direct damage by feeding on the plants and potentially



transmit virus diseases.

It is okay to pop a plant out of the pot and check the roots. Healthy plants should have lots of fuzzy roots. On annual plants and many perennials, healthy roots have a white color. On some woody perennials, healthy roots can have a dark color on the outside, but they will always be white on the inside. You can check this by scraping the roots with your thumb. Plants with poor root health have very few roots and those are discolored (tan, gray, brown or black). Plants with root damage usually don't have very good growth or color on the top.

One last tip is to look for uniformity. If you buy transplants in four or six-packs, a sign of plant health and vigor is uniformity in emergence, height, and color. If you are selecting a six-pack, there should be six plants not five or four. Sometimes a root rot problem can take out one or two of the transplants. If one is missing make sure to check the root health of remaining plants. A healthy six-pack should all be the same height, have a good uniform color and healthy roots.

Starting with healthy, vigorous plants will increase the success of your gardening efforts.

Borers on Pines?

by Ward Upham

If you see a row of holes on pine trees, the problem is not borers. Borer holes will be randomly spaced over the trunk. Holes that are in a horizontal (most common) or vertical row are caused by the feeding of the yellow-bellied sapsucker. This woodpecker makes shallow holes and then feeds on the sap released from the wounds or on insects attracted to the site.

Other trees this bird often attacks include maples and Bradford pear, but about any tree species is a potential target. Surprisingly, certain trees may become favorites to the exclusion of nearby trees of the same species.

Damage to mature, established trees is usually slight and temporary though small trees may be girdled and killed. To control them, you have a couple of options:

- Wrap the trunk with fine wire mesh in the area of damage. This may discourage them if left in place for several months. The mesh **MUST** be adjusted every six months or removed when no longer needed. If the mesh is left in place, the



tree will likely be girdled.

- Use Tanglefoot on the area of damage. This is a sticky material that is applied to tree trunks to capture insects that crawl up the trunk. Yellow-bellied sapsuckers do not like to put their feet in the sticky material.

Remove Blossoms on Newly Planted Strawberries

Spring-bearing strawberry plants that were set out this spring should have blossoms pinched off. New plants have a limited amount of energy. If blossoms remain on the plants, the energy that should go to runner development is used to mature fruit instead.

For a good strawberry plant population and a good strawberry crop next year, early runner development is necessary. Early developing runners will produce the most strawberries next spring. Newly planted everbearing plants also should have the fruits removed for the first 4 to 6 weeks after planting so they develop a strong root system.



Controlling Weeds in Strawberries

Strawberries are one of the most popular fruits, but gardeners often have problems with weed control. Strawberries form a mat of plants, so hoeing is difficult, and gardeners must pull weeds by hand or use herbicides. Unfortunately, homeowners do not have any weed preventers available for use on strawberries. However, we do have an herbicide that is a grass killer. Poast (sethoxydim) can only be used after the weedy grasses have emerged. Poast can be sprayed directly over the strawberries without harm. Do not use within 7 days of harvest. You can find Poast in Hi-Yield Grass Killer and Monterey Grass Getter.

"Rainy Day Schedule"

With the cool and rainy weather we have seen this spring you all might think that we have been secretly transported to Seattle. The rains are welcome but the havoc it plays with my schedule is not. Many of you are new customers so I will review our policy when it

comes to rain. As a rule if it rains on your day we will try and service your lawn the next day, however, if it rains more that one day all are off and we will get to your yard as soon as possible. Please also keep in mind that that if it rains in the beginning of the week that too will affect our service at the end of the week.

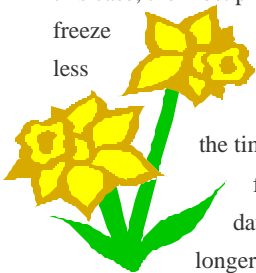


In fact last year over the Holiday it rained on Good Friday and then all day on Saturday, we do not work on Sunday (unless emergency) so we had to pick up our Friday accounts on Monday and then again on the following Friday in order to maintain our schedule. I am a stickler for keeping things on time; my wife thinks that I am a bit autistic and I use my obsessive ness about my schedule to keep me grounded. It's my form of self-therapy.

Please also give me a call if you have a special need to change your normal day for service. Many times during the summer we will have customers that are going to have a party, wedding, garage sale etc. and they will need to change their normal day of service. Please give us at least a week notice so that I can accommodate your needs. Also if it does rain near your event I can make sure that we put your yard to the front of the list, early communication is the key.

Daffodils Not Blooming

Though most of the daffodils across the state have put on a good show, some gardeners have noticed their plants have failed to bloom. Bloom failure can be attributed to a number of factors including removing the foliage after flowering, overcrowding, bulbs overheating (either in storage or when planted shallow) or undersized bulbs. In this case, the most probable reason is last year's Easter freeze damaging the foliage to the point that less food was available to form flower buds. Flower buds are formed during the time between flowering and when the foliage dies back naturally. With daffodils, this can take six weeks or longer. Since the Easter Freeze took place April 6 and 7, 2009, daffodils had little time to recapture the energy from the leaves if the freeze damaged the plant. Such plants should recover and bloom next year as long as no further damage occurs. I understand the temptation to



remove the leaves because they make the garden appear untidy. I like to gather up the spent foliage fold it over and secure with a rubber band. Then after the leaves turn brown I just remove them with a pair of hand shears or garden scissors.



Happy Memorial Day and thank you to all our veterans. I will never forget your service to our country, it is because of you that we enjoy our freedoms.

'It does not take a majority to prevail, but rather an irate, tireless minority, keen on setting brushfires of freedom in the minds of men.'
Samuel Adams

"Concentrated power has always been the enemy of liberty." Ronald Reagan

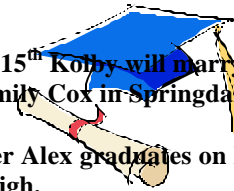
Congratulations:

Our son Kolby graduates on May the 8th from Ecclesia College in Springdale, Arkansas. He will graduate as the Valedictorian. We are very proud of him.

On May the 15th Kolby will marry is long time girlfriend Emily Cox in Springdale, AR.

Our daughter Alex graduates on May the 24th from East High.

And not to leave out our daughter Regan she past her freshman year(with a 4.0) and will be moving on to her sophomore year at East High.



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