

# THE PERENNIAL POST

NORTHWEST PERENNIAL ALLIANCE



FALL 2014 | VOLUME 24 | ISSUE 3

## New York Times garden columnist speaks September 21

Gayle Richardson

### SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21 Annual Meeting & Lecture "Half a Lifetime in Gardens and What They Have Taught Me" with Anne Raver

1 pm - Doors open at noon for seed  
and plant sales

NPA members free/Nonmembers \$10

**NEW VENUE:** Bellevue Botanical Garden  
Education Center

12001 Main Street, Bellevue

NPA WELCOMES ANNE RAVER, long-time garden columnist and writer, and the featured speaker at our Annual Meeting & Lecture, which will be held for the first time at the Bellevue Botanical Garden's recently opened Education Center. Anne has spent 30 years in the field, first at Newsday, a Long Island daily, and then the New York Times, both fine newspapers where readers make sure to call the editor about a misspelled Latin name or factual error. At both papers she wrote about



Anne Raver, New York Times garden columnist

"the garden writ large," that is, on almost anything that involved plants. She has seen not only unforgettable gardens, but national parks devastated by fire, nurseries wiped out by hurricanes, Superfund sites, river farms of the Amazon jungle and cantaloupes ripening on a Queens fire escape. She will share some of these stories and more, as she gives us a glimpse of just

what it takes to be a garden writer.

Anne and her partner currently live on the six-generation family farm she grew up on, occupying a Soho-like loft in the same barn where she used to build tunnels in the hay. They have a labyrinth herb garden in the old barnyard and share a field of tomatoes, potatoes and what-have-you with the deer and stink bugs. A 1971 graduate of Oberlin, Anne has a master's degree in Creative Writing from Johns Hopkins University and is a former Loeb Fellow at Harvard's Graduate School of Design. She has taught at Boston College, Hopkins University, McDaniel College and Carroll Community College in Westminster, Maryland. Her book, *Deep in the Green*, (Knopf, 1995) is still in print as a Vintage Paperback, and she is currently working on another, a collection about coming home to Maryland. Mark your calendars now for this not-to-be-missed treat. And don't forget: the meeting is in Bellevue, not Seattle!

## Landscaping for Winter Color and Beauty

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 1 PM Free lecture with Sue Goetz  
Molbak's Nursery, 13625 NE 175th Street, Woodinville



A BEAUTIFUL GARDEN should not end as the abundant summer garden fades into fall and winter. Join Sue Goetz on Sunday, November 2, at Molbak's as she shows how to add texture and color with bark, berries, foliage and evergreens for year around color.

Sue is an award-winning garden designer, writer and speaker. Through her business, Creative Gardener, she helps clients to personalize their outdoor spaces, from garden coaching the small seasonal tasks to full landscape design projects.

She was named 2012 Educator of the Year by the Washington State Nursery and Landscape Association and Best Horticulturalist by West Sound Home and Garden magazine in spring 2013. Her writing has appeared in Fine Gardening Magazine, West Sound Home and Garden, The Tacoma News Tribune and many other publications.

Sue is certified as a professional horticulturalist (CPH) and is a member of NPA. She is also the owner of Urban Garden Company in Tacoma.

- SEPTEMBER 13 **Transform Your Backyard into a Jungle class** with Justin Galicic, Saturday, 10 am - noon (see Classes, page 3)
- SEPTEMBER 17 **Garden Design Workshop** with Kirsten Lints, Wednesday, 10 am – noon, Bellevue Botanical Garden (see Classes, page 3)
- SEPTEMBER 21 **Annual Meeting & Lecture** with New York Times garden columnist Anne Raver, Sunday, 1 pm, NEW VENUE: Bellevue Botanical Garden Education Center, 12001 Main Street, Bellevue (details, page 1)
- SEPTEMBER 24 **Learn to Propagate Plants workshop** with Carrie Lee, Wednesday, 10 am – noon, Lee Farms, Fall City (see Classes, page 3)
- OCTOBER 11 **Fall Renewal and Division class** with George Lasch, Saturday, 10 am – noon, Bellevue Botanical Garden (see Classes, page 3)
- NOVEMBER 2 **Winter Landscaping lecture** with Sue Goetz, Sunday, 1:00 pm, Molbak's, Woodinville (details, page 1)
- NOVEMBER 29 **Garden d'Lights, begins at Bellevue Botanical Garden**, 4:30 – 9:30 pm (last entry at 9:00 pm). Tickets \$5; children 10 and under free. Order online at [www.gardendlights.org](http://www.gardendlights.org)

## A warm welcome to our new members

*Amanda Uhry*

*Amy Truex*

*Ann M Miller*

*Anna Marie Nelson*

*Ari Shiff*

*Barbara & Mike Waske*

*Betsy Kenney*

*Betty Goetz*

*Bill McJohn*

*Birdie (Roberta) Kimmel*

*Cherie Christensen*

*Collene Collins*

*Deborah Bloom*

*Deborah Sherwood*

*Donna Rae Hunt*

*Elizabeth Boran*

*Emily Khan*

*Emily Matthiessen*

*Fred & Alice Ellis*

*Gayle Gower*

*Gayle Peach*

*Jan Goetz*

*Kathleen & Tom Wilkinson*

*Katy McCarthy*

*Lia Ward*

*Marcia & Doug Hastings*

*Marietta Modl*

*Marilyn May*

*Mike Keeley & Brian Racy*

*Nancy & Daniel Bowen-Pope*

*Natasha Bloom*

*Patty Parker-Gillis*

*Phyllis & Richard Varjian*

*Roger Howarth*

*Sandra Demers*

*Sandy Eacker*

*Sandy Keathley*

*Sarah Hinckley*

*Sheila Moore*

*Stephen Willey Mats Mats*

*Sue Teeter*

*Susan Sheridan*

*Vicky Tom*

*Virginia Brewer*

*Virginia Olsen*

# NPA CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

# Fall

Saturday, September 13, 10 am - noon

## TRANSFORM YOUR BACKYARD INTO A JUNGLE

*Justin Galicic*

Fee: \$25 Class Limit: 20



Justin Galicic, author of the blog GrowingSteady.com, invites you to his tropical-themed garden in Normandy Park for a truly aloha experience. Designed to tantalize the senses while maximizing functionality, this garden showcases a wide variety of exotic plants that are proving to be hardy for us here in the Pacific Northwest. You'll see lots of exotic plants you have yearned for, plus plenty of new ones to picture in your own garden, and gain proven ideas about how to overwinter them.

Soak in the island spirit while Justin outlines the steps he took to transform a boring, blank backyard into a stunning slice of Seattle suburban paradise. You'll be inspired!

Wednesday, September 17, 10 am - noon

## GARDEN DESIGN = FUNDAMENTALS + FUN

*Kirsten Lints*

Bellevue Botanical Garden

Fee: \$25 Class limit: 35

Kirsten Lints, C.P.H, owner of Gardens ALIVE Design, is a professional horticultural designer who has been working in Northwest gardens for over 20 years. She believes that landscaping doesn't need to be complicated, risky or expensive – solid plant recommendations and often small

improvements can get your landscape from now to Wow! Kirsten's designs were featured in the Sunday, July 21, PNW Magazine in the Seattle Times. Does your landscape offer enjoyment? Does your home's entry welcome and impress with knock-out curb appeal? Bring your own dilemmas (photos welcome) and sketch paper to work on a small area of your



landscape. Whether your garden needs color, edibles or insight, Kirsten will guide you through the design steps to get the garden you want.

Wednesday, September 24, 10 am - noon

## LEARN TO PROPAGATE PLANTS

*Carrie Lee*

Lee Farms, Fall City, WA

Fee: \$25 Class Limit: 25



Early autumn is the ideal time to learn about seeds, dividing plants, and how to make new plants from cuttings for your garden next year. Come out and meet Carrie Lee from Lee Farm and Nursery in

Fall City. She will share her expertise and you'll learn some successful tricks about plant propagation. Bring clippings from your own garden or try some cuttings from Carrie's nursery. This is a hands-on workshop!

Come armed with your favorite clippers and wear comfortable clothes. We'll meet in one of Carrie's greenhouses. Carrie will supply the pots and soil, or you can bring your own containers so you can take your creations home. Carrie and Dean's nursery will be open after the workshop for plant sales.

Saturday, October 11, 10 am - noon

## FALL RENEWAL AND DIVISION: MORE VIGOR AND MORE PLANTS

*George Lasch*

Fee: \$25 Class Limit: 25



Come spend the morning with George Lasch in the beautiful NPA Border at Bellevue Botanical Garden learning how to get the most from your garden. To keep your garden looking its best, George will teach you when plants need to be divided to renew and maintain their vigor, and which ones are best divided in the fall.

He will demonstrate his technique on various plants in the Border. Come away with new garden insights and a new perennial for your garden.



# Spread the Joy!

## A request for plant donations

Linda Gray

**G**REETINGS, FELLOW FLORA FANATICS! You all know the thrill of finding wonderful plants and having them thrive in your garden. Have they spread so happily that it's time to divide them? Are they well behaved and healthy? If so, please consider donating your extra plants to the NPA. Along with member and nursery donations, extra plants from the NPA Border are put out for sale at the Bellevue Botanical Garden's visitor center. These sales help fund border maintenance and the plants make nice gifts and souvenirs for visitors. It's not easy to keep up with demand. Please share your treasures!

If you are not sure what plants to donate here is a list to get you started: Aster, Brunnera, Clematis, Corydalis, Crocosmia (except 'Lucifer'), Darmera peltata, Epimedium, Geranium (named), Geum, Hakonechloa macra, Helenium, Heuchera, Hosta, Kirengeshoma, Kitaibelia vitifolia, Ophiopogon planiscapus 'Nigrescens', Omphalodes, Potentilla gelida, Primula (named), Rudbeckia, Schizostylis, Sedum.



A donated plant, labeled and ready to sell.



The NPA plant stand is next to the gift shop at BBG.

Volunteers working to sell the plants ask that donations be potted (in 4 inch, 1, 2 or 5 gallon pots), labeled (details are much appreciated), tidy and weed free, and left in the work yard on one of the wooden potting benches. The work yard is at the northwest corner of the BBG and the gate to it from Main Street is unlocked daily from 9-2. If not, please leave the plants off to the side near the locked gate and someone will bring them into the work yard. Thank you!

## Plant stand volunteers needed

Plants have been flying off the shelves of the NPA plant stand at Bellevue Botanical Garden, generating much-needed money to help support our famous NPA Perennial Border. Linda Gray and Carol Scheuffele keep the stand going from spring through early fall, but they could really use some extra help!

If you can spare an hour or so once a week to help water the plants or do a bit of potting up and labeling, please contact Nora at the NPA office saying you'd like to help with the plant stand at BBG. Email [info@northwestperennialalliance.org](mailto:info@northwestperennialalliance.org) or call 425-647-6004.



Linda Gray runs the NPA plant stand at Bellevue Botanical Garden.



# A DAY IN THE BORDER

Craig Wagner



AS YOU GET OLDER, more often than not it's the seemingly small things that can matter the most.

It's 9:00 a.m. on a Thursday morning. I leave the house, the garbage and clean green stationed at curbside, my backpack stuffed with gardening paraphernalia, and climb into the car gingerly, flinching as my IT band complains, and head out. I-90 is busy but moving, the lake calm, and as we Seattleites rejoice in saying, "The Mountain is out." The cars, trucks, and buses on the road seem mindlessly destined for just another day on the job, whereas my objective is an unexpected sweet reward of retirement.

Soon off the freeway, it's up the hill, on to Main Street, past the new Bellevue Botanical Garden Visitor and Education building with its elegantly modulated exterior and broad overhangs and into the parking lot. Through the breezeway and into the new Meeting Place with its calming water-wall, I take the arcing trail up through the woodland canopy. The Tateuchi viewing pavilion floats ahead and holds a tender memory from two years earlier, of my wife Margaret and I who sat with our friend Wayne a month before his death from cancer and listened to his stories of Africa. It now waits serenely for this day's visitors.

Passing the Shorts House, architect Paul Kirk's Northwest post-war modern design, I cross the great lawn, shoes wet from the morning dew, and step onto the crunch of the

wide gravel path of the perennial border.

I'm a very new gardener; I'll confess with honest lack of pretense and often needed self defense. When I started volunteering at the border what I knew about plants would have fit on the head of a pin with room left over. Now a year later, I know a bit more, thanks to our mentor George and some generous colleagues. But the truth is that if the border were a university, I would still be a freshman amongst many grad students and PhDs. It was intimidating at first to be working alongside people who actually spoke in Latin as if it was their native tongue. But my worries were soon allayed by the unassuming nature of those who I now think of as friends. The remarkable commitment these folks have for this place is a legacy built on gifts of their time over many years.

On this day, summer is in full gallop as

clouds, some billowy and others wind-swept, yield wonderful patches of brilliant azure. The soft and harsh, subtle shades and shapes of winter are a faint memory eclipsed now by a chorus of colors, forms and scents more than enough to make anyone's day. The garden is literally in motion as new blooms emerge and others recede. To have found such a place to give a few hours of my time each week, to be with interesting people, and learn something new each time is a gift not to be taken for granted. One of those seemingly small things.

We'll prune and dead head, unearth the stealthy and tenacious shotweed and, after a short tutorial from George, tend to whatever else he has in mind for the day. A good sweat means we are really into the warm season. The knees of my jeans are soon the color of the soil and a rose bush

with an attitude has left a mark on my arm. But it is all good.

There is something deeply satisfying to look up from my weeding spot in one of the beds, and see the other volunteers spread out across the garden, tenaciously working away, and feel a part of something beautiful and important. I know that we are, strictly speaking, involved in a horticultural endeavor, but in the end it is the human part that gets to me the most. It's one thing to be immersed in beauty as we are in the perennial border. It is another to have people around you to share in the experience. This never gets old.



*Craig Wagner, a retired architect who lives in Seattle, is a member of the NPA Board. He volunteers most Thursdays in the NPA Border at Bellevue. You're invited to join him!*

# Hail & Farewell: Big changes come to the NPA Board

*Michele Cournoyer*

**T**HE NPA BOARD'S YEAR ENDS in September, and this month marks a big transition. It's time to welcome newcomers and new leadership to the board and bid a fond farewell to the veterans who are leaving.



**Michele Cournoyer** is stepping down after nine years on the board, although she'll continue as editor of the Perennial Post and NPA website. Michele has worn numerous hats over the years, serving as President, Study Weekend Chair, Membership Chair, Board Development Chair and Volunteer Chair. She spearheaded the renovation of the NPA Border at Bellevue Botanical Garden, led fundraising efforts for the project, and worked in the border every Thursday for several years. She also helped run the March Mania and Spring Plant sales and our booth at the Northwest Flower & Garden Show. Michele created the NPA website and launched the NPA Facebook page, filmed a series of gardening videos with George Lasch for YouTube, and produced all-new materials for the organization, including brochures, banners and signage. Michele is a retired advertising executive, creative director, award-winning writer and journalist. She and her husband Paul and their two scrappy terriers have recently moved to

Snohomish, where they are designing a new garden with the help of Glenn Withey and Charles Price.



**Gayle Richardson** is also leaving the board after nine years. Gayle has served as Vice President and Education Chair, bringing in well-known speakers for many memorable NPA lectures. Gayle also helps run our plant sales, where she serves as vendor liaison, runs the NPA Mercantile table, manages the NPA Archives, and was the first to put the NPA Seed Exchange on the internet—all projects she will continue to run. She is currently enthralled with the idea of raising plants from seeds and cuttings for the now-more-patronized-than-ever NPA plant stand at BBG.

Gayle is an indefatigable volunteer, working many, many years in the NPA Border, and was named NPA's Volunteer of the Year in 2007. She served on the steering committee for Study Weekend, where she recruited a cast of all-star speakers for the event and also ran the Plant Market. A retired librarian, Gayle's passion for books is evident in her popular book review columns in the Post, which she plans to keep writing. She is an avid traveler, jetting off to numerous destinations each year, including the Oxford Literary Festival.

**Linda Gray** is leaving the board, but will continue to manage the NPA plant stand and nursery at Bellevue Botanical Garden. Linda also keeps key plants in the NPA Border labeled and takes terrific photographs of perennials to share on our Facebook page. Now that they are empty-nesters, Linda and her husband plan to do more traveling.

**Sandy Kanaga**, who lives in Enumclaw, will continue to run Classes & Workshops, although she will no longer make the long trips to board meetings.

**Barbara Danek**, who has served as Membership Co-Chair with Denise DuBose the last two years, will also be leaving. Barb helped host the annual lunch meeting for neighborhood group coordinators and visited several groups to get acquainted. Barb has also been a regular volunteer at the NPA plant sales. She is a member of the Shovels & Hoes neighborhood group in North Bend.

## Introducing the NPA Board for 2015

Each year the board elects its officers for the coming year from among the directors currently serving on the board. Congratulations to Kit Haesloop, who has been



**Kit Haesloop**, new NPA President



elected President, and to Diana Davidson, elected Vice President. Kit, who already runs our Scholarship program, has also become our new Education



Diana Davidson, new NPA Vice President

Chair. Diana will continue as Volunteer Chair, helping to run our plant sales and manage the booth at the Northwest Flower & Garden Show. Ellie Sanchez was re-elected as Secretary and Gary Davidson was re-elected Treasurer. Walt Bubelis is beginning his third three-year term on the board, much to everyone's delight. Other returning directors include Sara Drogin, Communications Chair; Denise DuBose, Membership Co-Chair; and directors at large Carolyn Whittlesey, Craig Wagner and Linda Kline.

The board would like to welcome five new members: Karen Brighton, Cathy Atkins, Tia Scarce, Cynthia Wheaton and Nancy Hansen-Stifel. We're looking forward to working with these enthusiastic new board directors.

We would also like to give a thumbs-up to our new NPA Office Administrator, Nora Clark, who started in June and has done an outstanding job since day one. Nora maintains the NPA membership database, answers the NPA phone and email messages, and publishes our monthly emails to members. You can reach Nora at 425-647-6004.

## Meet our new Open Garden Co-Chairs

Ilse Nethercutt and Ramona Hensrude have teamed up to oversee our Open Gardens program and will be producing their first directory in 2015.

Ilse has toured many gardens and has opened her own garden to NPA members three times. She brings a love of gardening and real enthusiasm to Open Gardens, and sees working on the directory as a way to perpetuate the joy of gardening. "I like what it does, how it connects and inspires gardeners," she said. "And I want to see it continue strongly in the years to come."



Ilse Nethercutt, new Open Gardens Co-Chair

A child of two avid gardeners, Ilse was destined to end up a gardener herself. She grew up in Germany, married a US service man and immigrated to the States over 40 years ago. "I thank my lucky stars that I ended up here," she said. "I adore the Pacific Northwest, and I couldn't imagine living or gardening anywhere else."

With her children grown and now retired from a rewarding career, Ilse enjoys having more time for family and friends. She's turned to creative interests, which she pursues vigorously: gardening, mosaics and stained glass.

Ramona Hensrude started gardening 30 years ago. She met her husband at Bellevue Botanical Garden in 1993 where she worked as a summer intern. They created their third garden together in south



Ramona Hensrude, new Open Gardens Co-Chair

Everett beginning in 2006. Ramona and John work at the UW and look forward to retirement. Like many NPA members, Ramona is also an animal lover and volunteers once a week as an adoption counselor for Purrfect Pals.

Ramona's favorite part of NPA is the opportunity to visit other gardens. "I'm volunteering to be co-editor of the 2015 book because I'd like to encourage an even greater participation of NPA members and nurseries," she said. "I'd like to encourage more new members to open their gardens, especially in Snohomish County." Ramona plans to open her Snohomish County garden for the first time in several years.

Ilse and Ramona can hardly wait to tackle next year's Open Gardens book, featuring full-color photography on the cover and tantalizing garden descriptions inside. We hope members will show their support by opening their gardens in 2015. Watch for the registration form in the December edition of the Post or find it on the NPA website at [www.n-p-a.org](http://www.n-p-a.org).

# Announcing the NPA Scholarship Recipient for 2014

*Kit Haesloop*

This year NPA awarded one well-deserved \$750 scholarship. The recipient was Anne Smeester, who is enrolled at Edmonds Community College. Anne is an honor roll student focusing on Urban Agriculture Systems and Sustainable Agriculture practices. She has been active in a number of community outreach programs and volunteer activities. One of her career ambitions is to use her horticultural knowledge and passion for plants to create an urban community farm focusing on sustainable agriculture.



Anne Smeester, NPA Scholarship recipient

The scholarship applicants were evaluated based on their academic record, references, career goals, and experience. The NPA scholarship funds must be used at a Puget Sound two or four-year accredited college or accredited trade school within the academic year following receipt of the scholarship. NPA Scholarships are for students pursuing education in horticulture, botany, sustainable agriculture, landscape design/architecture or environmental science. Along with the scholarship award, recipients also receive a one-year membership in the NPA.

To learn more about the NPA Scholarships or for questions regarding applying for a 2015 NPA Scholarship, please visit the NPA website at [www.n-p-a.org](http://www.n-p-a.org).

# Thanks for your support of Study Weekend

*Michele Cournoyer*

“It was so much fun!” That was the verdict of the more than 450 avid gardeners who attended NPA’s Hardy Plant Study Weekend in Bellevue this June. We’d like to thank our members for their great support, especially the many attendees who pitched in to volunteer and help make the four-day event a success. Who will ever forget the wacky Green Goddess and Green God competition at the Saturday night party, held at Wells Medina? Hats off to the party’s organizers, Susan Picquelle and Carolyn Whittlesey (photos, page 12). And people are still talking about the massive, mind-blowing horticulture display created by Walt Bubelis, Kit Haesloop and Denise DuBose. Open Gardens were also a big hit, thanks to Tina Dixon and George Lasch—with great driving directions provided by Carol Scheuffele and Tina.

Gayle Richardson brought in a highly entertaining mix of celebrity speakers, who had a ball playing up the theme, “Married to Your Garden: How to Save the Relationship,” the brainchild of Sue Moss. Meanwhile, over at Bellevue Botanical Garden, visitors to the NPA Border received a warm welcome from Linda Kline and Craig Wagner. Special thanks to our moderator, Susie Eagan, who kept the lectures running like clockwork; to Diana Davidson, who did a superb job running the registration desk; to Linda Gray, who processed the plant purchases bound for Canada; and to Katie Padwick, our amazing registrar.

Next year Study Weekend moves to Portland, where it will be hosted by the Hardy Plant Society of Oregon (HPSO) June 26-28. Their theme is “Planet Garden: Gardening in Our Changing World.” They will explore our planet and its incredible diversity of plants, the variety of garden

styles found across its continents, and the role we humans must play in sustaining it for the future. Speakers will include C. Colston Burrell, Evelyn Hadden, Dan Hinkley, Maurice Horn, Mike Kintgen, Jonathan Wright and Andrea Wulf. For more information visit [www.hardyplant-society.org](http://www.hardyplant-society.org).

## THANK YOU, ORGANIZING TEAM!

Chair – **Michele Cournoyer**  
Registration – **Katie Padwick & Diana Davidson**  
Speakers – **Gayle Richardson & Sue Moss**  
Open Gardens – **George Lasch & Tina Dixon**  
Saturday Night Party – **Susan Picquelle & Carolyn Whittlesey**  
Horticulture Display – **Walt Bubelis, Denise DuBose & Kit Haesloop**  
Plant market – **Gayle Richardson**  
Publicity – **Sara Drogin**  
Food & Facility – **Michele Cournoyer**  
Volunteers – **Diana Davidson**  
Tea at the Border – **Linda Kline & Craig Wagner**  
Phytosanitary Inspections – **Linda Gray**  
Program & Marketing Materials – **Michele & Paul Cournoyer**  
Swag bags – **Ellie Sanchez & Sara Drogin**



## From LA to Venice and England

Gayle Richardson

### “SUMMER OF THE BIG BACHI”

by Naomi Hirahara (Bantam, 2004)

“Mas Arai didn’t believe in Jesus or Buddha, but thought there might be something in bachi. In Japanese, bachi was when you snapped at your wife, and then tripped on a rock in the driveway.” In other words, what goes around, comes around. Now an aging landscape gardener in the Los Angeles area, Mas has a past—50-year-old secrets and lies—reaching out to haunt him. Not so quickly as bachi, but from the dark days when he, an American-born teenager living in Hiroshima, managed to survive the dropping of the bomb. Anyone looking at him now might think he had nothing—widowed, estranged from his only child, and a 40-year-old truck to work his diminishing number of jobs, but he does have his honor, and that’s what leads him to try to right some very chilling wrongs that just might kill him if he doesn’t succeed. Edgar-winning Hirahara’s novel, first published to rave reviews in 2004, is the first in a series of five mysteries featuring the unassuming, yet vividly drawn, Mas.

### “CHASING THE ROSE: AN ADVENTURE IN THE VENETIAN COUNTRYSIDE”

by Andrea di Robilant (Knopf, 2014)

Scion of the aristocratic Mocenigo family that gave seven doges to Venice, di Robilant embarks on a dogged quest to research, identify and register a wild rose found growing on abandoned family property in the Veneto. His attempt to learn everything possible about ‘la rosa moceniga’ takes him from England to China and through thousands of years of history...horticultural, European and family. Charmingly told, and illustrated

delightfully, this little tome might at first seem only a dilettantish diversion but it proves to be far more than that. Anecdotal yet scholarly, personal yet universal, it leaves the reader thinking and pondering about it long after the last page is turned.



### “EARTHLY JOYS” by Philippa Gregory (St. Martin’s Press, 1998)

Gregory, famous for her historical novels about the Tudors, moves on to the Stuart era in this absorbing fictional account of the life of John Tradescant, naturalist, plant hunter, gardener and garden designer extraordinaire. Rising from obscurity to serving the highest in the land, he is nevertheless at the beck and call of royalty, once losing a treasured garden when the king confiscates it, and stately manor as well, for his own pleasure. Nevertheless, Tradescant is always his master’s man, no matter who, or, in the modern reader’s eyes, how unworthy that master might be. Thus Tradescant follows orders to seek out plants in the farthest, most frigid reaches of Europe, and even when sent along to sieges and battles, nevertheless continues to track down new plants to bring back to England. Like another

historical novel I just finished listening to, Nancy Horan’s wonderful “UNDER THE WIDE AND STARRY SKY,” about Robert Louis Stevenson, this title countless times makes the reader think and wonder about how much is really true, and how much is author’s invention. The Tradescant family saga is continued in “VIRGIN EARTH,” where Gregory picks up the life and career of the gardener’s son, also named John, as he moves on to the New World to extend his father’s legacy.

### “THOUGHTFUL GARDENING”

by Robin Lane Fox (Basic Books, 2010)

A collection of essays marching through a calendar year but often straying off to such places as the Jardin Majorelle or an appreciation of Rosemary Verey (one essay, intriguingly titled “Let Them Eat Squirrel,” includes a recipe you’ll never manage to forget). But the book’s greatest strength, apart from the writer’s style, is his careful consideration of many different species and cultivars of a whole host of genera, invaluable for gardeners seeking the absolutely right plant to add. Some of his barbs are laugh-out-loud funny, as in “Mahonia Charity first appeared... where it was accompanied by two other good crosses, Faith and Hope. Hope disappeared altogether in 1964 after the election of a Labor government and Faith has now dropped out of the RHS Plant Finder.” He also inveighs against the BBC’s version of “Mansfield Park” where a garden columnist (in Regency England?!) is inserted into the film to further the plot. What next? he asks. A gardening columnist for the St. Petersburg News catching Vronsky and Anna in flagrante? Small wonder the Financial Times called this the “best gardening book for the past 30 years.”

# The Petal Pusher's Perfect Partnering Project

Julie Martin

**T**HE EVOLUTION OF OUR NPA neighborhood group, Petal Pushers, began with a unique opportunity: to give back. In January, 2012, Petal Pushers formed. Jan Jensen, our group coordinator, was invited by Stephanie Walsh, Executive Director of Lakewold Gardens, to discuss the possibility of partnering with Lakewold. Lakewold Gardens, in Lakewood, Washington, is a historic garden estate of world class distinction. Stephanie and the Board of Directors are always looking for opportunities to reach out to the community to partner in different ways. Because Jan had many years of docent and committee experience at Lakewold, Stephanie was confident that Jan and the Petal Pushers could be a perfect fit. Stephanie proposed that our group adopt an area of the garden (this was a new venture for Lakewold) and



Jan Jensen, Paula Rutan and Annette Clingman

create our own unique design, planting and maintaining a section of the gardens. In return, we would be able to use meeting rooms in the home on the estate for our group meetings and activities. Our group liked the idea, for not only was this a way to give back and better our community, but this was an opportunity for us to grow our own horticultural knowledge and experience. Needless to say, we jumped at the opportunity!

Our initial year was filled with site selection, planning and preparation. Throughout the spring and summer months we removed the unwanted plants from the area. We watched the sun cross the sky, and deliberated over what plants would best suit the site. We needed to complement the spirit of the design com-



The Hydrangea Garden at Lakewold

ponents found throughout the other parts of the Gardens. Spring is already a “show stopper” at Lakewold with their outstanding collection of rhododendrons. We thought we would focus on summer interest and decided to take a comment once made by a visitor to Lakewold and expand on it. “This garden is ideal for hydrangeas,” said Dan Hinkley. We concurred (how could you not--it was Dan Hinkley!) and set out to plan a hydrangea collection garden. With seed money from Lakewold we made our first purchases in the fall of 2012 and our shovels haven't stopped since.

Now, two years into this partnership project, we feel we have achieved more than we thought possible. With support, donations and sponsorship from our members and local growers we have been able to expand our space to four times its original size. The inner bed design remains the same: a mixed perennial garden with hydrangea highlights. And now the outlying areas will become shaded pathways lined with a variety of interesting and unique hydrangeas, creating a visual feast for visitors to stroll down on a hot summer day.

The group's success lies mostly in the hard working members of our garden club and the support from Lakewold staff. Regular work parties and seasonal planning meetings, led by Julie Martin, ensure the success of the garden. Our Lakewold team goes above and beyond

to help. We continue to work the mixed bed and replace unsuccessful plants with hardier varieties. We plant, move, divide and sometimes even have time to admire the plants we care for! As with all gardens, each new season provides us with aah's and ooh's, head scratching and welcome surprises, and without a doubt, it gives us



The Petal Pushers neighborhood group



plenty to be thankful for.

We thank George Lasch for a tip he provided us with when we toured the NPA Border in Bellevue last year. He encouraged us to reach out for donations from local growers and nurseries. We are awed by the generosity of our local suppliers and find it encouraging that their support



Judy and Karin enjoying the cleanup.

will help us achieve our ultimate goal of a hydrangea collection garden. Thanks to the efforts of our member, Karen Hegarty, to date we have had donations from Old Goat Farm, Dan Hinkley (who donated four mature rare hydrangeas from his Windcliff garden), Far Reaches Farm and Proven Winners (a national company who shipped 30 large plants from Michigan at no cost to us!). Far Reaches Farm has indicated to Mark Lyke (Lakewold's Garden Manager) that they will provide ongoing donations based on what we want. We continue to reach out to the community for donations. We are in particular need of ground covers like *Saxifraga x urbium* 'London Pride' and *Black Mondo grass* (*Ophiopogon planiscapus* 'Nigrescens') and, of course, unique hydrangeas are always welcomed! Moving forward, we are

working towards the education portion of our proposal. Site plans are being made up and we have begun the labeling and signage. We will also be working with the Garden Shop at Lakewold to ensure they have updated lists of the plants we have in our garden.

Though our NPA garden club works hard to maintain a beautiful garden at Lakewold, we also have fun. We meet the third Tuesday of the month to get out and visit many local gardens or host interesting programs. Our meetings are at either Lakewold Gardens or at the home of one of our members. Petal Pushers continue to look for members who would like to help us in achieving our goal at Lakewold Gardens. If you are in the Lakewood, Tacoma or Olympia area and feel this is something you're up for, we'd love to hear from you! See our website for more information and photos at <http://petalpushersgardenclub.wordpress.com>.

*If you would like to share a story about your group's activities, please contact the editor, Michele Cournoyer, at [editor@northwestperennialalliance.org](mailto:editor@northwestperennialalliance.org).*

### JOIN A NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP

If you are an NPA member and would like to know if there is a neighborhood group in your area, check the list on our website at [www.n-p-a.org](http://www.n-p-a.org) or email us at [groups@northwestperennialalliance.org](mailto:groups@northwestperennialalliance.org). We will connect you with a local group in your area. If there is no group in your area, or if the group nearest you is "closed" due to size limitations, we'll show you how very easy it is to start your own neighborhood group.

### NPA Advisory Board

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### Northwest Perennial Alliance

*The Northwest Perennial Alliance is a group of ardent gardeners with a passionate devotion to herbaceous plants. Members comprise a wide range, professional and amateur, but all with the aim of furthering perennial gardening in the Northwest.*

Website: [www.n-p-a.org](http://www.n-p-a.org)  
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#### NPA 2014-2015 Officers:

Kit Haesloop, President: 425-333-6529  
Diana Davidson, Vice President: 425-896-8040  
Ellie Sanchez, Secretary: 425-828-6820  
Gary Davidson, Treasurer: 425-896-8040

#### Membership:

The membership year runs from January to December. To join, visit [www.n-p-a.org](http://www.n-p-a.org) to pay electronically or download a membership form. You may also mail a check for \$35, payable to NPA, to the address below. Include your name, mailing address, email address and telephone number. NPA accepts certain credit cards and debit cards by telephone at 425-647-6004.

#### Donations:

NPA is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and your donations are tax deductible. Donations are used to support our educational programs, including Open Gardens, lectures, workshops, the NPA Border and student scholarships.

#### Submissions and paid advertisements:

Contact the Post Editor at  
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## Celebrating "50 Shades of Green"



A spirited competition for the titles of Green God and Green Goddess was the highlight of the Saturday night party during Study Weekend in June. Many thanks to party organizers Susan Picquelle and Carolyn Whittlesey for an evening to remember—and to Lisa Wells, Wendy Wells and Anne Johnson for hosting us at Wells Medina Nursery.

Photos by Laura Kleppe