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October is the month for harvesting fruits and planting trees. If you're having trouble deciding what fruit trees to plant or want to know what grows best here mark Saturday October 26 on your calendar. From 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at the Silverdale Community Center, 9729 Silverdale Way NW you can attend the Peninsula Fruit Club's annual "All About Fruit show and Gourmet Apple Tasting." Admission is only one dollar. Children under twelve get in for free.

You'll see and taste dozens of varieties of apples, pears, grapes and nuts. The club is supplying informational pamphlets, apple identification, an apple maggot fly display (yikes) and an opportunity to meet the local growers. This is the ideal opportunity to find out about growing fruit in our area.

Hopefully we'll start getting some rain on a regular basis soon. (Don't hate me for that statement.) We had very little measurable rain this whole summer and some plants are showing stress. Don't worry though if your cedar trees and rhodies have about a third of their foliage turning a golden or rusty brown. This condition in cedars is called flagging. Every year evergreens of all varieties lose nearly a third of their growth. It's similar to us loosing strands of hair. Think of it as a renewal process.

Local nurseries are offering plants at sale prices this month. Check out your favorite and bring home a few beauties. It's the perfect time to plant a tree. The Poulsbo Tree Board (call Poulsbo Parks and Rec at 779-9898) has a wonderful leaflet with planting instructions and suggested trees to meet various requirements in the landscape. Poulsbo Parks and Rec will tell you how to get in touch with the Tree Board. Or you can stop at their office on Front Street (above the Health Department) and pick up a leaflet in person.

Don Larson, Jim Trainer, Mike Shepherd (CORRECT SPELLING) and Daren (CHECK SPELLING) Nygren (CORRECT SPELLING) are the masterminds behind the newly formed Kitsap Trees group. The group was originally formed for Bremerton but has grown to encompass all of Kitsap County. Partners in the efforts are: Olympic Chapter WSNLA, WSU Kitsap County Extension, Puget Sound Energy, Kitsap County DCD, Poulsbo Tree Board, Kitsap Diving Scuba Alliance, citizens, officials and groups from all areas of the county.

Kitsap Trees is a non-profit organization hoping to provide education about trees and be a source for selecting and planting the best tree for your particular site. Free trees and trees at reduced rates will be available in the future. The public is always welcome at the meetings held at 6 p.m. the third Tuesday of every month. To be notified about the meeting on October 15 contact Don Larson at P.O. Box 1302 Bremerton 98337 or call 360-373-7593. A new meeting site is in the works, hence the reason to call Don for a location.

While we're on the topic of Bremerton. Another worthy group growing in Bremerton is BUGS (Bremerton Urban Garden Society) led by Mac (Taylor) Black. BUGS meets the last Wednesday of each month. The group meets at the Max Hale Center on Fifth Street in Bremerton. Use the side entry door located to the left when you face the building. BUGS is currently working on their mission statement and securing a plot to plant some small gardens in the spring. They welcome your help (and donations for that matter). To find out more about this group come to the meeting at 6:30 on Wednesday October 30. I'll write a whole column on community gardens in the future so you can learn more about BUGS and other opportunities in our county.

Stillwaters' (environmental learning center) in Kingston is having an Encore Used Book Sale Friday through Sunday October 18-20 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Stillwaters, 26059 Barber Cut Off Road. They had so many books (about 10,000) at their last sale so saved some for a second event. They've added about 1,000 new books and say they're still accepting donations. Just drop them on the back porch of the barn building at Stillwaters.

Contact Peg with comments or questions in care of this newspaper or via email at gardenmentor@yahoo.com or ptillery@co.kitsap.wa.us