

DIG THIS By Peg Tillery (for 11-26-03) Holiday Garden Books, ©2005

It's time for holiday book recommendations. Remember these books are available all year long at local bookstores. I found these at Liberty Bay Books in Poulsbo, but any bookstore should be able to order them for you in time for the holidays.

“Roses for Washington and Oregon” by Brad Jalbert and Laura Peters is affordable at \$18.95 (ISBN 1551052652, Lone Pine Publishing). Readers will find 144 roses to choose from, perfectly suited to our climate. The illustrations and information are excellent. Discover tips on: choosing and buying roses; best locations for planting; soil, water and fertilizing needs; problems and pests; winter protection; pruning to maintain shape and beauty; landscape uses such as beds and borders and roses to grow for fragrance and color.

Books by Sharon Lovejoy are always good for the eye as well as the soul. Sharon's latest book from Workman Publishing (ISBN 0761126325) at \$13.95 is a compact, delightfully illustrated book called “Trowel and Error” containing over 700 shortcuts, tips and remedies for the gardener. Sharon gardens in Northern California and her previous books “Roots Shoots Buckets and Boots” and “Sunflower Houses” inspire gardeners here too. This compact book would make a good stocking stuffer or be great to mail to someone out of state.

A really appealing, affordable at \$10.95, paperback book by Bill Neal with introduction by Barbara Damrosch (ISBN 1565123840) will entice you to learn some of those Latin (botanically correct) plant names. Each page of “Gardener's Latin” has wonderful sketches and the lore and information are fun to read (and learn) serving as a reference for years to come.

Do you know a gardener who has everything? A perfect choice would be “The Painted Garden” by Mary Woodin, English artist and garden expert, taking readers through a year in her enchanted garden. The water color illustrations and flowing notes are delightful. Readers might be inspired to take up the art of garden journaling through sketching and writing. This hardback is only \$17.95 (ISBN 0762415304 Running Press).

“Roses a Celebration” in hardback at \$30 (ISBN 0835476616 North Point Press) edited by Wayne Winterrowd (CORRECT SPELLING) with original paintings by Pamela Stagg features thirty-three eminent gardeners writing about their favorite roses. Even if you don't have anyone in mind for this book as a present, you'll want to go relish its appealing words and illustrations.

Ken Druse is the maestro of appealingly informative and wonderfully photographed books on every aspect of garden design and cultivation. His newest offering is “The Passion for Gardening” subtitled “Inspiration for a Lifetime.” Available in hardback at \$50 (ISBN 0517707888 Clarkson Potter Publishers). This book is heralded as “not a how to, but a why to” book. Inside are more than 250 dazzling photographs and much food for

thought. The book is full of Zen wisdom and inspiration for everyone who has ever picked up a trowel or breathed in the heady earth-affirming aroma of good compost.

Anything by the American Horticultural Society is worth perusing and purchasing. The AHS has teamed up with publisher Dorling Kindersley (DK) to again bring us a not to be missed book the “Northwest Smart Garden Regional Guide” an encyclopedia and handbook loaded with “successful plants and gardening techniques” for our area, including over 2500 full-color photos and 3000 plant listings. All 420 pages of this oversize paperback are worth the purchase price of \$30 (ISBN 0789493667).

Gifts can be low cost too. Make and give a certificate for several hours of free weeding. Purchase terra cotta pots, grab some acrylic paint and decorate a pot. Collect wonderful shells and stones and glue them on a pot. Personalized cement stepping stones are very low cost (a bag of ready mix, under two dollars, is enough for five stones). Check out your favorite thrift store for baskets or containers and explore possibilities. Collect packets of early spring seeds like lettuce, radish or sweet peas and package them up in a basket festooned with ribbon. Hand write several of your favorite vegetable or herb recipes and put them in a decorative tin to present to a gardening friend.

The important thing about the holidays is being together with loved ones. Years ago our family decided we'd only buy presents for the children in our lives during the holidays. After all they're the ones who see the magic in all life and believe in miracles. It makes the holidays so enjoyable and carefree. Remember the most important gift we can give to each other is time. Happy Thanksgiving and may your upcoming holidays be serene and full of love and laughter.