

Consider the options when buying a lawn mower

Considering the 80 million home lawns in the country, there are a lot of people buying lawn mowers.

How you choose between rotary, reel and electric models has to do with your situation and preferences, said Alec Kowalewski, Oregon State University Extension turfgrass specialist. All three have their pros and cons.

Rotary and electric mowers, which have one blade, cut like weed wackers with the blade spinning in a circle. Reel (push) mowers, on the other hand, are designed with two blades that slide across each other and cut like scissors. Both do a good job, Kowalewski said.

"The reel mower is going to be a cleaner cut," he said. "But that doesn't have that big of an effect on grass. It takes a really dull rotary mower to make much of a difference. A sharp rotary mower will produce just as good of grass as a reel mower."

The lesson is to keep mower blades sharp, no matter the type. Rotary blades are easier to maintain because the blades detach. Reel mowers, on the other hand, don't have removable blades so they have to be taken to a professional for sharpening.

Mulching mowers, which tend to be more expensive than others, are also on the market. They cut grass into smaller pieces than other mowers, which makes leaving clippings behind an easy task. But any mower will do the same if the lawn is cut often and left tall.

"Instead of bagging up clippings, consider leaving them where they fall," Kowalewski said. "They break down quickly and re-supply much-needed nitrogen. The more often you mow, the easier this is to do.



KYM POKORNY
Your Garden

Don't, however, leave clumps of clippings sitting on the lawn."

When you buy a mower, he recommends doing some research and buying the best you can afford. Check to see if the brand you're considering has a commercial version. That quality translates to the homeowner models. There are many on the market, but a few recommended brands are Toro and Honda and Jacobsen.



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There are pros and cons to each type of mower so choose the one best for you.

For more information about caring for lawns, refer to Extension's publications Practical Lawn Care for Western Oregon, Fertilizing

Lawns and Practical Lawn Establishment and Renovation. There's also a video on Integrated Pest Management for Turfgrass

It's clear there are a lot of choices when it comes to lawn mowers. Kowalewski breaks down some of the pros and cons of each type.

ROTARY MOWER

Pros:

- Sturdy machines that last a long time.
- Goes right over the top of leaves and small twigs.
- Can mow quickly, especially the self-propelled models.
- Easier to use in large areas.

Cons:

- Noisy
- Produces some amount of carbon dioxide.
- Can't get down to a low mowing height. However, Kowalewski notes that perennial ryegrass and fescue, the two most common grasses in western Oregon, should not be cut low. Keeping them 2 to 3 inches tall is optimum for healthy growth, which means fewer weeds. Older lawns that have transitioned to colonial or creeping bentgrass can be mowed lower, so a reel mower would be good for those types of grasses.

REEL MOWER

Pros:

- Quiet
- If you're concerned about carbon emissions, reel mowers are the way to go. However, Kowalewski cited recent studies that show grass has the potential to sequester up to four times the amount of carbon dioxide that is produced by mowing. All plants remove carbon dioxide from the air and use it for new growth, including roots that decompose into organic matter and fix carbon in the soil.

Cons:

- Harder to push, though newer models are much lighter and easier to handle than older ones.
- Doesn't go over twigs and leaves very well.
- Not good for uneven terrain.
- Best for small lawns.

ELECTRIC MOWER

Pros:

- Moderately quiet
- No need to deal with gas and oil.

Cons:

- Only operates so long before battery dies on battery-operated models.
- Must deal with cords on plug-in models, though Kowalewski points out, "My grandfather had an electric mower for years and years and years and he never ran over a cord."

MI TOWN

Summertime, and the living is busy. The days and nights are flying by more quickly than we wish, now that blue skies and puffy clouds are happening on an almost daily basis. We're ready to bid a fond farewell to June and to welcome July with concerts in the park and fireworks and good picnic food and to share our enthusiasm and good times with friends and family from near and far. All of us in MI Town look forward to showing off our communities during Independence Day celebrations when we can celebrate America's birthday with good and special times.

This week's *Itemizer-ObsERVER* lists all the local celebrations – and it's good to have a plan so we try to attend as many as we possibly can. We'll open our homes and our hearts to family and friends visiting from far-



PATTY TAYLOR DUTCHER
Columnist

away places or from down the street.

Let's begin our July 4 celebration at the Polk County Fire District No. 1 Station 90, where firefighters, volunteers and local Scouts will serve up the best breakfast in MI Town. The line forms at 6:30 a.m., and you'll get an opportunity to see friends and neighbors share in food and conversation. The cost is \$5 per person, and free for children younger than 6. While you're there, pick up a bracelet to get into see the fireworks at Riverveiw Park. Entry is \$2 this year, but if

you buy it at the breakfast, during the parade, or at Les Schwab, they're still \$1.

On Tuesday, the fun begins in Monmouth with the fun run at 11:30 a.m., Children's Parade at 11:45 and the big parade at noon. We'll be in our usual place to enjoy watching kids on bikes, in wagons, walking with parents and grandparents, and having a wonderful time. Please be sure to bring your enthusiasm, community spirit and lots of sunscreen.

If you haven't had the opportunity to visit the Monmouth Senior Center since the new addition has been completed, you're invited to the open house on Tuesday from 2 until 4 p.m. Complimentary cold drinks and hot dogs will be available for everyone.

There will be a book available soon for Oregon Vietnam veterans, and it is available free of charge. Please visit the website, www.Vietnam50gift.com, to complete the form.

The Monmouth Senior Center has been designated a local cooling center on days when the temperature is over 90 degrees. Bring a book to read, visit with friends, play games or watch TV in a cool, comfortable and welcoming environment.

The first Music in the Park program for the summer will feature the Shinkle Family Band on July 5 at the Main Street Park Amphitheater in Monmouth. Enjoy folk and country music, bring a picnic supper, or purchase food and drink from local vendors. See you there.

PEDEE NEWS

The Pedee Women's Club members were pleased when neighbor Jon Bansen invited them over to see the work on the old Skidmore barn he is remodeling for his son Ross's wedding later this summer. What a change. Inviting exterior, roomy interior and a beautiful view out the back. Juandeane Skidmore was particularly excited to see the improvements. Of course, it will never be seen inside by the cows again. The Bansens bought the old Skidmore place several years ago, but live on Elkins Road, where they have an organic dairy farm.



ARLENE KOVASH
Columnist

The Women's Club has completed its patriotic quilt to raffle off to benefit its soldiers' fund, and the quilt is beautiful. The first tickets will be sold at the Independence Western Days festival over the weekend of the Fourth of July. LaVerne Bennett coordinated the making of the quilt, which was quilt-

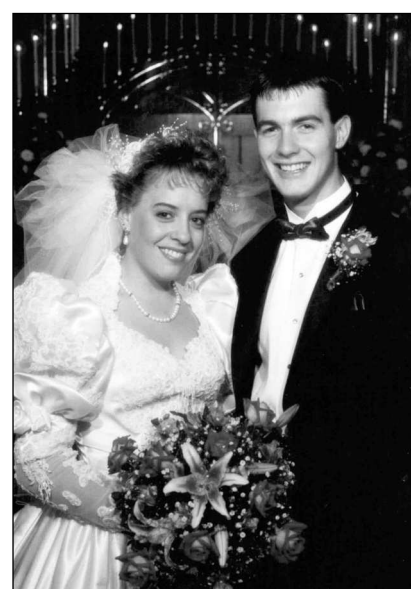
ed by Pat Yancey, and Pam Burkhalter coordinates ticket sales. The soldiers' fund pays for postage for the several packages the women send to active duty servicemen and women each month, which they have been doing since World War II. If you have the address of a soldier (of any branch of the service) who would appreciate a package, contact the club.

Pedee Church has a volunteer event coordinator this summer, Kim Brooks, of Philomath. She is planning several community concerts, the first being on July 7, an

evening of fun at the church. At 5 p.m. that night, kids will make tie-dye shirts and grill hotdogs, led by Heather Traglia, then at 7 p.m. everyone is invited to the amphitheater to hear Zoe Emporium in concert. Zoe Emporium is an alternative rock band started by Matt and Nichole Roby's four teens, Jed, Aleithia, Corbin, and Cosimo. They will be playing music from their first album, "Good Life," that they recorded earlier this year. They've been playing at other venues, but this will be their first full outdoor concert. Bring a chair when you come.

ANNIVERSARIES

Kibbey – 25th



Michael and Colleen Kibbey have been married for 25 years, from June 20, 1992 to June 20, 2017.

The couple was married at First Christian Church in Dallas by Pastor Gary Ivey. They've lived in Dallas ever since and have a son, Josh Kibbey, who lives in Dallas and Newberg.

Michael Kibbey works for the city of Dallas and in his spare time enjoys coaching youth baseball, big game hunting and camping. Colleen (Veeder) Kibbey is a daycare provider and enjoys sewing, gardening and being a mom and aunt.

Michael and Colleen will celebrate their anniversary at a later date.

ENGAGEMENTS

Schmitt - Kuenzi



Michael Schmitt and Janeen Kuenzi were engaged on May 27th, 2017 at Michael's family blueberry farm on James Howe Road.

Michael's parents are John and Joy Schmitt. Janeen's parents are Jack and Janet Kuenzi.

Both Michael and Janeen graduated from OSU with degrees in Microbiology, 2014 (Michael)

and Public Health 2013 (Janeen). Michael and Janeen met while attending Oregon Institute of Technology. They both graduated with degrees in medical technology in 2016. They both work as medical technologists for Legacy Laboratory Services in Portland.

The wedding location is at Bridal Veil Lakes in Corbett and is scheduled for May 26, 2018. Bridal party members are family and friends.

The couple is thinking about honeymooning in the Cook Islands. They plan on residing in the Portland area but still visit home regularly. Wedding colors are grey, green, gold, and dark blue.

Janeen loves flowers and will be arranging all of the flowers for the wedding.

BIRTHS

Snedden

Dylan Lucas Snedden was born on June 5 at 5:36 p.m. to Trevor and Andrea (Younger) Snedden, at Bremerton Naval Hospital, Bremerton, Wash.

He weighed 8 pounds, 10 ounces and was 21 3/4 inches long.

He is the couple's first child. Grandparents are Daniel and Ester Salinas, of Independence, and James Snedden, of Arizona, and Erin Cooper, of Louisiana.

Great grandparents are James and Beth Snedden of Arizona and Ron and Linda Simi of California.

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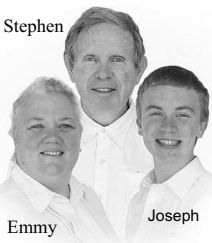
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"On June 3, 2017, at the Dallas Park, the Celebration of Life for Shirley Reynolds, was a complete success. Attended by her closest and most loving family and friends. Thank you all for attending, and thank you Shirley, we miss and love you.

Submitted by her children, Debra Salzman, Jerry Reynolds and Cindy Lazarre

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