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Welcome to Fj Lawn Care Newsletter!



Blowing off driveway. Part of our mow, trim and blow. Lawn Mowing Brooklyn Park, Mn

Hello folks! Once again, writing this a wee bit late, but who cares! Right? Right? It's just great to be able to read one of these letters! I know... Lol! Ok, Spring rains went right into June, bringing us a healthy volume of mowing and lawn care customers, thank you! Spent a lot of our time on our mowing routes, shrub trimming, second round fertiliza-

tion and weed control for those darned dandelions and Clover. At the same time Creeping Charlie started showing it's self and special treatments took off. July came in with that maintained momentum with the rains, with greater precipitation than last season. The end of July brought on the second round of weeds, the annuals. Our crews spent weeks weed whipping and spraying side walks and driveways to keep the weeds down, a must with this service. During the latter part of July, we covered 1 full week of mowing for a local lawn company's foreclosure properties, which was interesting. This local company does mowing for what are called property preservation companies, which are companies that I believe manage bank owned properties and these companies hire contractors such as myself to maintain them. During these couple month's we brought on some much needed part time/full time help. Welcome Zach, Trevor and Casey. In this business, you certainly need the extra hands to accommodate our customers. We hope everyone had a wonderful Independence Day! To conclude, I would like note, the month of June was my son John's 6th Bday and July was my son David's 9th Bday. Happy Birthday little lawn boys! Well, enjoy the rest of the news letter! We'll be seeing you real soon. Please note: If you're receiving treatments, or fertilization and no irrigation, the grass must be on the green side to be most effective and is customers responsibility to water!

June and July Drawing

On a monthly basis we will draw 1 name for a \$25 gift card to various establishments in the Metro area. We will also randomly draw 25% off discounts on lawn service.

At times these prize amounts may increase, but will stay at \$25 minimum.

Rules: Previous year customers will qualify for drawings through May 2013. Resigning customers or new customers in 2013 will qualify for each month of service. For example, if you sign up for say seasonal

June winner \$25 gift card- Fred P. Grant, MN

July winner \$25 gift card- Tammy R. Minneapolis, MN

mowing, which is April through October, this would qualify you for 7 months. If you were a Maintenance customer, say 4 fertilizations (4 months), 1 core aeration (1 month), Over seeding (1 month), and say a Fall clean up (1 month), this would qualify you for 7 months of drawings. If you have both

services, say mowing and maintenance, and the fertilization fell on the same month as mowing, your name would be entered twice. Once you win the gift prize, you can reenter in 4 months, and discounts in 3 months.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- ♦ *Monthly Prize Drawing*
- ♦ *Basic Lawn Care and Mowing*
- ♦ *Creeping Charlie*
- ♦ *BBQ Ribs by Jim (Dad), King of BBQ!*



Owner Jim and son David on the mowing route

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Basic Lawn Care and Mowing



Treated Lawn (Left) Vs Non treated Lawn (Right)

We often receive calls from folks that 'want their yard fixed'. The yard will look thin, weedy, hard, etc. All signs that very little to no maintenance had been down, for a long time. As far as maintenance, let me explain to you what a good maintenance plan is, then I'll tell you what the most important, KEY! Ingredient is for these plans to work. Ok, the plan includes for non irrigated yards, four fertilizing applications, 1st in Spring which carries the pre emergent for the crabgrass, 2nd in June with the Weed n Feed, 3rd in September as a regular fertilizing, 4th in Late October with higher Potassium for the roots through over wintering. Also, two weed control applications, 1st around late May and 2nd

early August. One core aeration in Spring or Fall, and one over seeding every couple years. Now, the key ingredient to make this all work is..... WATER! See, a lot of people want all of this, but those that don't have the irrigation and let their yards go dormant as we've experienced these last couple years can not have these chemicals and cultivating done, because it will cause more harm than good. NOTHING should be done to a dormant yard. If a yard is due for an application, grass needs to be thriving, somewhat green. Customers need to be watering their lawns as part of this lawn maintenance program. This said, with all these components working together, over a couple years, your

lawn will look like the lawn to the left. About mowing; The picture to the left explains it well. FJ lawn care lawn on left and non maintained, scalped with rotary reel mower on right. We've been maintaining the lawn on left for two years with everything I explained earlier, and we also cut it every week, at 2.5" in Spring and Fall and 3" during summer. Very important to cut grass taller in hotter, drier times. Cutting at a taller length will protect the grass roots, further keeping the grass healthier and thriving through times of low moisture. The lawn on the right is dried up, injured, and is rock hard. Hope this helps! Remember, WATER!

Creeping Charlie

You ever get that real strong odor, kinda minty smell to it, as you mow over parts of your lawn? You might notice that there are small or very large patches of these nickel sized leaves bunched together. They have pretty lavender colored flowers on them in the spring. You also notice that every year these patches grow and grow, eventually taking over your yard. No, it's not the green Blob, it's Creeping Charlie! Yeah! NOT! Ok, let's be honest, most of us hate the stuff and want it gone,

Right? Right?? We have several clients on our Creeping Charlie (CC) treatment plans. Our Treatment plan consists of three treatments, one treatment every two weeks, and after third spray, we wait two more weeks and on the six week, determine whether or not a forth app. would be needed, most cases not. It's funny, some neighbors just don't give a hoot if they have it, while we're trying diligently to get rid of it in the yard next to them. Due to the aggressiveness of this weed, repeat appli-

cations in following years may be necessary if neighbors still have it. Yes, we can improve the esthetics by physically not seeing it and bring back the grass, but guarantee if surrounding yards still have it, it will CREEP, hence the name, back into your yard. We have several customers that have us back every year and we have actually convinced a few of the neighbors to treat as well. As a consorted effort by all neighbors, will increase the percentage to eventually eradicating in a given neighborhood.

**"CUSTOMERS NEED
TO BE WATERING
THEIR LAWNS AS
PART OF THIS LAWN
MAINTENANCE
PROGRAM"**



Creeping Charlie (Perennial Weed)

BBQ Ribs by Jim (Dad), King of BBQ!

Are you ready for some BBQ ribs! We have a great recipe for ribs. My father Jim retired a few years back now, and has always loved to cook, and has really gotten involved with BBQ'ing. He is a **member of the Kansas City BBQ Society and Certified BBQ judge** and has traveled around the tri state judging at BBQ contests. Here's the recipe:

With three good months left in the outdoor BBQ season, it's time to fire up your grill and enjoy these easy to make delicious BBQ ribs. The secret to making good ribs on the grill is "low and slow". Cooking on low temps around 225 and cooking slow for about 4 to 5 hours on indirect heat.

FIRST STEP: Go out and pick up a nice rack of baby back ribs or St. Louis cut ribs. They are pretty inexpensive ranging anywhere from around \$9.00 to \$13.00 for a good rack of ribs. Check out the meat section in your favorite store. I would not recommend buying a full spare rib rack unless you know how to cut it and trim the rack into at least a St. Louis cut of ribs. It's much easier to buy the baby backs or St. Louis ribs cut and ready to go.

RIB PREPARATION:

Step 1: Open the bag and remove ribs. Run ribs under cold water to rinse off ribs. Pat dry with a couple paper towels.

Step 2: Place ribs on a cookie sheet with a lip around the edge as the next step might be a little messy and a cookie sheet keeps your counter top clean. Also you can carry the ribs out to the grill on the cookie sheet. On the back side of the ribs there is a silver membrane that runs down the middle of the ribs. Some people will remove this membrane when cooking the ribs. It's difficult to do until you learn how to remove it. It's not easy to explain how to do it in a written article so if this is your first time at cooking ribs or have no experience in removing the membrane, I would recommend just leaving it on. I have cooked them many times without removing it and many restaurants do not remove the membrane at all.

Lay the ribs on the cookie sheet with back side up. First shake a little Worchester Sauce on the ribs. Next take regular yellow mustard and put a couple

good size shots of mustard on the back side of the ribs, use your clean hands and rub the mustard in all over the back of the ribs. Next you will need a bbq rub made of different spices. I found a very good rub that I like to use at Walmart for around \$2.12 a container. It's Grill-Mates for Pork. There are literally hundreds of different commercially made rubs, so use what you like or want to experiment with. If you have your own secret recipe of rub, you can use that.



"Ribs coming off the grill at four and a half hours"

With the back of the ribs covered with mustard, shake on or use your fingers to sprinkle on a nice layer of the BBQ rub. Be sure to cover the sides and ends of the ribs. Next sprinkle on a coating of brown sugar. Leave the ribs sit for a few minutes so the rub and sugar adheres to the ribs.

Turn ribs over now to the top side of the ribs. Repeat the above process. Next put the tray with ribs in the refrigerator for a half hour to two hours to let them marinade in the spices.

GRILL PREPARATION:

Remember, the trick is to cook low and slow. Low temps around 225 on the indirect heat (the portion of the grill away from the flame or hot coals if using a charcoal grill) and cooking slow for four to five hours.

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Prepare and set aside a cup of apple juice with two tablespoons of Worcestershire sauce mixed in the apple juice. Use this mixture to spray the ribs with a spray bottle or use a brush to brush the mixture on the ribs every half hour for the first two hours that the ribs are cooking on the grill. If you don't have a spray bottle, you can use a tablespoon to drizzle the mixture over the top of the ribs. Also a brush will work to coat the ribs with the mixture but be sure not to brush too hard as you might brush off the nice mixture of spices on top the ribs.

Step 1: Get a chunk of hickory wood or apple wood and soak for an hour or so in water. You can also use wood chips if you have a metal container for the wood chips. Soak the wood chips in water ahead of time. Soaking in water will help to keep the wood from catching fire. A mixture of hickory with apple and/or cherry woods chips will work good with pork.

Step 2: Cook ribs on indirect heat. If you have a gas grill with three burners running side to side, light only the rear burner. Begin to heat up the grill and watch your temperature gauge and bring internal temperature up to 225 with only the rear burner on. At this time you



***“Notice how ribs pulled back away from the bone.
Ribs are done”***

can lay the chunk of wood or wood chip container close to the burner with the flame to get the wood smoldering. It may take a while but it will start to put out a nice smokey aroma. If possible, it's best to smoke the ribs for at least the first hour or two of cooking. Not a heavy smoke

but just a nice mild smoke.

Step 3: Take ribs on tray out to the grill and place over the burners that are not on. Place ribs on the grill top side up. Do not turn ribs over while cooking. We are going to use the grill like an oven and slowly smoke and bake the ribs. This will be a four to five hour process. Every half hour open the lid and apply the mixture of the apple juice you prepared over the top of ribs. This will help keep the ribs moist and impart a nice flavor. Do not keep the lid open very long as you will lose your heat. Keep it open only long enough to apply the mixture. Otherwise, keep the lid closed as much as possible so the ribs will continue to bake at 225.

AFTER TWO HOURS:

There are two different methods you can use for the final two to three hours.

METHOD #1: Remove ribs from grill, put ribs on your tray and take into the house. At this time we are going to wrap the ribs with extra wide heavy duty aluminum foil. Tear off a piece of foil 8 to 10 inches longer than the rib rack so we can close up the ends after we wrap the ribs in the foil. Be careful not to puncture the foil with the rib bones as we want to keep the liquid inside the foil with the ribs.

Lay the foil on the counter top, place ribs on top of foil. At this time curl up the foil around the ribs as we will be putting four to six ounces of apple juice in the foil with the ribs and don't want it to run all over the counter. First sprinkle the ribs with a little brown sugar. You can also add a little more rub if you brushed it off during the first two hours. Pour in a quarter cup of apple juice around the ribs. Now close the ribs up in the foil. Don't wrap ribs real tight. Try to make a tent over the ribs by crimping the top folds leaving space over the ribs and then crimping the ends and folding upright so the juices don't run out during the cooking process for the next two hours. Be sure to close all openings in the foil. This will allow the ribs to bake and steam during the next two hours for that tender almost fall of the bone rib.

Return foil packet of ribs back to grill and continue cooking for two hours at 225. Remember, do not place ribs over the burner that is on.

After two hours in the foil, carefully remove ribs from foil and return to grill on the indirect heat again for around 30 minutes to firm ribs

up and apply your coating of bbq sauce. Be careful taking ribs out of foil as there will be hot liquid in the packet. Just reopen top of foil packet to remove ribs. The ribs will be hot. I use a pair of insulated rubber food handling gloves to pick the ribs up out of the foil. Use your favorite sauces at this time. If you don't like to use BBQ sauce, you can simply let ribs firm up for 20 to 30 minutes. By now meat should be pulled away and back from bones. You are now ready to take them in and enjoy.

METHOD #2:

After the first two hour mark mentioned above, you can simply continue cooking the ribs unwrapped for another two hours instead of foiling with aluminum foil. Be sure to spray or apply the apple juice mixture to keep the ribs as moist as possible during the next two hours. Also keep the grill temperature around 225. You can go as high as 250 during the cook. Higher heat will dry out the ribs. Around four hours into this method the meat should be pulling back from the bones and they are ready for saucing with your favorite sauces. Again, if you prefer no sauce, that's fine also.

Cooking times will vary on both methods depending upon your cooking temperatures, how long the lid on the grill was open, etc. You have to use some judgment as to when the ribs are done. Generally when they have been on the grill for around four to five hours and the meat is pulling back from the bones, you are ready to eat.

If you are using a charcoal grill, be sure to use the indirect heat method. Keep the ribs away from the direct coals.

Don't forget, the real trick is cooking at low temps, and slow. This is a good basic recipe and you can add your own favorite sauces, marinades, spices and cooking times. Experiment and play with your grill doing ribs many different ways until you come up with your winning ribs. Don't forget to add some wood smoke during the first hour or two and you will have your neighbors looking over the fence to see what you're up to.



"Sally and I enjoyed the savory ribs with leftovers for breakfast"

Message to our customers

Well guys, here's to another fun filled newsletter. As we go through the summer, those of us that don't have irrigation and do want the maintenance, please try to keep your yards watered as it will help immensely with our efforts to get your yards where we planned to be. Of course the alternative is an irrigation system... \$\$, but is nice! Also, this year has seen a large



Owner Jim on mowing route in Golden Valley, MN

Increase in accounts and we ask everyone be patient with our applications ie fertilizing and weed control. We will get to you. With these applications we do have to be mindful of temperatures and can not apply when too hot. We will work diligently to contact you to let you know of any delays. To conclude, thank you much for your continued support, and congrats again to Fred and Tammy on your drawing!