

Garden Tips

- The best pumpkins are always from Caroline County. If you drive towards Greensboro from Denton, there are several produce stands. Stop at any of them for the plumpest pumpkins you've ever seen...all at bargain prices. You're buying direct from the farmers when you're in that area.
- Plant those bulbs this month. If you're planning on spring daffodils and tulips, remember that spring is only six months away
- October is also a good time to plant container grown trees and shrubbery. Ornamental grasses can be planted this month too. The warm days and cool nights help to minimize the shock of transplanting.
- If you are planting trees and shrubbery, please keep this basic tip in mind. You'll need to select a variety that fits the location. All too often, people are forced to move a mature tree because it outgrew its' site. Make sure the plant won't obstruct windows or doors in a few years.

A Personal Message

Have you noticed the renovation work that we're doing? Although it isn't installed yet, we're in the process of building a very pretty white fence. It's being constructed inside our warehouse by some of the staff. They're building it on the 2nd floor of the building and will lower the sections down through the big barn-door windows in the back. Wish us luck when it comes time to lower entire sections of our fence from the 2nd floor! We're doing lots of other work here too. While searching for a border, I found a Belgian cobblestone that I just couldn't resist. The cobblestone is a white flecked granite in a rectangular shape. We're using it as a border for the entrance beds to the office. It's also being installed as an edge for the English-style garden in front of the house.

Some of the landscape beds have been dug in and wooden edging has been installed as a border for them. Melissa and I have agreed that we really like the look of wood as a garden border. It gives an almost nautical appearance to the landscaping.

Remember last month I told you that we installed a French drain on the property? This type of drain is designed to divert water away from the house. It allows it to flow into a designated drain which we strategically placed away from the foundation. These drains are an absolute necessity when you are trying to force water to flow in a different direction.

Recently, you may have also seen me on a small excavator digging a trench around the perimeter of the property. In fact, I spent all day yesterday on that 27C excavator. That's why I'm sitting in the air conditioning

writing this newsletter today.

I dug a 3 foot wide trench that was probably 16" deep. I excavated tons of rock and horrible clay-based soil. We are planning to install landscape beds around the perimeter of this property. The plant material wouldn't stand a chance with my current soil conditions.

As I'm writing today, two of my trucks dropped several yards of compost amended topsoil in the parking lot. We'll be using this special topsoil for the garden beds. It's a bit more expensive than regular topsoil, but using amended soil is far cheaper than replacing expensive plant material.

Our next step is to actually dig out the landscape beds. Then, we'll place this topsoil in the trenches that I prepared. More topsoil will go into the landscape beds. After we install the selected plant material, we'll mulch the beds and enjoy the view.

Sedum Ternatum

We just discovered *sedum ternatum* or three-leaved stonecrop. It took a little imagination and a lot of help from the Maryland Department of Agriculture Extension Office.

Our client needed an indigenous plant with a strong root system to use on a shoreline. We hoped to find something a bit different than the usual ivy. However, we needed something that was as durable as ivy when it comes to preventing erosion.

The Extension Office helped with the research and we found that this type of sedum (there are many varieties) typically grows along stream banks, rivers and stony ledges. That's how the common name of three-leaved stonecrop occurred. More on the unusual name in a moment.

This perennial sedum grows 3-6 inches tall and spreads by creeping stems. The stems feature small rounded succulent leaves which grow in groups of three. (That's where it gets the rest of its' name.) Small white flowers grow in star-like formations during the spring.

Although this is known as a creeping ground cover, this native plant is not invasive. Any unwanted plants are easy to remove.

If you are concerned about erosion along your shoreline, this type of plant may work for you. It's a nifty change from the usual ivy covered stream banks that usually dot the Eastern Shore shoreline.

Oxford Garden Club

Thank you to the Oxford Garden Club for inviting me to speak at their monthly meeting on Thursday, September 6th. Once I got over my nervousness, I had a ball! I hope they did too.

The subject of my speech was natural/organic lawn care. During the questions and answer portion, we

all became sidetracked as we discussed deer repellent and methods of tick control. However, judging from the level of audience participation, I think everyone stayed interested.

The Oxford Garden Club is active in many community projects. They allowed us to sit in during the business portion of their meeting and it was amazing how many different causes they support.

Once again, my thanks to this fine organization. I enjoyed my time with you.

Leaf Removal

Falling leaves are an inevitable part of autumn. And if you want a strong healthy lawn, leaf removal is an inevitable part of your landscape maintenance.

It's important to remove leaves from your lawn. They block sunlight which is vital for the growth and development of your turfgrass.

A lack of light reduces photosynthesis production. Grass needs the nutrients that occur during photosynthesis, even during periods of freezing weather.

When the weather is cooler, your lawn manufactures food in its' root system. This way, grass can actually continue to grow underground, even during the dormant season.

In fact, your lawn needs food and sunlight now more than ever. The grass is preparing for an extended period of cold weather, just like us.

Whether you opt to rake them yourself or if you want a professional service, we may be able to help. We're available to vacuum piles of leaves that you've created quickly and efficiently. Or, our large leaf vacuum and industrial size blowers can make short work of a messy lawn.

Nothing makes a lawn appear more unkept than matted leaves strewn across the grass and landscape beds.

Our professional equipment mulches the leaves as it vacuums them up. Therefore, we're able to haul away large, compacted loads of leaves. Please call us if we can assist you this fall.

Something about Shultz watering granules I couldn't bring over.