

Wow, do I ever have lots of gardening info to share with you this week. Fasten your seatbelts here we go.

Don't miss the Sixth Annual Soroptimist Garden Show this coming Saturday. Admission at the door is five dollars (kids under twelve are admitted free). All proceeds will be donated to women's programs in Kitsap County. The show is at North Kitsap High School at the intersection of Hostmark and Caldart in Poulsbo.

At noon I'm speaking and showing slides about kids gardening in the Main Gym. In fact you can just call me the opening act for special guest speaker Scott Conner at 1:00 p.m. Scott is the host of "Gardening in the Northwest" on KOMO Radio, AM 1100, on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Other speakers in the Main Gym are: 10:30 a.m. Sylvia Smith from Poulsbo Marketplace Thriftway (container gardens); 11:15 a.m. Susan Cahoun of Plantswoman Design (designing with unusual plants for year round color and texture); and 2:00 p.m. Diana of B&D Lilies (lilies of course).

In the Auxiliary Gym you'll find: 10:45 a.m. Cheryl Corbin of Corbin Farms (how to grow hydrangeas); 11:30 a.m. LuDean Marvin (grape culture); 12:15 Chris Smith (proven winner fruit trees); 1:30 p.m. Valley Nursery staff (new perennials for 2001); and 2:15 p.m. Master Gardener and Master Composter Kathy Morse (composting). It's too bad speakers are simultaneously presenting; they're all too good to miss.

You'll also find over thirty-four vendors and informational booths. Nurseries represented are: Valley Nursery, B&D Lilies/Snow Creek Day Lily Gardens, Gardenland Nursery, Henery's Garden Center, Raven Nursery, and Reflective Gardens. Be sure to visit information tables manned (and womanned) by Poulsbo Garden Club, Poulsbo Tree Board, Kitsap County Noxious Weed Control Board, Washington Native Plant Society, Wild Birds Unlimited and WSU Master Gardeners. And don't forget to bring plenty of spending money because the other vendors have abundant temptations for us to enjoy and hopefully take home.

Kitsap Regional Library once again will have a display of their gardening book collection purchased with funds donated by Heronswood Nursery. New this year Liberty Bay Books will be selling a fabulous selection of gardening books, including Ann Lovejoy's two new books "Ann Lovejoy's Organic Gardening School" and "The Sage Garden," plus many more selections by well-known northwest authors. All of the books are fifteen percent off the retail price.

The Peninsula Fruit Club is always in the Auxiliary Gym with abundant information about growing small fruits and fruit trees in our maritime northwest climate. They'll also show you how to graft fruit trees. Be sure you ask lots of questions because these folks are an abundant resource. And each member is more than happy to share their love of growing fruit with us novices.

If you've always wanted to attend a garden show or learn more about gardening this is the event for you. The price is right at five dollars, you'll find plenty of parking and you'll meet other gardeners and experts in an extremely enjoyable and non-threatening, non-overwhelming environment. In addition, you can definitely bring kids to this event. It's never too crowded for them and this year Home Depot will have kids gardening activities to keep them entertained.

Here's the exciting news Ann Lovejoy wants to share with us: Bainbridge Gardens Nursery owners Junkoh and Christina Harui have embarked on an exciting new partnership with Ann Lovejoy. "As our associate, Ann will help us take Bainbridge Gardens to the next level of development," said Junkoh Harui. Ann added, "As a consummate plant shopper, I know exactly what I want to see in a nursery. At Bainbridge Gardens, all the key elements are already in place. Few nurseries in the region can match their depth of inventory or the overall excellence of the staff." Lovejoy will direct a new educational program for the nursery. Look for classes

introducing gardeners to beneficial bugs, corn gluten, and aerobically brewed compost teas plus much more for sustainable gardening practices.

But wait – there’s more. Don’t forget that the Kitsap Conservation District and the County Parks and Recreation is offering “DOO FOR YOU” (aged compost) for home gardeners at the Kitsap Fairgrounds Friday and Saturday March 2 and 3 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Call 337-7171 for more information.

Last but not least, Heronswood Nursery is offering a series of three classes for youth, five to twelve years old. The first class “Plant Propagation for Young People” is Saturday March 10 from 9 a.m. to noon. Instructor, Ramona Machulak, is both an experienced gardener and a grade-school teacher. Other classes are “Native Plants” Saturday March 31 from 9 a.m. to noon and the final class is “Beginning Natural History and Botany” on Saturday May 12 from 9 a.m. to noon. Each class is fifteen dollars. (Wish I were a youth.) Call 360-297-4172 or email heronswood@silverlink.net to register or ask questions.

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