

---

# GARDEN GAZETTE

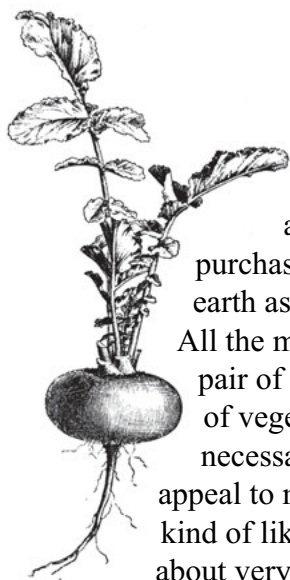
---

June - August 2010

John Christianson, Editor

## CHRISTIANSON'S Nursery & Greenhouse

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



### *Pop's Vegetable Garden*

As Pop (a contraction of Papa, our name of endearment for our Father) was selecting seed, he would be wearing his worn suit pants, an old white shirt with sleeves rolled up to show a deep tan, a brown Stetson hat and heavy leather boots—the boots being the only item purchased especially for working in the garden. He would smell of sweet pipe tobacco and garden earth as did the *Seattle Garden Center* back in the times when it was almost entirely a man's domain. All the men in the garden center were wearing their old clothes from their weekday work, not a pair of sweats or sneakers in sight, and many of them were here to buy new and improved strains of vegetable seeds along with vegetable starts and recommended garden chemicals considered necessary for a fine annual harvest of fruits and vegetables. There were no flowers in sight but the appeal to me was to see a part of Pop's world which was unavailable to me during his workweek – kind of like making myself very small and being unnoticed in a roomful of adults who were talking about very serious family and world affairs. This was not serious in the same way the death of a great aunt or a discussion about communism would be, but vegetable gardening was taken very seriously by my Pop. He leaned toward the scientific side of gardening and he would compare and improve his seed selection over the years and this was certainly the place to do that. The *Seattle Garden Center* is still in a small corner shop at the *Pike Place Market* and it was famous for cutting edge seed selection. To this day a visit to this garden center is like going back to my childhood. The building is turn of the century and the garden center moved in during 1943 following the occupancy of a shoe store. It had, and still does have, an uneven wood floor that smells of tung and linseed oil, and custom crafted seed bins which carry just about every variety of seed in commerce. Here we watched our father interact in an adult world rather than a father's world as he formulated his questions and made his decisions on seed selection. And then, on many evenings, from the day of the seed purchases until the night of the first frost, Pop would come home from work and change into his garden work clothes. After dinner he would go out to cultivate, plant, weed and harvest our half-acre vegetable garden. We would be in bed for a few hours of daylight during the gardening months as our bedtime was always 7:30 but while my sister and I were visiting and playing ourselves to sleep, we would hear Pop walk by our bedroom window several times during the evening to pick up necessary tools or supplies from the garage. He was most always whistling and sometimes he would tap a goodnight on our window. And, for some unexplainable reason, for two little girls, at that very moment, everything was right with the world.

**HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!**

Toni Christianson

*(This article first appeared in the June/July 2000 issue of the Gazette)*



## *Seventh Annual Rose Festival*

Saturday, June 19<sup>th</sup> 9 am – 6 pm Guest Speaker: **Ciscoe Morris**

- *Rose Display* 10 am - 5 pm ▪ **Tri-Valley Rose Society Plant Clinic** 10 am - 1 pm
- *Rose Garden Tour* with **John Christianson** (followed by light refreshments) 11:30 am
  - “*Easy-Care Roses*” with **Robyn Swesey** 1:00 pm
  - “*Roses in the Landscape*” **Ciscoe Morris** at 2:30 pm
  - *Rose Ice Cream Social in the Schoolhouse Garden* at 3:30 pm



### *Calling All Rosarians...*

As part of Christianson’s annual Rose Festival, the Tri-Valley Rose Society is once again hosting its Rose Display in our Schoolhouse and is extending an invitation to amateurs and experts alike to submit their roses to be judged in one of three categories: 1) Best in show 2) Best Fragrant Rose and 3) Best Floral Design incorporating perennials and roses. Winners will be announced by Ciscoe Morris in the afternoon and gift certificates will be awarded. Entries must be submitted by 9:30 am on June 19<sup>th</sup>. Call 466-3821 for more information.

### *The Conservatory’s Treasures*

A trip to Christianson’s often is a quick sprint to the perennial beds or to House 5 to select the perfect tomato plant, or to the Propagation House to select from the myriad number of geraniums in countless shades of pink, coral and orange. *Primrose*, too, is often the intended destination as you search for that special gift for the pampered gardener in your life. But tucked behind our Garden Store is another unique corner—the Conservatory. Next time you visit take the time to meander through its narrow winding aisles flanked by orchids, tropical Birds of Paradise and ficus trees. Overhead hang exotic ferns, Hoyas and Clerodendrons. All these plants serve as the backdrop for wonderful “finds” that no gardener should be without. There is the vast array of orchid pots, terracotta and AW pottery known for its excellent glazes and frost-proof qualities. Rain chains are suspended from above showing their coppery glow and depicting how they perform in their outdoor environment to channel water to a basin or rain barrel. Plant dollies are available in different sizes and styles to elevate your plant and enable you to move them with ease. Decorative plant feet serve a similar purpose in that they raise your pot off the ground and provide air circulation and prevent staining of your deck or porch. Amidst these treasures there is the sound of cascading water from indoor fountains. Overhead are assorted hummingbird feeders to attract these winged visitors to the garden and diverse garden ornaments that shelter votives perfect for an evening gathering. These are but a few of the many treasures harbored in this quiet corner of the Nursery. On your next visit set aside a few minutes to explore this tropical haven.



### *How Sweet it is...*

When planning your garden be sure to make room for two showy shrubs whose fragrant blooms are welcome additions to the summertime parade of plants. *Clethra alnifolia*, commonly referred to as Summersweet, is native to the eastern United States and is found in moist woodlands. This upright, deciduous shrub ranges from 5 to 8 feet and has dense green foliage that turns golden in the fall. Its nicely fragrant white flowers are held in racemes that bloom in July and August on the current season’s growth. *Clethra* prefers moist, acidic soil with organic matter and is tolerant of full sun or partial shade. Available cultivars include ‘Hummingbird’ known for its compact growth and heavy flowering, ‘Pink Spire’ which sports rose-colored buds that open to light pink and ‘Ruby Spice’ an award-winning selection recognized for its red buds that open to pink showcased against green, glossy foliage. *Itea virginica*, known as Sweetspire, is another shrub that satisfies the gardener looking for a plant that has neat foliage, fragrant flowers, fall color and is easy to grow. Like *Clethra*, *Itea* is an East Coast native that is found along stream banks in moist soil. Here in the Pacific Northwest *Itea* grows in average, medium to wet soil in full sun to part shade. Popular cultivars include ‘Henry’s Garnet’ with 6” long spikes of lightly fragrant white flowers that bloom in June and July. At maturity it reaches 3’ – 4’ tall. Its green foliage with coppery new growth turns bright red in the fall adding to autumn’s palette. Another selection is ‘Little Henry’ with shorter flower spikes and brilliant red to purple autumn color. ‘Little Henry’ grows 3’ by 3’ and is known for its dense, compact habit and competes with the burning bush (*euonymus alata*) for its late fall display. For nature enthusiasts either of these shrubs would be welcome additions as they attract both birds and butterflies.

# Christianson's Summer Calendar

(reservations required, \$5 per class unless otherwise noted)

## Invincible Vines

Saturday, June 5 11:00 – noon complimentary

This program presented by **Sally Isaïou** from *T & L Nursery* will introduce you to the wide array of flowering vines focusing on shade-loving akebias, fragrant loniceras, clematis and dramatic climbing hydrangeas.

## Water Gardens

Saturday, June 12 11:00 am – noon complimentary

There is something magical about a water garden and **Kathy** and **Scott Ramin** of *Still Waters Aquatic Nursery* will share with you the many plants that can make this magic happen. Learn how to establish and maintain plants to provide years of pleasure from your backyard pond.

## Children in the Garden Series

Saturday, June 12 1:00 – 2:30 pm \$10

In this make-and-take class children will learn how to plant and care for a **terrarium**. All materials will be provided and children may select from a wide array of tropical plants. This would make a perfect gift for Father's Day which is only a week away!

## Concrete Cast Leaf Design

Saturday, June 26 1:00 – 4:00 pm \$35

Learn the art of making concrete cast leaves using actual leaves and cement, as instructor **Debbie Pigman** guides you through the process with a brief lecture and lots of hands on time and tips for success. These unique leaves can be used in many ways: a bird bath, yard art, serving dish or as a simple home decoration, just to name a few. This make-and-take class will provide participants with the knowledge and skills to make many more.

## Children in the Garden- Leap Frog

Saturday, July 3 10:00 am – noon

This nature craft program is geared for children ages 5 to 10. Participants will have the chance to explore the nursery, meet and greet frogs and toads, build a toad abode and fashion origami frogs. Hurry and enroll your child today!

## It's Blueberry Time

Saturday, July 10 1:00 – 2:00 pm

**Matt Groff**, owner of *Sound Landscape Blueberry Farm*, will share with you his years of experience raising blueberries in Skagit Valley. Join Matt for this Q and A session to find out which varieties are best suited for this region and which ones will serve your needs. Join us in our "blueberry patch" for a fun and informative program.

## Attracting Birds to the Garden

Saturday, July 17 11:00 am – noon

This slide illustrated talk covers all aspects of attracting birds to the garden. Join **Bob Barca** from *Hummingbird Hill* as he instructs you on general garden practices, water sources, feeders, landscape design, and specific plants recommended for *birdscaping*.

## Bamboo—the Long and Short of It

Saturday, July 24 11:00 am – noon

Let **Eric Andrews** take the fear out of growing bamboo—one of the most exciting yet misunderstood plants in the world. Eric will demystify the behavior and cultivation of the "King of Grasses" and open your eyes to its versatility and potential in your landscape.

## Hypertufa

Saturday, July 31 or Saturday, August 21  
10:00 am – 1:00 pm \$35

**Kathy Hirdler** of *Floribunda Designs* is our guest artist who will explore with you the world of hypertufa. Each participant will complete a hypertufa trough that once cured will make a rustic container to showcase herbs and succulents. Sign up early for this popular class!

## Weed...Be Gone!

Saturday, August 7 11:00 am – noon

It's August and about the time gardeners everywhere are overwhelmed by the weeds that seem to be winning the race. **Ani Gurnee** of *Morning Light Design*, will tackle this challenge to rid gardens of the seemingly invincible weeds. By applying sound garden principles you will resolve your dilemma organically and achieve success in your garden.

## Designer Stepping Stones

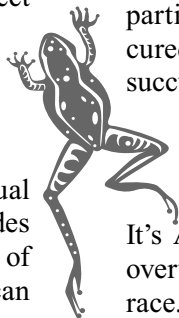
Saturday, August 14 1:00 – 4:00 pm \$35

Mosaic artist **Constance Funk** will instruct you in this fun-filled make-and-take-class where you will design your own stepping stone. The "frosting" technique employed allows you to create your own design utilizing tiles and beads. Each student will complete one stepping stone that incorporates all the principles needed to venture out on your own.

## Children in the Garden Series

Saturday, August 28 10:00 am – noon

Children will be introduced to miniature trees, groundcovers and succulents that can be used to create miniature gardens. Each child will complete a miniature garden in this make-and-take class.



# Summer Specials

June 1 - 13

## Vines

vigorous growing akebia, clematis, honeysuckle, jasmine, wisteria, and much more - 20% off

June 14 - 24

## Perennial Sale

our best selection of perennials ever thousands of plants for sun or shade 4 inch or 1 gallon sizes 20% off

July 1 - 5

## Annual 40% Off Sale

hanging baskets featuring geraniums, impatiens, petunias, fuchsias, lobelia and more also annuals in packs as well as 2 & 4-inch

July 19 - Aug 1

## Summer Herbs

basil, lavender, oregano, sage, rosemary and thyme 20% off

August 23 - 31

## Summer Heather

hardy blooming plants in a variety of colors 20% off

June 11 - 17

## Japanese Maples

upright and laceleaf varieties from 1 gallon to 7' tall 20% off

June 25 - 30

## "Lemon" Sale

ugly plants with beautiful futures nursery seconds at greatly reduced prices includes perennials, shrubs and trees priced to sell—up to 70% off

July 6 - 18

## Hydrangeas

our huge selection of summer blooming favorites - includes 'hortensias' and 'lacecaps,' oak leaf and Peegee tree hydrangeas - 20% off

August 2 - 22

## Outdoor Containers

our huge selection of small to very large glazed and terra cotta outdoor containers - 20% off

August 23 - 31

## Water Plants

water lilies, floating plants, iris and more 30% off

# CLASSES & EVENTS

## Climbing Vines

June 5 11:00 am

## Water Gardens

June 12 11:00 am

## Terrariums

June 12 1:00 pm

## Rose Festival

June 19 9:00 am

## Concrete Leaf Design

June 26 1:00 pm

## Children in the Garden

July 3 10:00 am

## Blueberries

July 10 1:00 pm

## Attracting Birds to the Garden

July 17 11:00 am

## Bamboo

July 24 11:00 am

## Hypertufa

July 31 or August 21 10:00 am

## Weed Control

August 7 11:00 am

## Stepping Stones

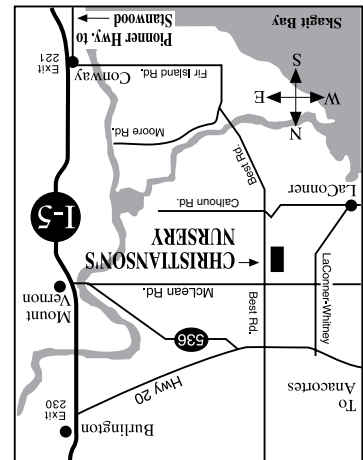
August 14 1:00 pm

## Children in the Garden

August 28 10:00 am

Weekly Radio Broadcast  
The Garden Show  
Sunday Mornings  
With John & Mike  
AM 660 KAPS • 9:30 am

From Bellingham: Take exit #230, 5 miles West on Hwy 20 to Best Road, 2 miles South on Best Road. From Everett: Take exit #221, 8.5 miles West on Fir Island Road to Best Road, 1 mile North on Best Road past Chilberg/Cathoun Road.



360-466-3821 • 1-800-585-8200

If your address label is not correct, please call us and let us know. Thanks!

**CHRISTIANSON'S**  
Nursery & Greenhouse  
15806 Best Road • Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
www.christiansonnursery.com

PRRST STD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
SAM INC