

## A Personal Message

Here's hoping you're enjoying the Winter of 2008. Once again this year, we'll be publishing our newsletter each month from February through December. If you know someone who may enjoy receiving them, call our office and we'll be happy to add them to our mailing list. There is no charge for our newsletters.

Did you have a nice Christmas? We enjoyed ourselves immensely. On Christmas Eve, I prepared 7 different dishes to celebrate The Feast of The Seven Fishes. I even included fried smelt, which my family used to eat when I was a child.

Then, everyone returned on Christmas Day to eat my homemade pizzas and open gifts. I may have gained a few pounds over the Holidays because I experimented with new recipes every few days. I'm thinking of becoming a chef when I grow up!

I bundled Melissa up for a visit to New York right after Christmas. We stayed with her family, which includes Miss Scarlett Rose Pace. She showed us every single toy she received for her second Christmas. Since there were more toys in her home than at the Times Square Toys-R-Us, this took considerable effort. We had a wonderful visit, despite the cold I caught the first day.

Our crews have been able to work most days this year. As I write this newsletter, it's sunny and almost 50 degrees. We take off on rainy days and when it's unbearably cold, we finish up early. Woods restoration work and new landscaping bed installations have kept us busy since last year.

Also, many people are taking advantage of our Winter Work Discount. In a nutshell, we offer 10% off all labor charges for your project, if it's scheduled during the months of January or February. The project doesn't have to be completed during those months; it just needs to be on our schedule.

You must mention this offer to receive the discount. Please keep in mind that the discount does not apply to lawn installations or our deer and tick repellent programs.

This may sound premature, but have you made a decision about your lawn care yet? Spring is the time to review your options and choose a service or type of fertilizer for your lawn. Weather permitting, we'll be applying time and our natural/organic fertilizer starting around the 1st of March.

## Garden Tips

- Have you noticed seed packages in the stores yet? Although it's tempting, don't start seeds indoors too early. Plants may get "leggy" if you don't follow directions on the package.
- If you want your ornamental grasses to fill out properly in the spring, now is the time to trim them. Ornamentals tend to become shabby and overgrown if left to themselves. Remember that liriodenites also need to be trimmed.
- Winter is a good time to cut the deadwood out of roses. Eighteen inches is probably a good length for branches, after trimming is complete. Also, we suggest trimming back to three main trunks of a mature bush.
- If the weather actually turns to winter, you may not want to use traditional ice removers. Our natural/organic fertilizer melts ice away just as effectively as salt. The low nitrogen levels of the fertilizer will not harm the Bay as it runs off. Call us if you'd like a bag delivered.

## How About Natural/Organic Lawn Care This Year?

It's the time of year that most folks make decisions about their lawn care companies for the forthcoming season. This article may help you decide whether or not we are right for you.

### Here are the highlights of our lawn care program:

- Combines organic fertilizers and composts with naturally occurring products to deter insects, fungus and diseases.
- 80% low-toxic/non-toxic products and methods without the use of harsh chemicals around your home and family.
- Fertilizer and calcium/lime applications are made in the spring and again in the fall. Any additional fertilizer treatments are based on the results of your soil test and will be applied only if absolutely necessary.

- Disease and fungus control is attained through the use of bacteria inoculated composts. Applications are made in April, May and late-June/early July. University research has confirmed a 95% control in expansive testing with composts.
- Insect deterrents for grubs, sod webworm and chinch bugs occur through biological and natural controls that are nontoxic to humans and animals. These applications are made in late-June/early July. Insects are also controlled through the use of endophyte-enhanced grasses. These grasses have been specifically bred to “taste bad” to surface feeding insects.
- Weed and crabgrass control is obtained through non-toxic/low-toxic intervention. You can expect a 3-5% natural weed involvement with our program.

Take a moment to consider the possibility of using a non-chemical alternative to toxic fertilizers and pesticides this year. Call or email to schedule a no cost, no obligation consultation of your lawn's needs for the next growing season.

Also, please keep in mind that we are competitively priced with traditional lawn care treatment programs. With the right amount of care your lawn will be just as beautiful as a traditionally maintained lawn. We hope to hear from you soon.

## **Fire Department Announces Access Requirements for Emergency Vehicles**

*by: Jaime Welch Staff Reporter*

The St. Michaels Fire Department has announced guidelines for emergency access to the properties they serve. They request ten feet of both horizontal and vertical clearances. Clearance space is needed so that they can maneuver large emergency vehicles in a rapid response situation.

Please check your lanes and driveways for encroaching vegetation and overhanging trees. We will be happy to help you trim everything back to a manageable level and keep it that way to avert a potential medical or fire disaster.

The Fire Department does not have the authority to force property owners to cut back vegetation. However, they will not unnecessarily endanger their personnel to reach an inaccessible location.

## When to Overseed

A lush green lawn doesn't usually just happen. Generally, when you see a beautiful lawn, it's the result of careful planning. Sometimes, it's also the result of blood, sweat and tears by the homeowner. That's where a lawn care company can help.

A lawn that is as dense as brand new sod will have the fewest weeds. To get a thick lawn, you'll need to overseed the lawn every fall, at least for the first couple of years.

After the second or third year, it's usually advisable to reseed every other year, even if the lawn is looking really good. A dense lawn will have been established and overseeding will help to out compete those pesky weeds.

**Our accounting software has been upgraded a notch. We can now email your invoices if you prefer.**