



The Picture Perfect Times

Winter/Spring 2017



A Newsletter from
Picture Perfect Landscape & Christmas Decor

Celebrating 25 years of
quality landscape services



Ron Poulin Owner

Thanks to La Nina we have had a warmer December & January than average but February tends to be the coldest month to get through each year. With March right around the corner I'm focusing on warmer sunnier days ahead.

Every spring, during that first warm week, we get swamped with calls from new clients that have finally emerged from their winter cocoons to take a look at their yards. **Our goal has always been to take care of our existing customers first.** That's why we estimate spring maintenance services early, and offer a discount to clients who sign up for pruning and mulching now. This allows us to prepare and schedule for next few weeks. Spring cleanups are our first type of work that we do and gets the landscaping ball rolling. You not only get a great value with a discounted price, but also save on the amount of labor and mulch needed by doing this before the shrubs start to leaf out. It's easier to work in beds where flowers & bulbs have not come up yet. The work temperatures are much cooler and weeds are still minimal. Our clients love nothing better than to come home and have their yard cleaned up, looking great, and know that spring is finally here! Contact us for more info on early spring savings today!

Spring Plantings & Landscape Renovations



Has Mother Nature really done a number on your shrubs and trees the last few seasons? Winter's snow/ice and the summer's hot and dry temperatures can damage shrubs and trees so that no amount of pruning will get those landscapes looking good again, and they just need to be replaced. Maybe you're tired of that evergreen look happening in your yard after spring flowers are done. Perhaps you skipped a few seasons and now your landscape is so overgrown that pruning will not help and you can no longer see out your windows! We can update your landscape by adding easier to care for plants that offer color & textures from spring to fall. Many homeowners like to budget their yard renovation into phases. We can work with you over the next few months. Step 1 remove any unwanted shrubs & clean up areas now. Step 2 is working with us to design an updated planting to be installed later in the spring or fall. Had a new addition or pool put in last year? Plant a privacy hedge of trees or install some easy to take care of shrubs. Take advantage of the cooler springtime which means less watering too.

Fun Facts 2017

Valentine's Day February 14th
About 1 billion Valentine's Day cards are exchanged each year. This makes it the second largest seasonal card sending time of the year.

St. Patrick's Day March 17th
The very first St. Patrick's Day parade was not in Ireland. It was in Boston in 1737. In Chicago, on St. Patrick's Day, the rivers are dyed green. Odds of finding a 4 leaf clover 1 in 10,000 and I actually found one while weeding last year!

First Day of Spring March 20th
The first spring flowers are typically lilacs, irises, lilies, tulips, daffodils, and dandelions. 😊

Easter Sunday April 16th Peep peep...
Americans buy more than 700 million marshmallow Peeps during Easter. This makes Peeps the most popular non-chocolate Easter candy.

Earth Day April 22nd Recycling one aluminum can saves enough energy to watch a TV for three hours - that is equivalent to half a gallon of gas.

Arbor Day April 28th Plant a tree or garden in honor of someone you love or to celebrate a birth. Trees benefit everyone in this and future generations and is perhaps the most fitting memorial of all.

Mother's Day Sunday May 10th The 1st Mother's Day in US: May 10, 1908; In the vast majority of the world's languages, the word for "mother" begins with the letter M.



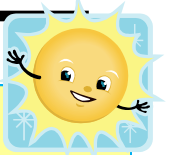
Spring Pruning & Mulching to Keep Plants in Check

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure".

This especially holds true with your plantings. Preventive pruning in late winter/ early spring and then again in early summer or fall will help your plantings stay healthy and full and keep them from becoming leggy and overgrown. Pruning once or maybe twice a year is recommended depending on the amount of rain each spring and new growth. If you wait too long the shrubs become too big & they may be beyond saving and then need to be removed & replaced. Most planting beds should be trimmed back slightly in March or early April before new growth emerges, and a fresh layer of mulch applied to dress things up. An exception would be any shrubs or trees with flower buds which can get pruned later in July after blooms are done. An application of "Preen", pre-emergent weed control, put down after mulch will greatly assist with preventing new weeds for about 12 weeks as well as spraying Roundup on any existing weeds. Mid-summer, around the fourth of July weekend after the majority of growing for the season has occurred, is the next time to prune and tighten up your shrubs, that will last the rest of the year. This is especially important if we have had a warm and rainy spring. You can tell by the amount of new growth that appears on your shrubs and trees. It's also time to apply another round of Preen for 12 more weeks of weed control. Give us a call if we can answer any questions for you, or give you a free quote on doing this work for you, or if you have any other spring projects in mind!

Prune and Mulch





You don't have to wait until it's 70 degrees out to start thinking about what you would like to do to your landscape this year. This way you will be able to enjoy the outdoors as soon as the weather warms up. Busy homeowners want simple, easy to care for landscapes. They don't have the time to prune hedges, weed, or dead-head flowers every weekend to keep their yards looking good. With the right combination of flowers, shrubs and trees, you can obtain a front landscape that not only has new curb appeal, but also you will spend less time and money on maintaining it each year. We just want to come home, grab a drink and sit for a few minutes to unwind from the day. Have you thought about sprucing up a section of your backyard to make it more usable for either yourself or your family? Maybe you have grandchildren that visit and you don't just want them glued to the TV, texting on cellphones, or their tablets playing video games all the time. **How about a clean, easy to care for patio and safe play area?** In today's hectic tech-driven world, everyone craves more quality time to enjoy family and catching up with friends. If you're like me, just a place to be alone, put down the cellphone, unplug the Wi-Fi and enjoy Mother Nature is nice. I've found that's my favorite form of therapy lately. **Our son Jason (who was born with special needs) just turned 10 years old this month.** As many of you know, raising a special needs child is not easy and I'm constantly reminded to take care of myself first so I can be there to better take care of him. This means stopping and taking some "me time" each day to relax, de-stress, and enjoy a few minutes to myself & breathe. Whether it's reading a book, listening to Country 92.5 while rocking in my backyard swing, or sometimes I just space out watching the trees and wildlife and listening to the clear water tumbling over the river rocks in our backyard water feature. At a recent networking event, I came across the **Japanese practice of forest relaxation** which can improve our health and immune system. Being outdoors and enjoying Nature is good for not just kids but adults of all ages as well. Having easy access to the outdoors encourages physical activity which in turn has positive health effects. I spend a lot of my time indoors on the computer or on the phone. Years ago before I was pregnant, Ron created an outdoor patio area to use during the warmer months so I can go sit outside as soon as it's 50 degrees out. We added a carpet, table and furniture with cushions, shaded gazebo with canopy curtains, and even a standup fan for those warmer days and it helps with insects too. We enjoy the firepit & also have a section of **artificial turf** where I set up Jason's pool each summer; less mess and cleaner! This year, make the resolution to stop and take some time to yourself and try putting that cellphone down for an hour. Create your own **backyard oasis** or even a **sensory garden** to enjoy at your leisure. More info on my website blog...**Happy Spring!**

Our autistic son Jason enjoys outdoors as much as me. **Our backyard is his sanctuary.** The sights, sounds, and smells are easier to take in for him & he does not feel so overwhelmed with all the sensory info as in an enclosed space. We do bring headphones just in case but the excitement of visiting places such as parks and even garden centers brings a big smile on his face. He loves greeting the people we meet even for a quick hello!



Anticipating my time outdoors... This year, the official first day of spring is March 20th and it can't come soon enough! If you're like me, and can't stand the cold, I start preparing early by listing the items I plan to get done. I start with spring cleanup and **planning my vegetable garden** for the warm months ahead. Many stores are already displaying outdoor patio furniture, gazebos, grills and other accessories including gardening supplies. Last year, I spoke with a number of clients that were interested in starting a basic garden that they could enjoy with their kids. Many school children are learning about growing their own food and flowers and enjoy doing a little cooking at home with fresh ingredients. It's a great learning experience as well as a good time for family bonding. I remember helping my grandfather tend his 50' x 50' garden up in Northern Maine each summer. (I was a city slicker myself lol). Nothing beats eating a salad that you grew and picked on your own. I find there's something about getting back to Nature and putting in some work that makes you appreciate the delicious taste too! I started researching **Urban Gardening** and you'd be surprised what can be grown successfully in small spaces when planned correctly and using the proper materials. I included some info below on one person's great idea. **Last year I experimented with patio tomatoes, lettuce, potatoes, cucumbers, peas, green beans, peppers, okra, green onions, and lots of herbs like cilantro, garlic chives, sweet basil and can't forget mint for Ron's mojitos! :)** You can also do annuals in raised pots and put them on your front entrance, by your garage, or right on your patio to add seasonal color and interest instead of trying to add to your landscape beds. Good luck with your spring gardening and feel free to contact me with any questions if you need some help! *Kim*



Nothing like the taste of home grown tomatoes left to ripen in the sun!



Easy to Care For Patio Gardens Using Raised Planters, Wooden Boxes, Containers/Pots or Even Herb Window Boxes

- Less weeding! Weeds don't grow in raised garden beds like they do on the ground or in traditional raised beds
- No bending over or backaches. Great for people in wheelchairs or walkers
- Plans use BPA FREE growing containers and where to get them
- Great for backyards and small areas; place on concrete patios for easy care
- Put it anywhere the sun shines and close to water source
- No dogs, gophers, rabbits, armadillos or critters getting your garden
- Reduced insects and ants since elevated
- Take it with you when you move – a raised garden bed is completely portable
- No roto-tilling or preparing the ground, use nutrient rich soil right from the start
- Great for the elderly and easy to maintain; kid friendly Easy access from all angles.
- Plus, save on your grocery budget by growing your own food
- Kids are learning more about this in schools as well, so let them help you too!

www.RaisedUrbanGardens.com



[RaisedUrbanGardens.com](http://www.RaisedUrbanGardens.com)



Patio Accessories

Staycations and Family Backyard entertaining continue to be landscaping's **top trends for 2017**. Folks here in the Northeast are incorporating fireplaces, outdoor fire pits, grills & propane heaters in their backyard so they can enjoy a cozy fire during the cool evenings of spring, summer, and fall and sometimes even winter. For decades, homeowners out West and down South, have extended their quality time outdoors by installing heating elements that are both functional as well as enjoyable. In addition to the pool and hot tub, it opens up the options when company comes over. If they don't want to get wet, they can still hang outside comfortably when areas with benches and pillows, chairs and even bar stools are added. For those that don't want the expense of a pool or hot tub, installing a low cost and easy to care for water feature offers tranquility, through sound and motion for enjoying an evening fire with family and friends.

Visit: <http://www.woodlanddirect.com/> for more ideas on fire places, fire pits, tables, bowls (either propane or wood burning options.) Our designers can show you ideas that are available to you, depending on your particular budget. We can create a 3D design video exploring your yard and it's possibilities. Contact us to go over your project and ideas today in more detail.

Let Us Create Your Picture Perfect Patio Today!

Get Back to Mother Nature...

Feeling down or stressed? Try Eco-Therapy...

Ecotherapy is the name given to a wide range of treatment programs which aim to improve your mental and physical wellbeing through outdoor activities. Connecting with nature can have lots of positive health benefits. Try activities such as gardening, walking or yoga, and outdoor exercises or spending time with animals.

Not Just for Tech Workers-Is It Time to Unplug?

The Japanese practice of "Forest Bathing" or "Forest Relaxation" is proven to lower heart rate and blood pressure, reduce stress hormone production, boost the immune system, and improve overall feelings of wellbeing. It originated in Japan the early 1980s, where it's called **Shinrin-yoku**. And it has been gaining ground in the United States. Recent studies have found that people spend as much as 5 to 7 hours a day in front of screens and checking their smartphones several times an hour.

The tonic of the wilderness was Henry David Thoreau's classic prescription for civilization and its discontents, offered in the 1854 essay *Walden: Or, Life in the Woods*.

2017 Outdoor Living Spaces and Gardens:

Many clients are putting a lot of thought & planning into their home additions these days, especially with many homeowners planning to **age in place**. Also, many find themselves having to care for a child, spouse, parent, or other family member with limited mobility. Concerns such as steep stairs, uneven and dangerous walkways, challenging slopes and no wheelchair accessibility are just a few of the things that need to be taken into consideration as people get older, but want to stay in their homes as long as possible. Nearly 3 million households did renovations to ease access for the elderly or disabled in 2015, according to the American Housing Survey conducted by the federal government. Newer homes, designed to keep this in mind, already have showers that are flush to the floor with grab bars, front door entrances that are wider and with no steps to climb, easy to reach switches and outlets, lower counters



Expand Your Outdoor Areas...

Paver Patio w/ Firepit & Seating Walls

for wheelchairs and wider hallways as well.

Accommodations are being considered for front entrance areas and backyard recreational spaces as well. We can create wider concrete paver paths and eliminate stairs to get to the front door. Smoother, safe pavers that allow wheelchairs, strollers, and motorized scooters to meander through the backyard or to get to a garden area to enjoy some time outdoors. By creating an open outdoor living area that includes a nice view of your backyard for the warmer seasons, you can enjoy Mother Nature and not feel cooped up inside. Place a bench or glider under a pergola or shaded umbrella or tree. By utilizing an open gazebo/canopy on a patio with side curtains, you get privacy & protection from the elements and insects. Having different areas on a smooth paver patio for relaxing with a good book, gardening, grilling, enjoying a fire, area with picnic table for the grandchildren, or entertaining with friends by a water feature or raised bar...the ideas are endless.

Consider installing artificial grass for a dog area, practice putting green or just for kids (or adults) to play on that's clean, safe, and no mowing required. Let us show you how to come up with a plan designed for your lifestyle and needs today.

Call us for a [free estimate](#) & start planning your backyard retreat!



Low Maintenance Designed Sensory & Relaxation Gardens

2016 Prayer Garden for The Church of the Holy Family in Hebron-Kim assisted with 3D design for Dan McCormack & his Eagle Scout Project

Landscaping from Spring to October: Specializing in lower maintenance projects designed for today's busy homeowner...

We Design: Landscape Design 1, 2 and 5 year phased plans • 3D Before and After designs and photos • Virtual Video Walk-throughs • Drawn-to-scale full color and labeled plans • Computer Generated Landscape Design; initial free onsite meeting and consultation to go over budget and plans

We Build: Landscape Foundation Plantings • Privacy Hedges • Fences • Easy to Care For Gardens • Concrete Paver Walkways & Patios • Built In Fire Pits • Retaining Wall Systems • PlayScape and Shed Area Prep • Cobblestone and Crushed Natural Stone for Plantings, Pathways, Driveways • Energy Efficient Water Features that you can turn on/off • Natural Drainage Systems and River Rock Beds • Artificial Turf • Landscape Renovations

We Maintain: Lower Maintenance Planting Beds • Leaf/Debris Cleanup • Pruning • Weeding • Edging • Plant Removal • Mulching • Crushed Stone

October through January: CHRISTMAS DÉCOR Full Service Holiday Lighting and Decorating celebrating 18 years. Our crews take care of over 120 locations each year including both *homes and businesses*. Places such as the Glastonbury Shoppes at Somerset, Highland Park Market Manchester, Enfield Square, Bushnell Park in Hartford, Ted's and Hebron Eye Care in Hebron, Westside Market in Rocky Hill, Bowlorama in Newington, Willowbrook Plaza in Cromwell, Munson's Chocolates in Bolton, Maneeley's Banquet Facility in South Windsor and A Villa Louisa in Bolton, Baribault Jewelers in Glastonbury, Risinger Othodontics and Piatti's Restaurant just to name a few local businesses you may know. Already pre-booking for next season so call if you would like a free design and estimate today!



Before



After

www.perfectscapes.com



Is It Time for a Landscape Make-Over?

Add curb appeal for yourself or potential homebuyer. Overgrown shrubs and trees. Too close & touching. Can't look out your windows anymore. Evergreen look after spring flowers done-add new gold and burgundy tones to update your landscape. Landscape Envy. Do your Neighbors have newer plants-varieties that have vibrant color and interest especially from April through October? Shrubs are too close to the house and need to be constantly kept in check-harder for painters, gutter cleaners and power washers to access & keep clean. Difficult to get behind plantings to clean leaves & debris which can harbor insects, mice & other pests.

Party Time!

Planning a graduation party this summer? Maybe things just need a little sprucing up and some color. How about hosting casual dinner parties with family and friends? Add a little wow factor to your backyard and transform a boring deck or existing patio into a destination made for outdoor entertaining. We can help you make your house the one that friends and family want to be at during those sunny days and cool nights. Add cool water or a warm fire & the next thing you know folks will be inviting themselves to your next cocktail gathering or patio party.

Simplify Your Life...Let Us Beautify Your Landscape



3D Plans and Video Images...

Having problems visualizing your new landscape project?
 One of the biggest problems some homeowners face with landscape design is trying to visualize the final project. Most people just keep their fingers crossed and hope it will turn out well. At Picture Perfect Landscape that is not good enough. The highly detailed pictures and walkthrough functions of our 3D design program will show you what your new project will look like when finished. We can add details like different furniture, trees, shade structures, etc. with a click of the mouse to help find solutions for your particular situation. We want to make it easy for you to see our ideas for your property and to fine tune them & make them your own **BEFORE** we start building. This service is offered during the slower **winter and early spring months** to allow us to concentrate on the time and details needed to create these drawn to scale computer 3D renderings. This way our clients are ready to go as soon as the weather warms up for planting and the nurseries have the best selection

of specimens, shrubs, and trees to offer. If this is something you would be interested in, we can **schedule a free consultation now** while there might still be snow on the ground. We can talk about budget and ideas for your space and then go back and take the photos and fine tune any measurements once the snow starts to disappear! Contact our office today to discuss your upcoming landscape plans so once the ground is clear you are all set to get started! **860-228-3915**