

Kitsap County abounds with creative folks who are combining their craft with their love of gardening. I met several of these talented folks at the Poulsbo Garden Club's recent plant sale during Viking Fest. The proceeds from the sale will benefit the library's new perennial garden to be planted and maintained by the garden club.

Mark Eder and Karen Triplett have a business called 3 Trees (360-692-9264). They make "rustic creations for the home and garden crafted from rescued bits of nature." Last year their incredible garden was part of the Silverdale Garden Tour. Grandparents and parents will fall in love with their rustic table and chairs sized just right for small people. An exhibit of their furniture can be seen at Rainshadow in Winslow. Be sure to see the mamma bear, papa bear and baby bear chairs on display. "Our creations can be described as elegant rustic," Mark says. Prices range from affordable to investments. "I'm disabled and can only use one hand. That's what got me into this; I had time on my hand," said Mark.

Watercolor artist Linda Spearman (360-377-1388) and photographer Rod Barbee (360-437-1124) both exhibit their work at Collective Visions Art Gallery at 4th and Pacific in Bremerton. Linda has a solo show at the gallery on July 6. Her watercolor "Garden Gate" was selected for Pierce College's 2001 Lakewood Garden Tour poster to raise funds for the college tutoring program. Spearman said, "I'm an avid gardener who took up water coloring and my two loves dovetailed. When I water my garden I'm watering my models." Rod took his inspiration from the photos of Pat O'Hara. "Pat's photos inspired me to hike. I'd be out backpacking and wanted to take decent photos to capture the moments. My hobby got out of control and has now become my art," said Barbee. Meet Rod at Bremerton's First Friday Art Walk on June 1.

Beatrice Idris of Raven Nursery sells wonderful plants and creates tempting hyper tufa containers. Raven Nursery (360-598-3323) has hours by appointment. Beatrice says, "Call for directions because you'll need them. The nursery is hard to find." Her specialty is seed grown species maples with over twenty-seven varieties growing no taller than thirty feet. Visitors will also find conifers, ground covers and over 250 varieties of day lilies. Raven is celebrating its eighth year. Beatrice is a botanist with a Master of Plant Ecology and worked as a medical writer for a German magazine. Our climate reminds her of Germany. Idris became a hyper tufa artist after taking a class offered by the Washington Nursery Association. "I got stuck and hooked on them," Beatrice says, explaining that she creates her art during wintertime when the nursery rests.

Elaine Strom of Belfair sells "Grandma Elaine's Bee Balm" products for gardeners. "I make it myself," she says, "the recipe was a gift from a friend whose kids call me Grandma." The lotions and bars are gentle, soothing and healing for heels, knees, fingers and elbows. Elaine can be found at both the Gig Harbor and Kingston Farmers Markets on alternate Saturdays. Reach Elaine at 360-275-7123 or aestrom@hctc.com.

Woodworker Sam Agnew's windowed potting benches, garden benches and planter boxes were all sold out before the first hour was over at the Soroptimist Garden Show in March so the garden club asked him to come back to Poulsbo during Viking Fest. "I really get a positive response from people," he says about his recycled aged wood creations. "It all started when I bought a barrel of barnwood at a thrift store. It was old cedar and I liked working with it," said Sam. Son Sammy (12), daughter Haley (9) and wife Tina are some of Sam's best admirers. The Navy brought the family to Kitsap County, but Sam will retire soon and hopes to turn his part-time woodworking into a full time business. Agnew is available for custom woodworking. Reach him at 360-769-2742.

Last but not least is Victoria's Venture stoneware and garden art. Visitors to the Kingston Farmer's Market know Victoria Green well. Her friends said "You should share your art with other people." She cleaned house for a living and started making pottery garden art. Her signs, wind chimes, garden stakes and critters are full of whimsy and color. I covet the fairy people, school of fish wind chimes and flying frog plant stakes. "People are so receptive to happy stuff," she says, adding, "I went from a clean job and now I'm in the mud." Green is making a living with her art and no longer has to clean houses except her own. Contact her at 360-698-5637.

Contact Peg with comments or questions in care of this newspaper or at gardenmentor@yahoo.com