

Figley from page D10

use," she said. "I believe one shouldn't pollute any more than you have to."

Colleen Traylor and John Lawson of Groveland Township have had a push-mower for eight years for their small grassy area.

"I don't like power tools because of the noise and the air pollution," he said. "I love it. It's easy to store, the maintenance is a 'piece of cake,' and it's also good exercise."

She advises to keep the blade sharp and to leave the clippings. By mowing at the right time you only "nip" the tops. She also said a hand-powered mower doesn't shoot the grass clippings into the borders.

Rosemary Liddicoatt of Orion told me her mower came from her father-in-law and she has used it for 10 years. She has a small yard.

"I don't like to be bothered with mechanical things," she said.

While she mows, she enjoys memories of childhood and there is no air pollution.

"It gives good muscle exercise," said Irene Elston of Birmingham. "I think they're 100 percent better than new gadgets."

She has had no trouble with her mower, and it seems to cut cleanly.

Greg and Sung Davis of Farmington



Marty Figley

Reel attraction: Push-mowers are still being used.

Hills find advantages and disadvantages.

He said it's quiet, inexpensive to operate and maintain and doesn't pollute the air. He feels comfortable using it around his 2-year-old daughter - feels it's safer.

It does take a little longer to mow and to get the same quality cut as with a power mower, so he mows the grass twice - in one direction and then the other.

Reel-type mower sales are still fairly brisk.

Maskill's True Value Hardware in Birmingham sells 30 to 40 mowers each year, said manager Dan Conroy, mostly

to those with small, shady lots. He does caution: Push-mowers don't do well in shady grass because it's too fine.

Randy Parks of Billings Feed in Royal Oak said they sell 60 reel-type mowers per year, generally to those with small yards who don't want to spend money on gas or electricity.

The Sears store in Livonia sold 11 last year, usually to people with a small area who don't want anything with a motor.

On the other hand, Erik Schlitt of Trevarrow Ace Hardware in Troy said they

sold their last one, although "a reel mower can be ordered by request."

I found two places that will sharpen blades: Black's in Northville and A&E Mowers in Royal Oak.

I'm sorry, but I couldn't reach a Mr. Cooper or Joan Mueller.

What's the point of this survey? I suppose nothing other than to learn people are concerned about the environment, and exercise. I'm sure there are many more push-mowers in use in the area, according to the sales.

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