



MEL'S

Where Home and Garden Come Together

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WINTERIZING YOUR GARDEN FOR THE BIG COMA

Before surrendering to the call of a good book, a steaming mug of cocoa and an over-stuffed chair by the fireplace, tend to your autumnal garden chores for dividends next spring. Here's a checklist to help put your garden to bed or as we like to think of it – inducing a good coma.

- 1) **By mid-August, discontinue fertilizing** shrubs, roses, trees, ornamental grasses and flowering perennials. These plants need to prepare for dormancy by channeling their energy into carbohydrate storage rather than producing vegetative growth.
- 2) In late-September/early October, **fertilize your lawn** with a slow release fertilizer.
- 3) **Empty all clay or ceramic containers** and store them in a dry area. Even "frost-proof" containers may crack from freezing and thawing if soil is left in the container or water is allowed to accumulate in the pots.
- 4) **Clean, sharpen and repair all garden tools.** Use steel wool to remove rust. If using tung or linseed oil to help preserve wood handles, be sure to store rags in an air-tight container as they are *extremely* combustible.
- 5) **Rake up leaves** and add to your compost pile. Leaves compacting on the lawn encourage moss and fungal problems. Leaves left under shrubs provide a ready-made home for rodents and over-wintering insects.
- 6) **Protect susceptible evergreen trees and shrubs** (rhododendrons, hinoki cypress, pieris) **from desiccation** (dehydration from cold, dry winds) by applying an anti-desiccant such as Wilt Proof or a mulch of pine needles or boughs to low-lying shrubs like heather.
- 7) Now is the time to **plant spring flowering bulbs** – hyacinths, tulips, giant alliums and daffodils. **Dig and store all tender bulbs, tubers and corms** such as dahlias, cannas, eucomis, gladiolas before hard freezes "toast" these beauties.

(Continued on Page 2)



The Big Coma (Continued)

- 8) **Cut back perennials** that don't provide winter interest and **remove plant debris** from spent annuals and vegetables. Wait to cut back your ornamental grasses until spring — some evergreen grasses such as carex and fescue should be groomed and not cut. Be sure to remove all garden peony (*peonia lactiflora*) stems and leaves to prevent fungal disease next spring. Any diseased or insect infested foliage goes into the garbage and not the compost pile.
- 9) **Protect grafted roses.** Without a consistent snow cover, grafted roses will need protection in our area. Hill soil 8-12" around the base of the rose and then fill the upper canes with pine needles. Burlap and rose cones also provide good winter protection.
- 10) **Protect young trees with tree wrap.** Bright sunny winter days followed by freezing nighttime temperatures can be injurious to young, thin-barked trees. The protective bark can split as the outer bark cools down and contracts faster than the inner layers leaving the tree susceptible to insects, disease and more freeze damage.
- 11) **Weeding is not just for spring anymore.** Get rid of weeds now wherever you find them. Did you know that a single lambs quarter produces up to 72,000 seeds per plant and redroot pigweed about 117,000?
- 12) **Make sure perennials, shrubs, trees and especially evergreens are put to bed well-watered.** Evergreens will continue to lose water (transpiration) throughout the winter when the ground is frozen and roots can not replenish moisture lost to winter sun and dry chilling winds.
- 13) **Mulch any marginally hardy plants and all newly planted trees, shrubs and perennials.** Mulch is a top-dressing applied over soil to provide moisture retention, weed control, an insulating layer from temperature extremes and to give a "finished look". The primary reason for mulching in late fall is to protect the roots from the cycles of freezing and thawing which can heave shallow rooted plants or new transplants right out of the soil. Do wait until the ground has frozen before mulching (2-3 inches deep). Some of the best winter mulching materials are found in our own backyards — pine needles or shredded leaves from oaks or beech trees. These leaves are stiff and don't mat down as do maple leaves.
- 14) Lastly, homeowners' insurance companies throughout the Inland Northwest would appreciate the **disconnection of garden hoses from outside spigots.** Drain and store hoses out of the elements.

Now, if you can complete all of these tasks before the weather takes a nasty turn and a simple nap proves insufficient, you, too, deserve to "take a coma".

JUST GO TO MEL'S

Taking the children to find the perfect pumpkin for the Jack-o-Lantern – genuinely fun!

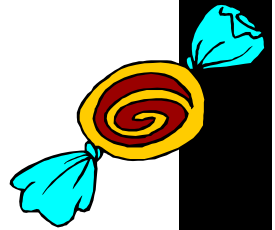
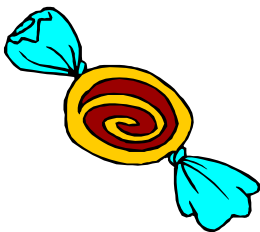
Scooping out the slime no one else wanted to touch—w--a--y less fun!

Carving a backlit scene from the pages of Martha Stewart with a dull kitchen knife – not fun at all!

Traipsing the rotting pumpkin to the garbage without wearing it – easier said than done.

The moral of this story is **JUST GO TO MEL'S** where you'll find:

- ◆ Everlasting Jack-o-Lanterns
- ◆ Cackling and dancing witches
- ◆ Frightful ghouls and other creepy characters
- ◆ Ghostly lights
- ◆ Haunting black cats
- ◆ Spooky party favors and candy bowls
- ◆ Halloween votives and safety lights and
- ◆ Clever signs to welcome your trick-or-treaters!





BEST AWARDS

Thank you customers for voting Mel's The Best Northside Shop/Best Garden Shop/Best Gift Shop in Spokane/Coeur d'Alene Living Magazine's "Best Awards". Here's what the magazine writers had to say:

"From eclectic furniture to jewelry to household items to that wonderful selection of plants, Mel's has something for just about any occasion... Mel's prides itself on its knowledgeable staff and great selection for the home, inside and out. According to the votes, you think they're doing a pretty good job."

TRENDLINE



Here's a fun, new trend you'll find at Mel's — cell phone jewelry. Sparkling, high-fashion bling-bling to adorn your cell phone antenna!



Personalize your phone and set it apart from the ordinary! "Can They See You Now"?

SURROUND YOURSELF IN COMFORT AND STYLE

At Mel's you won't find the ordinary! Come browse our beautifully decorated furniture rooms...

Be Inspired

Preview design trends

Explore Mel's remarkable selection

Compare our quality and comfort

Then, cuddle into one of our new, luxurious BarcaLounger recliners. With nail-head trim and oversized wing backs, these aren't your father's recliners! We invite you to come, elevate your feet and relax in the seat

The Christmas Rooms Await You!

Over 50 decorated Christmas trees, from homespun to elegant, are now on glorious display. Among these beautifully decorated, themed-trees, you'll find:

- ◆ **Noah's Ark**
- ◆ **Victorian Elegance**
- ◆ **Dance, Ballerina, Dance**
- ◆ **Rustic Woods**
- ◆ **Iced Glimmer**
- ◆ **Sports Mania**
- ◆ **For The Birds**
- ◆ **Old-fashioned Christmas**
- ◆ **Wild, Wild West**
- ◆ **Department 56 Krinkles & Christmas Eve Collectibles**

Set a festive table, adorn the mantle with our incredible silk flowers, picks and berries, deck the front door with a festive wreath, add a centerpiece, spice up your home with holiday scents, drape the staircase in garland – Mel's has it all!

