



## Bob Dunning: The answer is blowing with the leaves

By **Bob Dunning**

President Trump warned those of us living in a deep blue city that this was coming.

“First they’ll come for your guns and then they’ll come for your leaf blowers,” the president told me during one of our regular late-night phone conversations.

Indeed, that friendly South Davis service station affectionately known as Gas-n-Guns no longer sells lethal weapons. And now the second part of the president’s warning is about to come true if members of the Davis City Council do as I expect by one day banning our decibel-destroying leaf blowers.

I don't know about you, but the last time I checked there were no guns or leaf blowers in our humble East Davis garage. Truth be told, we never did have any weapons more deadly than a child's slingshot and a bow-and-arrow set from The Dollar Tree.

The proposed leaf blower ban is part of what the president says is a devious plot to destroy the suburbs by covering our neighborhoods with leaves and twigs and wilted dandelions, not to mention anarchists, arsonists, socialists and residents of low-cost housing.

According to Anne Ternus-Bellamy's front-page piece in this very newspaper, "Davis City Council members directed city staff to work with city commissioners and the community at large to craft a revised leaf blower ordinance that would likely include a ban on gas-powered blowers."

Before they do that, however, council members, city staff, city commissioners and members of the community at large should try to make a living in this town by successfully maintaining a number of Davis yards without the use of a leaf blower.

I think we all might learn something.

In the many years I have lived in Davis I have known a number of people who pay the rent and put food on the table by mowing people's lawns, trimming their hedges and blowing their fallen leaves into piles for proper disposal.

Nearly without exception, none of these people could afford to actually live in Davis. Not by a long shot. The term "workforce housing" does not apply to them.

I do agree with Councilman Dan Carson's assessment that "if there is ash present, you should never use these devices."

That's common sense. But ash on Davis lawns and sidewalks is uncommon.

Some folks complain about the noise, but gardeners rarely use a leaf blower for more than a few minutes on any individual yard. If they were forced to use rakes

or brooms instead, the additional time necessary to properly finish a job would seriously impact their ability to make a living.

Others complain about the gas being used and the fumes released into the air. These would be the same people who think nothing of idling the 420-horsepower engine on their Cadillac Escalade as they wait 10 or 15 minutes for a coffee-flavored milkshake in the drive-thru lane at Starbucks.

As my friend Eric so perfectly notes, “Banning the use of gasoline-powered blowers would place an inordinate burden upon those who rely upon them for their livelihood.”

Indeed.

Adds Eric, “The citizens of Davis who sit inside their cozy homes and complain about three minutes of noise while their gardener labors outside regardless of weather does not seem right. The difference between the time and labor it takes to quickly blow off a sidewalk or walkway relative to the time and effort to push a broom is substantial. These individuals already operate on thin margins.”

In short, give them a break. These people work hard to keep our town neat and clean, almost always accepting low wages with no benefits or perks of any kind, other than a cold drink of water from someone’s garden hose.

A bit of noise, a bit of gas and a bit of stirred up dust that will quickly settle is a small price to pay for the great service they provide.

— Reach Bob Dunning at [bdunning@davisenterprise.net](mailto:bdunning@davisenterprise.net).