

Hired hands take on our white grubs

It happens every spring. As snow levels diminish, the ground, that once was a lawn, re-appears in all its ugliness.

Strange, isn't it, how one pretends those little bare spots, so visible in the fall, will somehow repair themselves during six months of hibernation?

I wish. Unfortunately, in this regard, nothing changes. The imperfections are just as noticeable in April as in November.

It's been 48 years and 10 months since we moved into our humble abode. Back then, as newlyweds, we were proud of our place. A \$12,500 price tag and a 20-year, \$7,000 mortgage seemed right for a greenhorn journalist earning \$60 a week.

But one thing aggravated us. The lawn. Grass in the rear yard was so high we couldn't venture beyond the back steps without holding hands.

The front yard was better, but not much. Bricks and stones, unearthed during the original excavation, still littered the ground.

Out of necessity, our first major acquisition was a Toro mower, purchased at Hendricks' Hardware for \$90.

Foot by foot, we tackled the grassy forest, finally reducing it to a respectable height.

Since then, with the help of son Barry, we've managed to keep it under control.

While our lot will never resemble a golf course or bowling green, I still contend a well-manicured lawn mirrors the pride people have in their properties.

I care not if the house is a 20-room mansion or a single-room cottage, the outside matters most.

And this is the cause of recent concerns.

Four summers ago, I observed a dead spot near our drive. I blamed it on salt runoff in the spring. A year later, the dead spot had widened.

The fact hordes of grackles were daily descending on the surface should have indicated something serious.

But I did nothing, hoping the dilemma would somehow go away.

However, when raccoons and skunks arrived, I realized swift action was required. So I dug it all up and planted fresh seed. That should do it, I muttered to myself.

But it didn't.

As fast as new sprouts appeared, they disappeared.

So I planted again, and again and again.

The same result.

We'd gone from the best to the worst lawn on the block.

I felt ashamed.

But what to do?

By co-incidence, a representative from a firm called Dan-Mar drove by.

The driver stopped, took



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

a look and recognized the problem.

White grubs, he said, they were really bad that year. He offered assistance, at the same time suggesting the menace would undoubtedly return the next year but with lesser effect.

I signed on the dotted line.

To say Dan-Mar did a creditable job would be an understatement. Excellent would better describes their work.

Fertilizer applications were provided spring, summer and fall. In addition, they not only eradicated the grubs but also the weeds.

Further, without charge, they seeded all bare spots created through winter-kill. In two summers, our lawn went from a veritable desert to a lush fairway.

I was pleased. And so was my wife, Jean, truly thankful someone had taken charge who knew what he was doing.

Unfortunately, this spring, I found myself back to square one.

The Dan-Mar firm is no more, at least not in the grass-growing trade. Since I prefer keeping business local, I didn't know where to turn.

Unlike previous seasons, when lawn-care companies were constantly plaguing us with calls or filling our postal box with brochures, we heard nothing.

No one except the Weed-Man.

A representative phoned not once, but three times.

Without being pushy, he described all the benefits the firm had to offer. The program sounded impressive.

Still, I put him off, hoping other companies would provide comparison pricing.

But none did.

So I agreed - not on his terms but on mine; one application of fertilizer in April; another in October and grub control, if needed, in June. If results fall short of expectations, the firm's agreed to return and repeat the treatment.

I could ask for nothing more except assistance from neighbours when time comes to cut the grass.

Jim Thomas is a Stouffville resident who has written for area newspapers for more than 50 years.

OUR PEAMEAL - BACON -

If you are used to travelling in the 'States, you'll know that 'Canadian Bacon' can be anything that is not side strip bacon, depending on the locale you are in. And truthfully, once you wander out of Ontario eastward or westward, this bacon becomes more and more rare. It could quite truthfully be called 'Ontario Bacon'.

Our peameal will be on sale this week. Our butchers like it when this happens because they don't have to slice it - a time-consuming enterprise as we do it by hand. We sell lots of our peameal for a number of reasons. The first - we only sell centre-cuts. Secondly, we use a fairly low-salt cure. Thirdly, we trim it lean so that there is next to no fat. Fourthly, we don't pump it with brine to the extent that it becomes watery. Lastly, (but not least) we don't put it through the "extend" cycle on a tumbling machine to make it bigger.

So if peameal is on on your menu, get your knives out, sharpen them up and come and see us, 'cause the peameal deal is back!

By the piece - Reg. \$4.99 lb.

P.S. If your knife is dull, bring it too; we'll sharpen it.

2⁹⁹ LB. THIS WEEK

WHAT'S COOKIN! AT THE DELI!

In our busy little deli kitchen we'll be doing a lot of cooking for this weekend. We'll be making

CHICKEN BREASTS CORDON-BLEU, using our air-chilled chicken, so they'll be on the plump side and juicy - and to serve with it we'll have a Basmati Rice Pilaf - and our now famous Broccoli and Cauliflower Salad - all of these priced at **1/3 OFF OUR REGULAR** for this Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Dinner's ready, folks!

WHAT'S FOR DINNER! THIS WEEK ...

Our steak pies will be our frozen entrée feature for this week. These are made with steak which we flour and brown, then slow-roast with onions, mushrooms, red wine and spices, then cover it all with a pastry lid. What you need to do is uncover the container and bake it for 45-50 minutes and voila - a warm steak pie and an aroma that in itself will make you hungry. Reg. \$16.95 ea. Serves 3 - 4

25% OFF THIS WEEK

WHAT'S NEW!

We will soon begin stocking a range of frozen organic meats, sausages and a few dinner entrées. Also, we will be making some allergen-free sausages, beginning next week. We'll sell these from the frozen case as well.

CREAM OF CAULIFLOWER SOUP

This is a chicken-stock-based soup, with onions, celery, cream, white wine and seasoning. It's really good either hot or chilled.

Reg. \$6.49 ea. Serves 3 - 4

25% OFF THIS WEEK

PANSIES

Our first shipment of pansies has arrived and we're good to go. We'll have flats of 48 cell packs (some of the frilly variety) and an assortment of the very large 16" bowls. The 12" bowls are a bit thin yet and will be available next week.

FRESH BROCCOLI

We'll have a feature price this week on this great broccoli, so grab one of these as you go by, and you'll mitigate any extravagancies that might occur at the bakery counter. From California **.99** THIS WEEK

FRESH BLACKBERRIES

These are the half-pint size, from Mexico. I'm eating a container of these as I write this. They are sweet, plump and juicy - the perfect berry. **1⁹⁹** Container

A SPECIAL THANKS!

Kevin and I want to thank all of you who contributed - and bid on our 'Mystery Packages' - and not so mystery packages - at the Hospital Gala. For those of you who weren't there, they fetched \$77,000! **MANY, MANY THANKS**

TEXAN HOT SAUSAGES

These sausages are just full of flavour, and a fair degree of heat. They're larger (like most things from Texas) than our other sausages and they're great grilled, if your BBQ is close, or roasted, if the oven is your choice.

Made daily. Reg. \$3.99 lb.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

HALIBUT

We'll have the first-of-the-season fresh Pacific Halibut this week. I've been reading-up on my fish as you know, and in my favourite fish cookery book, 20 pages are dedicated to 'Genus Soleidae'; Pacific Halibut being just one of a great many. The assortment of recipes is bewildering, and another time we will do a 'Sole Sale' and list the 33 classic French preparations of this fish. We sell our halibut filleted, boneless and skinless, and it's at its best grilled with simple spices or poached, and almost always with a dollop of butter. From British Columbia **12⁹⁵** THIS WEEK

WHAT'S BAKING! THIS WEEK ...

It's a chocolate week in our little bakery, and we'll be making

FROSTED CHOCOLATE CAKES - made with three layers of our dense, moist, double chocolate cake filled and iced with a buttery chocolate frosting. Two sizes **\$14⁹⁵ & \$22⁹⁵**

CHOCOLATE CREAM PIE - we fill a Graham Crust with a rich chocolate custard which we make with cream of course, Dutch cocoa and pure unsweetened chocolate, then we top it with a layer of whipped cream (also real) and chocolate shavings **\$15⁹⁵**

DOUBLE-CHOCOLATE LOAF - this loaf is made with our double-chocolate cake batter, dark cocoa, sour cream, dark and milk chocolate chunks and drizzled with white chocolate, just to be sure. Reg. **\$4⁹⁹**

REVERSE CHOCOLATE COOKIES - these are soft and chewy dark-chocolate cookies studded with white-chocolate chunks. Container **\$6⁹⁵ Ea.**

'PALM LEAVES' - these crisp, light pastries are made with our own Puff Pastry, layered with sugar and folded many times so that they bake into many layers - and then half-dipped in chocolate **\$2⁴⁹ Ea.**

FLOURLESS CHOCOLATE CAKE - this cake is like a dense brownie, yet soft and melty like a truffle. It's made with eggs, sugar and chocolate, and we top it with whipped sour cream and berries. Reg. **\$12⁹⁵ Ea**

ALL THESE ITEMS WILL BE FEATURED THIS WEEK AT **25% OFF THIS WEEK**

SPECIALS IN EFFECT UNTIL CLOSING SUNDAY APRIL 13TH
Hours:
 Mon. 11:00-7:00 ~ Tues.-Thurs. 9:00-7:00 ~ Fri. 9:00-8:00
 Sat. 9:00-6:00 ~ Sun. 10:00-5:00
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