

DIG THIS By Peg Tillery (Fall Events and Musings) © 2005

Get ready for Valley Nursery's annual "Fall Harvest Fair" on September 25 this year. It's time for the "Great Pumpkin Weigh-In." Brad's Dad Al always gets participants fired up when he brings in his own "Great Pumpkin" and everyone guesses its weight. Competing pumpkins must be at the nursery after September 18 and no later than noon on Sunday September 25. The top 10 pumpkins will win a prize with the winner receiving a \$150 gift certificate.

Prizes in other categories include: Tallest Corn Stalk (cut at ground level, measured to tip of tallest part of the plant); Tallest Sunflower (cut at ground level, measured to base of flower head); Biggest Sunflower Head (from seed to seed at widest point); Biggest Beet (largest by weight, no dirt or stem); Biggest Radish (largest by weight, no dirt or stem); Heaviest Potato (largest by weight, no dirt); Biggest Bell Pepper (largest by weight, no dirt or stem); Biggest Corn on Cob (largest by weight, no stem or husk); Largest Carrot (largest by weight, no stem or dirt); Heaviest Tomato (largest by weight, no dirt or stem); Most Cherry Tomatoes on One Cluster (all tomatoes must remain on the cluster at time of entry); Longest Cucumber (measured from end to end, no stem); Heaviest Zucchini (largest by weight, no stem or dirt). The Giant Veggie winner for each category will receive a \$35 gift certificate! Wow! Now there's a place you can take that zucchini you forgot to pick – just think it might win a prize!

All produce for the prize categories above can be brought to Valley Nursery anytime after August 1, 2005 and before noon on Sunday, September 25. Winners will be announced at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, September 25 during the Valley Nursery Award Ceremony. If you have any questions call the nursery at 360-779-3806.

While you're out in your gardens measuring and salivating and dreaming about your big prize, pick that extra produce and donate it to your local food bank or soup kitchen. If you can't remember where your own local foodbank is, call the Extension Office at 360-337-7157 and we'll give you a contact number and open hours for the foodbank nearest you.

The Poulsbo Farmers Market Great Tomato Tasteoff begins at 9 a.m. on September 17 (located in the Doctors Clinic parking lot south of Poulsbo Village). You'll want to bring your tomatoes to the Tasteoff and maybe you'll win a prize! If you don't grow your own tomatoes then for sure you'll want to head up to Poulsbo to tantalize and pleasure your taste buds. Take extra money because the vendors have great things to eat and you can even have breakfast and stay for lunch, then take home fresh veggies for the week ahead.

Also on September 17 from 9 a.m. to noon you can take a class on "Care, Feeding and Landscaping Your Septic System" at Stillwaters at 26059 Barber Cutoff Road, Kingston. Call Naomi at 360-397-2876 to reserve a space at \$35 per person and \$40 for a family, refreshments are included. Speakers are Jody Holdcroft from the Health District and Peg Tillery from WSU Extension Kitsap.

A new gardening magazine “Westsound Homes and Gardens” published by Wet Apple Communications makes its debut in Kitsap County this fall. It’s the brainchild of Dee Coppola. Look for it soon at your favorite nursery, newsstand and bookstore. I’ve written several of the articles in this first issue, as have Jane Bedinger, WSU Master Gardener and freelance writer, and Kate Easton, local landscape designer. The magazine promises to be a pleaser and it’s free!!

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