

GARDEN GAZETTE

October – December 2016

Toni Christianson, *Editor*

CHRISTIANSON'S Nursery & Greenhouse

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

How Does Your Garden Grow?

Our three youngest grandchildren always, and I mean always, burst through the mudroom door with an enthusiastic shout of 'Hi Nana!' and then they race straight to the refrigerator. There they survey the contents, choose whatever suits their fancy and head for the garden. It's like one continuous motion. And, it was in the garden about 4 years ago that Nora, the youngest at 6 years old, discovered her favorite all time treat...strawberries! After that, she would go searching for strawberries no matter the season. She insisted there should be berries year round and often demanded that I should make that happen. Over the years I would talk about little white flowers, bees, sunshine, warmth, the month of June and anything else to help her understand the cycle of strawberries but nothing helped until she planted her own. This year we gave all three grandchildren their own space in our veggie garden with the freedom to choose what to plant. Ian chose boy things like pumpkins and corn and he now has 4 large pumpkins to take to his Auntie Ann's pumpkin party. Maeve chose girl things like seed grown flowers and a lavender plant. Through the Summer she picked many bouquets to give to friends and family. She will surely take a colorful bouquet to the pumpkin party. And Nora chose strawberries. Over the weeks and months of Summer she watched as her strawberry plants settled in, finally bloomed and later bore fruit. They are ever-bearing so when the first crop was finished she patiently waited for the second set of flowers and then the fruit. In the meantime her interest turned to the ripening raspberries and her first love then had competition from the two rows on the east side of the garden. Now, after finding a snack in the fridge, she grabs her recycled cottage cheese carton and heads out to the rows of raspberries and strawberries to pick whatever she can find. She has become good at selecting only ripe berries and leaving the others for another day. Of course every other berry goes into her mouth. But she usually comes in the house with a carton full of mixed berries and defies anyone to eat a berry because she is going to take them home and make a cobbler. And she does...make the cobbler that is.

Yesterday we had our picnic to celebrate the harvest from our orchard and the kids pulled carrots and cut chives from their gardens and helped pick a super abundance of apples and pears. After dinner we used a modern practice of notetaking. I interviewed them while their mother recorded us on her smartphone. We discussed successes and failures and what to change for next year. The successes were corn, pumpkins, strawberries, sunflowers, marigolds and lavender. And the very obvious failures were cucumbers, peas and radishes. All three children want a bigger space next Spring and all three could see the benefit of recording this year's garden thoughts and conclusions so as not to make the same mistakes next year. This ease of modern video notetaking was impressive but I was happy to be there to teach them about the importance of century's old best practices of veggie gardening...the use of compost, organic fertilizer, soil temperature at planting (the reason the cucumbers didn't survive...soil was way too cold) and abundant water (the reason the peas were tough). The radishes are a whole different story. I have yet to find an organic control for wormy radishes...always totally disgusting. They go straight over the fence to the sheep and chickens. And while I'm very happy with our grandchildren's enthusiasm for gardening and the knowledge they acquired this season, my true delight is that Nora will no longer beg me to go searching for strawberries in the snow.

Toni Christianson

Fresh Cider Pressing

Saturday, October 1

12:30 - 2:00 p.m.

You are welcome to watch, help turn the crank or just have a glass of cider during this throw-back celebration to an earlier time when an old oak cider press was used to make cider for the Autumn Season. **John Christianson** and staff will be making the cider from a varietal mix of our own organic apples. We have found that a mix produces better flavored cider and we love experimenting with different types of apples. Come to visit our magical Skagit Valley, have some cider, along with our complimentary molasses cookies (there's no better combination), and then go on to tour neighboring farms, including La Conner Flats, Hedlin's Farm and Gordon's Pumpkins, during the *Festival of Family Farms* scheduled for the same weekend.

Holiday Open House and Arts Alive *Wine and Appetizers*

Friday Evening November 4 5 - 8 p.m.

We are excited to be hosting a new event during the weekend of our Holiday Open House. The Nursery will be open late on Friday to celebrate the beginning of the Holiday Season. After decorating Primrose and the Garden Store from floor to ceiling we will be ready to greet our loyal customers and share our design and holiday inspiration during an after-hours party. Wine and hor d'oeuvres will be served in the Conservatory. Please join us!

Saturday and Sunday November 5 & 6

With new greenhouse space for our Winter events we are now blessed with extra room for our Holiday Open House. Our Garden Store with its old Tillinghast seed counters and cubbies and our Conservatory with garden antiques and gifts for gardeners will now carry an assortment of gifts, pottery and decorations with many ideas for bringing the outdoors in during this festive season. This will allow Primrose some breathing space for fancier goods and holiday inspiration. So gather your friends and ring in the holidays with a special visit to our Nursery where you will find many wonderful ideas for entertaining, gift giving and decorating during this magical Season. Primrose will be a Winter Wonderland and we hope to inspire your creativity and jump start your enthusiasm for the celebrations of the Season. There will be new additions and old favorites including Christmas trees decorated with a mix of new and vintage ornaments and our mohair 'snow'. The mohair has been washed and carded by a processor in Maltby and Debra will be mixing mica into the fibers to create the glistening, silver frost look so beautiful on trees, mantles, and shelves. You can have a magical frosted Christmas tree without the mess of flocking or glitter plus you can remove and store the snow to use in future years.

In conjunction with our **Holiday Open House** we are participating in **Art's Alive!**. This celebration of the arts is held throughout the La Conner area and we will have many local artists displaying their work. We'll also have live music along with apple cider served from our antique cider press. Join us, as part of the Wine and Cheese Party, Friday evening from 5 to 8 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., in supporting locally hand-made craft and art.

Participating artists at the Nursery include:

Rochelle Anderson	Victorian and steampunk style jewelry	Allison Woosley	shell casing jewelry
Two Old Crows	repurposed wool home accessories	Joe Tuel	wood-working home furnishings
Keith Keyser	rustic wood furniture and home décor	Carol Bryant	glass and driftwood garden art
Jeanne Reis	small oil paintings	Laura Campbell	rose-hip wreaths
Debra Lacy	Mohair Snow & carding demonstration	Collen E. Monette	collage and assemblage pieces using found objects

Cajun music by **Laurel Bliss** and **John Clark** on Saturday, November 5, 12:00 – 3:00

Twenty-first Annual Holiday Tea & Visit with Father Christmas

We extend our appreciation to customers with this complimentary Holiday Tea to celebrate the start of the Holiday Season. Come enjoy tea, scones, assorted sandwiches, chocolates and desserts. Our 1888 Schoolhouse will be decorated with candlelight and a delightful forest theme. Auto harpist **Bob Harper** and violinist and cellist **Dennis Burkhardt** will play background chamber music to add to the 19th century setting. Dress up for a formal tea or come as you are. All are welcome.

November 26 noon - 5 p.m. reservations required

Donations will benefit the La Conner Library Foundation



Father Christmas is excited to greet children of all ages and listen to their Christmas wishes while sitting with them in an antique red clipper sleigh that is nestled in a wooded setting in our warm greenhouse. Come in your holiday finest or Saturday casual and bring your cameras to take your own keepsake photos.

10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Holiday Wreath-Making Classes

reservations required 11a.m. - 4 p.m. class fee \$8

Deck the halls with ease by using our wreath-making machine and getting the practical and inspiring help of designer **Karen Harper**. These are one-hour classes (starting at 11 a.m., noon, 1 p.m., 2 p.m. and 3 p.m.). We provide a delightful array of greens (sold by the pound) or feel free to bring your own. The cost of one wreath form is included in the class fee. Wear warm clothing and bring your own pruners and gardening gloves. The wreath making machines will be available from November 27 to December 24 for those customers who already know how to use them. Please call for reservations.



In an effort to conserve resources we will be emailing our Garden Gazette to our customers and fellow gardeners who would rather receive the Gazette in a PDF format to download through Garden Notes or our website rather than through the mail. If you would like to access the Gazette electronically, please email your request to PublicRelations.Christiansons@gmail.com. Please include your name and address so we can take you off our hard-copy mailing list. You can also call us at 360-466-3821. If we don't hear from you we will continue mailing our Gazette to you. Thank you for your continuing interest in Christianson's Nursery.

Mark Your Calendars! Northwest Flower and Garden Show



NORTHWEST
FLOWER & GARDEN
SHOW

The Northwest Flower & Garden Show will be held in Seattle on February 22 – 26, 2017 with the theme **'Taste of Spring'**. Tickets for the show will be available for purchase in our Garden Store starting December 15 (ticket prices are \$17 for early bird tickets and \$22 during the dates of the show).

As always, we will be offering 'Flower Buses' so you can gather your friends and enjoy going to the show without the stress of driving and parking. The Flower Buses will be going to the show on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, February

22, 23, and 24, leaving the Nursery at 8:30 am and returning at approximately 6:00 pm. The cost of a combination show ticket and bus ride is \$52. Please call the Nursery to make your Flower Bus reservations (360-466-3821).

Tickets to the Northwest Flower and Garden Show make great Christmas gifts for your favorite gardeners.

Christianson's Autumn Garden Calendar

Creating A Japanese-Inspired Garden

Saturday, October 1 11 a.m. – noon

reservations required class fee: \$8

In this three-part series, garden designer **Hans Wressnigg** of *NIWA Japanese-inspired Landscapes*, introduces the most fundamental principles of the Japanese garden design tradition. In part one, learn about the heart of the tradition and how to adapt it to your unique home and garden site. Part two addresses how to use rocks in the Japanese tradition and part three demonstrates a residential garden project from inception to realization.

Digging, Dividing and Storing Dahlias Made Easy

Saturday, October 8 11 a.m. – noon

reservations required class fee: \$8



Learn quick and reliable ways to expand your dahlia collection from year to year from **John and Kathy Willson** of *Swede Hill Dahlia and Sunflower Farm*. They will teach you how to dig, divide and overwinter your dahlias with special emphasis given to methods for retaining seasonal plant vigor and potency.

Full Color Walk with John Christianson

Saturday, October 15 1 – 2 p.m.

reservations requested complimentary

Join **John Christianson** on an ever popular tour to enjoy and learn about the fabulous Fall colors of leaves and berries in the Nursery's Display Gardens and at adjoining La Conner Flats. Make sure to dress for the weather and wear good shoes that can take the mud.



Rosehip Wreath-Making Workshop

Saturday, October 22 9:30 – 11 a.m.

reservations required class fee: \$49

Join wreath-making extraordinaire, **Laura Campbell** in this hands-on workshop to learn how to create a beautiful rose hip wreath for your holiday enjoyment. All materials are included in the class fee. Students need to bring pruners, gloves and enthusiasm. Be sure to wear warm clothes and long sleeves as the materials can be somewhat prickly.

Rain Garden Principles for Every Garden

Saturday, October 22 11 a.m. – noon

reservations required class fee: \$8

A rain garden can manage and conserve rainwater, creating an oasis for plants, people and wildlife. The principles of rain garden design can be applied everywhere: shaping the land, building soil health and making smart plant choices. Landscape designer, **Janaki Kilgore** will present a permaculture perspective, offering practical examples and inspiring images of Salish Sea gardens. You may share the specific challenges of your site in the question and answer period after the class.

Hedgerows & Habitats

Saturday, October 29 11 a.m. – noon

reservations required class fee: \$8

Throughout the centuries hedges have served a variety of purposes including keeping animals in or out of a particular area, providing privacy and creating a distinct border to define a garden area. But hedges can also provide animal habitat. Join **Ani Gurnee** of *Aulos Design* to learn how different hedging plants create distinct ecosystems that can support a variety of wildlife in your garden.

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



Spring Blooming Bulbs Are Now Available!

We know Winter is coming to an end when Fall planted bulbs start pushing their leaves through the soil. And, now is the time to plant the bulbs we so enjoy in the Spring; tulips, daffodils, snow drops, hyacinths, crocus and narcissus. Now is also the time to start forcing paperwhites and early blooming tulips and daffodils for color in your homes or for gift giving during the Holidays or the long Winter months. And, it's time to plant the bulbs of the giant purple allium flowers so many of you have admired in the Schoolhouse Garden. Visit our Garden Store early for the best selection.

Christianson's Autumn Class Calendar - continued

Rocks and Plants In Japanese Gardens

Saturday, November 12 11 a.m. – noon

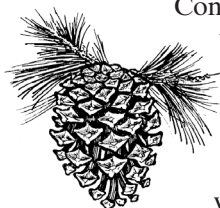
reservations required class fee: \$8

Rocks constitute the most important garden element in Japanese gardens. Learn how to make a geological statement in your garden by employing rocks in a variety of ways. **Hans Wressnigg** of *NIWA Japanese-inspired Landscapes*, will discuss selection criteria, composition and rock setting techniques in this second of his class series.

Conifer Walk with John Christianson

Saturday, November 19 1 – 2 p.m.

reservations requested complimentary



Conifers add so much variety and interest to our year-round gardens. Join **John Christianson** on a casual tour to enjoy and learn about many great conifers in the Nursery's display gardens and at adjoining La Conner Flats. Dress for the weather and wear good shoes for muddy spots.

Holiday Wreath-Making with Karen Harper

Saturday, November 26 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

reservations required class fee: \$8

Deck the halls with ease by using wreath-making machines and getting the practical and inspiring help of designer **Karen Harper**. These are one-hour classes (starting at 11 a.m., noon, 1 p.m., 2 p.m. and 3 p.m.). Greens are sold by the pound or feel free to bring your own. The cost of one wreath form is included in the class fee. Wear warm clothing and bring your own pruners and gardening gloves.

Independent Holiday Wreath - Making

November 26 through December 24

reservations recommended 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

fee: \$8.00 per wreath form

All who have taken the wreath class are invited to use our wreath making machines during our Nursery's open hours. Plan a day out with friends to design wreaths, explore Primrose and have lunch in La Conner. Bring your own greens (this is a great time to prune your conifers and evergreen shrubs, trees and groundcovers) or buy from the great assortment we will have available. Reservations are highly recommended so you are not disappointed if you arrive while someone else has reserved the machines. Custom designed wreaths are also wonderful gifts for family and friends. Come, make this a holiday tradition.

From the Ground Up:

The Creation of a Japanese-Inspired Garden

Saturday, December 3 11 a.m. – noon

reservations required class fee: \$8

Creating a garden with a Japanese touch involves much more than just placing statues and lanterns into an existing garden. Using an example of a complete make-over, **Hans Wressnigg** from *NIWA Japanese-Inspired Landscapes* will explain the stages from inception to realization, while considering site conditions and their influences on the design and how to find creative solutions in the Japanese-gardening tradition.

Swans of the Skagit

Saturday, December 10 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

reservations required class fee: \$8

The majestic beauty of fields filled with white swans, both native trumpeter and tundra swans, is virtually at Christianson's doorstep in December, January and February. Come hear wildlife biologist **Martha Jordan** discuss these amazing birds (the largest waterfowl in the world) and share Skagit Valley's best places to view them. Jordan is the Executive Director of the *Northwest Swan Conservation Association*. Make your reservations early; this is always a wildly popular class!

Snow Geese of the Skagit

Saturday, December 17 11 a.m. – noon

reservations required class fee: \$8

Huge numbers of snow geese migrate to Skagit Valley farmlands from Alaska and Wrangell Island, Russia. Come learn more about their fascinating life history and challenges with wildlife biologist **Martha Jordan**, who is Executive Director of the *Northwest Swan Conservation Association*. Make your reservations early for this popular class!

Fall Is For Planting

We encourage all our customers to plant in the Fall. Trends have moved away from this but a tree, shrub or hardy perennial put into the ground in Autumn to early Winter will put on some root growth and settle in before it begins to put on above ground growth in the Spring. In fact, the roots will continue to grow throughout the Winter whenever the temperatures are above 42 degrees. These Fall plantings will have a head start on plantings made next Spring and will need less water during the coming seasons.



October – December Specials

October 1 – 20

Conifer Sale

tall and dwarf evergreens, including spruce, fir, cypress, pine and junipers
25% off

November 1 – 30

Roses

End-of-season sale
many varieties still available
50% off

November 18 – 30

Camellias

Winter and Spring flowering
Camellias
in bud or bloom
1-gallon to 5-gallon sizes
20% off

October 21 – 31

Hedging Sale

laurel, boxwood, photinia, Japanese holly,
Leyland cypress, privet and arborvitae
25% off

November 1 – 17

Ground Covers

Kinnickinnick, ivy, juniper, salal, Cotoneaster,
Vinca, Pachysandra and Euonymus
25% off

December 1 – 31

Christmas Holly

Traditional English holly plus many rare and
uncommon varieties
1-gallon to 6-foot sizes

Christmas Rose

(Hellebore niger)
in bloom!
20% off

Stay in Touch

Website: www.christiansonsnursery.com

Garden Notes: Our monthly emailed newsletter

<http://www.christiansonsnursery.com/whats-happening/newsletters/>

Facebook: Like us on our website

Pinterest: <http://www.pinterest.com/primrosegifts>

Weekly Radio Broadcast

The Garden Show

Sunday Mornings

With John & Mike

10:30 a.m.

AM 660 KAPS & FM 102.1

CLASSES & EVENTS

Saturday, October 1

Creating A Japanese-Inspired Garden 11 a.m. – noon
Fresh Cider Pressing 12:30 – 2 p.m.

Saturday, October 8

Digging, Dividing & Storing Dahlias Made Easy
11 a.m. – noon

Saturday, October 15

Fall Color Walk with John Christianson 1 – 2 p.m.

Saturday, October 22

Rosehip Wreath-Making Workshop 9:30 – 11 a.m.
Rain Garden Principles for Every Garden 11 a.m. – noon

Saturday, October 29

Hedgerows & Habitats 11 a.m. – noon

Friday, November 4

Arts Alive! & Holiday Open House Wine & Cheese Party
5 – 8 p.m.

Saturday & Sunday, November 5 - 6

Arts Alive! & Holiday Open House 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Saturday, November 12

Rocks & Plants in Japanese Gardens 11 a.m. – noon

Saturday, November 19

Conifer Walk with John Christianson 1 – 2 p.m.

Saturday, November 26

Arrival of Father Christmas 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Holiday Wreath-Making Classes 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.
Nineteenth Annual Holiday Tea noon – 5 p.m.

December 1 – 24

Independent Wreath-Making 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. daily

Saturday, December 3

The Creation of a Japanese-Inspired Garden 11 a.m. – noon

Saturday, December 10

Swans of the Skagit 11 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Saturday, December 17

Snow Geese of the Skagit 11 a.m. – noon

Fall Hours
Daily 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.
Beginning November 1
Open until 5 p.m.

From Bellingham: Take EXIT 230. Go 5 miles west on Hwy. 20 to Best Road. Turn left. Head south past the roundabout. Nursery is on the right.
From Everett: Take Exit 221, go over I-5 and take the first right at Fir Island roundabout (Conway). Head 8.5 miles, cross river to Best Road. Continue North on Best Road. Nursery is 1 mile north of the Chillberg Road intersection.



CHRISTIANSON'S
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