

## A Personal Message

To many of you, this newsletter will appear the same as it always did. Our Talbot County readers have the same, full service landscaping services available to them as usual.

However, if you live in Queen Anne's County, we now offer our full menu of services for all homeowners. We want to thank everyone who has insisted that we work for them. Your response has been extremely flattering! We are now staffed and ready to meet your demands efficiently and effectively.

As the spring weather intensifies into summer, I feel the need to warn you about a very real problem that we're noticing this year. Tick activity seems to be at an all-time high. We have noticed a significant increase in the number of ticks we see after working outdoors. If they can reach us through our protective clothing, they'll reach you too.

You may remember that I wrote about being bitten by a tick in May of 2006. I didn't contract Lyme disease or Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. However, I did end up in the hospital for several days with a severe infection. I still suffer some weakness and sensitivity from this infected bite.

So, I decided not to get mad. I'm getting even! We now offer a barrier tick repellent service that is proving to be safe and extremely effective. Barrier treatments are the single most effective method of control at this time. The tick repellent is sprayed where ticks thrive - such as brushy areas and woodpiles.

Additionally, we may suggest placing Damminix tubes in nests around your property. Damminix tubes contain treated material which is deadly for ticks, but doesn't harm mammals. Our integrated approach to tick control doesn't stop there. We work to identify habitation areas. Then, you can choose whether to treat them with repellent or remove the host area entirely.

Tick repellent service is tailored for each individual property.

On a lighter, brighter note, I can't believe the beautiful plant material that the staff has grown. They keep bringing these gorgeous geraniums, impatiens and petunias up from the greenhouse. It's plant material that has been grown in Maryland and adapts well to our climate

Please give the office a call if you're interested in seeing the plants. We'll be happy to make an appointment with you.

## Garden Tips

- If you haven't tried them already, we recommend daylilies for an easy burst of color in your garden. Dollar for dollar, daylilies are the best perennial investment you can purchase. The foliage looks great, they bloom for long periods of time and if you don't like where you put them, dig them up and move them. They'll survive a lot of mistreatment. The downside? Deer think they're a main course.
- Make sure all container plants are in an area where they get adequate sunlight. Few plants, especially those in pots, can tolerate full summer sun all day. They need to be where they can be watered easily with a hose. Warm daytime temperatures and summer breezes will dry plants to the extent that they need watering every day. Remember to run the hose until all the sun-warmed water has drained out of it.
- We're growing heirloom tomatoes this year. Heirloom tomatoes are generally considered to be an older variety that has been passed down through the generations. They can be more susceptible to disease and rot because they don't have genetic enhancements. But the taste is usually far superior to most other types of tomatoes. Melissa started 60 plants, so we'll keep you posted.

## Stroke Support Group

Dell was kind enough to give me some space in this newsletter to write about a subject that is important to me. My name is Melissa and I am fortunate enough to have Dell in my life. Many of you have read about me from time to time.

Four years ago, I suffered a massive stroke. Sure, it changed my life. But, it doesn't define my life any more. Thanks to some very good doctors and several years of physical and occupational therapy, I'm still here to tell you about it. However, recently, I decided to do something a little more constructive than just talk about life after stroke.

I've been working with Memorial Hospital in Easton and we've formed a stroke support group. Everyone else seems to have a support group and we needed one just for us.

Memorial Hospital was designated as a Primary Stroke Center last year. This means that if you enter their emergency room suffering signs of a stroke, they are equipped to handle you.

I began pestering Christina Ball, who is a Neuroscience Specialist with Memorial Hospital. After seeing a photograph of her in an old newspaper I grabbed out of Dell's briefcase, somehow I knew that she could help me form a support group.

Christina finally took pity on me and we met at Memorial Hospital with Ruth Arnouts, another stroke survivor. Things started happening quickly and we held our first meeting this past April.

We were hoping for four or five attendees. Twelve survivors and several of their caregivers showed up to share information. What amazing stories of survival we heard that day!

One man who now views life from a wheelchair told us that he had suffered ten strokes. It is difficult to understand his speech, but every one of us realized that he is determined to walk again some day.

A young woman was taking her ballet class when her stroke occurred. She is unable to dance again, but hopes to regain the use of her paralyzed side as she undergoes rigorous physical therapy.

Another member hopes to establish a lending library of materials about stroke prevention and cure. My personal goal is to establish an outreach program for new survivors. Four years ago, I would have liked to talk with someone about the terrifying twist my life had taken. It helps to know that other people have achieved a really good quality of life can after stroke.

If you are interested or know someone who may be interested in attending, please don't hesitate to contact me at 410.770.5882. We meet on the 4th Wednesday of each month from 2:00-3:30 at the St. Michaels library. We're worth a listen!

## Proper Mowing Heights

Whether you choose our natural/organic lawn care program or maintain the lawn yourself, the height of your grass can make a world of difference in the health of your turfgrass.

Most grasses in our area should be mowed no lower than two inches. However, 2 1/2 to 3 inches is actually preferable. Low mowing heights allow weeds to get a foothold, particularly in a newly established lawn. We have always advocated taller mowing heights because they cause less stress on your lawn. Low cut grasses may also allow insects and diseases to gain a foothold. Now that the price of gasoline causes us to take a second look at everything we do, less frequent mowing may sound like an even better idea.

## Look What's Growing in Our Greenhouse!

**New Guinea Impatiens** - Pink, white, purple, & rose swirls - three to a pot. This is our best value. These plants are hardy and durable. The blooms are absolutely beautiful! - **\$10.50 for a pot of three plants**

**Wave Petunias** - Pink, purple, rose, blue -- or we'll be happy to make custom assorted planters mixed with other annuals. Wave petunias dip and trail as if they're growing in waves...hence their name. - **Several sizes and prices available**

**Hostas** - variegated green and cream foliage—perfect plants for shady areas. We have non-variegated too. - **\$10.00 each**

**Daylilies** - standard orange—and we have miniature varieties too. They bloom with tiny yellow flowers. - **\$5.00 each**

**Geraniums** - many beautiful assorted colors. We're experts at growing geraniums. - **\$6.00 each**

**Lots of perennials are growing in the greenhouse. Most of these items are ready now:**

**Monardo (Bee Balm)**

**Rudbeckia (Black-eyed Susan's)**

**Leucanthemum (Shasta Daisies)**

**Perovskia (Russian Sage)**

**Verbena**

**Salvia**

**Echinacea (Purple and Yellow Coneflowers)**

**Azaleas**

**All plant material was grown in Maryland and adapts well to our climate. Our plants were not trucked in from Florida or Mexico. Call the office and we'll make sure we have samples brought up from our greenhouse.**