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Our county abounds in gardening activities and opportunities this spring. Here are a few you might want to check out, plus a few tips too.

Don't miss the WSU Master Gardener Plant Sale and Free Classes at Givens Center on Sidney in Port Orchard this Saturday April 26 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. You'll want to arrive early. The always much-anticipated annual WSU Master Gardener Mother's Day Weekend Plant Sale is also not to be missed. It's Saturday and Sunday May 10 and 11 at the Cat Barn at the Fairgrounds from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. each day. Call 360-337-7157 for details. Both sales benefit public gardens throughout the county where WSU Master Gardeners are on site to offer gardening information and educational classes.

The Kingston Garden Club Plant Sale is Saturday May 3 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Kingston Community Center at Highway 104 and Iowa Street in Kingston. Sale proceeds help fund community beautification and local elementary school student garden shows.

A few more Earth Day Celebrations are this weekend Saturday April 26 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Central Market (in Poulsbo), Poulsbo Market and Bainbridge Island Towne and Country Market. Composters will be for sale at Central Market. Information tables will be at all three locations. Master Gardeners, Master Composters and Master Weed Advisors will be available too. Bring your gardening questions. Natural lawncare will be featured at Towne and Country. All activities, except the purchase of the composters, are free to the public. Come out and see how you can have a more earth friendly environment.

April 26 is a very busy day. You could start in Port Orchard and end up in Poulsbo or Bainbridge Island. Also in Poulsbo at the home and studio of Lari Ward at 24400 Rhododendron Lane NW you can make stepping stones for a donation. Lari Ward's 4-H group called Creative Creatures is making a path of clay stepping stones all impressed with positive uplifting words. The walk of words will be installed at the Raab Park Community Garden P-Patch.

The youths' theory is: "We can transform our entire outlook on life, our feelings, surroundings and ourselves just by seeing and repeating positive and powerful words. As we evolve we help ourselves, and by doing this we help others." The group hopes their creation and gift of art and inspiration will touch the hearts and minds of all those who visit Raab Park. For more information call 360-697-3998.

If you've always wanted to learn about composting and the makeup of soil and soil structure then you might want to find time to attend the 2003 Master Composter Training Course. Classes are every Tuesday and Thursday from May 13 through June 5 at the Thunderbird Room at the Fairgrounds. Classes are noon to 3 p.m. with two field trips, May 27 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and June 3 from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Call Dave Peters at 360-

337-4898 to register. The course is free and is offered by Kitsap County Public Works and WSU Cooperative Extension.

If you have access to the Internet you'll want to visit the County Compost Site on a regular basis. Key in www.kitsapgov.com/sw/compost.htm and click away. You'll find directions for making your own worm bin, compost bins, what to do with all that solid waste and much much more. Kid friendly activities are available at the site too, plus plant and lawncare information. This site is updated regularly and offers a plethora of valuable, helpful, user-friendly information.

Plant sales abound all over the county from this weekend through most of May. If you've forgotten the dates send me an email at ptillery@co.kitsap.wa.us and I'll send you a list of the dates, places and times for all the garden club activities to help you stock your garden full of delightful plants.

I hate to even mention this, but, the tent caterpillars will soon be crawling among us. If you decide to use Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*) to control the population you'll want to make sure you follow the label directions exactly and make sure the caterpillars are actively feeding. In other words get them when they're young. You can also go online to <http://gardening.wsu.edu/library/inse003/inse003.htm> and view information about these pests and how to control them. If you don't have Internet access call the WSU Cooperative Extension Office at 360-337-7157 and our staff will mail you a copy of the publication. Remember, killing the moths with a spray is not the way to control the caterpillars, only killing the larvae does the trick.