

This week's column is full of announcements. But we'll start with the Flicker report. Read on.

Flicker Report – Our pair of flickers is comfortably inhabiting their bird home. Each morning for a few minutes Mr. Flicker raps merrily away on the top and side of his own house. Mrs. Flicker resides inside the house and he rests on top keeping guard. At 8:15 a.m. he taps away on the house and she comes flying out for the day.

Our friend Dennis made another house that we'll mount nearby so Mr. Flicker can have a roof over his head too. Right now the flickers are using the house for shelter but in March we're hoping they'll also raise a brood of baby birds. We filled the first house with cedar shavings but some of the research on flicker nesting boxes says to pack sawdust in the house and the flickers will spend time excavating the sawdust to build a nesting area. We're going to pack Mr. Flicker's house with sawdust and see what happens. I'll report the results in a future column. Stay tuned.

Organic Gardening Magazine – You might want to pick up a copy of the January/February issue of "Organic Gardening." Inside you'll find an encyclopedia of information on lawn mowers, greenhouses, composters, rototillers, cherry tomatoes and mail-order sources for seeds and plants. It's definitely an issue you'll refer to again and again.

Green Prints (The Weeder's Digest) – Aggie Allpress of Central Valley Garden Club (and of the decorated silos at Christmas on Waaga Way) recently gave me a copy of this fun small magazine full of prose with eye-appealing artwork. I happily read every page. It was a feast for the eyes and spirit. A subscription to "Greenprints" is \$19.97 per year. Checks can be mailed to GreenPrints at P.O. Box 1355 Fairview, NC 28730 or by calling 1-800-569-0602 for credit card payments. You can access the website at www.greenprints.com for samples of the digest or to subscribe online.

Plants for Spring – I recently received a notice about a Native Plant Workshop offered on January 13 by the Kitsap Conservation District. Alas I did not receive the notice in time to make my deadline for turning in the column. To order native plants at extremely reasonable prices please contact Carla Pizzano or Sandra Jacobson at the Conservation District at 360-337-7171. You can also stop in to see them for a plant order form at 817 Sidney Avenue in Port Orchard Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. But be very very quick. Orders for the plants must be in by January 19. Orders will be available for pickup on March 2 from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. and March 3 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Fairgrounds.

Doo for You! – On March 2 and 3 the Conservation District is also offering free aged compost. From 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. gardeners can come pick up and haul it away. A tractor and operator have been donated by Kitsap County Parks and Rec and the staff on site will give handling instructions and information. The "Doo" is offered on a first come first served basis. It's available until it's gone. The District says "Come join us for this "enriching" event."

Sunset Western Garden Book – After more than six years in the works the 2001 revised issue of "Sunset Western Garden Book" will soon be hot off the presses. This edition will include more than 2000 new entries; all-new full-color plant illustrations and photo gallery; and expanded and more detailed climate zone maps. This seventh edition promises to focus on "natural gardening" by minimizing the need for chemical pest control and will emphasize the use of native plants. I especially like the "full-color" illustrations instead of the old black and white ones. It will be available February 2001 (of course at the NW Flower and Garden Show which is sponsored by Sunset). The cost is \$32.95 and includes 768 pages of information for gardening in the Northwest.

Peninsula Fruit Club has a new meeting place. They will now meet at the Kitsap County Fairgrounds in Meeting Room 100 (the old Ryan's Restaurant Building) on Fairgrounds Road across from the Pavilion. Look for the Eagle's Nest Catering sign and park at the back of the building entering on the ground floor. The Fruit Club meets the second Thursday of each month at 7 p.m.

Notices of activities – I really like to publish upcoming events. Please send them to me at least three weeks or a month ahead of time so I can get them into my column. Thanks.

You can email comments to Peg at gardenmentor@yahoo.com or in care of this newspaper.