Farm News

By: Tom Mills
County Extension Agent for Agriculture

Fall Lawn Care

As the days of summer wind down, you might be thinking about a long rest from lawn care. But don't take that vacation just yet, or if you do, make it a short one, because fall is a good time to take care of weeds, remove leaves and fertilize grass.

Fall is the best time of the year to control such broadleaf weeds as dandelion, plantain, chickweed, henbit and clover. These weeds are actively growing in the fall, making them easier to control. And since grass also is actively growing during this time, it will fill in spaces the weeds formerly occupied.

Another reason to use fall broadleaf weed control is that winds usually are calmer this time of year so there is less chance of herbicide drift. Also, there are fewer sensitive plants in the yard that might be injured by drift or herbicide volatility. You shouldn't depend on frost for weed control because it only stunts or kills the tops, not the crowns and roots.

It's important to remove leaves because they shade grass and this prevents the growth of new grass plants. Although you can chop leaves with a lawnmower, it's best to remove them because accumulation of chopped leaves hurts new grass plant and stem development. Rather than send the leaves you've removed to the landfill, add them to your compost pile.

Fall also is an important time to properly mow and fertilize your grass. You should keep mowing grass as long as it's growing. Mow it shorter in the fall because grass should be no more than two inches tall going into the winter. Grass that's too tall often flops over and smothers itself-out, causing you to lose up to one-half the grass density. Mowing grass shorter and fertilizing it in the fall produces a more lush lawn. The short grass allows more light to penetrate. This, plus a high-nitrogen fertilizer, produces new grass plants that thicken your lawn. It also will produce earlier growth and green up next spring.

To increase lawn density without excessive top growth, apply a high-nitrogen fertilizer, making two applications six to eight weeks apart before the end of December. Apply the fertilizer at the rate of one and one-half pounds of actual nitrogen per 1,000 square feet. The percentage nitrogen is the first number in the analysis on the fertilizer bag. So, when using ammonium nitrate (33-0-0) you would apply four and one half pounds per 1,000 sq. ft. because three pounds of 33 percent nitrogen is the equivalent of one pound of actual nitrogen. With a 10-10-10 fertilizer, you would apply 15 pounds per 1,000 square feet.

For more information contact the Rockcastle County Cooperative Extension Service at 256-2403.

Educational programs of the Cooperative Extension Service serve all people regardless of race, color, age, sex, religion, disability or national origin.

Safety Tips for Halloween

By: Hazel Jackson
Rockcastle Cooperative Extension Service Agent for Family and Consumer Sciences

Trick-or-treaters won't be the only ones in disguises this Halloween. Potential hazards to children also might appear in disguises, or not be apparent.

Halloween-related injuries result from treats that have been tampered with, or that pose a choking hazard. Injuries also might involve eye abrasions from sharp accessories or objects attached to masks or costumes, and burns from flammable costumes ignited by open flames from candles and jack-o'-lanterns. Children also can be injured from running through dimly lit yards or dashing out into streets.

These safety suggestions will help ensure that Halloween ghosts and goblins won't be haunted by unnecessary injuries.

Warn children not to eat any treats before an adult has carefully examined the items for evidence of tampering.

An adult also should examine any novelty items or toys received by children under three years old. Discard items that are small enough to present a choking hazard or those with small parts or components that could separate during use and cause a problem with choking.

Be sure masks have no sharp objects that could injure children. Swords, knives and similar costume accessories should be made from soft or flexible materials.

Select costumes and accessories (masks, wigs and beards) that are labeled "Flame Resistant." Although these could catch fire, this labeling indicates that they will resist burning and should extinguish quickly when removed from the ignition source.

Avoid flimsy costume materials and outfits with big, baggy sleeves or billowing skirts to reduce the risk of contact with candles or other ignition sources.

To guard against trips and falls, children's costumes should be short enough not to drag on the ground. Also, children should wear sturdy, tight-fitting shoes; wearing oversized shoes, especially high heels, isn't a safe practice.

Be sure children's masks fit securely, provide adequate ventilation, and have eyeholes large enough to permit full vision. Also, securely tie hats and scarves to keep them from slipping over children's eyes and interfering with vision. Instead of a mask, consider applying hypoallergenic cosmetics.

Make or buy costumes bright enough to be clearly visible to motorists. For better visibility at dusk or darkness, decorate or trim costumes with reflective tape that will glow in a car's headlight beam. Also, choose brightly colored treat bags or sacks, or decorate these containers with reflective tape, which usually is available in hardware, bicycle and sporting goods stores. Carrying flashlights will help children more easily see and be seen.

An adult or older, responsible child should accompany smaller children. Be sure young children finish trick-or-treating and return home before dark.

Children should only enter homes or apartments when accompanied by an adult or responsible, older child.

Go over pedestrian safety rules before children go out to trick-or-treat. Encourage children to walk on the sidewalk rather than in the street. Also, remind them to walk, not run, from house to house and not to dash into the street from between parked cars.

To protect trick-or-treaters coming to your home, do not put candlelit jack-o'-lanterns near landings and doorsteps where costumes could brush against the flame.

Keep indoor jack-o'-lanterns, candles and other ignition sources away from curtains, decorations and other furnishings that could be ignited.

Whether for indoor or outdoor usage, only use lights tested for safety by a recognized testing laboratory. Check each set of lights for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, and loose connections. Discard damaged sets of lights. Don't overload extension cords.

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Extension Office news

The Mt. Vernon Homemakers Club will be meeting on October 27 at 10:00 am. Gladys Kirby will be teaching a basic knitting class. All supplies are furnished. Everyone is welcome. Call 256-2403 for details.

On Oct. 28, 9:00 am-2:00 pm, a Workday for Quilts will be held at the Extension Office. The quilts will be donated to the Lame Deer Indian Reservation in Montana. Volunteers are needed to tie and bind quilts. Call 256-2403 for details.

A free class entitled Social Savvy will be held at 10:00 am on October 30, at the Extension Office. A free class on Quick Holiday Entrees will follow at 11:30. Classes are open to everyone. Call 256-2403 for details.

A Holiday Workshop will be held on November 3 at 9:00 am at the Extension Office. A Snowman Glass Centerpiece and Kitchen Towel Angels will be taught. Call 256-2403 to register and for a list of supplies.

On November 6, 9:00-11:00 am, a Painted Gourd class will be taught by Glenna Robinson. Call 256-2403 for details.

The annual Holiday Cooking School sponsored by the Extension Service will be held on November 11, 5:00-8:00 pm, at the Corbin Civic Center. Tickets are $5 and may be purchased at the Extension Office. Limited availability. Call 256-2403 for details.

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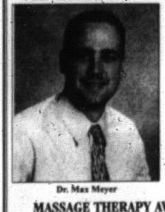
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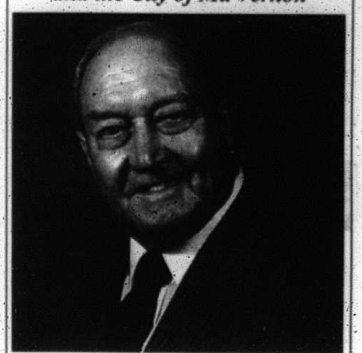
A Tribute and Thank You to Mr. Tom Welch from Mayor Clarice R. Kirby and the City of Mt. Vernon



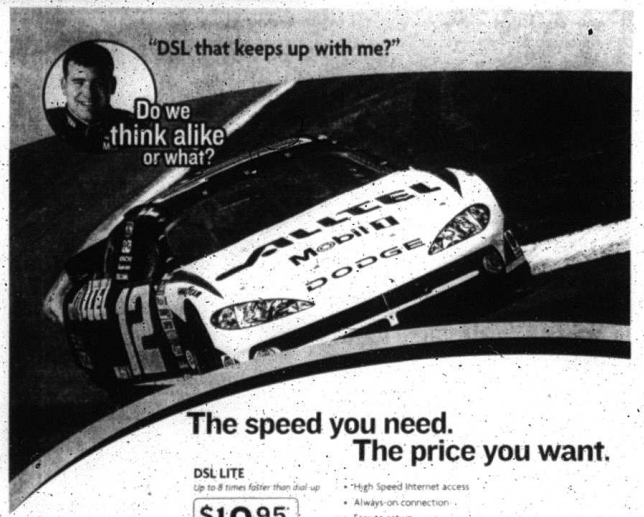
Mr. Tom Welch served on Mt. Vernon City Council from January 7, 1980 to December 31, 1987.

Recently, the City of Mt. Vernon received a check in the amount of $1,000 in the mail. It was a donation from Mr. Tom Welch. We contacted him and thanked him by phone and asked what he would like us to do with it. His replay was whatever you need and want to use it for. My original plan was to buy a flagpole for our city park, but we were fortunate enough to have Woodmen of the World come through for us and donate the flag and pole on September 11, 2003. I had the city workers pour a concrete pad for the flagpole. On each side I had them fix and leave openings for a state flagpole and a city flagpole.

I had debated on using his contribution for office equipment that City Hall needed, but I've decided that Mr. Tom would feel honored to know we will be flying a City Flag and that he has contributed to making this happen. When we get our logo and flag finished we will be holding a flag raising at Mt. Vernon City Park with a permanent plaque honoring Mr. Tom Welch.

We would again like to say thank you Mr. Tom Welch for all you have contributed through the years to the country, city and community. We love you and will always remember you.

Mayor Clarice R. Kirby and City Council of Mt. Vernon



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