

GARDEN GAZETTE

July – September 2015

John Christianson, Editor

CHRISTIANSON'S Nursery & Greenhouse

An Enticing Selection of Common and Uncommon Plants . . . Friendly Service . . . Expert Advice

Sweet Nothings

“I’m freakin’ out!!! This would be so flippin’ cute with a tiny bunch of periwinkle blue grape hyacinths in it.” As I hurry around the corner toward the sound of Darcie’s voice I find her holding a shapely little silver creamer that is aged to perfection. And, it would be adorable on the windowsill above the kitchen sink with everything from snowdrops, lily of the valley, forget-me-nots, pansies, roses and oh so many other wonderful little blossoms to march one through the seasons and admire up close. It is all in the details...this may be something others find slightly eccentric about many of us who want (even need) these small little nothings that make us enormously happy. As a college student sharing an old house in the U District with two roommates, I would always stop at Johnny’s Flowers on Fridays after class to buy one stem of a seasonal flower to have on our table all week long. It could not be a rose in January or a chrysanthemum in June. The stems had to match the continuum of flowers as they bloomed through the year because I was not only celebrating the weekend, but I was reminding myself of my childhood home where my Mom almost always had simple bouquets of flowers from our garden placed at different favorite places throughout our house. My flower habit started the spring I was nine with roses from the enormous climbing Dr. Van Fleet rambling rose by our driveway. I picked a few stems on Saturday morning and placed them in a vase on my nightstand. They were my inspiration to clean my side of the small room I shared with my sister. Our mother had taken a start of this climber from my Grandparents’ garden and her parents had taken a cutting from my Great Grandmother’s garden when they moved west from Michigan. As a child it was always my favorite rose; not only because of its shell pink color and fruity-rose fragrance, but because of the story surrounding its history in our family and the fact that it was only in bloom for what seemed like a very short month; for absence truly does make the heart grow fonder. This stands out as the beginning of the ritual that has followed me through life. I always do the flowers before I do the cooking and cleaning. It just makes sense for me and I was reminded of it again when John and I visited our friends Carl and Waverley a few weeks ago to see how they were doing in remodeling a small cottage on their property. As we walked through the grand entrance to this tiny doll house space we could see there was still a lot of work to do. There was a tumble of cut lengths of lumber and sheet rock, cast off pieces of unnecessary paneling, shims and sawdust littering a floor covered in craft paper to protect the wonderful painting of roses and cherubs painted on the floor a number of years ago. There was also the continuous sound of a generator going off and on and the noxious smell of paint. But my eyes went right to the singular purple primrose placed in the soap dish of the antique kitchen sink and I knew straightaway why it was there. For most, this little glimpse of beauty would seem out of place; rather like a beautiful sculpture placed at a freeway construction site. But, for those of us who find inspiration and comfort in the beauty and simplicity of a flower, it is the sweet nothing that draws us to the end of the tunnel.

Toni Christianson

Reprinted from the April – May 2006 Garden Gazette



James Christianson, (3rd from left) John's Great-grandfather & "Father of the Wenatchee Apple" and Dwight Christianson, (2nd from the left) John's Grandfather.

'Tis the season for picnics and outdoor living!

We have folding market baskets, perfect for trips to the farmer's markets, quick stops at produce stands, and impromptu picnics. Stem-less wine glasses made from durable polymer are great for picnics, boating, and dining al fresco on your deck or patio.

For BBQs, picnics and camping, we have laminated tablecloths and aprons from ImpWear, a Seattle-based company. These tablecloths and aprons are made from 100% cotton and laminated with a water-based urethane coating, making them soft, drapery, and splash-proof. Most importantly, they are food safe, eco-friendly, and come in a great assortment of fun designs.

From a new line called RockFlowerPaper, we have canvas tote bags, bucket bags, cosmetic bags, lunch totes and gift bags, all in fresh summer colors. Also from this line are beautiful drink coasters and serving trays with nature-inspired artwork.

On those hot summer days, don't forget to pack your umbrella. You'll be sitting pretty (and cool) under one of our art-inspired umbrellas, such as Monet's Garden, Water Lilies, Gustav Klimt's 'The Kiss', Paris and London scenes, Antique Roses, and more.

Bath products...

After a day of summer garden chores, sometimes it takes more than a bar of soap to scrub off the grime, sun block, and berry stains. Given that, we now carry a full line of bath items, such as pumice stones, natural bristle body brushes, nail brushes, and soap mitts and back scrubbers made from bamboo and jute.

Michel line of beautiful soaps and lotions in summery fragrances such as Lemon Basil, Pink Grapefruit, Lavender Rosemary, Honey Almond, Sweet Apple, and many more.

From Pre de Provence, No. 63 is a men's line of shaving products, including cube soap, shower gel, shaving cream, shaving soap in a tin, a shaving brush, and after-shave balm. Enriched with shea butter, coconut oil, and aloe vera, No. 63 has a peppery, citrus top note rounded by a warm, cedarwood fragrance. It's designed to be a men's line but because it's so hydrating (and smells so good), it's quickly become a favorite among some of our female staff members.

Also from Pre de Provence, Rose de Mai beauty oils, balms, soaps, and lotions, as well as beautifully packaged soaps from the Private Collection in exquisite scent combinations such as Rhubarb & Mint Tea, Tobacco Flower & Vanilla, Cardamom, Absinthe & Sandalwood, and Wild Celery & Tonka Bean.

School Bells will Chime



Interior of the Schoolhouse during the Rose Festival

Many years after designing and planting our Rose Gardens and restoring the Meadow Schoolhouse, Tom, from Mary Davis Lighting, gave us a tiny vacation cottage which we moved to the back of the gardens. After restoring this cottage we are now ready for weddings in the Schoolhouse. This tiny building has been given a new life as a bridal dressing room with two restrooms. It is a time-worn addition that adds to the authentic feel of lovingly cared for spaces within a glorious old-fashioned garden set in the heart of scenic Skagit Valley. The gardens will be blooming with seasonal color during spring, summer and fall weddings with spring being the best time for roses, summer for roses and perennials and fall for roses and autumn color. For winter weddings there is a completely different feel with darkness coming so early. The Schoolhouse is magical with twinkling candles in the windows, flowers and swags of voile or tulle draping the eight foot

tall windows and candelabras at the altar. The warmth of the building is in stark contrast to the winter landscape. Whether a bride and groom choose a seasonal wedding with guests spilling out into the gardens after the ceremony or an intimate winter wedding in the Schoolhouse, it is our hope this destination wedding location will provide cherished memories for couples, families and guests of a wonderful wedding day.

There is a commercial kitchen on site for catering, live plants are available for rent and our in-house custom container designer is available for consultations.

The Schoolhouse and Rose Gardens are also a perfect location for anniversaries, showers, birthday parties and family reunions.

For inquiries please call Debra, our event coordinator, at 360-466-3821 or 800-585-8200.

Christianson's Summer Calendar

Pruning Shrubs and Small Trees:

The Summer Advantage

Saturday, July 11 11 a.m. - noon
reservations required class fee: \$8



Many gardeners are timid or even fearful of pruning in summer. There are good reasons to be cautious. Those same reasons make it an ideal time to subdue water sprouts and maintain size. Join Certified Arborist, **Christina Pfeiffer** to learn how to save work and produce better results by doing the right amount of the right pruning on the right plants during this time of year.

Growing, Tending & Harvesting Dahlias

Made Easy

Saturday, July 18 11 a.m. - noon
reservations required class fee: \$8

Be it perfection of bloom that you seek, or just the glorious profusion of color in the garden, **John and Kathy Willson** of *Swede Hill Dahlia and Sunflower Farm*, can show you how to grow, tend and harvest dahlias successfully. Special emphasis will be given to watering and fertilizing dahlias without the need for special tools, harmful chemicals or excessive commitment of time or energy.



Rain Gardens: Beauty With Benefits

Saturday, July 18 1 - 2 p.m.
reservations required class fee: \$8

Whether you are dealing with drainage issues or simply love low-maintenance, wildlife-friendly gardens, you will appreciate what rain gardens have to offer. Discover how to work with our Northwest climate and soils in this practical and inspirational class with *Wonder-Flora* Landscape designer **Janaki Kilgore**.

Vermiculture Composting

Saturday, July 25 1 - 2 p.m.
reservations required class fee: \$8

Americans throw away 34 million tons of food waste into landfills each year; more than any other type of waste. Worm composting uses worms to do the work of breaking down waste and is more efficient and easier to manage than a traditional backyard compost pile. In addition, its compact design makes it perfect for use in any household. Learn how to set up, care for and harvest a vermiculture system from expert **John York** of *Nature's Footprint*.

The Artful Gardener

Saturday, September 5 11 a.m. - 12:30
reservations required class fee: \$8

What does art in the garden mean? You turn a corner on the garden path to find dramatic scenes of stone, symmetry and silhouette or light soars into rainbows from a crystal bobble tucked into a tree. **Kathy Hirdler** of *Floribunda Designs* will help you see art as another layer to add in your garden. Photos from her garden travels provide sparks of inspiration and with simple design principles in regard to placement, scale and color, you can infuse your garden with inspiration.

Fall Soil Care for a Healthier Landscape

Saturday, September 12 11 a.m. - noon
reservations required class fee: \$8

How we treat the soil determines the success and health of the landscape. Join Certified Arborist, **Christina Pfeiffer** to learn the best things to do – and not do – at this time of year in order to get ready for winter. She'll also cover the best kinds of mulch to use, making leaf-mold mulch and tips for improving overall soil conditions.

Mulch Matters!

Saturday, September 12 1 - 2 p.m.
reservations required class fee: \$8

Join Certified Arborist and Consultant, **Christina Pfeiffer** as she explains different mulch materials and how they perform in the garden for weed suppression, aesthetics, and maintaining soil condition. She will also explain how to use leaves and the different compost products to their best advantage and why weed barriers are a dead end. Valuable information especially for all those folks who are compelled to scrape every last leaf out of their garden and leave the ground bare in the fall.

Gardening With Native Plants

Saturday, September 19 11 a.m. - noon
reservations required class fee: \$8

Native plants can be attractive and provide habitat to your garden, helping to attract beneficial species and support their ecosystems. Join **Ani Gurnee** of *Aulos Designs* to learn how to incorporate native plants in your garden for an attractive look while creating an eco-friendly habitat.



Mossy Wall Pockets Workshop

Saturday, September 19 1 - 2:30
reservations required class fee: \$45

Join **Laura Campbell** as she walks you through the step by step process of making an adorable moss wall pocket (basket) with a bit of chicken wire, moss and vines. Finish off your pocket with a variety of annuals for a unique look. Students to bring pliers, wire cutters and garden gloves. Plants sold separately.

Bats Incredible!

Saturday, September 27 11 a.m. - noon
reservations requested complimentary



Got bats? If you want a healthy ecosystem, then the answer is "yes!" Back by popular demand, **Kathleen Bander**, founder of *Bats Northwest*, joins the fun at our Skagit Valley Giant Pumpkin Festival to talk about the 15 species of bats native to Washington. Learn about night-blooming plants attractive to the insects that Northwest bats eat. Get plans to build a bat house to put out next spring. Kids can get up close and personal with real mounted specimens.

To make your reservations for classes and events,
please visit the Nursery or call us at
360-466-3821 or 1-800-585-8200.

Fifth Annual
Skagit Valley
Giant Pumpkin Festival

Saturday, September 26
at Christianson's Nursery

Sponsored by the
Pacific Northwest Giant Pumpkin Growers

with Coastal Farm & Ranch, Northern Lights Gardening, Skagit Valley Food Co-op, Skagit County and
Christianson's Nursery & Greenhouse

Giant Pumpkin Weigh-Off

Harvest Food • Pony Rides • Face Painting
Family Carnival Games • Toad Races • "The Bat Lady"

Cash prize for the biggest pumpkin!

Last year's pumpkin weighed in at over 1450 pounds! What will it weigh this year?
The prize amount is still growing as we go to press; stay tuned for updates
about the prizes and all our sponsors at www.christiansonsnursery.com and on Facebook.

Howard Dill Award for "Prettiest Pumpkin"
We'll also have prizes for
Giant Vegetables • Children's Pumpkins • Big Sunflowers

Festival Schedule

9 a.m. – Noon	Entries for pumpkin weigh-off accepted; also bring your exhibition veggies and sunflowers.
10 a.m. – 2 p.m.	WSU Master Gardener's Plant Clinic
11 a.m. – Noon	"Bats Incredible" with "Bat Lady" Kathleen Bander, founder of <i>Bats Northwest</i> . (see page 3 for details.) Reservations requested. Kids are welcome.
11 a.m. – 3 p.m.	Random Acts of Food & Queen Bee Espresso
Noon – 2 p.m.	Musicians Laurel Bliss and John Clark play old-time Cajun and bluegrass.
Noon – 4 p.m.	Giant Pumpkin Weigh-Off
1 – 3 p.m.	Family fun! Pony rides with Lang's Traveling Ponies, face painting, carnival games, toad races and more!
4 p.m.	Winner of the largest pumpkin announced

How to Enter

Contest entry forms are available at our Garden Store and on our website at www.christiansonsnursery.com

Summer Specials

July 1 - 9

Annual 40% off Sale

hanging baskets, geraniums, impatiens, petunias, fuchsias, lobelia and more annuals in packs, 2-inch and 4-inch pots

40% off

July 20 - 31

Summer Herbs

basil, lavender, oregano, parsley, sage rosemary and thyme...and much more

20% off

August 17 - 31

Summer Heather

hardy blooming plants in a variety of colors

20% off

September

Fall is for Planting

a wide variety of specials throughout the month

July 10 - 19

Hydrangeas

our huge selection of summer-blooming favorites includes "hortensias", lacecaps, oak-leaf and peegee tree forms.

20% off

August 1 - 16

Outdoor Containers

our huge selection of small to very large glazed and terra-cotta outdoor containers

20% off

August 17 - 31

Water Plants

water lilies, floating plants, iris and more

30% off

Weekly Radio Broadcast

The Garden Show

Sunday Mornings

With John & Mike

AM 660 KAPS • 10:30 a.m.

CLASSES & EVENTS

Saturday, July 11

Summer Pruning 11 a.m. - noon

Saturday, July 18

Growing, Tending & Harvesting Dahlias

11 a.m. - noon

Rain Gardens: Beauty with Benefits 1 - 2 p.m.

Saturday, July 25

Vermiculture Composting 1 - 2 p.m.

Saturday, September 5

The Artful Gardener 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Saturday, September 12

Soil Care for the Sustainable Garden

11 a.m. - noon

Mulch Matters 1 - 2 p.m.

Saturday, September 19

Gardening With Natives 11 a.m. - noon

Mossy Wall Pockets Workshop 1 - 2:30 p.m.

Saturday, September 27

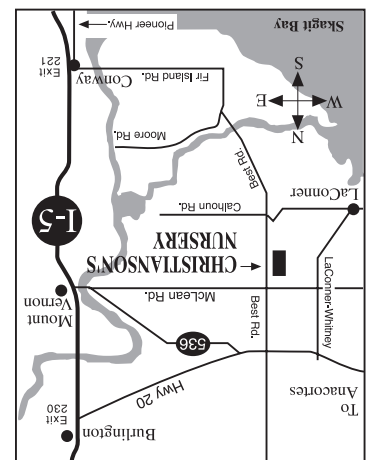
Fifth Annual Giant Pumpkin Festival

9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Bats Incredible! 11 a.m. - noon

Summer Hours
Daily 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
July 4th 'til 3 p.m.
Open Labor Day

From Bellingham: Take Exit 230. Go 5 miles west on Hwy 20 to Best Road. Turn south, go 2 miles on Best Road.
From Everett: Take Exit 221. Go 8.5 miles west on Fir Island Road to Best Road. Continue north on Best Road; Nursery is 1 mile north of the intersection with Chilberg/Calhoun Road.



360-466-3821 • 1-800-585-8200

CHRISTIANSON'S
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