



Tune in today

Find out two good reasons why America loves country music.

USA Weekend

Work early to prepare for winter

This column was prepared by Lake County Master Gardener Connie Owen.

Winter's drastic weather changes can provide challenges to our landscape plants, but proper care can often provide

needed protection for woody plants in Northeastern Ohio landscapes.

While we normally think of the lowest temperatures as being most dangerous to our plants, injuries can occur in autumn, winter or spring. Injuries such as browning of evergreen foliage, injury or flower bud death, bark splitting or root death may result.

Plants go through a process of acclimation when they transform from growth stages to dormancy.

Plants acclimate or develop hardiness to winter temperatures when the hours of daylight shorten and when temperatures go below freezing.

Gardeners can help their plants acclimate to winter conditions. Plants should enter the fall season as healthy as possible, but not rapidly growing, so applications of nitrogen fertilizers should be reduced after mid-July and stopped by late summer.

Soils should be well irrigated in mid to late autumn before the soil freezes to protect from tissue desiccation. Other ways to protect your plants include mulching, tying, wrapping and protecting from rodents.

Mulching: Some plants, such as perennials, rock garden plants, strawberries and other shallow rooted plants, benefit from a 2- to 3-inch layer of mulch (bark products, composts, peat moss, pine needles, straw, hay or other materials available from local garden centers).

Apply the mulch after the soil freezes to keep the soil cold, not to protect it from becoming cold. The mulch maintains a more even soil temperature and retains moisture. Pine boughs from your Christmas tree can be used to help protect plants from damage by the wind and sun.

Tying: The weight of snow and ice often causes branches to break or crack on plants such as arborvitae, juniper and yew. This can be avoided by fastening heavy twine at the base and winding it spirally around and upward to the top and back down in a reverse spiral. This especially helps plants as they become larger and more open at the top.

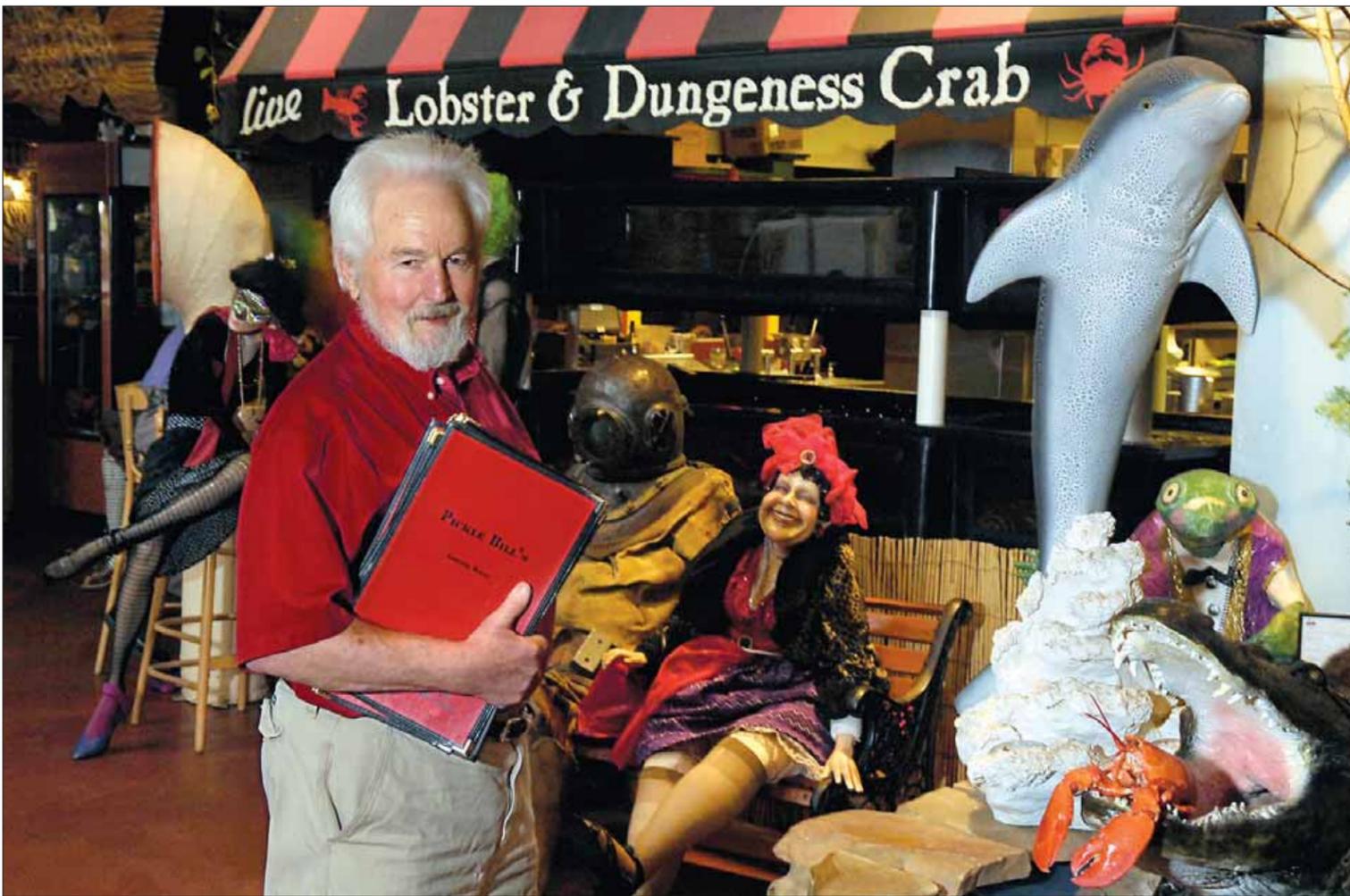
Wrappings: Wrapping the body of evergreens with burlap or canvas can help protect plants from drying out due to sun, wind or drift from de-icing salts.

Gardening with the masters



PICKLE BILL'S MARKS 25 YEARS

A continuing story



Michael Blair/MBlair@News-Herald.com

Jerry Powell combed estate sales and flea markets to find the quirky items used in his Pickle Bill's decor. One close friend said the Grand River restaurant is a perfect reflection of its owner.

Determined owner endures many challenges

Janet Podolak

JPodolak@News-Herald.com

On its way to becoming a Northeast Ohio institution, Pickle Bill's has survived fire, flood and just about everything but a swarm of locusts. Owner Jerry Powell has gone out of business three times and each time has made a comeback.

This month, Pickle Bill's celebrates its 25th year along the Grand River, serving as many as 1,000 meals on a sunny summer weekend day.

Naturally, seafood is its specialty. The restaurant's quirky decor boasts mermaids, mannequins, trophy fish suspended from the ceiling and a roof garden with swings for barstools. A carousel-shaped barge, where boaters can tie up to refresh themselves, floats off Pickle Bill's decks in the Grand River.

At least one old friend says the entire place mirrors Powell. "Pickle Bill's reflects Jerry's personality," said Mike Mason of Mentor. "It's bizarre across the board. There's nothing like it anywhere."

Each year, the restaurant's owner buys champion steers raised by 4-H kids and hosts Toys for Tots fundraisers and supports other good causes.

But Powell came close to losing his shirt a fourth time last year when the flooding Grand River washed his party barge into Lake Erie. The July flood left scores of Lake County residents homeless and made national headlines.

The experience underscored Powell's belief that perception often is reality. Folks, hearing of the Grand River devastation wreaked by 11 inches of rain falling over two days, stayed away in droves.

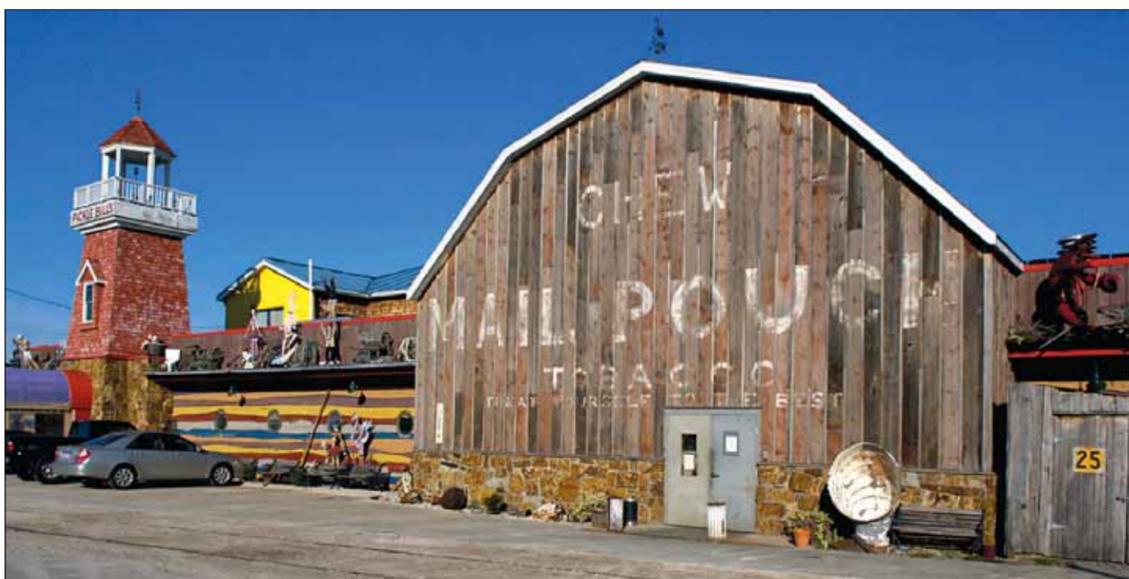
"We were open the whole time," Powell said. "We were dry and it was business as usual. We even served lunch the day of the flooding."

"But it was one of our worst summers ever for business."

When the party barge was recovered a week later near the Perry Nuclear Power Plant, all its liquor was gone, either washed overboard or consumed by passing boaters who helped themselves.

Coping with lost business because of the flood was, however, child's play compared to other hardships for Pickle Bill's.

Rumors accused Powell of torching the place in 1998, when 16 fire departments were called to fight a blaze that leveled Pickle Bill's.



Photos by Jeff Forman/JForman@News-Herald.com

Barn siding sports an old Mail Pouch Tobacco ad to set the tone on Pickle Bill's exterior.



Chef and Pickle Bill's kitchen manager Ryan Collins grills walleye. The restaurant has come back several times after going out of business. It suffered severe damage in a 1998 fire and in the July 2006 flooding.

"I didn't do it," he said. "I loved the place."

Powell was at his condo in Ellicottville, N.Y., preparing to celebrate Christmas with his wife, Marianne, when one of his employees called with the news.

"I never saw him so dejected (as) when he was standing out there in front of the

ruins of his restaurant," said longtime friend Sean Moore. "Jerry is always so upbeat, and the rumors hurt him as much as the fire. I don't know how things like that get started. He was making money there, and he is such a nice guy."

The fire was, at first, called "suspicious" by officials, but no cause was ever

If you go

To celebrate its 25 years, Pickle Bill's, 101 River St., Grand River, will roll back prices on some of its meals to their 1982 level.

It also will extend its half-price early-bird specials for Saturday and Sunday afternoons, the only afternoons it's open during the winter months.

Details: (440) 352-6343; www.picklebills.com.

officially determined. Grand River Fire Chief Robert B. Lloyd says the case is inactive.

Powell says he knows who set fire to the restaurant but has never been able to prove it.

"But he's in prison now for bank robbery, so he got his," he said.

Powell was determined to rebuild, and Pickle Bill's reopened 14 months later. Gradually, the rumors died down.

"He's the most creative person I know," Moore says.

"Give him a hammer and saw and he'll build a nightclub."

Powell's early skills have come to his rescue several times.

See Pickle, Page F2

See Masters, Page F2

Workshop set

Mark your calendar for the 2008 Home Gardener's Workshop.

The workshop will be March 15 at Lakeland Community College in Kirtland. The workshop offers a full day of gardening classes and educational displays, sponsored by Ohio State University Extension, Lake County Master Gardeners. Call (440) 350-2582 to be included in the January mailing of registration information or watch the Web site, www.lake.osu.edu.



Service News

■ Army National Guard Pvt. **Michael A. Triana** has graduated from basic infantry training at Fort Benning, Columbus, Ga. Triana is the son of Daniel and Colleen Triana of Madison and a 2006 graduate of Madison High School.

■ Marine Sgt. **Mark R. Mlachak** recently completed training exercise Mojave Viper in preparation for deployment to Iraq with 3rd Battalion 2nd Marines.

Sgt. Mlachak is a 2001 graduate of Thomas W. Harvey High School and enlisted in the Marine Corps after graduation. He is serving his second enlistment and has previously seen duty in Afghanistan and Haiti.

He is the son of Mark F. and Donna Mlachak of Painesville.

■ **Brandon D. Mitchell** has joined the U.S. Army under the Delayed Entry Program.

Mitchell, a 2006 graduate of Brush High School in Lyndhurst, has reported to Fort Knox, Ky., for basic training.

He is the son of Deirda and Adrian N. Mitchell of South Euclid.

■ Air Force Reserve Airman 1st Class **Markeeban K. Bowes** has graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

During the six weeks of training, the airman studied the Air Force mission, organization, and military customs and courtesies; performed drill and ceremony marches, and received physical training, rifle marksmanship, field training exercises, and special training in human relations.

In addition, airmen who complete basic training earn credits toward an associate degree through the Community College of the Air Force.

The son of Donna Bowes of Euclid, he is a 2007 graduate of Euclid High School.

■ Army Spc. **Eric Horvath** is with the 3rd Squadron, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment at Camp Liberty, Baghdad. He was deployed from Vilseck Germany in August 2007. The unit left the United States from Fort Lewis in Seattle.

A 2005 graduate of Mentor High School, he is the son of Sharon Horvath of Mentor and David Horvath of Adairsville, Ga.

■ Marine Corps Pvt. **Robert A. Johnston**, son of Bonnie M. Johnston of Conneaut and Dale Johnston of Conneaut, recently completed 12 weeks of basic training at Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S.C.

■ Air Force Reserve Airman **Michael J. Croucher** has graduated from basic military training at Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas.

During the six weeks of training, the airman studied the Air Force mission, organization, and military customs and courtesies; performed drill and ceremony marches, and received physical training, rifle marksmanship, field training exercises, and special training in human relations.

In addition, airmen who complete basic training earn credits toward an associate degree through the Community College of the Air Force.

He is the son of David and Patty Croucher of Painesville and a 2007 graduate of Riverside High School.

Hillcrest Concert Band ready for holiday concert series

Now celebrating 52 years of making music, the Hillcrest Concert Band is planning a series of Christmas concerts entitled " 'Tis the Season."

In December, the band will present four concerts in Northeastern Ohio:

- Painesville Assembly of God, 10949 Johnnycake Ridge Road, Concord, Dec. 4.
- United Methodist Church, 20 South Franklin St., Chagrin Falls, Dec. 11.
- Mentor Senior Center, 8484 Munson Drive, Mentor, Dec. 14.
- St. Paul Lutheran Church, 27993 Detroit Road, Westlake, Dec. 16.

All of the weekday evening concerts begin at 7:30 p.m.; the Sunday afternoon concert begins at 3 p.m. The concerts will begin and end with patriotic numbers from the band's repertoire "The Star Spangled Banner" and "Stars and Stripes Forever."

In between, a variety of Christmas music is presented. Gustav Holst, well known for his military suites, also

wrote a winter suite that includes chilly winter winds. The Hillcrest Saxophone Quartet will offer three exciting melodies, and the Hillcrest Chorale will join the band.

The band will mark the 100th anniversary of the birth of composer Leroy Anderson with two of his compositions — "A Christmas Celebration" and "Sleigh Ride."

The audience will be invited to sing along to the music of the season.

For more information, call (216) 765-1064.



Jeff Forman/JForman@News-Herald.com

Marsha and Dave Brickman came from their home in Willoughby Hills to enjoy a recent dinner at Pickle Bill's.

Pickle

From Page F1

He grew up in East Cleveland working in his family's heating, roofing and sheet metal business. Powell was a journeyman sheet metal worker by the time he was in high school and began his own construction business just a few years later.

"But I was very unsophisticated when it came to business, and I ended up going broke," he said.

Back at work for his dad, he concluded that good sales skills were needed. So he took a job in sales, supplementing his income by playing cards.

"I did all right," he said. "But by then I was married, and staying out all night playing cards a couple nights a week didn't go over too well."

A friend, Mike O'Toole, needed a silent partner for a restaurant in a World War II Quonset hut catering to stevedores and factory workers in Cleveland's Flats. It was the 1960s, and the neighborhood had not yet become an entertainment district.

Powell thought a restaurant would be a better augment to his sales income.

The name Pickle Bill's was a tribute to W.C. Fields, a comedian who was often inebriated — or, in the slang of the day, "pickled."

The men remodeled the Quonset hut, showed old-time movies and hosted bands and football lunches to expand the clientele.

O'Toole fell on hard times, and soon Powell was sole owner of Pickle Bill's. To further expand the business, he bought an old fishing schooner and moored it behind the restaurant.

"But the city put up so many roadblocks that Pickle's went broke and closed," Powell said.

The next few years were spent at a variety of construction and restaurant-management jobs, when his old friend O'Toole offered him a chance to take over a dilapidated place in Grand River called the Potted Lobster.

Pickle Bill's was born again, on another river.

Powell began with 78 seats and no

liquor license. Over the next 16 years, the restaurant grew to 300 seats and added a roof garden and floating barge.

In rebuilding after the fire, he expanded to a seating capacity of 400, scouring area antique and estate sales for the decor.

The steel pilot house from the 1912 lake freighter had survived the fire. At the resurrected Pickle Bill's it became a private dining room Powell calls Admiral Charlie's.

Pickle Bill's still sees its greatest crowds in the summer, when folks come from miles around to eat and drink and watch the river traffic from the roof garden.

Powell, who lives on the water in the Headlands neighborhood of Mentor, is often there.

This year, for the second summer, the Powells sponsored a dozen college students from Slovakia as summer employees. The students learn English and the American way of life while they work, and the Powells have employees who can start earlier in the year and stay later than American college students can.

It's a win-win scenario for everyone.

Masters

From Page F1

Be sure to leave the top of the plant open, as some light is necessary during the winter.

Rodents: During long periods of snow cover, small animals such as rabbits, mice or moles often use landscape plants as a food source. Girdling (the result of a rodent chewing the outer layer of tissue all around the trunk) will kill the plants. Partial girdling creates wounds for borers and diseases to enter the plant. Plastic collars or hardware cloth can be slipped around the tree trunks to protect them.

There are also repellents available at garden centers, which can be sprayed or painted on lower branches and trunks to discourage the pests. Rodents often nest in mulch, so use care to apply mulch so it is not within a few inches of the trunk or stem of plants.

Many times plants survive without intervention; but an ounce of prevention may help protect your investment in landscaping.

For more information on winterizing your garden or any other garden topic, contact the Master Gardener Hotline at Ohio State University Extension, Lake County at (440) 350-2582.

For all your gardening questions and free information, contact the Master Gardeners. Write to Ohio State University Extension, Lake County, 99 E. Erie St., Painesville 44077; call (440) 350-2582, (440) 918-2582, or (440) 428-4348 ext. 2582; or visit the Web site at lake.osu.edu. The hotline is available from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. Tuesdays.



GRAND OPENING SALE!
Mattress WHOLESALE CENTER

Factory Special Twin \$55 ea pc Full \$75 ea pc Queen \$85 ea pc * sets only	reg \$699 Spine Bracer Firm or Pillowtop Sale \$349 Queen Set	reg \$2199 \$995 Queen Set Vera Wang By Serta your choice Visco or Latex 30 year warranty
---	--	---

reg \$1199
\$495 SERTA Queen Set
 Your choice Pillow Top, Plush, Firm

HUGE SAUDER GALLERY!

LOW PRICE GUARANTEE **SAME DAY DELIVERY ON STOCKED ITEMS**

29675 Lakeland Blvd, Wickliffe • 440-943-4755
 www.mattresswholesalecenter.com

Lake County Arts & Culture Seminar

2008 Funding Application Process

Thursday, November 15, 2007
9:30-11:30am

Kirtland Temple Visitor Center
7809 Joseph Street in Kirtland
 (Off Route 306 adjacent to Kirtland Temple)

FREE and OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

RSVP (440) 975-1234 by November 12, 2007.

Art & Culture Committee of the **Lake County VISITORS BUREAU**

Important event for Lake County non profit organizations that plan to apply for project funding through the Arts & Culture Fund of the Lake County Visitors Bureau.

He treats your concerns as well as your cancer.

Dr. Willem Jan van Heeckeren joins the Lake/University Ireland Cancer Center.

Willem Jan van Heeckeren, M.D., Ph.D., has a reputation for excellence. With a background rich in research, he offers patients the latest cancer treatments. As the latest addition to Lake/University Ireland Cancer Center, Dr. van Heeckeren joins a multidisciplinary team of experts who create a personalized treatment plan for each patient and are dedicated to providing quality, compassionate care to patients throughout Lake, Geauga and Ashtabula counties. To schedule an appointment or for more information on Lake/University Ireland Cancer Center, please call (440) 205-5755.

Lake/University Ireland Cancer Center
 A joint venture of Lake Hospital System and University Hospitals

9485 MENTOR AVE., SUITE 3 MENTOR, OH