

THE BUGGETTE



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Bare in Mind by Josh Bare

Hi, y'all! Recently, I decided to spend a day on the job with Marshall Pierce, a lawn care technician who's been with the Arbor-Nomics family for over 23 years. You might have seen his picture on one of our billboards this past spring. Marshall is originally from Louisiana, and he and his wife, Valerie, are the proud parents of Katie, who just graduated from Young Harris College.

Marshall has always served customers in Buckhead. Many of them have our Platinum service, which consists of 12 visits a year and is all-inclusive, which means he treats their ornamental trees and shrubs and their turf. On the day I went out with Marshall, he was treating these customers, so we decided to split up the tasks on each property.

we looked for issues needing special attention and then noted them to the customer on the invoice we left behind.

We've had such a dry fall we saw a number of small shrubs suffering from either drought

We headed out from the office around 8:30 and after wading through traffic arrived at the first customer's house at a little after 9:00. Marshall has just about every house committed to memory and knows the best spot to park at each one and where to pull the hose. Since we were sharing the duties, on some properties, I did the tree and shrub application while Marshall did the turf, and on others, we switched. As we walked the properties,



CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Lucky Foods for the New Year

For many, January 1 offers an opportunity to forget the past and make a clean start. But instead of leaving everything up to fate, why not enjoy a meal to increase your good fortune? Traditions vary from culture to culture, but there are striking similarities in what's consumed in different pockets of the world: The six major categories of auspicious foods are grapes, greens, fish, pork, legumes, and cakes. Eat as much lucky food as you can, just don't get too greedy—or the first place you'll be going in the new year is the gym.

Source: www.epicurious.com/archive/holidays/newyearsday/luckyfoods



'Tis the Season for Giving Thanks and Sending Wishes for Happy Holidays

From all of us at Arbor-Nomics to you, our valued customer: We are grateful for your business and your trust in us throughout the year. This season of celebration is the perfect time to send out thanks and wishes for joyous holidays for you and your families. From all of us to all of you...

Merry Christmas! Happy Hanukkah! Happy Holidays!



Seeing some weeds in your Fescue?

You may be seeing weeds in your Fescue lawn throughout the remainder of this year. Sit tight; on application #1 of 2017 (January/February), we will apply a post-emergent to kill any existing broadleaf weeds and a pre-emergent to help in the prevention of any new ones. This process of timed weed control and prevention is customary following the fall aeration/overseeding of Fescue lawns which is needed after the stress of a typical summer.

Holiday Traditions

Ever wonder where some of our holiday traditions come from? Here is a small sample of the many joys we share during the holiday season with a few important dates for your calendar.

Christmas Candy Canes

The Christmas Candy Cane originated in Germany about 250 years ago as straight white sugar sticks. The addition of red stripes and flavors of peppermint or wintergreen came in the 1900s.

Mistletoe

Kissing under the mistletoe may have come from ancient traditions and beliefs, but this symbolic herb is so much more! Mistletoe promotes wildlife because although it's poisonous to us, it provides a great source of food for many animals. It can bloom even in freezing conditions so birds rely on the plant and butterflies lay their eggs on it and use the nectar. Bees also get important pollen from mistletoe.



Hanukkah

Hanukkah is the Jewish Festival of Lights and it remembers the rededication of the second Jewish Temple in Jerusalem. This year's celebration begins the evening of Saturday, December 24th and continues until the evening of Sunday, January 1st.

Kwanzaa

Kwanzaa is a seven-day festival that celebrates African and African-American culture and history. Created by Dr. Maulana Karenga in 1966, Kwanzaa is celebrated from December 26th to January 1st.

Source: www.whychristmas.com



Winterize Your Trees and Shrubs

Trees and shrubs need care and protection from the cold and ice of winter to stay healthy and produce beautiful foliage for spring.



- Continue to water them until the ground freezes.
- Provide a warm blanket of mulch to protect the root structure.
- Fertilize now to keep them well fed through the winter.

If you are on our Gold or Platinum program, application #6 took care of fertilization for winter feeding. If you're on our Silver program, call us soon. During the fall, we can apply a single treatment of our slow-release fertilizer. This special formula reacts to soil temperatures, delivering fertilizer to your ornamental trees and shrubs when they need it, to help them develop a stronger root system and become more resistant to diseases and insects. You'll see lush growth and greener leaves this spring.

Your trees and shrubs need to be prepared for winter. If you're not on our tree and shrub program, call 770.447.6037 to get an estimate for your fertilizer treatment.



Application #7

We reserve the right to modify any of our treatments should the weather require it.

What we did to your lawn today:

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 of the 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. Fescue lawns received an application of Arbor-Organics, an organic fertilizer containing humic acid. Known as a natural bio-stimulator, humic acid benefits just about everything that grows.
3. Zoysia and fungicides: Zoysia is prone to Zoysia Patch, and we've also been seeing rust this season. Fungicides are not included with the Silver and Gold programs, but it would be a good idea to treat, so call us for a free estimate. Platinum customers received their Zoysia fungicide treatment today.

What we did to your trees and shrubs today:

(Only for customers on our Gold & Platinum programs)

1. We applied dormant oil to protect against certain insects. Many bugs survive our relatively mild winters, and they like to live in your trees and shrubs. The oil smothers them so they can do no harm, keeping your trees and shrubs healthier and more resistant to stresses like disease and drought. We'll follow up with a second application on our first visit next year.
2. For customers on our Gold or Platinum programs, your trees and shrubs have already received their fall fertilization. This helps them develop a strong root system and makes them more resistant to disease and insects. You'll also see lusher growth and greener leaves come springtime.

What you need to do until our next visit:

1. Even during the winter, your lawn should receive about one inch 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 about a 1/2" above your usual height for warm season grasses. The increased height will help the grass store up more food 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, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. at **770.447.6037**. If you call after hours, please leave a message and your call will be returned the following business day.



Remember to Mulch!

Now's the time to add or replenish mulch in trees and shrub beds. Along with controlling weeds, a blanket of mulch helps keep tree and shrub roots nice and warm through fall and winter.



Helpful Phone Numbers

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Arbor-Nomics Pre-pay Special

Don't forget to take advantage of our pre-pay special. You should have received your pre-pay letter in the mail in November. If you didn't, please give us a call. **Save 5% on your 2017 service when you pre-pay by 12/31/16.**

Bare in Mind CONTINUED

or overwatering from irrigation systems. We also saw a lot of trees that have browned out and might not leaf back out in the spring. I guess we'll find out sooner or later, as it sometimes takes a while to see the effects of drought on a mature tree.

Lunch break

Around noon, we stopped for lunch at a Zaxby's on Roswell Road. Most of the Arbor-Nomics technicians either pack a lunch to eat on their route or snack throughout the day. Taking care of lawns involves a lot of walking, so I appreciated being able to sit and rest for a while, especially since I wear rubber boots that aren't very supportive.

Lunch also gave us a chance to chat a bit. I enjoyed hearing about some of Marshall's memorable experiences thanks to his use of bright blue tracker dye to help him see what he has sprayed. One time, about 20 years ago, he got it on his gloves at a house with two very friendly golden retrievers.

"I love dogs. So when they ran over to me, I welcomed them with open arms," he said. "Just then, the customer pulled up and saw her 'blue dogs.'" Luckily, it's like food coloring and washed right out.

Another treatment scenario that led to unintended results was when he was spraying the ornamental trees and shrubs at a property where a large camellia shrub was growing up against the back porch.

"I stepped to the side to get it good but NOT get any spray on the house. But just as I started to spray," he said, "it got windy, and some of the mist went through an open window and into the second-floor sunroom." Luckily, after a wiping down with a little soap and water, everything was fine.

Back to work

After lunch, we headed back out to service more customers. One lawn with fescue grass had an active infestation of armyworms. The most common ones in metro Atlanta are about 1.5 inches long when mature and a dark greenish brown. They like to eat early in the morning or late evening and can quickly decimate a lawn. Armyworms run in cycles, driven by weather patterns and what is going on with their natural predators. This year they've been more active than usual.

Fortunately, our products are very effective at stopping them! So, we sprayed that lawn thoroughly and will follow up in two weeks, since sometimes two applications are needed to stop the second generation. Likewise, we drove by at least one other lawn to check the progress of an earlier armyworm treatment.

As usual, at most of our stops, our customers weren't home. At one, however, the owner and his dog were there. Marshall made friends with the dog by feeding him a dog treat that was sitting nearby. In our business, it's good to be on good terms with the customers' dogs.

In fact, just about every technician I know has a story of either being bitten or having a close call. But Marshall says that in all the years he's been treating people's lawns, he's been bitten only four times.

"I've been bitten a lot more by yellow jackets than dogs," he said. The best dog warning sign I ever saw while spraying was the one with the outline of a Doberman and these words: "I can make it to the fence in 2.8 seconds. Can you?" Certainly made me peek over the fence and whistle a time or two to ensure the dog wasn't out in the yard!

We didn't see any kids that day. But in the summer, when the kids are at home, they often ask Marshall what he's doing. He asks them if they take vitamins every day and then explains to them that he's giving vitamins to their lawn.

Last stop

At about 3:30, we were on our last property of the day working hard. When we saw they had new sod in the front, we applied our products lightly. That's because as new grass is knitting down and getting established, it's important not to stress it. A lighter application can result in some weeds, but better safe than sorry with a homeowner's investment in a new lawn! We also had to maneuver the hose around some obstacles to treat every nook and cranny of the property. But working together, we got it knocked out and exceeded our production goal for the day.

I enjoyed the day, especially catching up with Marshall.

I like the autonomy of my job. When I started in October of 1994, Dick told me, 'I want you to treat this route like your company. These are your customers.' He was so right! I love to solve problems, meet people and learn about where they're from, their culture and their way of life. I've made a lot of friends out of customers.

-Marshall Pierce, Certified Landscape Specialist

Customer Kudos

I just wanted to thank Marshall for his expertise in treating my very expensive brand-new lawn. He is both knowledgeable and extremely easy to talk with!

- T. C

This is to let you know that my wife and I have received consistently excellent service by Marshall and your other technicians during the past several years. Marshall does a great job of articulating what we need to do each season about our lawn maintenance and preventive care.

- H.D.

The Great Pumpkin Update

The kids planted and nurtured four pumpkin seeds they brought back from a family trip last fall to the Canfield County Fair in Youngstown, Ohio. The result was a giant pumpkin weighing in at a whopping 128.30 pounds!

