



# “Curb Appeal”

## “Nobleness of Self and Mildness of Character”

I came across this letter ten years ago in a friend’s office, I made a copy of it that I keep in my office. It was written by Robert E. Lee while President of what is now Washington and Lee University, to the father of student asking Lee if he had a “Definition of Gentleman” that he could share. Lee’s response is as follows:

### LEE’S DEFINITION OF A GENTLEMAN

*“The forbearing use of power does not only form a touchstone, but the manner in which an individual enjoys certain advantages over others is a test of a true gentleman. The power which the strong have over the weak, the employer over the employed, the educated over the unlettered, the experienced over the confiding, even the clever over the silly-the forbearing or inoffensive use of all this power or authority, or a total abstinence from it when the case admits it, will show the gentleman in a plain light. The gentleman does not needlessly and unnecessarily remind an offender of a wrong he may have committed against him. He cannot only forgive, he can forget; and he strives for that nobleness of self and mildness of character which impart sufficient strength to let the past be but the past. A true man of honor feels humbled himself when he cannot help humbling others.” --Robert E. Lee*

The simple elegance of Lee’s words penned some 150 years ago, are as much about leadership as anything. I thought this was worth sharing because the principles laid forth by Lee apply to all of us. I hope you find these words inspiring and meaningful as we look forward to the arrival of Spring.

## The Case for “Curb Appeal”

A couple of years ago I was reading an article about real estate and what buyers are looking for in the post real estate bubble era. The author of the piece said today’s consumers weighed their deciding factors in thirds. A third for bathrooms, a third for kitchens, and a third for “Curb Appeal”. Now if you

have ever renovated a bathroom or kitchen you know the sky is the limit, it really depends on your threshold for financial pain. I guess the same could be said for “Curb Appeal” but I think, and rightly so, that you can spend much less and get a bigger bang for your buck by enhancing the curb ap-

peal of your home. A new walkway, front entrance, driveway, or patio. Update the existing landscaping or do a total make-over. Maybe you’re planning to sell your home in the near future - what’s the first impression your home makes to a potential buyer? Exactly - *Curb Appeal!*

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### Trivia Contest

Who said???

“The business of America is business”

The first three correct answers win a \$25.00

G/C to Little House, Green Grocery

## THE COTTAGE GARDENER

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**"Curb Appeal by The Cottage Gardener"**

On the web@

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### Landscaping Tip

*Preventing Ethanol Damage to 2-Cycle Equipment?*

Since it was decided that putting food in our gas tanks was a great idea, Ethanol has been causing problems for 2-Cycle engines. The average home owner doesn't use 50-60 gallons of mix gas a season like we do so we don't have the problem of our 2-Cycle mix sitting in the tank for extended periods of time and that's where the problem begins. How to combat that issue? Most of you with 2-cycle equipment probably will not use a gallon or two mix per season so I recommend using a product called "Tru-Fuel". It is ethanol-free and it comes Pre-mix in a 32oz. can costing about \$5.50. It is available at Lowes, Home Depot, Pleasants, and Arthur's Electric. Expensive but worth it for stopping ethanol damage. Give it a try, you'll save money using this product.

### Quarterly Coupon

10% Off of All Landscaping and Hardscape Jobs over a \$1000.00\*!

\*Contract must be executed before coupon expires



Coupon expires 3/31/12

## Ask The Gardener

We do quite a bit of our work locally in the Bellevue and Ginter Park neighborhoods and I get questions from time to time about new businesses that have opened up. One new business to our area that is really cool is "Little House, Green Grocery". Partners Erin and Jess have brought to Bellevue Avenue the whole concept of farm to table, locally sourced meats, veggies, fruits, milk, and cheeses. They're located at 1227 Bellevue Ave and their phone number is 264-7979. So go by and check out "Little House, Green Grocery" - they couldn't be nicer folks and they live right here in Bellevue. Let's get them off to a great start.

**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 it might be fun to share a recipe or two in the newsletter and maybe we will get our readers to share their recipes as well. So here we go, Comfort Food 101!

#### White Bean Chili

1lb. boneless and skinless chicken thighs  
1 large yellow onion - rough chopped  
1/3 cup of minced jalapenos - pickled  
2 cans of cannilla beans  
water or stock  
olive oil

Heat the olive oil in a 6-8 quart stock pot and brown the chicken thighs. Remove the thighs and sauté the onion until soft. Add back in the chicken thighs, beans(do not drain), minced jalapenos, and water or stock. Salt and pepper to taste. Let the chili come up to a boil, reduce the heat to a simmer and then let the chili cook down and thicken.

### In the Yard.....

#### Late Winter Checklist

1. Sometime between Valentine's day and Mid-March apply a pre-emergent with fertilizer to stop the soon to be germinating Spring broadleaf weeds
2. Lime, lime, lime - can't emphasize this enough
3. Cut back your ornamental grass plants and liriopse
4. Prune your Crape Myrtles
5. Turn over your vegetable garden or beds
6. Service your lawn mower or better yet, let us cut your grass
7. Clean out your ornamental and flower beds
8. Mulch your ornamental and flower beds
9. Start your vegetable plants inside or in a cold frame
10. Call The Cottage Gardener if you need help