

Yard Work: The Reason Lawyers Work Indoors

by Evan Loeffler

One of the reasons why I wanted to own my own home was that I wanted my own yard. This not to say that I wanted to take care of it. It is well known that I don't like any sort of work at all. I wanted my own yard so that I could walk in my back yard and feel the satisfaction of knowing that the grass under my bare feet is *my* grass. I wanted to laze away a sunny weekend afternoon lying in the back yard with nothing to keep me company but a good book and pitcher of iced tea.

The fact that I live in Seattle, and therefore haven't seen a sunny weekend afternoon in two years, did not enter into my thinking when I purchased my house. Nor did the fact that I haven't had the time to do any serious lazing since college. I looked for, and eventually purchased a house boasting a small backyard with a dense patch of weeds and shrubbery where the grass was supposed to go.

When Spring came, I started making periodic forays into the yard to pull weeds and remove all non-grasslike growth.. After several such sallies I took stock of my backyard: several hundred square feet of much-trampled weeds and shrubbery.

At this point I knew I would not be cultivating my lawn without outside help. Those who know me well probably think I simply went whining to my father for help. Not so. Enough of my youth was spent pushing a lawn mower over my father's backyard that I felt confident I could handle this project without his helpful abuse.

I knew that what I needed were lawn TIPs or "Testosterone Inducing Powertools." No modern day outdoorsman is complete without a noisy, smoke-belching, fossil fuel devouring, whirring instrument of indiscriminate destruction. Paul Bunyan, noted woodsman and macho guy, is a mere flower-pressing sissy compared to an overweight slob with a chainsaw. I had to have TIPs if I was going to conquer the lawn.

In order to achieve mastery over my lawn I purchased a Bionic Weedsucker 2000. A true TIP, the Weedsucker came with racing stripes, lots of levers and buttons, many danger stickers and a two year guarantee. I began to feel the initial euphoria of sense-dulling testosterone as I filled out the "Waiver of liability for loss of limbs if used in an incredibly stupid manner" card. I started the Weedsucker and laughed evilly at the weeds now cowering miserably at my feet. No longer was I a mild-mannered attorney. I had transformed into the Lawn Barbarian.

Carving a swath of destruction with each swing of my thews, the Weedsucker and I made short work of all that lived in the backyard. As I switched off the TIP, I surveyed my handiwork. Not a weed remained unsmacked. Barely pausing to let my testosterone approach mortal levels, I unsheathed my second TIP: the Z-6 Ultra-Cultivator. The Z-6 is really just a rake that hums and makes exploding noises every time it touches the ground. No matter. The Lawn Barbarian was not to be trifled with. A few hours later the ground lay cultivated.

I spread grass seed, watered the lawn, and waited patiently for a week for grass to grow. In anticipation I even purchased a lawn chair. When I examined my back yard I found a barren patch of dirt littered with the carcasses of dead weeds. Not a blade of grass to be seen.

At this point, my interest in the project having waned, I called my father. I explained how I had mowed, hoed, sowed and watered. Dad, as usual, diagnosed the problem right away.

"You're an unbelievable idiot," he said. "How can it be that you, a lawyer of all people, have forgotten to spread fertilizer?"

I am now the proud owner of a patch of dirt sparsely populated by a few meek tufts of sorry-looking grass. My testosterone having ebbed back to its normal level, I have decided to take a more cerebral approach towards the backyard problem. I tried convincing myself the yard is better this way since it doesn't need much in the way of care or watering. That approach having failed, I have decided to hold a lawn party and barbecue. Admission to the party is one square foot of sod. People who bring crabgrass may not have any beer. Any takers can RSVP to my office.