

DIG THIS By Peg Tillery (for 1-08-03) , ©2005

I can't believe it's already time to write about the 15th Annual Northwest Flower and Garden Show. The Show runs February 19 through 23 from 9 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. (Wednesday through Saturday) and 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. on Sunday. This year is the "crystal anniversary" celebration. The Show is fifteen years old and promises to be even better than the previous years if that's possible.

Tickets are available locally at: Bainbridge Gardens and Bay Hay & Feed on Bainbridge Island; Kingston Sacks Feed & Garden; Valley Nursery in Poulsbo; Port Orchard Nursery in Port Orchard and Peninsula Gardens, Rosedale Gardens and Wild Birds Unlimited in Gig Harbor. Call 800-229-6311 to order tickets or do so online at www.gardenshow.com. Prices are eighteen dollars at the door or fifteen dollars purchased before February 18. Half-day tickets are twelve dollars after 3 p.m. purchased at the door only. Groups of twenty or more pay fourteen dollars each but must call 206-789-5333 for details.

This year's show has 29 gardens. A few tantalizing descriptions follow. Showgoers will see gardens showcasing a tribute to the Olmsted Brothers created by The Arboretum Foundation; the exploration of organic gardening practices by Seattle Tilth; a tropical expression with a life-size elephant sculpture by Falling Water Design and a songbird-friendly garden by the Songbird Foundation. But that's not all, other gardens include a hobbit home and vegetable patch; a bamboo retreat; three gardens with European influences; an Edgar Allan Poe-inspired botanical display; and a garden that showcases only black and purple foliage. (Bring your notebooks to jot down these plant names.)

Kitsap's own luminaries, Dan Hinkley will present talks titled "A Month in Eastern Nepal – Looking at Plants with National Geographic" and "Punctuation, Exclamation, Accentuation – The Importance of Textures in the Garden," and Ann Lovejoy will present "So Many Plants – So Little Room – A How-to-Get-There Approach" and "Why Plant a Problem – Tips on Easy Care Gardening Through Selection and Placement."

It's always fun to take in the show with a gardening buddy. The trick to getting into the talks given by the most popular speakers (i.e. Ann and Dan) is to stand in line at least one hour before the talk is scheduled to begin. This works really well with a buddy system. One of you can shop or look around for fifteen minutes while the other stands (or sits) in line and then you can trade off. But make sure you're both back in line thirty minutes before the talk begins. It's worth the wait believe me.

If you plan to see the show on Sunday February 19 come see me in the Baker Room at 9:30 a.m. for my talk and hands-on demonstration on "Creating Art for Your Garden." At 11:00 that same day in the same room is a demonstration on making "Hydrangea Wreaths" by Port Orchard's talented plant materials "artiste" Charlotte Lombard. Two of my favorite wreaths in my home were designed and created by Charlotte.

I especially want to check out the “Funky Junk” displays that will be created by high school students for the show. The kids will be proving that one person’s junk is another person’s artistic planter. I can hardly wait to see what amazing ways they’ll use “recreated” junk to create new homes for the beauty from our gardens.

Other local Eastside favorites you won’t want to miss at the show are: Ciscoe Morris, Marty Wingate, Debra Prinzing, Marianne Binetti, Valerie Easton and Scott Connor. A complete schedule of all activities with a map and ample information can be ordered or accessed online at ww.gardenshow.com or by calling 800-229-6311. The name of this year’s show is “Festa Botanica” which promises to be a “plantiferous” celebration. Don’t miss it.

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