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# GARDEN GAZETTE

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October – December 2014

John Christianson, *Editor*

## CHRISTIANSON'S Nursery & Greenhouse

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

### *Let Heaven and Nature Sing*

Knowing we would like Emma to grow up with an appreciation of the larger world, I have again been thinking about what has to happen before a child can recognize not only the beauty of a sunset but also have that feeling of wonder and awe that floods one's senses with the question of, "How does this happen and from where does all this worldly beauty come?" An age old question that continues to have as much power over our emotions and senses as it did when we were first experiencing it. I remember our parents pointing out beautiful things about the world by asking us to notice billowy white clouds racing across the sky or to notice the different parts that combined to make up the beauty of a dark purple bearded iris blooming against our back fence in the spring. Awareness of these sights added interest to my life but it was not until a clear, cold Christmas night when we were driving the long journey home from our grandparents' farm that I had that first rush of combined amazement and bewilderment about our world. We had had a deep snowfall the day before but Christmas day had dawned a beautiful sunny morning. As we left our grandparents' and darkness was upon us I was incredibly, and forever more, impressed by the beauty of the countryside. The evergreen and deciduous trees had developed slivers of icicles that, along with the crusty snow on the limbs of the fir trees, were sparkling in the light of the moon. They were the most beautiful Christmas trees I had ever seen but it was the moon that created an overwhelming sense of amazement within me. Not only was it lighting our pathway home and making the world a beautiful place, but it did not fall into the set of rules the world had taught me. It was refusing to move past us like the frosted trees and snow covered farmhouses were moving past us as we travelled down the road. It stayed where I could see it out the window on my side of the car. Occasionally it would move behind the car when we went around a curve but it would always return to my window. I remember consciously deciding to break the magical silence of this journey by asking my father why the moon was following us. I am sure he was trying to explain it in such a way that I could understand, but there are just those things that cannot be reduced to a five year old's comprehension and I remember I stopped listening to him when he started discussing the distance in miles the moon is from the earth, choosing to go back to the silent world of this exquisite night and my private thoughts. Even though I now understand why the moon seems not to move, that night contributed to my continued understanding that it is those events in our lives that we do not make happen and that we really have no control over that instill in us a reverence and passionate regard for the wonder of all that goes beyond knowledge and into faith. And, in the meantime, I know that is the direction we are going with our toddling daughter because she hurries her short little baby legs to the door whenever she senses we are going outdoors. Emma loves being out in the world. She loves the sun, she loves the rain, she loves the 'doggies' and the 'duckies', and she loves the feel of the wind on her face. It's a beginning and I know the feeling of reverence for the wonder of her life and the wonder of the world will come to her privately and in her own good time.

*Toni Christianson*

*Garden Gazette essay 1997*

# *Festival of Family Farms Fresh Cider Pressing*

*Saturday, October 4 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 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, drink some cider 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.

Additionally, we will be serving our fresh pressed apple cider along with complimentary molasses cookies during our Holiday Open House, November 1 & 2 and the day of our Holiday Tea, November 29. There is nothing better than the combination of homemade molasses cookies and fresh pressed cider...a wonderful Fall tradition.

## *Holiday Open House November 1 & 2*

Gather your friends and ring in the holidays with a special visit to our gift shop where you will find many wonderful ideas for entertaining, gift giving and decorating during this magical season. Our team of buyers, display artists and florists are planning a sublime Winter Wonderland as we hope to inspire your creativity and jump start your enthusiasm for the celebrations of Winter. 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, shelves or even firewood. 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. Additionally, the antique French white ironstone soup tureens appearing in so many magazines this last year will be on center stage. We purchased them from a friend in France who understands our look. Tureens in perfect condition can be used for serving hearty soups and stews and the rest will be planted with hyacinths, paperwhites and hellebores for holiday displays. These tureens are lovely for the 'Vintage by Nina' look that is so popular and, when not in use, they will add an old world look to your kitchen, dining room and even living room. We also have beautiful French floral antique quilts. Quilts such as these have moved out of the bedroom and into the living room where everyone can enjoy them. They can be thrown over the arm of the sofa, used as a partial slip cover over the seat and back of a chair or sofa or stacked in a cupboard or under a side table. Just being on display they add a sense of warmth and comfort to cold winter mornings and dark winter evenings.

Primrose will be closed October 27, 28 and 29 so we can decorate to our hearts' content. We may even paper the windows so guests will be completely surprised when we reopen for our Holiday Open House.

### **ART'S *Active!***

#### **November 1st & 2nd**

Festivities fill Christianson's on the first weekend in November: Many local artists display their works, this celebration of the Arts is held throughout the La Conner area. We'll have live music, cheese tastings and apple cider served from our antique cider press. Join us from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

#### **Artists on Display**

**Rochelle Anderson**, Vintage & Steampunk style jewelry

**Judy Sullivan**, oil and watercolor paintings, prints

**Laura Campbell**, rosehip wreaths

**and more...**

#### **Other Special Events**

Musicians **Laurel Bliss** and **John Clark** will play old-time Cajun and bluegrass music

**Samish Bay Cheese** offers tastings and specialty cheeses for sale

**Apple Cider** will be offered fresh from our antique cider press along with **homemade molasses cookies**

# Christianson's Autumn & Winter Calendar

## *Starting Your Vegetable Garden from Scratch*

Saturday, October 4 11 a.m. - noon  
reservations required class fee: \$8

Give your garden beds a huge jump start with some prep work in the fall. **Ani Gurnee** of *Aulos Design* will demonstrate the easiest and most fertile ways of getting rid of the weeds and invasive grasses to get your soil ready for spring planting. Dress for the weather as you see how she incorporates layered mulching under an easy-to-construct raised bed.

## *Beginning Bonsai Workshop*

Sunday, October 5 1 - 3:30 p.m.  
reservations required  
class fee: \$49 material fee: \$35

Learn hands-on basics of creating a beautiful bonsai from expert, **Tori Lenze**. Students will learn how to design and transplant a tree and how to use different tools for shaping. Class fees include all materials including bonsai pot, plant, soil and screening. Students bring small pruners, scissors and gloves. Additional tools and supplies available for purchase.



## *Digging, Dividing and Storing Dahlias*

Saturday, October 11 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.

## *Conifer Bonsai Workshop*

Sunday, October 12 1 - 3:30 p.m.  
reservations required  
class fee: \$49 material fee: \$35

Bonsai expert, **Tori Lenze** will teach a beginning level workshop encompassing the creation of a bonsai conifer. During the class, students learn the basics of transplanting and shaping for that species. All materials are included in the fee and students just need to bring small pruners, gloves and enthusiasm for this amazing art form.

## *Hedgerows & Habitats*

Saturday, October 18 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.

## *Permaculture Series: Front Yard Farming Turning Lawn Into Perennial Food*

Saturday, October 25 11 a.m. - noon  
reservations required class fee: \$8

Enjoy part one of three workshops - Fall/Winter/Spring - intended to transform your lawn area to a sustainable purpose by establishing edible tree guilds and food forest alternatives on a small or large scaled design. Learn surprisingly easy, well tested strategies to replace your lawn areas with nutritious, beautiful alternatives, from Certified Permaculture Designer **Nancy Chase** of *Shambala Farm and Edible Nursery* on Camano Island. By utilizing strategic combinations and concepts, you will provide a healthy, permanent perennial food source within your home-scape. Front yard farming is freedom!

## *Fall Color Walk with John Christianson*

Saturday, October 25 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 adjoining La Conner Flats Gardens. Make sure to dress for the weather and wear good shoes that can take the mud. Meet in front of the Schoolhouse.

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 & Winter Calendar - continued

## Winter Floral Arrangements

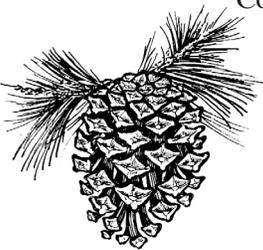
Saturday, November 8 11:00 a.m. - noon  
reservations required class fee: \$8

Come join **Cheryl Bensen** of *Christianson's Nursery* and **Andrew Pickens** as they combine their talents to create winter interest table tops for the upcoming holidays. Fresh greens and cuttings from the garden will be transformed into bouquets for any gathering.

## Conifer Walk with John Christianson

Saturday, November 8 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 adjoining La Conner Flats Gardens. Dress for the weather and wear good shoes for muddy spots.



## Rosehip Wreath-Making Workshop

Saturday, November 15 1 - 2:30 p.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 decorations. 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.

## Following the Flowers from Paris to Pompeii

Saturday, November 15 11 a.m. - noon  
reservations required class fee: \$8

Take a springtime tour through gardens of France and Italy with **Kathy Hirdler** of *Floribunda Designs*. From Paris to Pompeii and back again, see what caught the eye of this seasoned gardener as she visits some of southern Europe's renowned gardens and off beat beauty spots. Enjoy intimate peeks into the back streets of Italian hill



towns and the grand public spectacles of the Gardens of Versailles. Highlighted is a private tour of Claude Monet's garden on a misty morning in May.

## Japanese Garden Principles

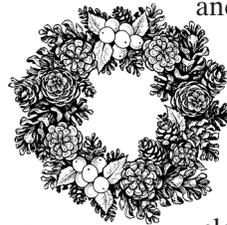
Saturday, November 22 11 a.m. - noon  
reservations required class fee: \$8

Creating a Japanese-inspired garden environment evokes feelings of serenity and peacefulness and requires a good understanding of core principles of Japanese garden aesthetics. Copying garden elements and basic layouts often leads to gardens that lack atmosphere and authenticity. Join **Hans Wressnigg** of *NIWA Japanese-inspired Landscapes* to gain an understanding of these principles and how to make them relevant in your garden environment.

## Holiday Wreath-Making with Karen Harper

Saturday, November 29 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.



## Swans of the Skagit

Saturday, December 6 10:30 a.m. - noon  
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** describe these amazing birds – the largest waterfowl in the world – and Skagit Valley's best places to view them. Jordan is the coordinator for Washington Swan Stewards, which is the local branch of The Trumpeter Swan Society. Make your reservations early; this was a wildly popular talk last year!

## Snow Geese of the Skagit

Saturday, December 6 1 - 2 p.m.  
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 history and current life challenges with wildlife biologist **Martha Jordan**, who is coordinator for Washington Swan Stewards, which is the local branch of The Trumpeter Swan Society. Make your reservations early!

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## *Holiday Tea and More November 29*

Saturday, November 29, is a special day at Christianson's Nursery and we hope you will be part of our festivities.

### *Nineteenth Annual Holiday Tea Noon - 5 p.m. reservations required*

John and Toni Christianson extend their appreciation to customers with this complimentary Holiday Tea to celebrate the start of the holiday season. Come enjoy tea, cider and assorted delicacies in our 1888 Schoolhouse, decorated with a forest theme, candlelight and the live music of auto harpist **Bob Harper** and violinist **Dennis Burkhardt**. We have four seatings; make your reservations today for what has become a Valley tradition.

*Donations will benefit Friendship House in Mount Vernon*

### *Arrival of Father Christmas 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.*



Father Christmas will be in his red sleigh nestled among the trees in our South Greenhouse. He is excited to greet children of all ages and listen to their Christmas wishes. Come in your holiday finest and bring your cameras to take your own keepsake photos.

### *Holiday Wreath-making Classes 11 a.m. - 4 p.m. reservations required; class fee is \$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 five one-hour classes. We provide a delightful array of greens (sold by the pound); but 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.

### *Mark Your Calendars! Northwest Flower and Garden Show*



NORTHWEST  
FLOWER & GARDEN  
SHOW\*

The Northwest Flower & Garden Show will be held in Seattle on February 11 – 15, 2015 with the theme **'Romance Blossoms'**. 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).

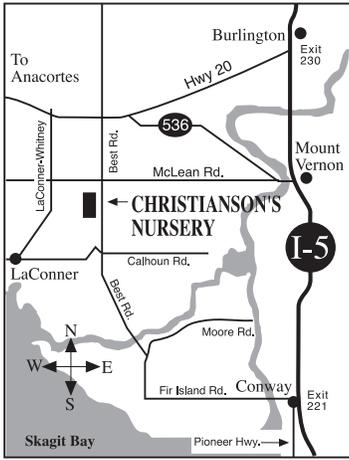
As always, we will be offering 'Flower Buses' so you can gather your friends and enjoy going to the show without the stress of driving and parking. The Flower Buses will be going to the show on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, February 11, 12, and 13, leaving the Nursery at 8:30 am and returning at approximately 6:00 pm. The cost of a combination show ticket and bus ride is \$52. Call the Nursery today to make your Flower Bus reservations (360-466-3821).

***Tickets to the Northwest Flower and Garden Show make  
perfect holiday gifts and stocking stuffers for all the gardeners on your list!***

360-466-3821 • 1-800-585-8200

# CHRISTIANSON'S Nursery & Greenhouse

15806 Best Road • Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
www.christiansonnursery.com



**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.

**Fall Hours**  
**Daily 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.**  
**Beginning November 2**  
**Open until 5 p.m.**

### CLASSES & EVENTS

**Saturday, October 4**  
Starting Your Vegetable Garden from Scratch 11 a.m. - noon  
Fresh Cider Pressing 12:30 - 2 p.m.

**Sunday, October 5**  
Beginning Bonsai Workshop 1 - 3:30 p.m.

**Saturday, October 11**  
Digging, Dividing and Storing Dahlias Made Easy 11 a.m. - noon

**Sunday, October 12**  
Conifer Bonsai Workshop 1 - 3:30 p.m.

**Saturday, October 18**  
Hedgerows and Habitats 11 a.m. - noon

**Saturday, October 25**  
Permaculture Series: Front Yard Farming 11 a.m. - noon  
Fall Color Walk 1 - 2 p.m.

**Saturday & Sunday, November 1 - 2**  
Arts Alive! & Holiday Open House

**Saturday, November 8**  
Winter Floral Arrangements 11 a.m. - noon  
Conifer Walk 1-2 p.m.

**Saturday, November 15**  
Following the Flowers 11 a.m. - noon  
Rosehip Wreath-making Workshop 1 - 2:30 p.m.

**Saturday, November 22**  
Japanese Design Principles 11 a.m. - noon

**Saturday, November 29**  
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 6**  
Swans of the Skagit 10:30 a.m. - noon  
Snow Geese of the Skagit 1 - 2 p.m.

**Weekly Radio Broadcast**  
*The Garden Show*  
Sunday Mornings  
With John & Mike  
AM 660 KAPS • 10:30 a.m.

**Stay in Touch**  
Website: [www.christiansonnursery.com](http://www.christiansonnursery.com)  
Garden Notes: Our monthly emailed newsletter  
<http://www.christiansonnursery.com/whats-happening/newsletters/>  
Facebook: Like us on our web site  
[Pinterest: http://www.pinterest.com/primosegifts](http://www.pinterest.com/primosegifts)

## October - December Specials

<p><b>October 20 - November 2</b> <b>Hedging Sale</b> 25% off Laurel, boxwood, photinia, Japanese holly, Leyland cypress, privet and arbutus</p>	<p><b>October 1 - 19</b> <b>Conifer Sale</b> 25% off Tall and dwarf evergreens, including spruce, fir, cypress, pine and junipers</p>
<p><b>November 1 - 30</b> <b>Roses</b> End-of-season sale many varieties still available 50% off</p>	<p><b>November 1 - 16</b> <b>Ground Covers</b> Kinnickinnick, ivy, juniper, salal, Cotoneaster, Vinca, Pachysandra and Euonymus 25% off</p>
<p><b>December 1 - 31</b> <b>Christmas Holly</b> Traditional English holly plus many rare and uncommon varieties 1-gallon to 6-foot sizes 20% off</p>	<p><b>November 17 - 30</b> <b>Camellias</b> Winter and spring flowering Camellias in bud or bloom 1-gallon to 5-gallon sizes 20% off</p>