

DIG THIS by Peg Tillery (for 10-29-08) Rhodies, MG Graduates and Wreaths © 2008

Here's a free class on rhododendron care. The Kitsap Chapter of the American Rhododendron Club presents a "hands on" rhododendron maintenance workshop at 9 a.m. on Saturday November 1 at Rolling Bay Presbyterian Church on Bainbridge Island. The class is free. Bring gloves and hand pruners. For more information contact Carol 360-271-4409 or Lynn 206-842-5464.

Congratulations to the WSU Extension Kitsap Master Gardener 2008 graduating class: Fred and Marlene Abrahamson, Roger Bacon, Carolyn Berger, Eugene Brennan, Jade Castillo, Carolyn Chinn, Ron Cleveland, Judy Cole-Martin, Leslee Conner, Lauren Davis, Cherry Edwards, Luba Fetterman, Michelle Gouin, Celia Grether, Ingrid Harper, Ted Hoppin, DJ Jacobson, Jessica Kendrena, Steven Kimbrough, Judith Martin, Gregg Peterson, Georgie Pulliam, Marilyn Raynor, Robbin Small, Pat Steele, Merry Stever, Lisa Stowers, Nancy Taylor, Tish Treherne, Ann Varley, Denise Walsh, Diane Watrous and Lisa-Marie Wilson. These dedicated volunteers each completed 72 hours of instruction in horticulture, plus contributed 50 hours or more of educational outreach and service to their communities.

It's not too early to think about making holiday wreaths for ourselves or to give as gifts. The annual Holiday Open House at Bainbridge Gardens is Saturday November 15 from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. As a gift back to the community, the nursery features a coupon good for 40 percent off on anything the nursery has for sale. That includes trellises, fountains, large trees - a host of temptations. You can also sign up to use the wreath maker. Demonstrations are Saturday, November 22 at 11 a.m., Sunday November 23 at 1 p.m. and Wednesday December 3 at 11 a.m.

Valley Nursery's Christmas Preview Party is Friday through Sunday, November 21-23. Visit <http://www.valleynurseryinc.com/calendar/default.asp> for a month by month listing of activities at the nursery. Valley now has a heated, comfortable classroom in the house on the site. You can also attend wreath making demonstrations and sign up to use their wreath maker. Visit <http://www.valleynurseryinc.com/classes.htm> for a listing of winter workshops at the nursery.

Both Valley and Bainbridge Gardens recommend reserving the wreath maker soon. Call Valley at 360-779-3806 and Bainbridge Gardens at 206-842-5888. Both nurseries have wreath greenery available for purchase or you can bring your own. If you bring your own greenery it's recommended the branches are cut in 18-inch or shorter pieces. Remember too to pick up after yourself and take your leftover greenery home with you. Dress for the weather (in layers) and bring gloves and hand pruners. Make it a party with friends and have lunch at the New Rose Café at Bainbridge Gardens or from Valley Nursery head in to Poulsbo for lunch at one of the enticing restaurants.

This is also the perfect time of year to haunt all our local nurseries with gift shops. Here are a host of them to peruse: Country Nursery and Gardens (Seabeck Highway), Clear Creek Nursery (Clear Creek Road), Peninsula Gardens (Gig Harbor), Rosedale Nursery

(Gig Harbor), Bremerton City Nursery (Adele, West Bremerton), Cooleen Gardens (Perry Avenue, East Bremerton), Sacks Feed and Garden (Kingston), Savage Plants (Kingston), Valley Nursery (Poulsbo), Bainbridge Gardens (Bainbridge Island) and Bay Hay (Bainbridge Island). You'll be amazed and charmed at the abundant temptations and unique finds, many at very affordable prices. You'll also be supporting our locally owned businesses and the green industry.