



THE BUGGETTE

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Bare in Mind

by Dick Bare

Hi, everyone!

Hope all is well with you and yours.

In the last newsletter, I talked about the first leg of our "Leaf Peeping Tour," where my wife, Sharon, and I, went up to Ohio. For the second leg of our tour, we flew into Boston to see New England and then Canada. Our plane was delayed for nearly an hour on take-off. After we were in the air, I asked the flight attendant the reason for the late departure. "Well," she exclaimed, "the pilot was worried about a noise he heard coming from one of the engines, and it took us a while to get a new pilot."

We left Boston the next day, and our first stop was Portland, Maine. Portland is an industrial city with a port but not much fall color. While we were in the area, we saw Kennebunkport, which reminded us of Helen, Georgia. It was kind of a touristy town. Former President George Bush and his wife, Barbara, live there. We passed their home, which was on a point out on the ocean and very beautiful. Next up, Bar Harbor and the Acadia National Forest.

This neck of the woods was incredibly beautiful. Here



again, not a lot of fall color because we were too early (although the following week it wasn't too early for snow!). Plus, they don't have a lot of maples, sweetgums, pears, etc., which really give off the explosive fall color. I think the really stunning color is more up into the interior of Vermont. The coast has more firs, spruce, pines and conifers. This area is where the Rockefellers reside, as well as Martha Stewart. Our guide told us some great Martha Stewart stories, but I had one of my own.

When Martha Stewart was released from prison, she was confined to her home and, of course, had to wear an ankle bracelet. She requested that she be able to go to church on Sunday mornings, which certainly seemed like a reasonable request, so it was granted.

What did she actually do during the four hours she was granted to go off the property?

She rode her horse over to the church and back again. She never went into the church, but the court couldn't do anything about it because she asked if she could "go to church," which she did.

That Martha Stewart is one smart cookie.


St. John Newfoundland, Canada, was a really charming little town. We visited a lab where they study and grow lobsters. We saw newborn lobsters and it was hard to believe how small they were (a quarter to a half inch). We also saw pictures of 50-year-old lobsters that weighed almost 50 pounds! That was very interesting.

Our last stop was Halifax, Canada. This, to me, was a very interesting small town with a rich history of tragedy. Many victims of the Titanic are buried here. There was also a devastating collision of two ships on December 6, 1917.


Back then, Halifax, in the province of Nova Scotia, was a bustling seaport town and on this particular day, the sun was shining, but it was bitterly cold and barren, as the ground was frozen solid. World War I had been raging over in Europe for more than three years, and Halifax showed signs of the war even though it was thousands of miles from there. The port in Halifax was busy with ships of all shapes and sizes, most related to the war effort, but many were North Atlantic Merchant ships too, hauling supplies in and out of Halifax.


Being a bustling commerce town, Halifax attracted many men with families because of the abundant work available; hence, the growth of the city was noted for its fast pace. Increasing the


What was the best gift you ever GAVE for the holidays?

 The year that all of us kids surprised my mom and showed up for Christmas so that we could all be together. That rarely happens with all of our busy lives and schedules.


- **Jessica Raczka**

 One year my husband and I made my mom two window boxes. I bought the potting soil and flowers, and my brother put them together and hung them up for my mom. My mom loved to work in her yard, and she kept those boxes filled every season with beautiful flowers. - **Deborah Norton**

 By far, the best Christmas gift I ever gave was my time. Time volunteered at a mission downtown was better than any monetary gift I've given over the years! - **Lagina Cadwell**


 The best Christmas present I ever gave was in Christmas of 2007. When my wife and I got engaged, in 1977, we were broke, so I couldn't get her an engagement ring. My mother bought a very cheap and very small diamond, and I surprised her with that. Thirty years later, I bought her a very nice and expensive engagement ring and gave it to her for Christmas to celebrate our 30-year anniversary. Better late than never.


- **Bob Donnelly**

 When our first son was born, we gave each of his grandparents a coffee mug with his picture on it. It was my dad's first grandchild, and he was over the moon to have


another way to show him off! I think he used that mug until the day he died -

Betty Spurlock

 My favorite gift I ever gave was a pencil drawing of my grandfather in his military uniform. I gave it to him when I was in high school. - **Megan Perry**

 My brother and I treated my parents to a weekend at a bed and breakfast. It was well-deserved, and they enjoyed it. -

Winnie Hoglund

 I know this is supposed to be about the best gift I ever gave, but I was on the receiving end of a wonderful gift that taught me a life-long lesson.

I had a great-great uncle that I adored. I was very, very close to him. When I was about 10, I unwrapped a gift at Christmas — it was a small fire truck. I remember thinking, “This is for babies,” and I made my feelings known to all those around me. Later I found out it was from that uncle, who had hardly any money. I felt awful. It was the first time that I realized that a gift from the heart was more important than any expensive gift. I kept that fire truck until recently, and now my mom has it. - **Doug Cash**



Winter Care for Lawn, Trees & Shrubs

Cool Season Grass

Raking your leaves is vital during the winter – if they are left on the lawn, they will smother it, as well as make it difficult for our treatments to reach the grass. Using a different mowing height during the winter months is also important. Cut your fescue every other week in the winter months, and cut shorter than you would in the summer. Leaving your clippings on the ground is beneficial; they will add nutrients as they break down. Also keep in mind that cool season grasses don't necessarily go completely dormant during the winter, so watering occasionally is a good idea.

Warm Season Grass

Although Bermuda grass goes into a dormant phase in the winter, it doesn't mean you should stop looking after it. Mow only when the grass requires it. Raise the height of the cut to leave more of the dormant Bermuda. It will insulate it. Raking leaves to prevent smothering is very important at this time, as all warm season grasses are fragile and easily damaged during winter.

Trees and Shrubs

During this time of year, fallen leaves collect around the bases of trees and shrubs to form a natural mulch. This protective covering not only keeps the ground at a constant temperature, it also keeps moisture from evaporating from the soil. Additionally, the materials in the mulch will break down to enrich the soil around the plant.

Pre-dug holes for the squirrels

I thought you'd get a kick out of what has been happening since my aeration and overseeding was done. The day after, I looked out the window, and this little squirrel was busy collecting nuts for winter storage. Where do you think it was poking the nut? Yep, right in one of the aeration holes! I saw another one yesterday doing the same thing. So cute it made me laugh out loud. – **Patty R., Mableton**



Application #7

What we did today

To your lawn:

- 1) **Fescue, Bermuda and Zoysia lawns** received weed control, as needed, to minimize weed growth during the winter. All lawns received a calcium and magnesium application to maintain the pH balance in your soil. Turf grasses grow best in a neutral soil environment (approximately 5.5-6.5 pH). Natural processes tend to make it more acidic over time. This application helps restore the neutral condition of your soil so your grass will grow better next spring.
- 2) **Centipede lawns** received weed control to prevent various fall and winter weeds. It also received a potassium fertilizer to enhance the root structure so your grass grows stronger and thicker.
- 3) **Fungicides** are not included in any of our applications, but it would be a good idea to put a fungicide on zoysia, especially if your lawn is prone to patch disease. Call us for a free estimate.

What You Need To Do Until Our Next Visit

- 1) Even during the winter, your Fescue lawn should receive about an 1" of water each week. Rain during the winter months is usually enough, but if it doesn't rain, do some additional watering.
- 2) Remove leaves regularly from your lawn. They can smother your grass and create problems with winter or early spring diseases.
- 3) Gradually increase the height of your mower for warm season grass. The increased height will help the grass to make more food to store so it can nourish itself when it comes out of dormancy in the spring.

If you have any questions concerning your lawn, trees, shrubs or our service, please call our Customer Service Department Monday – Friday, 8:00am-5:00pm at 770-447-6037. If you call after hours, please leave a message and your call will be returned the next business day.

Kudos

“The Bermuda has really improved in the backyard, and the yard as a whole is better looking in this short amount of time than I would have believed! ”

– **J. Andrews, Dallas**

“Wanted to let you know that Jason, Robby, & Mike were out and did a great job on aeration and seeding. It was the next-to-last job they had for the day. They were tired, but I wanted to let you know that they had great attitudes and were a joy to talk to”

– **B. Leavell, Lawrenceville**

Pre-Pay

Don't forget to take advantage of our pre-pay special. You should have received your pre-pay letter in the mail in early November. If you didn't, please contact us and we will send it out to you. You can save 5% if you pre-pay your 2012 service by 12/31/11.



Helpful Phone Numbers

www.arbor-nomics.com

Main#: 770-447-6037

Owner/President

Dick Bare: 678-638-4550
richard@arbor-nomics.com,
cell:..... 770-815-3879

Vice President

Doug Cash: 678-638-4548
doug@arbor-nomics.com

Branch Managers

David Sweeting, Branch Manager,
Norcross..... 678-638-4553

Greg Johnson, Branch Manager,
Marietta 678-638-4557
greg@arbor-nomics.com

Ward Frost, Branch Manager,
Cumming 678-638-4556
ward@arbor-nomics.com

Operations Managers

Teddy Linares, Operations Manager,
Norcross..... extension 1126
teddy@arbor-nomics.com

Bryan Powers, Operations Manager,
Cumming extension 1143
bryan@arbor-nomics.com

Customer Service

Lagina Cadwell extension 1129
lagina@arbor-nomics.com

Megan Perry extension 1145
megan@arbor-nomics.com

Jessica Raczka extension 1150
jessica@arbor-nomics.com

Deborah Norton extension 1151
deborah@arbor-nomics.com

Betty Spurlock extension 1152
betty@arbor-nomics.com

Winnie Hoglund extension 1158
winnie@arbor-nomics.com

Turfgrass Sales

Brandon Stegall, Sales Manager,
Atlanta..... 678-638-4552
brandon@arbor-nomics.com

Bob Donnelly, Sales Representative
..... 678-638-4554
bob@arbor-nomics.com

Bare in Mind...

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infrastructure of the town added even more workers, as homes and businesses were built at breakneck speed.

On December 5, 1917, the French steamship *Mont Blanc* parked for the night outside the harbor entrance. The ship had come up the coast from New England and was overloaded with a dangerous mix of explosives. The next day dawned bitter cold and windy, but sunny and beautiful. The Belgian relief steamer, *Imo*, embarked on a course out of the harbor, which put it in a line to encounter the *Mont Blanc*, now coming into the harbor. As the two vessels approached each other, each maintained its own course and signaled to one another that they were maintaining their course. However, as they got closer, it was obvious they were going to collide. The *Mont Blanc* was unable to move closer to the Dartmouth shore, and the *Imo* was unable to adequately reverse its engines.

The collision was mild, but it punctured some drums of benzene, causing a fire on the deck of the French ship. All of the munitions ships going in and out of Halifax Harbour were a common sight during the war years, but few Halifax residents would have guessed the volume and variety of the *Mont Blanc's* cargo — 2300 tons of picric acid, 10 tons of guncotton, 200 tons of TNT, and 35 tons of benzene.

The crew of the *Mont Blanc*, fully aware of the devastating explosion to come, boarded life boats and rowed like mad for the Dartmouth shore. Upon reaching shore, the sailors ran and warned onlookers as best they could (they only spoke French), while running into the woods to get as far away as possible from the shore. Other boats, seeing the fire, drew alongside the *Mont Blanc* to extinguish the blaze.

People along the shore of the

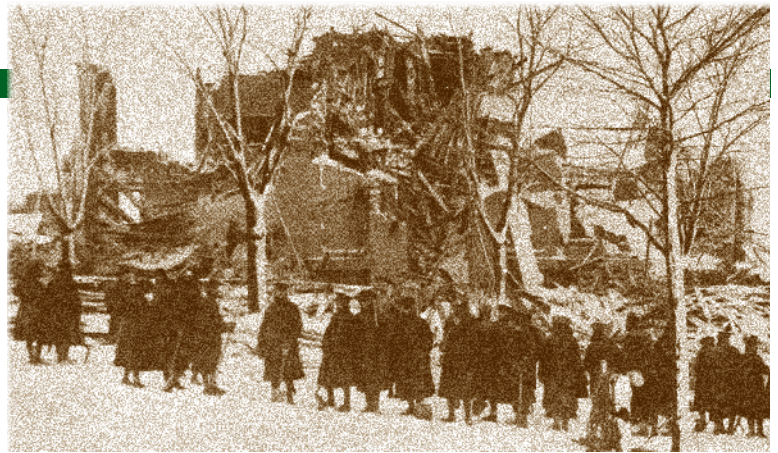
harbor, curious about the ship on fire, paused in their everyday pursuits to watch the ship burn. Residents in homes

surrounding the harbor also gathered in their windows and doors, as did children in schools and workers in factories, all unaware of their impending doom.

As the fire shot up with minor explosions and plumes of flame, the city's fire fighters raced to the scene to extinguish the blaze. Only a few people fled the scene, and a train dispatcher sent out a warning to incoming trains that a munitions ship was on fire, but overall no warning was issued.

At 9:05 a.m., the *Mont Blanc's* cargo ignited, and the largest man-made explosion ever known at that point flattened all of northern Halifax. Over sixteen hundred people were killed in that very instant. The sound waves of the explosion shattered windows 50 miles away, and 150-pound parts of the *Mont Blanc* anchor were found two miles off, in the northwest woods. One of its gun barrels was found three miles away in the other direction. Pieces of metal rained on the town, further damaging ships, buildings, and houses. The explosion blew all the water out of the harbor like a tidal wave and grounded whole ships, breaking cable lines that moored the docks around the harbor. Over two square-miles of northern Halifax was completely flattened. If you ever visit the museum in Halifax, you will see remnants of the disaster.

As the smoke cleared, it became clear that many would perish in the fires and rubble, buried beyond rescue. The death toll numbered in the thousands. Camp Hill Hospital admitted over 1400 injured victims — that number would grow to 9000. That day ended with many of the



injured going to stay with family and friends. Approximately 150 bodies were never identified; this in spite of a very good cataloging and classifying system developed five years earlier for the *Titanic* sinking.

The next day, December 7, 1917, the worst winter storm ever recorded in Halifax struck, further damaging the already flattened and vulnerable town. It raged on for six days, adding immeasurably to the travails of the survivors.

Aid came into Halifax from all the surrounding communities in Canada, as well as from Britain, Australia, New Zealand, South America, and the U.S. But the aid from the State of Massachusetts struck a chord with the people of Halifax like no other, and Halifax sends a Nova Scotia Christmas tree to Prudential Plaza, in Boston, each December in appreciation.

The blame for the explosion was never put on either ship completely; both did things that caused the accident. The language barrier was certainly a factor, as the *Mont Blanc* crew spoke only French. The captain of the *Imo* perished in the explosion, so many things were never known that may have helped the court inquiry. Many changes were made to shipping regulations, especially regarding munitions ships. Many rules and regulations were not being followed, and dishonesty and greed were rampant in the harbor environment.

We didn't do much leaf peeping on this second leg, but what we may have missed in explosive fall colors we more than made up for with an amazing tour of an explosive time in Halifax history.