

May is the perfect month to celebrate Mother's Day. Nurseries, bookstores, retail stores and home improvement centers abound with gift choices for the gardening mom. You can buy pots of wonderful plants at bargain prices at the Master Gardener Plant Sale at the Fairgrounds on Friday and Saturday May 13 and 14 from 9 AM to 3 PM. If these ideas don't grab you, hop in the car and take mom over to Whitney Gardens for an enjoyable stroll through acres of awesome rhododendrons and azaleas in colorful bloom.

Whitney Gardens is in Brinnon, Washington on Highway 101. You can't miss it. You'll spot the parking area surrounded by seven acres of flowers. The nursery and garden is open from 10 AM to 5:30 PM every day. Mother and daughter team Anna and Ellie Sather can answer all your questions. Their selection of perennials, shrubs, trees and gorgeous hanging baskets expands yearly to tempt each gardener. Visitors are asked to donate one dollar to tour the gardens but this includes a very complete catalogue and puts you on their mailing list. My husband and I look forward to the arrival of their catalogue every year. For further information call Whitney Gardens at 360-796-4411 or email them at info@whitneygardens.com. Over 15,000 people visit Whitney Gardens each year. Load the family into the car and add yourselves to this number.

Why not create a garden in a container for your mom? Sylvia Smith or her crew of able helpers at Poulsbo Market Thriftway have an incredible selection of starter plants to give a myriad display of color and texture throughout summer. You can create a great garden in a pot for ten to twenty dollars. Many of the plants available are long blooming perennials that your mom can remove from the container in the fall and plant in her garden to enjoy for many years.

Give your mom a gift certificate to attend one of the workshops presented by Sue Dearth and Marilyn Hepner at Gardenscapes the Herb and Perennial Farm in Port Orchard. For information on class dates and costs call 360-871-7245 or email them at gardenscapes@silverlink.net. On Mother's Day they're serving refreshments and have a small gift for each mom. They're selling their famous Victoria hanging baskets for \$55 and other baskets range from \$20 to \$35. To reach the nursery take the Sedgwick Road/Southworth Ferry Exit from Highway 16. Go about 6 miles east on Sedgwick to Wilson Creek Road. Turn left and take the first left onto Grandview which turns into Terrace Way. Look for the nursery sign on the left.

For fifteen dollars a year you could purchase an annual subscription to Ann Lovejoy's monthly newsletter. Her seven-page newsletter includes gardening tips, recipes, and schedules of free and fee classes. It's worth every penny of the subscription rate. Call Ann at 206-780-6783 to request a complimentary copy. Or subscribe now by mailing your check to Newsletter, 9010 Miller Road, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110.

One of my favorite book buys this month is "Creative Vegetable Gardening, Accenting Your Vegetables with Flowers" by Joy Larkcom. My friend Venita Caldwell discovered this great book. So far three of her friends (including me) have purchased it. Originally this beautifully illustrated hardback book was \$35. It's been republished (still in hardback) at \$17.50. We purchased ours at Liberty Bay Books in Poulsbo, but any bookstore should be able to order it for you. The ISBN number is 0896601129. Larkcom tells how to incorporate herbs, annuals and perennials into vegetable gardens. Readers will soon be growing works of art for the eye, spirit and taste buds to feast upon. Every page includes colorful photographs and the information provided is easy to understand and follow. Any mom would love it.

Another great gift is a basket full of gardening goodies. Include a pair of garden gloves, a new hand held tool, handcream or lotion, any product from Burt's Bees and jewelry with a gardening theme. Tuck in several gardening magazines. Add a blank journal so your mom can jot down notes and planting details for this year. Include some annual seed packets; try cosmos, sweet peas, alyssum and nasturtiums. Maybe include a decorative six or ten-inch flowerpot. You might even want to add notecards, writing pads or a bookmark with a gardening theme. A gardener mom will always delight in gifts with a garden motif.

If you're still stumped for ideas, visit or call your mom's favorite nursery and buy her a gift certificate. Happy Mother's Day on Sunday to all moms and especially to my mom, Jean Stark, and to my adopted mom, Mary Aitchison.

Send questions or comments to Peg at gardenmentor@yahoo.com or in care of this newspaper.