



“Curb Appeal”

Our First Newsletter

Since The Cottage Gardener’s inception five ago, I have been entertaining the idea of doing a newsletter as another way of communicating with our customers and attracting new clients. Also, a newsletter is a great way to share information with friends and neighbors who have a similar passion for what we do, hence the name of our newsletter *Curb Appeal*. My vision is that *Curb Appeal* will be informative, topical, witty, funny, and

a forum for people to share their ideas and find helpful hints to further their own curb appeal goals. And as always, I would certainly appreciate feedback from our customers and the



community at-large as to what they might like to see in a quarterly newsletter and what they would like to see The Cottage

Gardener offer in the way of goods and services. So off we go and I sincerely hope you enjoy our newsletter!

Comments and Questions

Please send to:

tim@thecottagegardener.net

Or

Thru our website @ www.thecottagegardener.net

“contact form”

Or

C/O Tim McCaffrey

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Richmond, VA 23227

There is Room for Improvement

They say there are two certainties in this life: death and taxes. Cheerfully, I have not experienced the first but way too much of the second. To this list I would like to add a third certainty, “the room for improvement”. For my

purposes, the room for improvement means making The Cottage Gardener the best that it can be for our customers, my employees, and for myself and my family. Are we there yet? No, we still have a lot of wood to chop but as long

as we continue down the path of improvement, we’ll get there one day - Maybe. But be warned! If you are looking for the finish line in this race there isn’t one. Just a little voice in your head saying “We’re not finished, there is still room for improvement”.

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Words of Wisdom

“To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield”

The first three people who can correctly identify the source and author of this quote will win a set of Swiss-made, Felco hand pruners

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"Curb Appeal by The Cottage Gardener"

On the web@

www.thecottagegardener.net

Landscaping Tip

"The Hard Edge"

Really want your landscaping to pop? Give your beds and tree wells a nice, hard edge. Simply take a flat garden spade and edge the outer line of the bed or tree well then go back on the inner line and at a 45 degree angle to create a turf wedge with the outer line. Remove the wedge and presto - A nice hard edge just like the pros! Now when you mulch, the mulch will roll down into the edge and give you definition between your turf and beds!

Quarterly Coupon

10% Off of All Landscaping and Lawn Services! Contact us thru the website and get another 5% to boot!

Offer good thru
3/15/12



Ask The Gardener

Customers frequently ask me, "What kind of tools do you buy or prefer for landscaping and working in the yard?"

Well, that's a great question. A lot or most of the tools I purchase for the company are of commercial grade because of the amount of wear and tear we put on them during a typical season. I have several criteria for selecting tools: quality, dependability, American-made, and product warranty. Now, does the average homeowner need to spend what we spend on tools for their property, probably not, but please keep in mind "you get what you pay for". That's why I'll spend more for a Jackson shovel because it's not only a great tool but it comes with a lifetime guarantee. I buy it once and that's it.

Do you need a recommendation on a tool or piece of power equipment? Please give me a call and I'll help you figure out what best suits your needs.

Have a question you would like answered??? Send it to us!

Comfort...Food!

One of my favorite things to do and especially during the winter when we have some down time, is to cook. So I thought is might be fun to share a recipe or two in the newsletter and maybe we will get our readers to share their recipes are well. So here we go, Comfort Food 101!

Mushroom Bread Pudding

One French baguette or hearty Italian bread

Two Shallots - minced

Heavy Cream

1 cup Fontina Cheese - grated

Parmesan Cheese - grated

8 oz. Shiitake Mushrooms - sliced

Tear the bread into medium size pieces and soak in the heavy cream for an hour or so. Sauté shallots and mushrooms until soft. Combine bread with cream, fontina cheese, shallots and mushrooms in a round casserole dish. Season to taste and top with parmesan cheese. Bake at 350 degrees for 30-45 minutes or until nice and bubbly.

In the Yard.....

Time to Lime

With Winter in full bloom many people are content to leave their lawns until Spring arrives in a few months. That begs the question, "Is there something we should be doing?" Of course there is. Our soil in Central Virginia trends to the acidic side of the pH scale because of the native soil composition and because of our large amount of deciduous trees. Most homeowners do not put down nearly enough lime to keep their lawns in a proper pH range of between 6.0 to 7.0. In a perfect world all of our lawns would be 6.7 but that's just not the case. The Virginia Tech Extension service allows up to 200lbs. of lime per 1000 square feet of lawn area per year.

The bottom line is we don't use enough lime on our lawns. Lime is cheap and easy to find. So once a month this Winter, put down a bag or two of lime (depending on lot size) to get your lawn healthy for this Spring and to keep it healthy going forward. We recommend using clean lime that is readily available at Lowes, Home Depot, Southern States, or Landscape Supply. Also, when's the last time you did a soil analysis? Don't have time for either? Give us a call and we will take care of it for you.

Now, let's move on to our trees and shrubs that need pruning during the Winter months. For trees, January and February is the time to prune crape myrtles and hollies that are in great abundance in our area. On the shrubbery side, it's time to prune Abelias, Summer blooming Hydrangeas, Boxwoods, Nadinias, clean-up perennials and cut back grass plants and liriopie. For more on tree and shrubbery pruning, go to our website: www.thecottagegardener.net to download calendars and pruning guidelines.

FYI - You can prune anytime for disease or structural damage