

LANDSCAPING COMMITTEE NEWSLETTER

THE CALM BEFORE THE RAKE

Autumn has arrived. The Olympic foothills are brushed with gold, and Sequim's famous "blue hole" is beginning to close for the season. The light turns honey-colored in the afternoons, the deer get bolder by the day, and our yards sigh in relief after the long, dry summer.

This is our time to **reset**: to tidy, trim, mulch, and plan for spring. Or, if you're like most of us, to stand at the window with a mug of something warm, watching the rain and making mental notes you'll *absolutely* get to later.

Either way, here's a little local wisdom for this season of puddles, pumpkins, and patience.

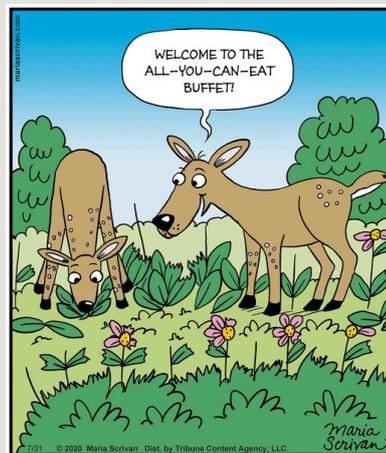
Neighbors Helping Neighbors

One of the best parts of living in SunLand isn't the mountain views or the manicured lawns, it's the people behind them.

We've heard stories lately that make us proud to call this place home: a neighbor who wheels in another's trash cans, someone who trades lawn-mowing for lawnmower borrowing, friends teaming up to tackle an overgrown corner lot, or lending a truck for a dump run just because it's Tuesday.

These small acts are the heartbeat of SunLand. They remind us that behind every trimmed hedge and swept sidewalk is a community that looks out for one another.

So if you've got an extra hand, a spare tool, or a few free minutes, offer them. Around here, the best landscape feature of all might just be the neighbor next door.



DEERLY DEPARTED? NOT A CHANCE

They never left. Why would they? Our lawns are lush, our flowerbeds delightful, and our fences mostly symbolic. Sequim's four-legged freeloaders are here year-round dining happily on whatever looks good this week.

If your chrysanthemums look like they've been through a salad spinner, you're not alone.

A few notes from the field:

- **Plant their least-favorite flavors:** lavender, rosemary, peony, foxglove, and daffodils.
- **Avoid dessert:** roses, tulips, hydrangea, and hostas.
- **Fencing helps** (architecture committee-approved, of course), but so does "distraction planting." Keep the good stuff close to the house where you have a better chance of protecting it.
- **Rotate repellents** and change up scents. They get wise fast.

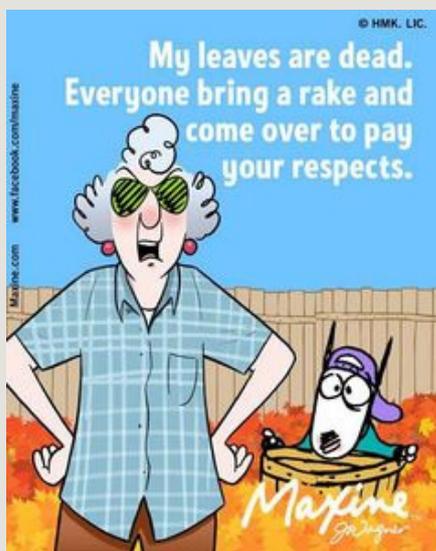
THE GREAT RAKE ESCAPE

There are two kinds of people in Sequim:

- 1) Those who love raking — the smell of leaves, the tidy piles, the satisfaction.
- 2) Those who tell themselves the wind will "take care of it."

If you fall into category two, a gentle reminder: the wind's idea of "taking care of it" usually means blowing it into your neighbor's yard. Maybe you like them, but they probably don't like that.

Do your leaves a favor: rake them, bag them, or compost them. Sequim's alder and maple leaves make great mulch if chopped up. And if you can, clear storm drains near your home. It keeps our roads from turning into mini rivers during the first big downpour.



THE SECRET LIFE OF TRASH CANS

Once upon a time in SunLand, a cheerful family of bright blue and green bins lived happily. Every week, they were rolled proudly to the curb, lined up neatly like little soldiers awaiting the great Tuesday morning Waste Connections parade.

The truck would come, lift them high into the air, and empty them with great fanfare. The bins would sigh contentedly, lighter and freer, ready to return to their peaceful home beside the garage or tucked quietly behind a screen.

But not all bins were so lucky. Some were left stranded, days after their grand adventure, still loitering at the curb like teenagers after curfew. Others were plunked down in front of garages, proudly facing the street like they owned the place. A few even took up permanent residence beside the driveway, thinking they'd "earned the view."

They hadn't.

See, bins are humble creatures. They don't want to be seen. They dream of privacy, of resting in the cool shade, hidden from the road, maybe chatting quietly with a rake or a garden hose about their big day out. When they're left on display, they blush in their faded plastic and whisper to passing pedestrians, "We weren't meant to live like this."

So let's do right by them. Roll them home. Tuck them away. Let them enjoy the dignity of being unseen.

Because nothing ruins a lovely Sequim street faster than a trash bin that's decided to take up permanent residence as a lawn ornament.

LOW MAINTENANCE, NOT NO MAINTENANCE

"Low-maintenance" doesn't mean "ignore it until next April." It means planning smart, especially for our Sequim microclimate of dry summers, soggy winters, and soil that's equal parts clay and mystery.

Some Sequim-strong favorites:

- Evergreen huckleberry – native, glossy, and bird-friendly
- Sedums – sculptural and tough as nails
- Manzanita – architectural and drought-hardy
- Ornamental grasses – add motion, survive anything

If you're redesigning, think in layers: evergreens for backbone, natives for resilience, and perennials for easy color.

WINTER IS COMING (FOR YOUR PIPES)

Don't be fooled by the fall rain. Young trees still need a slow soak before the ground freezes. It helps roots settle in and prevents winter dieback.

Now's also the time to shut off and winterize your irrigation systems (and while you're thinking about it, get your back flow testing done, too). Nothing ruins a December morning like a burst pipe and an unexpected ice sculpture in your front yard.

RETURN OF THE MOSS EMPIRE

The first autumn drizzle brings Sequim's unofficial city plant: moss. On driveways, on lawns, on anything that sits still long enough. If it's creeping in early, sprinkle some garden lime now to balance the pH before winter. Your sidewalks (and your back) will thank you come February.

ALL THAT GLITTERS IN SUNLAND

It's that time again. The Halloween Spirit Decoration Contest is back for its second year, and spooky season has officially taken over SunLand.

Skeletons are scaling porches, pumpkins are glowing, and a few overachievers have already turned their lawns into full-blown haunted houses.

If you haven't yet, take an evening walk or slow drive around the neighborhood to see what your creative neighbors have conjured up. There's plenty to admire, from charming harvest scenes to displays that could startle a mail carrier. Just remember to retire your jack-o'-lanterns before they collapse into sad little puddles on the porch.

Once the ghouls and ghosts are packed away, it's time to swap orange lights for twinkle lights. SunLand transforms again in December into a holly, jolly winter wonderland. Trees sparkle, porches glow, and the whole neighborhood feels a little brighter, inside and out.

If you love a neighbor's display, let them know. A kind word goes a long way. And if their 10-foot snowman blinks directly into your living room, maybe just close the curtains and enjoy the holiday cheer in your own way. That's the true spirit of the season.

The fun isn't just in the decorations, it's in the shared sparkle of a community that celebrates together. Whether you're hanging lights, sipping cocoa, or admiring from the sidewalk, take a moment to appreciate what makes SunLand shine.

Good Fences, Great Neighbors

Please check your security light. It's not just for your safety, but for everyone walking their dogs after dark.

Trim back vines and shrubs that spill into sidewalks or common spaces.

And if the weeds have gotten away from you this season, reach out. Your Landscaping Committee is here to help you make a plan, not to scold.

UNTIL NEXT SEASON

Fall in SunLand has its own quiet beauty: mist over the fairways, maples aflame, a whiff of woodsmoke in the morning air.

Take a walk, admire the colors, and wave to a neighbor. We're lucky to call this place home.

Rake kindly, plant wisely, and store those bins proudly.



Your Landscaping Committee
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