

Happy Autumn, Not Fall

By Donna Deos

As Fall rolls around I thought it would be a good time for us to talk a bit about fall prevention and yard work.

As with all of my hopefully helpful tips, some of this will be the “no-duh” type of stuff and some of it will be “oh, I really never thought about it that way.”

With fall comes yard work. This means more tripping hazards, more slipping hazards and more all-around accident potential. Let's face it, gutter cleaning does require a ladder and with ladders come the potential for accidents.

Okay, here are the things to look out for:

Hoses

Toys and bikes and such

Wet leaves

Dry leaves

Acorns

Yard clean up tools

Gardening tools you left out, forgot and are now buried under leaves

Hills and inclines

Ditches and divots

Lumps and bumps

Rocks

Moss

All of these things pose slipping and tripping hazards and can pose an extra challenge to you successfully completing your task. So can roots and stumps hidden under all of the leaves that will soon be



falling all around our yards.

As we age, our mobility and agility change. Balance can become more of an issue, as can stamina to do all that we used to so easily accomplish.

Uneven ground, slants and unseen obstacles can all cause potentially unsafe conditions when doing anything in your yard. We hardly ever think about it until it is too late and one of these things takes us down.

Also with aging comes the diminished ability to bounce back up!

So, when you go out to do work in your yard, please take your cell phone with you. If you live with someone else, tell them what you plan to do so if they hear a thud or feel like you have been gone too long they can check up on you. Better yet, have them join you ~ you'll get it all done in half the time!

If your task involves a ladder, ask someone to go with you and hold it for you. Preferably someone

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strong and capable because having your frail spouse or neighbor doing it only endangers both of you in the long run.

Speaking of the neighbor, sometimes we have neighbors who have new tools and gadgets and would love to try them out and help you get your yard work done quicker and easier. Most of us do like to be neighborly and help each other out. Also, your adult children are a potential source of help, as are church groups and grandchildren.

Sometimes we just automatically do things because it's our routine. It's what we have always done. That doesn't mean it is what you always HAVE to do though. You can find someone else to help you out. There is no shame in that! You're older and wiser after all, talk someone else into doing it.

I hope you don't find any of this insulting. I've simply seen and heard far too many stories of well-intended yard work taking a turn for the worse. My own mother fell on a wet leaf on our doorstep when going out to get the paper. She broke

her shoulder that time. She spent about an hour outside trying to figure out how to get back up with only one arm to use before getting into the house to call me on the phone to come help. I have no idea how many times she fell while actually doing yard work on the hills around our house, she only fessed up to a couple – and you and I both know that means there were more!

I know some of you love to do yard work, gardening and fall clean up and some of you feel like you cannot afford to pay someone else to do it for you. So, if you find yourself insisting on getting it done, please proceed with a cautious approach and have some bases covered.

Being careful now can save you a lot in the long run. So, when you go out to clear your head by clearing your yard of leaves, take some time to ground yourself mentally first and not physically with a fall. I'll leaf you with that. Happy Autumn to you and yours!

Donna

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Bow Young at Heart News

Bow Young at Heart members enjoyed a buffet lunch at the Indian Head Resort on August 16, followed by a very entertaining presentation of “Annie the Musical” at Jean's Play House in Lincoln.

On August 23 we moved our meeting to the barn at Beech Hill Farm, where members enjoyed the garden sheds, animals and, of course, the ice cream.

On October 11, we will again take our meeting on the road to the new Safety Building where our speaker will be Fire Chief Mitchell Harrington, followed by a tour of the fire station.

Members should park at the Safety Building. BYAH meetings are open to all seniors and begin at 11:30. Bring a bag lunch; beverage and dessert will be provided.

On October 12, we will be taking our last trip of the year: A tour of the Quabbin Reservoir, with lunch at the 1705 Salem Cross Inn, a restaurant listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Enjoy the heirloom garden and watch Hereford and Angus cattle graze the 600 acre farm. The farmhouse is brimming with antiques, crackling fires in fieldstone fireplaces and the glorious smells of food made from scratch (choice of Boston Scrod or Roast Pork).

A stop will also be made at Breezlands Orchards. Cost is \$71.00 per person. All seniors are welcome on our trips. For trip info contact Carol Walter 753-8000.

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