

My wife and I were married in 1965. We lived in Silver Spring for the first 10 years of our marriage and then moved to our home here in Brinkow in March of 1975 with our 2 children. We are now both 80 and 81 years of age, and have lived and enjoyed our life on these 2 beautiful acres for the past 50 years. I have mowed, raked leaves, and mulched our plants for all of those years. When I purchased a Stihl handheld gas leaf blower, I felt like I had "died and gone to heaven". This leaf blower was such an incredible help in clearing light snow on our 150 foot driveway and clearing and picking up leaves in the Fall. The radical statements of "allowing the leaves to remain and allowing the grass to remain unmown" is a prime breeding ground for ticks, mice, rats, and other vermin to breed and survive. They probably live in an apartment having no lawn to maintain and have no children to protect. As to the banning of the gas leaf blowers, I strongly urge the Council to fairly look at the "overreach" of the Council in robbing the county residents of the simple rights we should have as free agents, having the power to think and choose how we live our lives. Why not just educate the citizens of Montgomery County and allow the citizens to decide for themselves? That's what a true democracy is. Just imagine a Council that could be elected that could ban electric mowers, electric cars, electric leaf blowers, etc. because of the danger posed to the environment as a direct result of the tremendous overload on our electric grid, the toxins put into our environment as a direct result of wrongfully discarded batteries, added pollution resulting from the hundreds of gas generators needed to recharge the thousands of batteries, the added danger of battery fires that cannot be quickly extinguished, and the problem of increased shoulder and back problems that the landscapers will develop as a direct result of the added 11-13 lbs. added to the electric leaf blower backpacks in order to accommodate the extra large batteries to provide the power to get the job done. It would be instructive FOR ALL OF THE COUNCIL MEMBERS TO STRAP ONE OF THE 35+ LB. ELECTRIC LEAF BLOWERS ON THEIR BACK AND WORK FOR JUST 4 HOURS BLOWING LEAVES and then, I am willing to bet, this outrageous overreach by the Council would be dropped in an instant. There are so many worthy issues for the Council to address....THIS SHOULD NOT BE ONE TO SPEND 5 MINUTES ON.

Please do the right thing and totally reverse this electric leaf blower ban and set an example as to how real common sense can prevail.

I implore you. It will do NO HARM of any kind for me to use my handheld gas leaf blower that will greatly aid this 81 year old in maintaining my 2 acres. AT LEAST exempt anyone who has a 1/2 acre or more.

Please allow those who want an electric leaf blower to buy one and allow those who want a gas leaf blower to buy one. Simply put, that's freedom. If someone wants 15 in. tall grass covered with leaves, ticks, moles, mice, and rats, let them have it. (Although their neighbors may complain to the County Health Department regarding the health hazards.)

Once again, please reverse this poorly thought out ban.

Thank you for listening.

Leroy Haas