



After Melissa's stroke, she found that a raised bed helped her continue to enjoy gardening.

A Personal Message

May showers are continuing as I write this newsletter. News flash. We are no longer threatened by drought.

I kept hearing that we were still in a drought condition as the rains of 2009 continued throughout April. April is somewhat of a blur, running through the raindrops and dodging mud puddles. April was also a backlog of delayed projects and unfinished work. People were not happy with me in April.

Miraculously, the drought conditions were over when May came along. Not so with the rain. It continues even as I write this newsletter in mid-May. Guess what else continues? People who are not so happy with Dell.

To anyone whose job has been delayed, please let me apologize. Of course you know that we appreciate the work you have given us. We are even working weekends to try to catch up. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

As a matter of fact, I haven't even done any gardening of my own this year. Melissa has planted everything.

Her lettuce finally exploded into beautiful new growth. She planted four different types this year. It's stunning to see the rows in all different colors. They range from Ruby lettuce to pale green Stinson to darker green endive. She always plants lettuce from seed mixtures and it's fun to see the tiny sprouts erupt from the soil.

The peas are about a foot tall and we still have hopes for an early summer harvest. Carrots are showing their lacy tops. A thunderstorm toppled the broccoli in early May, but Melissa righted it again and the plants are showing promising signs. Life in the garden goes on, even if the weather doesn't exactly suit us.

Did you know that we have three Pontiac Vibes in our fleet of vehicles? I really like these cars. My sister Elaine and I drive two cars exactly alike, and Melissa drives the older model. They are fuel efficient, yet roomy enough for a tarp full of weeds, tools, and the occasional bag of pre-emergent or mulch.

We always carry several garden weasels with us too. Have you seen these yet? They're like a mini-rototiller with a handle. They cultivate the soil to make it ready for planting. Weasels combine the functions of a hoe and a spade. Ask us for a demonstration. If you like it, you're welcome to purchase a garden weasel from us at a discounted price.

June Garden Tips

- Spring flowering bushes such as lilacs and forsythia should be pruned as soon as they have finished blooming.
- Don't cut daffodil stalks back yet. The bulb won't get much nourishment if the stalks are cut back prematurely. Your best bet is to deadhead the spent flowers. Then, wait until the leaves look like they are starting to die back. Many people like to bend them double and tie them back for a finished look in the garden.
- The best tip for the month of June is to deadhead your plants. Roses should be deadheaded weekly to encourage new growth. Most perennials will benefit from regular deadheading to extend their bloom period. And fall blooming flowers such as chrysanthemums and asters need to be pinched back to discourage early blooms. You'll want them to be a bushy plant when fall arrives. If you cut mums back one or two inches, this should be sufficient. Pinch them back before the 1st of July and then leave them alone.
- Here's a tip from our own garden: Stake your tomato (and eggplant) plants before they get too big. Otherwise, it's a real chore to fit cages around the plant. We waited too long last year and had to cut the cages with bolt cutters to fit the tomatoes inside.



Tick Repellant

Several years ago, I was bitten by a tick. Last year, my Dad developed Lyme disease. We have both worked outdoors most of our lives. We're very aware of the tick problem in this region. However, even with our experience we made a mistake. That's the reason I started our tick repellent service.

We now offer a barrier tick repellent service. 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, woodpiles and even lawns.

But our program doesn't stop there. We use Damminix tubes to kill ticks in rodent nests. Damminix tubes are the ideal compliment for a barrier tick repellent spray. Squirrels and mice take the treated cotton inside the tubes back to their nests. These cardboard tubes contain treated material which is deadly for ticks but doesn't harm animals or birds.

Our integrated approach to tick control doesn't stop there. We work to identify their habitation areas. You can choose whether to treat the tick population with repellent or remove the host area entirely.

An area of heavy brush where deer congregate may need to be cleared out. We can make your woods look like a park with our environmentally friendly, low impact brush mowers.

Our natural/organic deer repellent service is another factor of an integrated approach to tick control. Deer tend to avoid the treated plants after a time and move on to other areas.

An integrated approach to tick control will help you enjoy the outdoors without worry. Please give us a call for a no-cost, no-obligation evaluation.

Our Simple Monthly Maintenance Program

We have a unique program in place that is working well for many of our customers. You may find it interesting and want to consider it for yourself.

This monthly service simply consists of a review of your property each month. We'll stop by and take notes of what we think may need to be done. Then, we'll e-mail you with our findings.

Some months, nothing needs to be done. We'll let you know that. During May, we found that many clients didn't need any work completed. We let them know that too.

For some, a simple touch-up seeding was necessary. The torrential rainfalls this spring have really been good for the weeds! So we let those customers know that a small clean-up was all that was needed.

Having us check your property each month will actually save you money. By taking care of weeds and other problems quickly and efficiently, you can save money in the long run. You won't need us for extensive clean-ups that could take time to complete. Landfill fees will be less and so will our truck charges for this type of project.

Here's another bonus: You are guaranteed a space on our calendar each month. The spring rains played havoc with our schedule. Even now we're still playing catch-up and trying to finish our spring cleaning on various properties.

However, if you're on the monthly maintenance rotation, you are assured that we will reserve space on the schedule. Regular customers always come first in our book!

Here's the best part about this program: There is no minimum and no contract to sign. In fact, you don't even have to use us every month. You can always say no. We'll skip that month and contact you again the following month. It's a simple and easy way to keep tabs on your outdoor space.

Give our program a try. It won't cost you anything. You may find that you enjoy a landscaping review on a monthly basis. Remember there's no obligation to use us each month.