

the Grassette

TERRE VISTA LLC

Another mowing season has come and is almost gone. With the close of October and the beginning of November we will turn our focus on fall clean ups and maybe another mow or two to tidy up your lawn. If any of you are planning a Thanksgiving get together and would like us to clean your lawn of leaves before the big day please give me a call so that we might move you to the top of the list.

Because October is my two girls' birthday I will dedicate this opening page to them. Alex already thinks that this should always be the case. Actually Alex begins on April 28th with a simple reminder that this is her "half birthday" always followed by, "what did you get me?" I always respond with, "the same thing that I got you last year, nothing."

Last month my daughter Regan participated in a cross-country meet in Arkansas City, she did extremely well, in fact, she won the darn thing. The ironic thing about the deal was that last year her sister, Alex, won the same event. So the past two winners of the Arkansas City Invitational reside here at 138 N. Battin. Who would a "thunk it."

This past week my wife and I had to make our annual trip to East High for parent-teacher conferences. Unlike their brother who only did enough to get by in high school, both girls had straight A's, except for Alex's B

OCTOBER 2009

(85%) in anatomy. We were very proud of them both. It is always a reassuring feeling when outsiders tell you how wonderful your children are. Not to leave out my son, because we are equally as proud of him as of now he too has straight A's, I guess you could say he is a bit of a late bloomer. While grades are important we do not feel that this is the only measure of self worth. All of our children are very conscience of others, at our home we treat others as we want to be treated and we try to teach them to think about other's feelings. But as each individual case warrants it is OK to stand up for your beliefs when others may not share your values. All in all life is great at the Burcham household and I am confident that we are readying our children for the world ahead. I am not so naive to think all will be well but we feel that we have helped them develop the tools to deal with life's up's and down's.

On my desk is a picture that was taken of me and my children for an ad that we did back in the early 90's for Walker Mowers. It ran all season in several trade magazines, anyway my son is seven my daughter, Alex, is 3 and I am holding Regan who is 8months old. I remember taking that picture like it was yesterday, in fact, it is at a property that we still maintain today and I think that the most telling thing is just how big the trees have gotten in fifteen years. But

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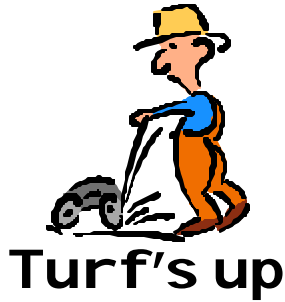
really my kids will almost be gone soon. Next year Alex will be away at school and only "Reggie Roo" will be at home, she hates that I call her that now that she is in high school.

My wife and I were cleaning out the basement the other day and we came across the girls' old soccer pictures, they were so cute in their little uniforms the shirts were too big and just hung on them and the shorts were so long that they went down all the way to the socks and their



hair was pulled back into the cutest pony tails. I sure do miss the days of getting up on Saturday morning and trekking to the soccer fields where it was always 10 degrees colder and the wind was blowing 15mph greater than anywhere else in the city. I am trying to talk them both into playing soccer this season for East for one last hurrah. They are both a bit apprehensive because it has been a couple of years since they last touched a ball. But I told them that it would come back to them and I but that it would be fun I also reminded them that East's uniforms were Carolina Blue and that they would both look good in them. I have found that the best way to get to a girl's heart is her wardrobe.

Thank you for your patience in letting me have this little excursion down memory lane. Have a Great Day!



Turf's up

September was spectacular; in fact this whole summer has just been about perfect. We only had one day above 100 degrees and most of the days were in the low 90's to upper 80's. All of our lawns are looking fabulous; I could not be more pleased. The rains have come at the most opportune time and we have had excellent temperatures. Remember only last year in the month of September Wichita set an all time record for rainfall some 13.5" fell in that month alone, we were almost 28 inches above normal for the entire year. For those of you who receive our lawn fertilization program we will be around sometime in October to apply the third round of fertilizer and spray for those pesky broadleaf weeds.

Unlike last season grubs were a bit of problem this year, next year I am strongly considering adding a round of Merit in our normal fertilization program. Merit is a little expensive but the damage that it prevents is well worth the additional cost. For example a 5,700 sq. ft. lawn that we would normally treat for \$44.00 would cost \$66.00 to treat with Merit giving season long control of grubs. That same lawn would cost about \$313.50 to overseed, a significant savings.

I am often asked why I delay fertilizing until October. The reason is two-fold. One is that our lawns are usually very quick to recover from the summer's stress and so an added boost is just not necessary, it is like having a snack just after Thanksgiving Dinner, nice but not needed. The second reason is probably the most important. We are overseeding many of our customer's lawns in September and the new grass is still vulnerable to the herbicides we use to rid your lawn of broadleaf weeds. October is also the best time of the year to rid your lawn of dandelions so I typically wait until then to fertilize and spray our customers, I like killing two birds with one stone, it is just efficient and that is what I am all about.



Company News



In college the degree that I was pursuing was business marketing. So I have decided to use my college experience to market the expansion of our fertilization program to customers outside our existing customer base. Our new campaign that I will be unveiling soon is "Love Your Lawn." To be honest the idea was not actually mine but a friend whose judgment I respect. I also think it is very good idea to get outside unbiased opinions, however, that being said I did not like the phrase at first but I pondered it while mowing one Monday and it began to grow on me a bit. I thought to myself what better way to sell the idea that we truly love what we do. I do some of my best thinking while on the mower, in fact, that is where I write much of my monthly newsletters, if only in my head. Unfortunately, many times my best ideas are forgotten somewhere between mower and lap-top but I am sure those of you who read already know that for yourselves. You will also notice that at times I tend to ramble off on some incoherent tangent leaving the original idea. I thought to myself what better why to sell the idea that we truly love what we do.

Back to my original point, I have also purchased a couple of pieces of new equipment that I hope to have up and running sometime late this month. One piece of equipment that I have ordered is a boom sprayer that can be fitted on one of our back-up mowers to turn it into a lawn sprayer using a low pressure delivery system. The benefit of this is that a 20 gallon tank can spray up to 20,000 sq ft by comparison to spray the same 20,000 sq ft it would take almost 100 gallons of normal mix. Ultimately this will lesson the amount of chemicals that we have to use. I have never liked to "blanket spray" an entire property and now I will have the ability to lesson the environmental impact while still maintaining a high quality of service delivered. The next piece of equipment that I purchased is a two gallon low pressure sprayer that can be retrofitted to fit inside one of our Lesco spreaders. The idea behind this is that while pushing the spreader across the lawn when a patch of weeds is encountered the operator can simply pull a trigger and spray a fine spray of herbicide, thus once again killing two birds

with one stone, making our service more efficient, which in the long run is what it is all about. Sometime in the future I am looking to buy a “PermaGreen” all-in-one spray and fertilizer application equipment, but with a price tag of just under \$8,000 it will be a few years and a few lawns.

Q & A



Question: “Sid, about late June early July my wave petunias stopped flowering, I fertilized them weekly but still no production, why?”

Answer: I had the same problem as well. I carefully looked over the leaf and could not find any insect damage. I was baffled. So I called someone who would know and he told me that it was from a tiny bud worm that only attacks the bud and does not bother any of the foliage. To make sure you get the little critters you have to spray every two weeks starting in early June.

Question: Sid, what is your suggestion on annual flowers that can take our summer’s heat here in Kansas?

Answer: This is tough but the following are the annuals that I have found work best for Kansas, while they are not fool proof they are pretty darn close: Verbena, geraniums, periwinkle, tropical hibiscus, marigolds, pentas, scabiola, diamond frost, lantana, pursalane, rose moss, salvia, begonia, coleus, sweet potato vines.



October To Do’s

1. Collect moonflower pods to over winter.
2. Plant spring bulbs: tulips daffodils

3. First freeze (average is around the 15th)
4. Plant pansies.
5. Pick green tomatoes and allow them to ripen indoors.
6. Now is a good time to select a new tree so that you can get a glimpse of its fall color.
7. Disconnect and winter store your garden hose.

Fall Clean up

It is not too early to start thinking about fall clean up the leaves will be falling before you know it and it is very important that we keep the fallen leaves off our grass. If leaves and other debris stay for too long they can mat together and cut off all sunlight to your lawn, thus killing it. If we have done this service for you the past several years there is no need to call, you are already on our list, if you are a new customer or you think that you might like us to perform this service for you this season please let me know. We typically do not start removing leaves until the last week in November and we will continue until we finish usually sometime in late December, once in awhile we will go into the first part of January to get everything done. This year we will be starting on the west side of town and working our way east.



About Aeration

October is the perfect time for aeration. What is aeration? And why should we do it? Aeration is the process of making your lawn more accessible to air, water, and nutrients. The process is accomplished by using a machine, oddly enough called an aerator. The kind of aerator that we use is a “core-aerator” which is basically a machine with a big steel drum that is covered with several hollow 3” to 4” spikes that are ½ to ¾ inch in diameter. The aerator is a little bigger than a push mower and is driven over the entire lawn removing plugs of soil and turf. In fact, after the process is over it looks like you have held a “poodle convention” in your yard.

Removing the plugs creates little holes in the entire lawn thus opening it up to air, water and nutrients. The openings allow air penetration and better water movement, and give the plant roots a place to stretch out and grow to become more vigorous and dense. Aeration can be done in either the spring or fall; I prefer the fall as I have found that it promotes a vigorous root growth going into winter. Aeration is a natural process that has no ill side effects. Even small plugs left behind by core-type aerators are beneficial. In the process of breaking down, they deposit a light coating of topdressing that helps decompose thatch accumulated at the base of the grass plant.

Approximate pricing \$15-\$20 per 1,000 sq. ft. So an average size lawn that is 5,000 sq ft would cost \$75.00 to core aerate.

For an estimate on aeration give us a call:

685-1794



Entitlement Society

Disclaimer: The following article is written by a lawndude with only a casual knowledge of the human psyche it in no way reflects the opinion of the staff or management. I am just venting.

The question that I have had the past several years is “What is wrong with America?” It has been said by the pundits that we are strongly divided; while true, we are not really any more divided than we have ever been, even going back to colonial times. In fact only 30% wanted to break away from Great Britain; 34% wanted to stay a loyal subject of the crown and the remaining 36% did not care either way. That leaves us with something in our society. After working with many young men over the past twenty-two years I have learned to read people pretty well. The most common thread I see is an attitude that someone owes them something. I think the problem can be traced back to the WWII generation. At this point I want to say that I believe that this generation is the “greatest generation” they went through the “Great Depression” and fought and won a world war and to them we will always be indebted. I know that in their heart of hearts they started the entitlement society with how they treated their children, my parent’s

generation (baby boomers), with the best of intentions I might add. Just after WWII our country went through an economic boom like the world had never seen, more prosperity has never been encountered thus more money in the pockets of its citizens than ever before. I know in my own family who experienced the dust bowl and the war made a promise to make sure that their respective family never went through a time that they did. They just simply wanted to give their children every advantage that they did not have. While this is very commendable sometimes it can have the opposite effect. Each generation expected to have more just because they felt entitled; they failed to realize that success comes through hard work and perseverance. Let’s skip ahead to the current generation, they want everything and they want it now. Television tells them all that they “deserve it” and credit allows them to fulfill their wants and desires. Before you know it you have an entire population that does not understand that respect in something that is earned and not automatically bestowed. I think that when people believe they are entitled to things it also trickles into the way they treat others, when you think everyone owes you something you are more apt not to appreciate your fellow man. Now with this all being said I still find myself from time to time giving my children too much.



Happy Birthday

To my daughters’ Regan (15) on the 13th & Alex (18) on the 28th

Once again it is time for our annual shootout with between my beloved **SOONERS** and our most hated rivals the texas longhorns. It always takes place the second Saturday in October at the Cotton Bowl.
Boomer Sooner!



Terre Vista



685-1794