

DIG THIS by Peg Tillery (NW Flower and Garden Show) for Feb 9, 2005 © 2005

Today marks the official opening day of spring when thousands of Kitsap gardeners head for the Northwest Flower and Garden Show at the Washington State Convention Center at 7th and Pike in Seattle. Even though it's still winter, the sights, smells and festivities of the show provide us with an experience to tide us over until we really get out into our warmed up gardens.

2005 marks the 17th year of the show, titled "Spring." Only one word, but it says everything. Purchase tickets locally at: Bainbridge Gardens, Bergers Garden and Gifts, Country Nursery and Garden, Peninsula Gardens, Rose Dale Gardens, Gig Harbor's Wild Birds Unlimited, Kingston's Sacks Feed and Garden, Port Orchard Nursery, Poulsbo's Valley Nursery and Rolling Bay's Bay Hay and Feed. An all week pass is \$65, one day is \$19 and \$13 covers admission after 3 p.m. daily. The show runs from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Wednesday, February 9, through Saturday, February 12 with the last day of the show on Sunday, February 13, from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Elandan Gardens' Dan Robinson has created "A Garden of Soul - the Japanese Garden – a Living Work of Art." You won't be disappointed by Dan's use of his incredible Bonsai, sculptural elements and the flavors of adventure and serenity combined into his usual luxurious garden design.

Gig Harbor garden designer and writer Susan Goetz of "the Creative Gardener" will delight us with "A Child in the Garden," a magical place where viewers travel through a gardener's life. The botanist child forgot her "roots" in the world of plants only to return finally as an adult to the serenity of the garden.

Brad Pugh has placed his stamp on many garden designs throughout Kitsap County. He's been designing the Washington Park Arboretum garden at the show for several years. This year's creation is "Passion for an Urban Oasis." You'll definitely want to wend your way through the crowds to see Brad's work.

Last year the Garden Writers Association encouraged gardeners to "Plant A Row" for the hungry with an award-winning garden designed by Rosemary Nichols-McGee. Every show visitor took home ideas to dig into growing food for themselves and others. This year the Seattle Youth Garden Works project (a program where inter-city youth grow produce to sell at the Farmers Markets) has installed a garden designed by Samuel O'Brien and Marcus Midlin. Their theme is "Urban Land Use and Food Security" where "the urban garden is a place where people can gather, breath, eat and grow – a place for community." These new show garden themes reach out to connect us to the earth and one another.

Every year the show features new gardening books hot off the presses. Our own Little and Lewis from Bainbridge Island have written "A Garden Gallery – The Plants, Art, and Hardscape of Little and Lewis." The exquisite photographs by Bainbridge Island's

Barbara Denk capture their art, gardens and visual story. Little and Lewis tell us their story and share their artistic secrets in a very conversational and intimate way. Readers step into a magical world. This book is a gift to us from George Little, David Lewis and Barbara Denk. We are so fortunate to have them here in Kitsap County.

Another great book making its debut at the show is Debra Prinzing and Mary Robson's "Washington and Oregon Gardener's Guide – Proven Plants for Inspired Gardeners" the perfect book for novice and seasoned gardeners. Both Prinzing and Robson come from WSU Master Gardener roots so they've taken their abundant knowledge and created an invaluable resource for Northwest gardeners. Every plant has excellent photographs to accompany the thorough information. You'll catch talks by Prinzing and Robson throughout all five days of the show.

Other favorite show speakers, Marty Wingate, Ciscoe Morris and Ann Lovejoy are joined this year by a host of garden gurus. Here's a tiny sampling: Russell Link, Ray Maleike, Linda Chalker-Scott and Art Krukeberg. For complete details on the speakers and their topics visit www.gardenshow.com. Speaker presentations and workshops are free and sponsored by "Sunset." Pick up a pass to the talks at the Sixth Floor information booth two hours before the talks and you can shop until ten minutes before the talks begin instead of standing in line for what seemed like hours. Head for the show to feel like "Spring."

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