**Garden Corner**
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Here it is the 1st of December and we have already had our first “pretty good” snow. Long time county residents say “we’re overdo”. But the Farmer’s Almanac says both warmer and dryer than normal. All depends upon who you talk to. Which brings us to this month’s article. One of those “long time” county residents asked me about a week ago: “What kinds of things do you do on your place this time of year?” This is pretty much what I told her.

We’ve already had some freezing and thawing of the ground, so on dry days walk around and push your bulbs back into the ground. If you have it available, cover them with mulch. With those very low temperatures, all the trees have sent their sap into the warm ground, so now is a good time to prune trees. (Exception: Prune walnut trees when the sap is up May or June timeframe. Otherwise they bleed a lot.) Dead and diseased can be cut anytime. If you haven’t taken care of your canes (blackberry & raspberry), now would be good. Same is true for your vines – think grapes.

Most everybody is getting garden, flower, and seed catalogues, right? (Please tell me I’m not the only one!) Before you make your wish list, right now might be a good time to jot down your observations from the past growing season. You know – Things like what did good and what didn’t. Or, this has to be moved over there and replaced by this beauty. Maybe you thought about adding a new bed or trying a different vegetable. Write it down! You know you’ll forget if you don’t!

Some things in life are truly stereotypical. For example, I’m a guy and I like machines. (I know! Girls do too! But, it’s mostly guys.) On the cold, cloudy, damp, dark days of winter, I’m in the workshop working on all the machines it takes to keep Hidden Harbor Park looking good. Changing engine oil and air filters, sharpening blades, tightening nuts, and bolts, and screws is performed for each piece of equipment. Check the condition of the belts too. If the machine has grease fittings, give them a shot or two. I’ll concede the argument that you can put a “stabilizer” additive into your gasoline and it will last until next spring. That’s not how we do it. All engines are operated/run until they are dry. Your choice.

It’s the end of the season and it is a really great time to reflect on the past eleven months. Thinking about how richly we have been blessed; like, being able to get out doors and pull weeds in the gardenϑ. Reliving the successes and enjoying the triumph is all part of gardening too. Think about all you learned (write it down!). Plan for the coming year and dream ….

Garden questions? Write: 370 NW 121 Rd., Warrensburg, MO 64093 or email: maandpak@embarqmail.com and we’ll chat. 2019! Ready or not – Here we come!