







ALL THE COMFORTS OF HOME & GARDEN

Christmas Craft Sale & Victorian Tea

he tradition continues at Sir John Colborne Seniors Centre as they host their annual Christmas at Colborne Craft Sale and Victorian Tea, Sunday, November 27 from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m.

This year's sale will be packed full of special items for the holiday season - from hand-knitted and gently-used jewelry finds, to Christmas crafts and baked goods.

"Christmas at Colborne takes you back in time for an afternoon," said Nancy Beddoe, Recreation Supervisor, Seniors Services, Town of Oakville. "After being personally greeted by the centre's very own "Sir John Colborne" and "Queen Victoria", guests are invited to shop for holiday treats and then enjoy a relaxing lunch or afternoon tea in the Victorian tea room featuring live music by the Kerr Street Ensemble."

The afternoon will be highlighted by a raffle. Tickets may be purchased in advance at the Sir John Colborne Seniors Centre, or during the craft sale.

The Sir John Colborne Seniors Centre is located at 1565 Old Lakeshore Road (southeast corner of Lakeshore Road and Third Line). Additional parking can be found at Coronation Park. For further information, contact the Centre at 905-815-5960.

Givina You the Dirt Winterizing the Garden

By SEAN JAMES, N.P.D.,

PRESIDENT OF FERN RIDGE LANDSCAPING

nyone driving by my house would think I was the biggest hypocrite on the planet. Every year I go on about how you should not cut down your garden in the fall. Now, my garden as been cut down...mostly. It's not my fault! Well, it is, but not how you'd think. I was touring a friend through the garden back in late July. My glasses were hooked on the collar of my shirt...at the beginning of the tour. They were not at the end.

I've been waiting since then to cut the garden down and find my glasses. The garden's almost cut down. So far, no glasses. I tell you this story so you won't see my garden and think it was an endorsement for fall cut down.

Leaving the garden standing offers shelter for beneficial insects, food for birds, shelter by holding the snow on the plant crowns and, I think, looks fantastic when the snow sits on the seedheads.

There are exceptions. Peonies, Tall Bearded Iris and plants which get powdery mildew such as Summer Phlox and Beebalm should all be cleaned up in the fall to prevent the spread of leaf diseases. The Iris should be cut back to a six-inch fan and all the dead leaves picked up.

I will admit, grudgingly that there are advantages to cleaning up the garden in the fall. Extra, unwanted plants and of course weeds can be removed. Some plants can be moved around although don't get too carried away. If the root system isn't substantial, frost heaving

will occur which could kill the plant.

I'm aware that for many gardeners the leaves are the issue and with good reason. Too many leaves can smother the grass or the small delicate perennials. My solution is to go out with my ear protection, eye protection and a leaf blower/vacuum. I suck up the leaves, chop them and spread a delicate blanket of them right back into the garden. I don't even use it with the bag attached. Of course I need to be extra careful of pedestrians. I don't want to take out an eye and make my mother right all those times. The finely chopped leaves will be gone by spring - broken down into the soil to add organic matter, water holding capability and nutrients and the Town didn't have to come and take them away for composting. It may not look neat and clean but it DOES look healthy.

With the exception of a few rare, delicate specimens, don't worry about wrapping your shrubs. If it needs to be wrapped, it shouldn't be in your garden. Don't wrap junipers! Trim them tightly instead.

For my part, I love getting outside on the first nice days in spring and dealing with all the moving and shaking. Overgrown perennials and shrubs can be dealt with soundly then and I get my first good shot of sun! Wait 'til then to do the butchering.

And... if you see my glasses lying around... call me.

