The Maple Lake MESSENGER Control of the Maple Lake Mesenger Extra, August 2017 Appleton of the Maple Lake Messenger - Distributed to 5,000 area homes & businesses



Reliable Auto Care: friendly, reliable and honest work

By Brenda Erdahl

Reliable Auto Care in Buffalo is more efficient and more reliable than ever thanks to a now completed renovation project that updated space and services.

Using the existing footprint, owners Jeff and Kris Jackson added two more vehicle bays onto their building at 1018 Highway 55 E in Buffalo, updated the lobby and office and installed a new, state-of-the-art alignment machine, all in an effort to better service their customers' vehicles.

"We'll be able to do what we've always done, only better," Jeff said.

More space, better service

The work, which was com-

bays from three to five, which means Reliable Auto technicians can service up to six vehicles at a time. In one of those bays is a computerized alignment machine that Jeff said is an upgrade technology-wise for the company. The new machine will provide even more accurate alignments for customers.

The additional work space prompted the Jacksons to hire more help for a total of three certified technicians, including Jeff. Between them, they have 35 years of experience.

Those technicians do everything but bodywork. Tires, brakes, suspension, steering, diagnostics and AC are some of Reliable Auto Care's services.

Thanks to the additional

options when it comes to oil changes and transmission flushes.

Vehicle years 2007 and up use semi synthetic or full synthetic oil instead of regular oil. In the past, the Jacksons have had to special order those oils, costing those customers more money. Now they can order the synthetic oils in bulk which means it's always on hand, and saves their clients' money.

Finally, the remodel expanded the shop's waiting room, allowing Kris and Jeff to make it more pleasant and homey with comfortable seating, a TV and Wi-fi.

The owners

Jeff Jackson received his ASE certification from St. Cloud Technical College, and



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drive an hour or more to get here. We have customers who have been coming here since the beginning, and they swear by us," Kris said.

As an added service to their customers, the Jacksons will arrange for clients to be driven home or to work and picked up again if they live or work within a five-mile radius of the shop.

Preparing for winter or school travel



Top, Reliable Auto Care is located at 1018 Highway 55 E in Buffalo across from Cub Foods. Above, owners Kris and Jeff Jackson promise to deliver friendly, reliable and honest service. "We will never sell you a service you don't need," Kris said.

road, the car will not handle

correctly if the alignment is

Why Reliable Auto Care

quality auto repair can be costly

and time consuming. That is

why they and their technicians

do everything they can to pro-

vide friendly, reliable and hon-

able Auto Care is aimed at es-

tablishing a trust-based

relationship with our customers

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shop just off Highway 55 East

near Cub Foods in Buffalo.

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that will last a lifetime."

"Everything we do at Reli-

The Jacksons know finding

off," Jeff said.

est work.

pleted last fall, increased their space, they can also offer more



Reliable Auto Care can service up to six vehicles at one time thanks to the addition of two new bays. In one of those bays is this computerized alignment machine that will provide even more accurate alignments for customers. since 1990 has worked as an auto technician at Goodyear, Car-X and Gould Brothers. In 1993, he and Kris were married, and in 2005 they opened Reliable Auto Care in Buffalo where they have been ever since. They have three children and live in Maple Lake.

The Jacksons believe strongly in getting to know their customers, and will never sell them a service they don't need. Instead, Reliable technicians prioritize potential problems, give the customer all the options up front and let them decide.

"We are never pushy," Jeff said.

That strategy has worked for the company for years and it shows in the many clients who keep coming back.

"We have customers who have moved away and they will

With September right around the corner, the Jacksons remind new and existing customers to come in and have their vehicles checked, whether heading off to college or simply to be prepared for the upcoming cold weather and first snow fall.

Reliable Auto technicians recommend that fluids, brakes, battery, suspension, air filter, and tires be checked by a professional before starting on a long trip. The same goes for preparing for winter weather. Before roads get icy and snow covered, drivers should make sure they have their tires looked at. A good tread makes all the difference on an icy road, Jeff said.

In addition, reliable brakes, suspension and accurate alignment are all imperative, especially in inclement weather.

"When you get on an icy

(Photos by Brenda Erdahl)



Rich Johnson, above, is one of three certified technicians at Reliable Auto.





Page 2 Help kids get ready for fall sports season

Summer is a season of relaxation, especially for school-aged children who are not yet old enough to work. Such youngsters no doubt enjoy the chance to spend summer days lounging pool-side or at the beach, all without a care in the world or any homework to complete.

Though summer is synonymous with R&R, parents of young athletes who hope to compete in scholastic athletics when the school year begins in autumn may need to take steps of injury once the curtain comes up on fall sports season.



to ensure their kids aren't at risk

• Examine and replace equipment if necessary. The right equipment can protect kids from injury and help them realize their full athletic potential. But damaged or outdated equipment can increase kids' risk of injury. Examine kids' equipment long before fall sports season begins so you have time to bargain hunt should anything need to be replaced.

 Schedule a physical for your child. Many school districts mandate that athletes receive and pass physicals before they can compete. Speak with the athletic director at your child's school to learn the guidelines that govern athletic physicals. The physical will need to be conducted by a pr-determined date, but you may also need the physical to be conducted after a certain date for it to be considered valid. Speak with your child's physician if any problems are found during the physical.

· Let kids heal. Kids' schedules are busier than ever before, and many youngsters play several sports during the school

year. Summer vacation may be the only extended period all year that youngsters' bodies get to heal. While it's important that kids stay physically active throughout the summer, make sure they don't overdo it, as you should emphasize the importance of rest.

• Gradually get back in the swing of things. While rest gives kids' bodies a chance to heal and develop, it's important that young athletes stay in shape over the summer. As the fall sports season draws near, help kids gradually get back in the swing of things. Tryouts tend to be physically demanding, so kids who have not lifted a finger all summer may be at risk of injury or missing the cut. Let kids ease back into regular exercise to make sure they are not starting from scratch come their first try-

· Speak with coaches. Coaches can be great assets to parents who want to make sure their youngsters enjoy the summer without sacrificing their chances of making the team in

the fall. Speak with kids' coaches to determine if there is any area your son or daughter can work on over the summer to improve his or her chances of making the team. Make sure kids are the ones leading the charge to improve their games; otherwise, they may feel pressured into doing so and that can take

away the fun of playing sports.

Scholastic athletes should take advantage of the opportunity to relax and recover that summer presents. But athletes who hope to compete in the fall can still work with their parents to ensure they're ready once the school year and sports season begins.



Another school year starts again very soon, and having kids ready for academics and fall sports will help ease (Photo submitted) them into the school year.

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Three pre-winter lawn care pointers

Winter weather can be harsh, especially on lawns. Homeowners who spend much of spring and summer tending to their lawns may fear the impact that winter will have on their once-lush landscapes, making the fall a great time to fortify lawns against any harsh conditions to come.

Homeowners must take grass type into consideration before taking steps to prepare their lawns for the winter. Some grasses are best fertilized in late-summer, while others should be fertilized in autumn. Cool-season grasses, including fescue and bluegrass, are best fertilized sometime between the months of September and November. Warm-season grasses, such as Bermuda or zoysia, should be fertilized between July and September. Once homeowners have gained a greater understanding of their lawns, they can begin exploring the various ways to prepare their lawns for whatever winter has in store.

1. Explore winterizing fertilizers.

Homeowners who want to make their grasses more winter hardy can consult landscaping professionals to determine if winterizing fertilizers will work for their lawns. These specially formulated fertilizers, many of which are made exclusively for cool-season grasses, contain higher levels of potassium and lower levels of nitrogen than early-season fertilizers. Potassium helps strengthen and harden plants, and cool-season grasses may need extra potassium as winter settles in. Homeowners who are not sure if they should apply winterizing fertilizer can conduct soil tests to determine the potassium levels in their soil. If the test indicates the soil has sufficient potassium, then applying a winterizing fertilizer is likely unnecessary. In addition, homeowners who have fed their lawn a balance of nutrients throughout spring and summer likely will not need to apply winterizing fertilizer.

2. Get rid of fallen leaves. While fallen leaves may be integral components of idyllic autumn landscapes, leaves left on the lawn throughout the winter may lead to disease in the grass. Leaves trap moisture and block sunlight and air from reaching grass, and that can encourage the development of disease. In addition, leaves can harbor insects that also may contribute to disease. While it might seem like common sense to delay leaf removal until the end of autumn when all the leaves have fallen, that, too, can prove harmful to lawns. Leaves left lying on lawns for long periods of time can contribute to the same types of

damage as leaves left on the lawn throughout winter, so do your best to remove leaves as they fall.

3. Take steps to fight snow mold.

Homeowners who live in regions where snow falls into spring or where spring tends to be cold and damp may want to take steps to prevent snow mold. Gray snow mold typically looks fuzzy and gray, and lawns infested with snow mold may develop unsightly gray or brown spots indicative of dead grass. Pink snow mold may be even worse than gray snow mold because pink mold attacks the roots as well as the leaves. To prevent snow mold, continue mowing into the fall, even as lawns grow dormant, clearing the lawn of grass clippings and leaves after each mow. Thick lawns may provide a breeding ground for snow mold, so homeowners whose lawns have a history of developing snow mold may benefit from mowing their lawns into the fall.

winter is rarely easy on harsh winter

lawns, but homeowners can take several steps to prepare their lawns for potentially harsh winter weather.



Earth-friendly tips for autumn

Autumn is soon upon us, and with the change of seasons comes the fall to-do list that must be completed before the arrival of winter weather. Many outdoor jobs are best completed before temperatures drop, while others can be tackled indoors to help save energy and prepare for increased time spent inside the home.

Outdoor cleanup

Autumn means leaves are falling from trees and littering landscapes. Cleaning up leaves can be a time-consuming task, but it's necessary to promote the health of lawns and other

We Make Dancing "Fun!"

plants. Grass that is completely matted down with leaves can become starved for light and moisture, and lawns may even rot when forced to spend winter beneath fallen leaves.

One eco-friendly timesaver is to shred leaves with a mower (a manual mower is preferable) and leave them as topdressing for the lawn. As long as the grass blades can be seen within the leaves, the lawn should be fine. Shredded leaves will decompose and add necessary nutrients and organic matter to the soil naturally.

BARBARA LEE'S STUDIO OF

Leaves also can be used in annual flower and vegetable gardens to improve the soil. Mulch made from shredded leaves can be placed on the soil around trees and shrubs. This helps to reduce weed problems and protects root systems from harsh temperature fluctuations.

Clothing donations

It's time to pack away summer clothing and once again fill closets and drawers with sweaters and jeans. Before packing away your summer wardrobe, conduct an inventory to determine if there are any items you no longer use. Donate these items or use them as rags when cleaning.

Keep some short-sleeved shirts accessible so you can layer them under sweatshirts and sweaters. The heat from layering will be trapped against your body and keep you cozier, reducing your reliance on HVAC systems to stay warm.

Home repairs

Check the roof for any missing shingles. In addition, look for spots where animals or insects may be able to gain entry into your home. Seal



Nights & Weekends!

these areas and repair any leaks. This will make your home more efficient later on when winter hits its stride.

Remove window air conditioners for the winter. If they can't be removed, seal them with caulking or tape and cover them with an airtight, insulated jacket. If you have forced-air systems, move furniture away from the vents so that air can flow better around the home and keep it comfortable.

Check weatherstripping around windows and doors and make the necessary adjustments. Installing additional insulation also can help reduce energy consumption.

A few tips can help homeowners prepare for autumn in eco-friendly ways.











Prepping for autumn will allow for an easy approach to a different season and help with unwanted problems. (Photo submitted)







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