

'Sunnyside Up'

November/December 2010

Wreath-Making

November 20th - December 12th
during regular business hours

- Easy and fun to make
- Unique holiday decor
- Great activity to schedule with family, friends & co-workers

Create a beautiful, long-lasting wreath w/our enticing selection of fresh greenery & dried accents!

Call before coming. Reservations required for private parties of 10 or more.



Start bulbs indoors now for winter cheer



Beautiful blooms and amazing fragrance of forced bulbs is a handy way to avoid the winter blues. Planting medium varies, but all new plantings should have a few weeks in a cool, dark place for rooting before moving to indirect light. Rotate pots to keep stems straight.

Paperwhites: 'Plant' bottom 1/2 of bulbs above a shallow layer of pea gravel or decorative glass beads in a non-draining container. Tall vases can alleviate the need to loosely tie together upper stems later on. Keep water level at or just below bottom of bulbs. Blooms in 4-6 weeks.

Amaryllis: Plant with quality potting soil in a draining container, leaving 1/2 to 1/3rd the bulb exposed. Allow soil to dry between waterings. Stake as needed. Flowers in 6-8 weeks.

Hyacinths: Put them in the fridge for 12 weeks before placing them in those cute vases. Keep roots in contact w/ water, bulbs mostly dry. Blooms in 2-4 weeks.

Setting down the shears



Your garden has started to shift gears, with most growth happening below ground. Keep it that way. Set down the shears and pruners for a spell.

Pruning stimulates new growth, which we don't want w/ the danger of hard frosts and freezes looming. Instead, focus on good clean up, mulching and dormant spraying.

February is usually the best time to pick up your pruners again, w/ plants well into winter dormancy. Incidentally, we'll offer a free class on pruning in late winter while the time is great for the task.

Greetings from 'The Whistling Gardener'

Even as the weather turns cold, the garden calls. Read [my gardening columns](#) for November on our website or in the paper if your mind wanders from the holidays. Here, I'd like to cover a concern expressed by many patrons lately, winter kill.



Plants rated USDA Zone 7 (the climate zone for most of us) can usually handle dips into the teens and even single digits. During longer spells, though, they may need a little help.

Season-long mulching is appropriate for roses, gunnera, hardy bananas and a few others. Once plants 'harden off' with a few hard frosts, heap a pile of compost up around their base for the winter.

Compost is better than straw for two reasons. It won't soak up as much water, so won't turn in to the slimy mess straw does and plants will breathe easier. Also, compost amends the soil. What's left at the end of the season can be spread around usefully rather than disposed of or... composted.

A 2-inch mulch of compost around the root zones of more tender perennials like hardy fuchsias, star jasmine and passion flowers provides winter protection as well as being great maintenance. Just remember to keep crowns, or bases, clear.

If temperatures are going to sink and sit in the teens, temporarily protect w/ 'Harvest Guard', burlap, paper bags, blankets or bed sheets (NOT plastic) and keep plants of concern covered while it stays below freezing. Usually hardy shrubs like hebes, rosemary and escallonia may otherwise succumb and others like ceonothus may incur damage. Be proactive.

Consider Harvest Guard (a.k.a. hardy cloth, row cover or reemay) as it is permeable to light, air and water, so can be more forgiving if left on when temps rise. Also, it's made for organic gardening so can come in handy later on.

Don't forget containers. Roots in pots don't enjoy the insulative value of the ground. Wrap container plantings in blankets during temps in the 20's or below.

Snow is a great insulator. It *is* heavy though, especially when wet. Keep an eye on conifers and broadleaf evergreens during snowfalls and if snow begins to weigh down branches, gently shake it off to avoid broken limbs.

Winter kill can't always be avoided, but a little vigilance and preparation goes a long way toward keeping great, if slightly warm-blooded, plants in your landscape.

Stop by or call with further questions. We're open through December 23rd and officially re-open January 22nd. Even when 'closed', you can email or leave a phone message and we'll respond soon.

Year-round, we're here so you can '**Come garden with us.**' *Happy Holidays!*

3915 Sunnyside Blvd., Marysville

(425) 334-2002