

GARDEN GAZETTE

Autumn 2017

Toni Christianson, Editor

CHRISTIANSON'S Nursery & Greenhouse

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

A Celebration!

'Respy! sower cream, brown shooger, rasderrys, vanilla' (with a cautionary last concern written at the bottom)... **'Don't throw away!'** was the note Nora, our seven year old granddaughter, had written to me this year on a hot July day right before she left for home. The note written in very bold, Sharpie letters on a paper towel was a reminder of the custom dessert she had just prepared. She was visiting to help harvest what was ripe in our garden and it's well known around here that if there are any ripe berries that is where we'll find her. She had picked a small bucket of fall bearing rasderrys and had come into the house to make dessert. She liked it so much she wanted to remember how to make it and so she wrote it down to leave with me for the next small bucket of rasderrys she might pick in the future.

John and I always look forward to the days our grandchildren visit to help harvest what's ready to eat in our garden. This particular day stands out in my mind because it made me realize how much more help I need in our garden with the passing years. I had to ask our daughter Emma to pick the sweet peas because by late summer they are too tall for me to pick. I've used a step ladder before but I no longer trust myself on a ladder on uneven ground. She also had to pick the figs because the tree is growing on a bank and picking them makes me dizzy and she also picked the raspberries that were too tall for the kids to pick and growing in rows I'm too wide to slip between anymore. I do realize this wideness is the only variable I have any control over and I do love raspberries.

Last year we continued the fun by celebrating our last and largest harvest of the season in mid-October. We picked all the apples, being careful to sort them according to use; apples to eat, dry, and bake right away, small lunch box apples that will last through December and less than perfect apples for apple cider pressing and freezing for the coming months. We threw the culls over the fence to the sheep and chickens

and everything else went into the compost pile. This hungry harvest crew had to be fed so I prepared what we have since called our 'Harvest Dinner' made especially for that day. We had a bone-in ham served with scandalous scalloped potatoes using my Dad's famous and easy to make recipe which includes lots of butter and cream. The richness of the potatoes was offset by a green salad made with a combination of seven raw vegetables, some dug or picked from our veggie garden that day. The decadence of the potatoes and ham is the reason we serve it only on Easter Sunday, but now, we'll also be having it during our October harvest.

I have been thinking about what makes a tradition a tradition. I decided only three rules apply; the event must happen at the same time each year, the same menu must be served and everyone involved must have a great time and really look forward to celebrating the event the next year. Our new Harvest Celebration qualifies in every way and will become a new tradition in our family. In the meantime, Nora's Respy! will stay on the fridge door for a few more weeks and then it will go into my drawer of family treasures. This is my drawer of happy memories and I must say my life is very, very good!

Toni Christianson



Fresh Cider Pressing,
Saturday, October 7th
from 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.
complimentary

Visit our "Best in Skagit" Nursery for fresh pressed cider made from a varietal mix of our own organic apples and homemade molasses cookies (there's no better combination) and then go on to touring neighboring farms, including Hedlin's Farms and Gordon's Pumpkins, during the Festival of Family Farms weekend celebration.

Christianson's Holiday Open House and Art's Alive! Celebration



Friday Evening, November 3

Wine & French Crepes
complimentary
Holiday Open House
Art's Alive!
5:00 – 8:00 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday, November 4 – 5

Holiday Open House
Art's Alive!
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

This November weekend has become a popular highlight of Skagit Valley's holiday season. To celebrate the beginning of the Holiday Season and the Art's Alive! weekend, the Nursery will be open until 8 p.m. on Friday night, November 3rd. Twinkle lights, lanterns and luminaries will light the walkways as you stroll from the Garden Store to Primrose, and through the courtyard to the greenhouses and Conservatory.

Friday Evening, November 3, 5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

In keeping with our yearly tradition, this Friday evening marks the start of our Holiday Open House. As always, our Primrose gift and antique shop will be adorned from floor to ceiling, sparkling with holiday cheer. For all of us - our guests and our staff alike - opening the doors of Primrose for her holiday unveiling is truly a joyous experience and we hope you can join us for this memorable evening!

Friday will also be an evening of art exploration as we host a wonderful array of visual and culinary artists as part of the Art's Alive! celebration happening throughout the La Conner area. We are delighted to announce that this year our Friday evening event will be catered by **The Crepes Guy** who will be serving French crepes sourced with local ingredients from Skagit Valley.

Saturday and Sunday, November 4 & 5, 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

The Holiday Open House and Art's Alive! celebration continues throughout the weekend. Our Garden Store, with its old Tillinghast seed counters and cubbies, will be dressed in its holiday best. Our Conservatory will be filled with garden antiques, gifts for gardeners, pottery, and holiday trees decorated with rustic and whimsical ornaments. As always, Primrose will be a wonderland of ideas for holiday decorating, gift giving and entertaining. With a theme of peace and wisdom, we hope to create an experience that leaves our guests feeling inspired and uplifted.

Our Art's Alive! festivities continue throughout the weekend as well. Many of our visual and culinary artists will be doing live demonstrations and selling their creations. The Nursery's greenhouses and beautiful grounds provide a unique venue for our featured artists. Every artist location will be intimate enough that you can have artful discussions with each artist about their backstory and artistic process. With arts and crafts ranging from painting to jewelry, sculpture to prints, and textiles to chocolates and crepes, this special event provides more artists an opportunity to exhibit their work.

Gather your friends and family and please join us for this festive weekend filled with twinkle lights, holiday inspiration, local artists, and abundant good cheer!

Featured Artists and Other Special Offerings

Beach Castle Sweets, Artisan Chocolates
Bob Bowling Rustics, Rustic Garden Art
Connie Funk, Mosaics
Fat Dragonfly, Fine Art & Prints
Isola Handmade Originals, Fiber Artist
Julie Schei, Jewelry Artist
Klt:works, Handmade Designs for Home
Laura Campbell, Rosehip Wreaths
Suzi's Glass Studio, Fused Glass Panels
Tracy Schaffer, Watercolor
Verso Jewelry, Original Metalsmithing

Musicians **Laurel Bliss** and **John Clark** will play old-time Cajun and bluegrass music on Saturday from noon – 2:00 p.m.

Apple Cider will be offered fresh from our antique cider press along with homemade molasses cookies on Saturday from noon – 2:00 p.m.

Crepes Guy, Sweet and Savory French crepes sourced from local ingredients, Saturday and Sunday.

Christianson's Autumn Class Calendar

Digging, Dividing and Storing Dahlias

Saturday, October 21 11 a.m. - noon
reservations required class fee: \$8

Dahlias rarely fail to produce an ample supply of new and high-quality tubers when properly divided and stored or overwintered. If you desire to learn quick and reliable ways to expand your dahlia collection from year to year, **John and Kathy Willson** will teach you how to dig, divide and overwinter your dahlias. Special emphasis in this workshop will be given to methods for retaining seasonal plant vigor and health.



Fall Color Walk with John Christianson

Saturday, October 21 1 - 2 p.m.
reservations requested complimentary

John Christianson takes gardeners 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.



Principles of Aesthetic Pruning in Japanese Gardens

Saturday, October 28 11 a.m. - noon
reservations required class fee: \$8

Plants play various specific roles in a Japanese garden. Over many centuries pruning styles have been developed to showcase the essential qualities of plants and trees. This class is an introduction to the fundamental principles of the aesthetic pruning tradition. Join instructor, **Hans Wressnigg**, and bring along your hand pruners for practicing various cutting techniques.

Japanese-inspired Gardens for Small Spaces

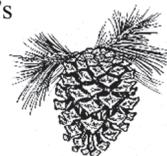
Saturday, November 11 11 a.m. - noon
reservations required class fee: \$8

The appeal of Japanese garden design lies in its adaptability to spaces of any size. With shrinking living spaces in modern cities and towns the ancient Japanese courtyard garden style (Tsuboniwa) is experiencing a revival throughout the world. Join **Hans Wressnigg** and learn how to identify and develop tsuboniwa spaces in your garden.

Conifer Walk with John Christianson

Saturday, November 11 1 - 2 p.m.
reservations requested complimentary

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.



Impressionistic Flower and Garden Photography

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

Inspired by the nineteenth Century French impressionist painters, more and more garden photographers are discovering they can use their cameras and smartphones as a "digital paintbrush." These "painterly" techniques are surprisingly easy to learn. Your instructors **John and Kathy Willson** will show you how to photograph flowers in ways you have never imagined.

Moong and Masur Dal and Parsnip and Pear Cream Soup

Saturday, December 2 11 a.m. - noon
reservations required class fee: \$15

The red and yellow lentils cook quickly while you make a flavor base of cumin, tomatoes, ginger and a little something spicy. Culinary instructor **Suzanne Butler** puts them together with bright green spinach to make a beautiful winter soup that tastes complex but is simple to make. Parsnips and pears come together in a velvety, cream soup with delicate but unmistakable flavors that offer comfort as well as elegance. This soup is a perfect introduction to parsnips for the uninitiated. Both soups are welcome additions to fall and winter menus.



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

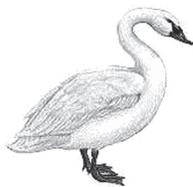
Christianson's Autumn Class Calendar - continued

Swans of the Skagit

December 2 1 – 2:00 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 9 1 – 2:00 p.m.

reservations required class fee: \$8

Vast 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!

Winter Interest in the Garden

Saturday, December 9 11 a.m. – noon

reservations required class fee: \$8

U.W. Graduate in Botany, local radio and television personality, business consultant and long-time Nurseryman, **Scott Conner** teaches Winter Interest in the Garden at the Schoolhouse. We are blessed to live in the PNW and have, in our opinion, the mildest year-round climate. Sure, spring is nice and summers are colorful, fall color is great, but we don't have to stop there. There are MANY wonderful plants that shine and look great during our shortest days. Let us explore just a few of our favorite year-round plants that show off their glory in the winter.

Stay in Touch!

For current information at the Nursery, visit our social media sites:

Online: www.ChristiansonsNursery.com

Facebook@ChristiansonsNursery

Instagram@ChristiansonsNursery

Pinterest.com/Christiansonpr

Pinterest.com/PrimroseGifts

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

“Ask John!”

Q: Hi John, I purchased the ‘Gentle Hermione’ David Austen Rose about a year ago. She bloomed beautifully early this season and is blooming again only with fewer blossoms. The bush has also produced a few very long canes. My question: I am wondering if I should cut back the non-blooming canes to a similar height as those that are or have produced blossoms.

-Louise, Orcas Island, WA

A: Hello Louise, This rose is not grafted but is growing on its own roots, even though some canes are taller and arching they are not grafted on a different stock. You have three good options:

- 1.) Cut back the tall canes by a third to maintain the shape and balance of the plant.
- 2.) Peg it! Depending on the size of your garden, you could peg the long canes to the ground on both sides of the rose bush to create a rose hedge. Next year you would have a flowering plant three times as wide as your present ‘Gentle Hermione’.
- 3.) Do nothing-the tall canes will still flower next year.

*Wishing you all the best,
John Christianson*

*22nd Annual Holiday Tea
& Visit with Father & Mother Christmas
Saturday, November 25*

Holiday Tea

We extend our appreciation to customers with a complimentary Holiday Tea to celebrate the upcoming Holiday Season. Bring your family and friends to enjoy tea, scones, assorted sandwiches, chocolates and desserts. Our 1888 Schoolhouse will be decorated in a delightful candlelit 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.

Maximum of 36 guests per session: 12:00 p.m., 1:15 p.m., 2:30 p.m. and 3:45 p.m.

Reservations are required. Donations will benefit the La Conner Regional Library Foundation.



Father & Mother Christmas Arrive!

They are excited to greet children of all ages and listen to their Christmas wishes while sitting with them in an antique red clipper sleigh nestled in a wooded setting in our warm greenhouse. Bring your cameras to take your own keepsake photos. 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Holiday Wreath-Making Classes

Deck the halls by using our wreath-making machines to create a personalized decoration with inspiring help from designers **Karen Harper** and **Laura Campbell**. We provide a stunning array of fresh greens and berries (sold by the pound) or 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.

Maximum of 7 students per class: 11:00 a.m., noon, 1:00 p.m., 2:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. Can't make class? Reserve time to use our machines at your leisure from November 27 to December 24.

Reservations required. Class fee: \$8

11:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

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

www.ChristiansonsNursery.com

*Mark Your Calendars!
Northwest Flower and Garden Show*



The Seattle Northwest Flower & Garden Show's 30th anniversary theme is "Garden Party", and it kicks off on February 7 – 11, 2018. Tickets will be available for purchase in our Garden Store starting December 15 (ticket prices are \$19 for early bird tickets and \$24 during the dates of the show).

Gather your friends and family to ride the Flower Bus and enjoy going to the show without the stress of driving and parking. The Flower Buses leave the Nursery on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, February 7, 8, and 9, at 8:30 am and return at approximately 6:00 pm. The cost of a combination show ticket and bus ride is \$56. For reservations on the Flower Bus, call the Nursery at 360-466-3821.

October – December Specials

Through October 19

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 17 – 30

Camellias

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

October 20 – 31

Hedging Sale

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

November 1 - 16

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 and larger
20% off

Christmas Hellebore (Hellebore niger)

20% off

Weekly Radio Broadcast

The Garden Show

Sunday Mornings with John & Mike AM 660 KAPS
& 102.1 FM KAPS 10:30 a.m.

CLASSES & EVENTS

Saturday, October 21

Digging, Dividing and Storing Dahlias 11 a.m. – noon
Fall Color Walk 1 – 2 p.m.

Saturday, October 28

Principles of Aesthetic Pruning in Japanese Gardens 11 a.m. - noon

November 3, 4 & 5

Holiday Open House & La Conner's Art's Alive!

Friday Evening- Complimentary Wine &

French Crepes 5 - 8 p.m.

Saturday and Sunday- Primrose and Garden Store Open House,

Visual, Structural, Fiber and Culinary Artists 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Apple Cider Pressing noon – 2 p.m. (Saturday only)

Saturday, November 11

Japanese-inspired Gardens for Small Spaces 11 a.m. – noon

Conifer Walk 1 - 2 p.m.

Saturday, November 18

Impressionistic Flower and Garden Photography 11 a.m. – noon

Saturday, November 25

Arrival of Father & Mother Christmas 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Holiday Wreath-making Classes 11 a.m. – 4 p.m.

22nd Annual Holiday Tea noon – 5 p.m.

November 27 - December 24

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

Saturday, December 2

Moong and Masur Dal & Parsnip and Pear Cream Soup

11 a.m. – noon

Swans of the Skagit 1 – 2 p.m.

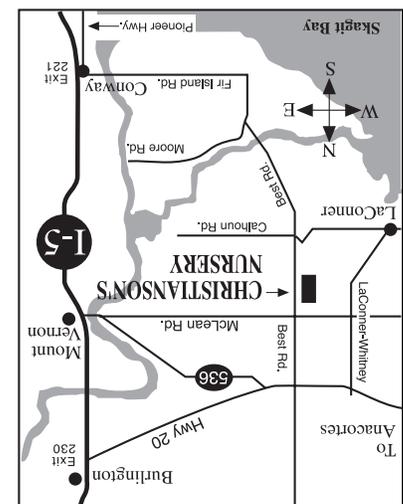
Saturday, December 9

Winter Interest in the Garden 11 a.m. – noon

Snow Geese of the Skagit 1 – 2 p.m.

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

From Bellingham: Take Exit 230. Go 5 miles west on Hwy 20 to Best Road. Turn south, go 2 miles on Best Road, we're just past the round-about.
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.



CHRISTIANSON'S
Nursery & Greenhouse
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www.christiansonsnursery.com
360-466-3821 • 1-800-585-8200