

DIG THIS By Peg Tillery (for 9-28-05) Native Planting Galore © 2005

Three local groups are sharing their love of native plants and the environment by working to create places of learning and enjoyment for everyone in Kitsap County.

Naomi Mosberg and Joleen Palmer from Stillwaters Environmental Learning Center have set the model for environmental learning in Kitsap County. They received the Kitsap County 2005 Earthday Award in April this year for their efforts. Ecofest in April each year is perhaps their best-known event. Stillwaters also hosts evening, weekend and daytime classes all year on a wide array of environmental and sustainable topics. This week and all through October you'll want to visit Stillwaters on weekends (Friday through Sunday) from September 30 through October 30 for their huge (and I do mean huge) booksale. More than 15,000 titles are available. "Bag Day" is Sunday October 30 where you can buy a whole bag of books for three dollars. And, if you have books you want to donate they'll take them too.

The mission of Stillwaters is "teach, inspire and support individuals and organizations to achieve sustainability in the use of Earth's resources." For more information about Stillwaters visit www.stillwatersenvironmentalcenter.org or email Naomi and Joleen at info@stillwatersenvironmentalcenter.org or call 360-297-2876. Stillwaters located at 26059 Barber Cut Off Road in Kingston is a Non-Profit 502C. Planting parties are held frequently on Fridays during the year, but there are many opportunities to volunteer in a myriad of ways.

A very new native plant learning site is growing at Buck Lake in Hansville. The old BMX area at Buck Lake Park near the Hansville Community Center will soon develop into a beautiful garden landscaped with native plants. In the future visitors will find a xeroscaped area, pond, pollinator and wildlife plants and a flower meadow. Groups coming together so far to make this idea a reality are: Hansville Community Center, Hansville's Flotsam and Jetsam Garden Club, Hansville Greenways Committee, WSU Master Gardeners and Kitsap Facilities Parks and Recreation. The landscaping plan was designed by Mary Booth and Patrick Leuner. Funding will come from these groups and other Hansville community members. Contact Roland Malan 360-638-2997, Mary Booth 360-638-2059 or Susan Harrington 360-638-2538 to see how you can be a part of this effort.

Poulsbo's Fish Park in Poulsbo is a partnership with City of Poulsbo Parks and Recreation, the Suquamish Tribe, WSU Extension, WSU Master Gardeners, Poulsbo Rotary, Poulsbo Lions and community volunteers. Work parties to develop the park are the third Sunday of every month (rain or shine) from 1-4 p.m. Come dressed for the weather, bring your favorite gardening tool or use the ones provided. This park will feature walking trails, several wildlife and fish viewing stations and quiet contemplation areas. It all began when a culvert and thousands of yards of fill dirt were removed and a new bridge constructed to return Dogfish Creek back into a salmon spawning stream.

Kitsap County's annual very popular "Salmon Tours" is Saturday November 19 from 8:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Poulsbo's Fish Park is one of the featured sites. Attendees will also see salmon returning and learn about fish habitat from biologists at each site. This incredible and educational event is sponsored by Kitsap PUD, Kitsap County DCD, Kitsap County SSWM, Washington Sea Grant Program, Washington State University Extension and the Great Peninsula Land Trust. The price of \$12 for adults and \$6 per child under 16 includes a morning snack and catered lunch. It's worth every penny. Register by calling Debbie Thomas at 360-626-7723 or dthomas@kpud.org. The tour begins at Sons of Norway in Poulsbo at 18891 Front Street. Wear walking shoes and dress for the weather.