

DIG THIS by Peg Tillery (for 07-09-08) Check out WSU Extension Kitsap's Website
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Did you know that right here in Kitsap County you can tap into a wealth of research based and extremely useful information from both Washington State University and University of Washington? As a WSU Extension employee I and my colleagues sometimes lament that our office seems to be one of Kitsap's best kept secrets. We hope that people can discover how much information we have available to share with those who live in Kitsap County.

One way to access this abundant information on just about any topic is to check out our WSU Extension Kitsap website at <http://kitsap.wsu.edu>. You can also talk to us in person by visiting the Extension Office in the Norm Dicks Government Center in downtown Bremerton at 345 6th Street, Suite 550 or by calling 360-337-7157. Our office also includes the Kitsap County Noxious Weed Program and University of Washington Sea Grant.

Here's a brief list of our staff and what our specialties are: Director Arno Bergstrom (Forestry, Sustainable Agriculture, Watershed Stewardship, Community and Economic Development); Rene Overath (Human Growth, Learning and Development and Family Support and Education); Charlotte Garrido (Baccalaureate Programs); Kelly Fisk (4H and Youth Development); Peg Tillery (Horticulture, Community and Organic Gardening and volunteers in these programs: Master Gardeners, Shoreline Stewards, Native Plant Advisors, Beach Naturalists); Gayle Alleman (Food Sense Program); Barbara Gross (Clothing and Textile Advisor Program); Dana Coggon (Kitsap County Noxious Weed Program); and Jeff Adams (University of Washington SeaGrant and Water Quality).

Last but not least, since most of us are often out in the field at events, meetings, consultations and teaching classes, we have two incredible admin assistants. Vicki Avery is in charge of just about everything and Rhiannon Fernandez is our website and marketing guru. She also helps us understand our office computers' abilities. None of us know what we'd do without Vicki and Rhiannon. It would take about twenty columns to describe what they do and how invaluable they are to our office.

Our office is often full of volunteers. Several days a week year in and year out you'll find one or more Master Gardeners in the office staffing the MG Hotline at 360-337-7158 and solving gardening problems brought in to the office. We have a microscope in the office that we can link up to the Internet to send digital images all over the United States to receive a diagnosis on what the insect is or what the plant problem is. This Internet system is called DDDI (Digital Distance Diagnostic Imaging). We're very proud of its capabilities. Usually, though, most of the insects and plant problems can be diagnosed in a few minutes right in our office. We're also able to send specimens directly to Puyallup when we can't diagnose the problem.

This month one of Kitsap's renowned marine scientists, Nancy Sefton, has begun writing a column about our area of Puget Sound. It's called "Life on the Edge." Each month

she'll cover a new shoreline or marine life topic. You'll want to check it out right away. Go to <http://kitsap.wsu.edu> and click on the icon on the right: "Life on the Edge." You'll be glad you did.

We have such a wealth of life amenities and opportunities here in Kitsap County. Nearly every day as we work and play we can see farmland, forests, shorelines and amazing beauty everywhere. WSU Extension and UW SeaGrant have been helping citizens find information on these and other topics for many decades. We want to be a resource for you. Check us out!