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# GARDEN GAZETTE

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February - March 2011

John Christianson, Editor

## CHRISTIANSON'S Nursery & Greenhouse

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

*It's Time for Spring!*

It is that time of year again. Time to enjoy spring indoors before it arrives outdoors. And we are busy building and designing a nursery and display garden to be set-up on the floor of the Washington State Convention Center. John and I are deep into our discussions of the best look, best plants, best placement and best use of recycled materials as we dive into a project that takes us a year to plan and pretty much dominates our conversations for the better part of the two months leading up to the show. It takes a lot of thought and compromise between the two of us and we would call it hard work except for the fact that we are having so much fun.

The theme of this year's show is **Once Upon A Time: Spectacular Gardens with Stories to Tell** and the dates are February 23 - 27, 2011. Our garden tells the story of a family nursery with owners so enthusiastic about plants and gardens that some people would call them eccentric.

Hope to see you there!

### NORTHWEST FLOWER & GARDEN SHOW

*A Day Well Spent*

Once upon a time plants were started from seeds or cuttings, grown on in pots or open fields and sold to customers at the same location. These small family nurseries took on a easy charm with left over plants, bulbs, trees and shrubs sometimes taking root wherever they were last set down. Rows of trees could become permanent windbreaks and lined out shrubs could turn into fences. Seasons influenced the family's life with most of spring taken up with selling plants and the rest of the year with plant production in the growing fields surrounding the nursery.



- Toni Christianson

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## *A Fascination for Hellebores*

Christianson's Fifth Annual Winter Festival

March 4<sup>th</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup>

with Guest Speaker Marianne Binetti

Saturday, March 5, 2011 at 1:00 pm

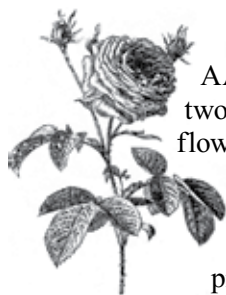


Our Guest Speaker for our tribute to Winter's gift to gardeners—the *hellebore*— is noted writer and syndicated columnist **Marianne Binetti**. Well-known in the Pacific Northwest for her book **Best Garden Plants for Washington and Oregon**, Marianne is also recognized for her television and radio appearances, and is a frequent guest lecturer. This year's topic "Wonders of the Winter Garden" spotlights new varieties of this shade-loving perennial and its companion plants both of which will infuse your winter garden with perpetual color.

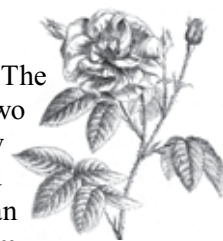
### *Abloom with Color*

Winter does not need to be limited to the silhouettes of leafless trees and leaf-strewn beds where perennials once thrived. The variety of berrying shrubs (also enjoyed by our birds) and hardy perennials can brighten up your landscape and add color to your winter garden. Take time to stroll through the Nursery and see plants that play a major role providing color and fragrance to your landscape: Camellia japonica; Corylus avellana (contorted filbert); Crocus; Daffodils; Daphne odora; Edgeworthia (Chinese Paper Bush); Hamamelis (Witch Hazel); Erica carnea (Heath); Fothergilla major (Mountain Witchalder); Galanthus (Snow drops); Garrya elliptica (Silk Tassel Bush); Helleborus orientalis; Leucojum (Giant snowflakes); Sarcococca (Sweet Box); Mahonia 'Charity'; Tulipa greigii (Rock Garden Tulips) and Viburnum bodnantense 'Dawn.' - Joanne Romann

### *All-America Rose Winners for 2011*



AARS winning roses represent all of the characteristics today's gardener desires in a plant. The two winners for 2011 are **Dick Clark**, a grandiflora with a chameleon-like trait with no two flowers exactly the same, and **Walking on Sunshine**, an excellent disease-resistant yellow floribunda. Dick Clark's buds are black-red and open to show off swirls of cream, edged with cherry pink blushing to burgundy. Its long stems bearing shiny green leaves makes it an exciting addition to one's rose garden. Walking on Sunshine is noted for its excellent bloom production, dark green foliage and ruffly blooms which exude a mild anise fragrance.



### *Flower Buses to the Northwest Flower & Garden Show*

Our chartered Buses will be leaving the Nursery on the first three days of the Northwest Flower and Garden Show, February 23, 24 and 25 at 8:30 am and returning to the Nursery at approximately 6:00 pm. Enjoy the comfort of a chauffeured ride in the company of other avid gardeners! This year's show theme is **Once Upon a Time – Spectacular Gardens with Stories to Tell**. Plan to make Christianson's Display Garden *A Day Well Spent* the first stop on this exciting adventure. The cost of a combination show ticket and bus ride is \$49. Don't be left behind –call today to make your reservation!

### *Third Annual Photography Contest*



With our Fifth Annual Winter Festival, *A Fascination for Hellebores*, we are once again sponsoring a Winter Gardens Photography Contest. Amateurs as well as professionals are encouraged to participate by submitting up to two digital images of previously unpublished images in one of two categories: 1) artistic (in-camera) impression of a winter garden scene or a single plant utilizing close-up, multiple exposure or special focus techniques and/or 2) an artistic (computer) enhanced impression. Entries should be 5 x 7 photos mounted on black mat board with a 2 or 3 inch border. Entry forms, available at the Nursery or by emailing [chrisny@fidalgo.net](mailto:chrisny@fidalgo.net), should be affixed to the back of each photo submitted. Entries must be received by Friday, February 25, 2011. Submittals to Christianson's Winter Gardens Photography Contest will be professionally judged by Scott Terrell, Photography Editor for the Skagit Valley Herald. Prizes will be awarded to first, second and third place winners. Christianson's Nursery reserves the right to use the images in future publications with proper permission and acknowledgement. All entries will be exhibited in our Schoolhouse the weekend of our Hellebore Festival: March 4 – 6 and can be viewed during Nursery hours.

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## Christianson's Calendar

### *Luring the Mason Bee*

Saturday, February 5 11:00 am  
\$5 reservations required

Mason Bee expert **Dave Hunter** from Woodinville will be our guest speaker at the Nursery to discuss the valuable service mason bees provide to our gardens. What started as a hobby some 20 years ago has become a unique business know as "Crown Bees," dedicated to helping gardeners and orchardists alike learn more about one of nature's best non-aggressive pollinators. Plan to attend this informative lecture that covers the current pollination challenge and how you can make a difference. Learn how to identify different types of bees and how to raise mason bees.

### *Pruning Basics with Ani Gurnee*

Saturday, February 12 11:00 am – 1:15pm  
\$5 reservations required

**Ani Gurnee** of *Aulos Design* is back with this informative program that deals with the basics of pruning roses from hybrid teas to climbers. The first hour of this demonstration will be devoted to practical instruction to make you an accomplished pruner. The second hour of this program will be open to questions as well as a demonstration on how to prune select trees and shrubs. Register today for this always popular program.

### *Pruning Fruit Trees & Espalier*

Saturday, February 19 11:00am – 1:15pm  
\$5 reservations required

**Ani Gurnee** continues her pruning workshops with this two-part program. The first session will deal with fruit trees and their particular needs. The second half of the program will be dedicated to the fine art of espalier, quintessential French gardening that combines both form and function to make fruit trees as aesthetic as they are productive.

### *Photographing Skagit Valley's Spring Garden Color*

Saturday, February 26 11:00 am  
\$5 reservations required

**Kathy and John Willson**, award-winning photographers, formerly with Seattle's *Museum of Flight*, have timed this one-hour workshop to tie in with the Northwest Flower and Garden Show. Now that the show is coming to a close it is the perfect time to get out in the garden and capture the beauty that surrounds us in the Pacific Northwest. John and Kathy know the Valley's countless fields and farms and will give you many helpful tips on how to photograph Skagit's celebrated scenery.

### *Wonders of the Winter Garden*

Saturday, March 5 1:00 pm  
(See preceding page: *A Fascination for Hellebores*)

### *Think Veggies!*

Saturday, March 12 11:00 am  
\$5 reservations required

Arugula pesto, garlic bruschetta, sesame snow peas in apricot sauce ... these savory dishes all begin with the versatile vegetables that can get an early start in the Pacific Northwest. Join **Bob Hart**, well-known to those living in this area, for the vegetable trials he conducts at *La Conner Flats* and learn from the expert which varieties will perform best for you in our temperate climate.

### *Success with Rhododendrons*

Saturday, March 19 11:00  
\$5 reservations required

The range of rhododendrons from species varieties to hybrids is extensive. In this program learn all about this outstanding shrub that performs throughout our four seasons as an independent specimen, a backdrop for perennials or in a mass planting. Their color range is spectacular –yellow, pink, red, purple, blue and colors in between. Their versatility and resilience make them a must for every garden. Come learn from the experts how to grow and care for your rhododendrons!

### *Starting, Planting & Staking Dahlias*

Saturday March 26 11:00 am  
\$5 reservations required

**John and Kathy Willson**, owners of the *Swede Hill Dahlia Sunflower Farm* on Whidbey Island, are our chief resource in the area of dahlia care and culture. In this workshop they will provide you with all the information needed for getting your dahlias off to a good start. Topics will include choosing, jumpstarting and planting out dahlia tubers. By attending this workshop you are promised the reward of showy blooms in a rainbow of stunning colors and styles!

### *Spring Walk with John Christianson*

Saturday, March 26 1:00 pm

Begin the first garden tour of 2011 with **John Christianson** as your guide, leading you through the 11-acre garden, *La Conner Flats*. Meet at our 1888 Schoolhouse and see our garden as it awakes from winter and starts to show off its many treasures. From there stroll with John as he points out trees and shrubs and emerging bulbs that await you on this fun and informative tour.

## Early Spring Specials

February 1 - 13

### Blooming Witch Hazel

our winter favorites

### Heather

hundreds of winter and spring flowering plants  
20% off

February 14 - 28

### Roses

our biggest Rose Sale of the year!  
includes the new 2011 All-America Rose selections, antique, English, climbing and drought tolerant rugosa roses  
20% off

March 1 - 13

### Bare Root

the best selection of the year  
fruit, flowering and shade trees, berries, lilacs and hydrangeas  
20% off already low bare root prices

March 14 - 31

### Camellia

Winter and Spring flowering beauties – many in bloom!  
20% off

April 1 - 14

### Magnolia

hundreds of beautiful blooming trees with white, pink, purple or yellow flowers  
20% off

Visit us at the  
**NORTHWEST  
FLOWER & GARDEN  
SHOW**  
February 23-27, 2011

## CLASSES & EVENTS

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February 5 11:00 am

### Pruning Basics with Ani Gurnee

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### Pruning Fruit Trees and Espalier

February 19 11:00 am

### Northwest Flower & Garden Show

February 23 - 27

### Photographing Spring Gardens

February 26 11:00 am

### A Fascination for Hellebores Wonders of the Winter Garden

March 5 1:00 pm

### Think Veggies!

March 12 11:00 am

### Success with Rhododendrons

March 19 11:00 am

### Dahlias Made Easy

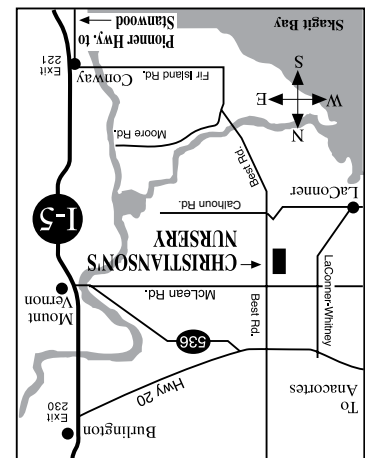
March 26 11:00 am

### Spring Walk

March 26 1:00 pm

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

Spring Hours  
Beginning March 1st  
Daily 9:00 to 6:00 pm

**CHRISTIANSON'S**  
Nursery & Greenhouse  
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www.christiansonsnursery.com

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