

CARING FOR CREATION NEWS

Bye, Bye Summer . . .

December 2007

It's time to put away the garden tools and rake the leaves. Summer is over and Michigan people know that it's time to prepare for winter. We've seen all the signs: gas saving tips from the utility company, the falling back of daylight savings time, and, of course, that ritual of storing the patio furniture. But before we say good bye to summer, let's take one look back. Last February in this column, we mentioned the fact that a motorized lawn mower operating for an hour can put out as much air pollution as a car traveling 250 miles. Our own Bill Bryson read that statement and decided to take up the challenge. He got himself a push mower. The following is his story:

Getting a "hand push lawn mower" for my birthday last April was reminiscent of getting underwear for Christmas. It's a gift that in economic terms, most of us would probably classify as a need rather than a want.

Although I have never asked for underwear for Christmas, I did ask for a hand push lawn mower for my birthday. Michelle, the shopper who gets results, located one at the local Sears for a reasonable \$85.00. she brought it home, and the benefits have been many.

For instance, it is the only appliance I have ever been able to assemble myself. How self-affirming was that! Upon assembling it, I lived a literary moment, when, like Tom Sawyer's friends begged to paint his fence, each of my kids lined up to mow the lawn with this unique contraption. (A "moment" was the exact duration.) The kids have since developed a fear of this mower also. The dog, however, has not. She no longer shakes and barks while I mow. For a time, our eighteen-year-old was able to access fuel in the old mower can for his commute.

The automobile (and rider mower) traffic on Woodwind Drive slows as drivers gawk at the quirky guy operating this retro mower. You'd swear they are thinking, "It's stranger than the getups he wears to get the newspaper on Saturday morning!" Judging by what I read in that newspaper, pushing this mower seems like a good idea.