

# THE PERENNIAL POST

NORTHWEST PERENNIAL ALLIANCE



WINTER 2015 | VOLUME 25 | ISSUE 1



**March Mania is  
coming Saturday,  
March 14!**

See page 3 for details



- JANUARY 16** **Plantsmanship as Competitive Sport**, special event with Dan Hinkley & Jim Fox. Friday. Reception 6:30 pm; Lecture 7-8 pm; Silent Auction wrap up 8-8:30 pm. Bellevue Botanical Garden Education Center. Tickets \$45, available at [www.heronwoodgarden.org](http://www.heronwoodgarden.org) (details, page 11)
- JANUARY 25** **Lifelong Landscape Design: Can your landscape fit your lifestyle like a glove?** Lecture with Mary Palmer Dargan. Sunday, 1 pm, Bellevue Botanical Garden Education Center. (details, page 4)
- FEBRUARY 7** **Pruning Techniques** class with George Lasch. Saturday, 10 am – noon, NPA Border at Bellevue Botanical Garden. (see classes, page 7)
- MARCH 11** **All About Hydrangeas** class with George Lasch. Wednesday, 10 am – noon, NPA Border at Bellevue Botanical Garden. (see classes, page 7)
- MARCH 14** **March Mania Plant Sale**, Saturday, 9 am-3 pm, Bellevue Botanical Garden Education Center. (details, page 3)
- MARCH 15** **From Old Classics to New** with Sean Hogan. Sunday, 1 pm, Bellevue Botanical Garden Education Center. (details, page 5)
- MARCH 28** **Make a Garden Stepping Stone** class with Cathy Atkins. Saturday, 10 am-noon. (see classes, page 7)

## Time to renew your NPA membership

Karen Brighton

**N**OW'S THE TIME TO RENEW your NPA membership for another year of inspiring garden tours, classes and workshops, lectures and gardening fun with a neighborhood group. Memberships run from January through December. If you've joined or renewed anytime after September 2014, you're good for all of 2015.

It's easy to renew online at [www.n-p-a.org](http://www.n-p-a.org). You can pay with your credit card, or download a membership form and mail it with a check.

NPA membership is one of the best deals in town at only \$35 for an individual, \$45 for a household, which includes two people living at the same address, and \$75 for a business. Student memberships are \$20 with proof of current student status.

The Business Membership is for garden-related businesses. It includes a free

listing in NPA's Open Gardens directory in the Business Spotlight section and on the NPA website. Nurseries and businesses that offer a discount to NPA members will also be showcased for free in the Open Gardens Directory in a section called Nurseries and Businesses Offering a Discount to NPA Members along with a similar listing on the NPA website. Both of these listings will allow NPA Members to easily identify and locate NPA-friendly nurseries and garden-related businesses.

We invite you to consider making a donation to NPA when you renew this year by joining at a higher level. Since NPA is a nonprofit, your gift above the membership rate is usually tax-deductible; please consult your tax advisor. Every year NPA organizes fundraisers to generate enough money to cover the gap between dues income and the cost of run-



ning NPA. Imagine the difference it could make if everyone gave just a little bit more at renewal. It would mean less fundraising and less wear and tear on our wonderful volunteers!

NPA was founded in Seattle in 1984, marking 31 years of gardening education and fellowship. Your continued support will help ensure NPA continues into the future as a gathering place for our extended gardening community.

# March Mania is coming Saturday, March 14!

Craig Wagner

**MARCH MANIA PLANT SALE**  
**SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 9 AM – 3PM**  
**Bellevue Botanical Garden,**  
**Education Center**  
12001 Main Street, Bellevue, WA 98005

**W**E'VE MADE IT through the holidays! What a happy time for all. Well okay, so instead of finding the big Chihuly coffee table book I had been hoping for under the tree, I got a Chia Pet because they knew I "liked plants." How ironic.

Not to be a curmudgeon, but for me the holidays can be about rekindling family tensions, exceedingly rich food, indigestion and virtual eternal darkness. I retreat into the short days of January a reclusive, horizontally inclined football addict whose acme is the Super Bowl, guacamole and a hoped-for wardrobe malfunction. By the end of February I am a lethargic, chubby, cerebral thrill seeker, hooked on Poirot reruns and holding up the check out queue in the grocery store

while reading the tabloid headlines. Sad.

But wait! Here's the antidote to this winter malaise. One of the biggest things on everyone's spring calendar should be the NPA March Mania Plant Sale on Saturday, March 14, at the Bellevue Botanical Garden. This is one of our most important fundraising events of the year. What a great opportunity to help support the NPA and purchase some special plants to enhance your garden at the same time. And this year promises to be an especially exciting event in a completely new venue! Basically the Super Bowl of plant sales, only instead of at the end of the season like the Super Bowl, our event is at the very beginning of the season. Instead of \$2500 a seat, it's free admission. You can put your plants in sturdy, free boxes, not expensive box seats. You can root for your favorite botanical treasure. And the ground game is definitely determining the pace of things. Gosh I love these puns, especially at this time of the year.

Seriously, the new Education Center is a plant sale dream. One could not ask for a more beautiful, spacious and COVERED

setting for this event. No more can torrential downpours thwart our plans or dampen our spirits and enthusiasm. We've even got air-conditioning at the ready should global warming produce a mid-March heat wave! The spaces are lofty with floor to ceiling expanses of glass offering lovely views out to the BBG gardens. A truly inspirational setting to contemplate new additions to one's own garden and put the tail lights of winter funk in the emotional rear view mirror.



Then there is the fabulous group of unique and exceptional vendors, many of whom are not generally open to the public: **Botanica, Bouquet Banque, Celestial Dream Gardens, Growing Girls, Keeping It Green, Lael's Moon Garden, Lee Farm, NPA, Taking Root, White Picket Gardens and Wind Poppy Farm.**

Finally, we wanted to make this year's event a little warmer, more festive and family friendly. We'll have a kid's table where young gardeners can learn how to plant seeds in their own personally decorated pot that they can proudly take home alongside all of their parents' stunningly beautiful purchases. We also decided to add a little hot beverage and goodie cart to keep hands warm and tummies happy. There will even be music, of a botanical bent of course.

So please join us for March Mania. It's going to be like a tailgate party for plant lovers. Maybe my Chia Pet can be our mascot!



Young gardeners can learn how to plant seeds in their own personally decorated pot at this year's March Mania, held indoors. Photos by Carol Hart

# “Lifelong Landscape Design: Can your landscape fit your lifestyle like a glove?” with Mary Palmer Dargan

Kit Haesloop

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 25**  
**1:00 pm – Doors open at noon for**  
**plant sales & book signing**  
NPA members free/Nonmembers \$15  
Bellevue Botanical Garden  
Education Center  
12001 Main Street, Bellevue

**A**S A GARDENER, how can I fit all the plants, beautiful vistas and outdoor activities I want in my garden into a successful arrangement? Learn how, as noted landscape architect Mary Palmer Dargan provides the framework that allows you to flourish and reach your life potential at any age. To “landscape your life” is to contour and adorn your home environment to sustain your lifestyle with minimal damage to the earth. It is larger than your garden. It reaches like the mycelia of a mushroom deep into your community to interconnect the web of life.



With over 40 years of experience in the trenches designing home environments from coast to coast, Mary Palmer Dargan and her husband, Hugh Graham

Dargan, are firmly rooted in landscape design. Their best selling books, “Timeless Landscape Design” and “Lifelong Landscape Design,” reflect their commitment to sustain mother earth by healing the earth, one garden at a time. Both of them will be on hand to sign their books at this lecture.

The Dargans live dual lives while straddling corporate duties at Dargan Landscape Architects in Atlanta, Georgia, and their lovely shop, Dovecote Porch & Gardens, in Cashiers, North Carolina. They love to garden and put their principles to practice in their home environment to test trends.

Mary Dargan wowed the audience in her last lecture here during Study Weekend 2010. Don't miss this opportunity to see her again in an informative lecture that “breaks the genetic code for your property” and provides a framework to fit your landscape to your lifestyle like a glove.

## Free tickets to the Northwest Flower & Garden Show

Diana Davidson

NPA MEMBERS WHO VOLUNTEER to work a three-hour shift in the NPA booth get a free admission ticket to the Northwest Flower & Garden Show. Our enthusiastic volunteers talk to people about NPA and all it has to offer. Two people are assigned per shift, so sign up with a friend! You'll be provided with written instructions and guidance for signing up new members.

To volunteer, contact the NPA office at [info@northwestperennialalliance.org](mailto:info@northwestperennialalliance.org) or 425-647-6004.

This year's show, “Romance Blossoms,” will be held February 11-15 at the Seattle Convention and Trade Center in Seattle. If you can't volunteer but plan to visit the show, be sure to stop by the NPA booth (#2501) and register to win a garden-related prize.



# “From Old Classics to New” with Sean Hogan

Kit Haesloop

## NICOLAY MEMORIAL LECTURE SUNDAY, MARCH 15

1 pm - Doors open at noon for Cistus Nursery plant sales

NPA members \$5/Nonmembers \$20

Bellevue Botanical Garden  
Education Center  
12001 Main Street, Bellevue

**T**HE LAST FEW YEARS have brought us endless new plants. Some great, some not. At this year’s annual Nicolay Memorial Lecture, Sean Hogan will talk about his favorites, from western natives to those from far away, including star performers from Cistus Nursery’s collections of Mediterranean climate, southern hemisphere and hardy tropical plants. These are plants for many garden situations and they have proven themselves, weather-wise, through the school of hard knocks.

Sean Hogan, owner of Cistus Nursery, is a plant explorer, author and designer. He has lectured extensively in North America and Europe, and his writing and photos can be found in a wide range of horticultural and botanical literature.

From the mid-80s to the mid-90s, Sean worked as the curator of the South Afri-



can, New Zealand, Australian, New World Desert and California Native Cultivar Gardens of the UC Berkley Botanic Garden. In 1995, he and his partner, botanist Parker Sanderson, returned to Portland to start a firm specializing in regionally appropriate plants for the Pacific Northwest, which led to the opening of Cistus Nursery on Sauvie Island in the Columbia River west of Portland. Cistus Nursery is highly regarded as one of the best west coast retail micro-nurseries and is known worldwide for its collection of rare plants and advocacy of unusual and underused plants.

Come prepared to watch your list of must-have plants expand exponentially. Doors open at noon for plant sales from Cistus Nursery.

Every year, NPA holds a special lecture to honor the memory of Kevin Nicolay, one of the founders of NPA.

## Remembering Kevin Nicolay

*Kevin Nicolay was one of the founders of NPA in 1984. He was a noted plantsman and teacher, and one of the better botanical illustrators of his time. Kevin imported seeds and cuttings of rare and unusual plants, and introduced hundreds of plants to American gardens before his untimely death in 1990 at the age of 33. NPA holds an annual lecture in his honor.*

“Anyone phoning the home of Kevin Nicolay in his last year was greeted by a prim, pseudo-British voice declaring, ‘You have reached the studio of Kevin Nicolay, Slave of the Goddess Flora. He is unable to come to the phone right now because he is either painting plants, writing about plants, talking about plants or taking care of far too many plants...’”  
—Jean Emmons, botanical artist, and former student of Kevin’s

“A few years after moving to Seattle, I moved into a small mother-in-law cottage only a couple of blocks away from Kevin’s home. As a new gardener just learning about plants in the Northwest it was a real treat to see all sorts of wonder-

ful plants marching through the seasons (including) rarities like hellebores and other early spring bloomers in the lushly planted plot.”—Richie Steffen, Curator, Elisabeth C. Miller Botanical Garden

“The main memory I’d want people to take away would be how many plants Kevin introduced to the PNW that nowadays we take for granted. In some ways it is hard to believe what excitement and frisson these plants generated, seeing them for the first time. Mostly, we remember Kevin’s spirit. He was both kind and generous, gossipy and funny, talented and lazy. He was human, like all of us, but such a bright light.”  
—Glenn Withey, of garden design team Withey/Price, who designed the NPA Border

“At his funeral there were no store-bought flowers at his request, only those grown in our gardens. Jerry Sedenko’s wonderful sense of humor is now my fondest memory. He said, ‘Come on now, let’s not get too maudlin. We all know that Kevin is not pushing up daisies. He’s pushing up the rarest and best plants he can find!’”—Barbara Flynn, friend and fellow gardener extraordinaire

# Open Your Garden!

*Ilse Nethercutt*

**O**UR OPEN GARDENS PROGRAM is well supported by all our members. The tally for our 2014 season: an amazing 1700+ visits to 62 gardens opened by fellow members. It comes as no surprise that the Open Gardens program is our most popular member benefit.

Open Gardens are a shared experience for garden visitor and host alike: meeting fellow gardeners, talking plants, exchanging tips and tricks, or commiserating about failed plants.

If you have ever been a visitor on NPA garden tours, we don't need to tell you how much fun it is. You come away with ideas, inspiration, and the motivation to try something different in your own garden. It could mean a new plant, a bold plant combination you've never seen before, or a piece of DIY yard art you can't wait to try yourself. Open Gardens need garden visitors – all you need to do is show up and enjoy.

A garden host, on the other hand, gives generously in both time and effort



Rebecca Brenneman & Laird Harris garden

to prepare the garden for Open Day, and each deserves our thanks. But it is also the garden host who comes away with the more rewarding end of the deal. It's not just being in the spotlight or raking in compliments, the best part is how you will discover your own garden through the eyes of others. Previous hosts have described this experience as "wonderful," "profound," even as "an opportunity for personal growth."

Can't open your garden in 2015? You could still get involved: Consider volun-

teering at an Open Garden. The host will really appreciate your help. You could assist with garden preparation a few days before the Open Garden date. On the Open Garden days, you could direct visitors, answer questions, or prepare refreshments and preside at the sign-in sheet table.

So, whether you are a veteran gardener or an enthusiastic beginner, an old hand at showing your garden or a rookie, invite us in to see the 2015 version of your garden. Be an NPA Open Garden Host!



Susan Picquelle & James Meador garden

## THANK YOU, WELLS MEDINA NURSERY

Many thanks to our wonderful friends at Wells Medina for once again generously donating gift certificates for the Open Garden drawing at the November lecture. Four lucky garden host couples received a \$50 certificate this year: Judy Montoure and Dorian Sanchez, Jennifer and Elroy Carlson, Mary and Don MacFarlane, and Karen and Al Mashburn. The three garden visitors who received a \$25 certificate were: Vicki Stratton, Connie Purchase and Ken Little.



Linda Knutson & Ron Sell garden

# NPA WORKSHOPS & *Classes*

Saturday, February 7, 10 am - noon  
**PRUNING TECHNIQUES**  
with *George Lasch*  
Fee: \$25 Class Limit: 15



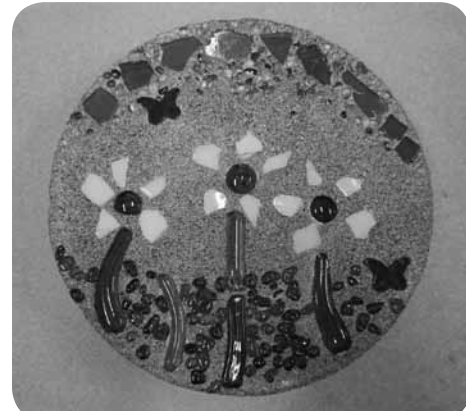
Pruning is a vital and often overwhelming part of plant ownership. Border Supervisor George Lasch will discuss and demonstrate on a backyard garden level some of the many types of pruning of trees and shrubs. Come spend a couple of hours in the NPA Border at Bellevue Botanical Garden as George helps allay those apprehensions of cutting your prized plants. Bring your questions and be ready to dive in.

Wednesday, March 11, 10 am - noon  
**ALL ABOUT HYDRANGEAS: TYPES, CARE AND PRUNING**  
with *George Lasch*  
Fee: \$25 Class Limit: 15

Love your Hydrangeas? Mopheads? Coneheads? Lacetops? Climbers? Join Border Supervisor and Hydrangea lover George Lasch for a tour of the many types of Hydrangeas. He will explain the distinguishing traits between species, how to care for the different types, and will demonstrate pruning on several species that grow in the NPA Border at the Bellevue Botanical Garden. Come prepared to walk and talk with your questions.



Saturday, March 28, 10 am - noon  
**MAKE A GARDEN STEPPING STONE**  
with *Cathy Atkins*  
Fee: \$35 includes materials  
Class Limit: 5



Learn how to make a stepping stone for your garden. Cathy Atkins will teach you this technique in her home workshop in Lynnwood. It's easy to learn with the most difficult part being choosing a design and colors. So really this class is all about fun! Cathy will show you how to mix the concrete and other techniques for making the stepping stones. The stones have to set and cure, thus will be ready to take home about two weeks after the class.

**REGISTER NOW FOR NPA CLASSES.** It's easy to register online at [www.n-p-a.org](http://www.n-p-a.org). Or contact the NPA Office at 425-647-6004. We'll be adding more classes throughout the spring and summer. Watch your emails and future editions of The Perennial Post for details. If you have an idea for a class or workshop, contact Classes & Workshops at: [classes@northwestperennialalliance.org](mailto:classes@northwestperennialalliance.org)

## Apply for an NPA Scholarship

Do you know a deserving horticulture student who would appreciate a little help with tuition and books? Encourage them to apply for an NPA Scholarship.

This year NPA will award \$750 to be used at a two or four-year accredited college or accredited trade school within the academic year following receipt of the scholarship. Applicants must be enrolled as matriculated students pursuing education in horticulture, botany, landscape design/architecture or environmental science. Funds are paid directly to the school

that the recipient will be attending and these funds may only be used for tuition and books.

The scholarship recipient also receives a one year membership in the NPA. Applicants can download the application form on the NPA website at [www.n-p-a.org](http://www.n-p-a.org). The deadline for applications is May 15, and funds are available in June.

## Great reads to chase the winter's gloom

Gayle Richardson

### **UNDER THE WIDE AND STARRY SKY** by Nancy Horan (Ballantine Books, 2013)

A novel about the life of Robert Louis Stevenson might seem an odd choice for a garden books column, but it's earned its place. Stevenson's American wife Fanny Osbourne's vocation in life was to keep the consumptive RLS alive. But her avocation, almost equally as strong and important to her, was gardening. From Oakland to Samoa, and places in between, the story of their life together is also the story of the gardens she created. Published to wide critical acclaim, one review called it "splendid."

Right on the nose, in my estimation. Easily the best book I've come across all year, and, months after I finished listening to it on tape, I still think about it frequently.

### **THE GREAT TREES OF LONDON** (Time Out Guides, 2010)

It annoys me no end that quite recently I managed to walk obliviously past one of the greatest tree spottings in London--all because I didn't have in my hand this handsome, chunky little guide to the most noteworthy trees in the capital. Those books about 1,001 things to do or see before you die are so daunting...the five dozen trees here are a much more modest and doable goal, and will take you to parts of the city you would never otherwise discover. The range of species is not vast (half the trees in the city are London planes), but the stories they tell, or the events they have witnessed, will provide hours of entertainment for the tourist who has already seen Big Ben and done the Eye and the Tate. Every entry has several color photographs and instructions on how to get there via tube or bus. Oh, the tree I missed? The Hardy Ash. Turns out Thomas Hardy was apprenticed to an architect and one of his tasks was to catalog



and oversee the removal of quite a number of tombstones in St. Pancras Churchyard preparatory to some restoration work. His interests lying elsewhere, he did the job halfheartedly and left them piled around a young tree, which, during the following century plus, grew up and around and over them, entrapping them like some kind of lava or custard, making that bicycle up the tree on Vashon Island look like a mere upstart. And the oldest tree in London? A yew, still going strong at 2,000 years of age.

### **DEEP IN THE GREEN: AN EXPLORATION OF COUNTRY PLEASURES** by Anne Raver (Knopf, 1995)

New York Times garden columnist Raver can now add one more arrow to her quiver: NPA speaker. If you missed seeing her at our first lecture at the new BBG Education Center last September, or even if you did attend, you all need to get hold of this memorable book. Put it on a little table, where you sit down in a comfortable chair with a cup of tea, or glass of wine, and enjoy it, a chapter at a time, in the coming winter gloom. These collected columns detail her return to gardening at her parents' farm in Maryland after many years' residence in New York and Massachusetts. Her

writing style is notable: touching, funny, and quirky. We've all looked at those little holes in a dried poppy seedhead, but have we ever expressed it so cleverly and succinctly? "Nature thought of the saltshaker long before we ever did." Or, in the case of peas, "the perfect houseguest," leaving behind, with the nitrogen-fixing they do, a gift. A book to be savored and treasured. Publishers Weekly nailed it: "She writes with the pen of an angel."

### **THE DARLING DAHLIAS AND THE CUCUMBER TREE** by Susan Wittig Albert (Berkeley, 2010)

Set in Darling, Alabama (pop. 907) in May, 1930, this is a most promising start to a new series by the prolific mystery writer. Here, several board members of the Dahlias Garden Club set out to solve the murder of...well, I'll keep it secret... as well as discover what's going on with that ghost in the garden behind their recently inherited clubhouse. Lots of period detail of small-town Southern living, overlaid with great poignancy, as they are assured by the President that, "the worst (of the Depression) is over." Well-developed individual characters in the club are a special treat. I plan to get my hands on THE DARLING DAHLIAS AND THE NAKED LADIES immediately.



Legendary librarian Gayle Richardson is former NPA Vice President and an avid NPA volunteer.



# SPACES AT THE EDGE

Wendy Lagozzino

**W**E HAD 23.31 INCHES of total rainfall from January 1 to May 1, 2014. That's closer to the average totals in October than May. I felt like it would never stop raining. Then, one day, as I looked out onto my side yard from my dry and cozy living room, I saw a terrible sight. Where there was once a wonderful 114-year-old wall built of broken concrete, miscellaneous rocks, clinker brick, sword ferns and Oregon grape, there was now a bona fide landslide. As the years went by, part of it had started a slow slump southward, but never enough to cause worry. Now, after a winter of drizzles and downpours, it had given way.

My wall had finally come to its knees in a heave of mud, clinker brick and buried plants. This was always a wet area where water would pool at the base of the wall and on the path around the house. But now the path was blocked with this mountain of trouble.

Rebuilding the wall entailed waiting until the rain subsided and the ground dried out a bit. Interesting to note was the mitigating factors that precipitated the sag. I know it was used by various raccoons to travel to the next front of foraging on their travels in the night. It was also used by local cats to roam to the next territory to mark and conquer. But what I also found was a nice cozy rat's nest settled behind the eroded brick. Various nesting materials had been used to produce a space lined with dried leaves, bits of moss, twigs for structure and pieces of plastic and string that were found along the way. Luckily, no one was home during the excavation.

Plans were carefully made to rebuild the wall properly to prevent another occurrence. New spaces were needed in order to reinsert the existing ferns back into the wall. This created an opportunity



Lovely blooms of *Heloniopsis acutifolia* BSWJ 6817

Photo courtesy of Far Reaches Farm

to relocate some of the ferns that had become too big for the bottom floor. When I was done, there was a narrow, shady, moist strip of soil empty—yes, empty!—of any plants. How exciting is that? These are the things for fodder on sleepless nights. As I rubbed my hands together in anticipation, I considered my options. The spring gardening season was soon upon me and plant sales abounded. In the meantime, I filled several spaces with *Lamium* 'Purple Dragon' and *Corydalis cheilanthifolia* to fend off weeds and provide temporary interest. (Yes, I heard that, you plant snobs. But these can be charming plants despite their vim and vigor.)

Not long into summer a trip to Far Reaches Farm presented itself and I was like a kid in a candy store, tempted by anything that caught my eye and would work in that space. It had to be narrow, not get too big and provide enough interest to be appreciated in this narrow, dim area. The beauty of this space on the edge was that it could be used to tuck small treasures to be discovered when they went on display.

Something I had been coveting but had nowhere to put was an *Ajuga incisa* 'Bikun'. Not your grandmother's *Ajuga*, this one is totally different and has a muted variegation in green, white and cream. Then, in May/June, spectacular blue flowers appear on stems to 16 inches.

This won't be floppy and fall into the path either. And by the way, it is in the *Lamiaceae* family, so there, you *Lamium*-haters.

The next plant choices were selected because of the hoopla they create when in bloom. *Heloniopsis* come in several different cultivars, all very special. I chose *H. acutifolia* BSWJ 6817 and *H. tubiflora* 'Temple Blue'. Great effort was made to bring them to us from far-away places, so as a result, several things happen when they bloom. First, rapturous music begins to play, then the fireworks start going off, which look similar to their flowers by the way, and finally, social media sites are all informed of the event. This can cause parking problems in the neighborhood, so you have to be vigilant to the consequences of this plant choice.

As it turned out, my memory expanded the actual space as I roamed the nursery, so I had to pare down my selections to three....so far. The *Lamium* and *Corydalis* can always be relocated, right? I'd sure like a *Hepatica* too. But those other three are my newest stars and I'm just waiting for the big show.

*Wendy Lagozzino is a longtime NPA member and avid gardener whose Queen Anne garden is packed with extraordinary plants.*

# Late Bloomers Neighborhood Group grows friendships and fun

Kathleen Neal

**“Out of gardens grow fleeting flowers but lasting friendships.” – Beverly Rose**

**O**UR NEIGHBORHOOD GROUP, the Late Bloomers, started in 2007 in Edmonds and South Snohomish County. Over the years, we’ve shared many experiences, had lots of speakers, learned much from one another, and have made wonderful friendships along the way.

As we settle in to the winter months, it’s a good time to reflect on the past gardening season and plan ahead. Wasn’t our summer glorious? (Though some of us Bloomers regretted yet again the lack of an efficient watering system. For most, hauling hose doesn’t count as efficient!)

The Late Bloomers are in the midst of planning our 2015 agenda. We meet in the evening once a month. We have 24 members, and two members per month are responsible for the topic or speaker, refreshments and hosting in one of their homes. Everyone in the group contributes ideas and leads for topics, speakers and separate daytime outings. Two of the highlights from previous years that we plan to repeat are the white elephant auction and the progressive garden tour.

Highlights, among many over the years, include:

## **SPEAKERS:**

**Zsophia Pastor**, of Innovative Landscape Technologies, on rain gardens, low impact design and sustainable gardens.

**Frankie Dennison** on growing hardy fuchsias.

**Kelly Dodson** and **Sue Milliken** from Far Reaches Farm, on plant exploration.

**Marty Wingate**, designer/author, on garden-focused travel in Europe.

## **OUTINGS:**

- Our group’s progressive garden tours, where we start with ‘breakfast’ at the first garden, progressing through the day to multiple gardens and ending with wine and appetizers at the last garden. Love this!

- NPA and other open garden tours, and NPA lectures at the Center for Urban Horticulture (CUH).

- Field trips to Dunn Gardens, Bloedel Reserve, Rhododendron Species Garden, Volunteer Park Conservatory and Cedar Grove.

- Northwest Flower and Garden Show display garden setup, helping designer Susan Browne.

- Camano Island trek; two years ago, at a member’s beachfront summer home, we were wowed by her new garden, beautiful views, kayaking and relaxing together. We can’t wait to see how the garden is maturing when we visit again next summer.



## **OTHER:**

- Garden ‘white elephant’ auction. We raised money for a tour next year of the Miller Garden. Each of us brought garden-related items that we no longer needed, like tools, garden art, plants, pots, etc., and one of the members was the auctioneer. Great fun!

- Garden crafts: concrete leaves, soldered copper peony/perennial cages, and glass wind chimes crafted from wine bottles.
- Summer potluck and swimming pool party at a member’s home.

**“You don’t have a garden just for yourself. You have it to share.” – Augusta Carter**

Some Late Bloomers members plan to open their gardens next summer and are looking forward to visiting with you. We invited Ilse Nethercutt, NPA Open Gardens co-chair, to our October meeting for information and inspiration, and encourage other neighborhood groups to do the same. Whenever I’ve opened my garden, I’ve loved talking with like-minded gardeners and took much pleasure in their enjoyment of my garden.



Happy gardening! Make the most of your NPA membership. Join a neighborhood group. Ours is currently full, bursting at the seams when we meet in our homes. If you don't find an open group in your area it's very gratifying to start a new one. Just contact Karen Brighton or Denise DuBose, NPA Membership co-chairs, at

groups@northwestperennialalliance.org for more information and mailing lists for particular zip codes.

**"In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt."** – Margaret Atwood

## Plantsmanship as Competitive Sport: Jim Fox and Dan Hinkley on why their favorite plants are better.

Dan Hinkley

**FRIDAY, JANUARY 16**  
**NO HOST RECEPTION, 6:30-7 PM**  
**LECTURE 7:00-8:00 PM**  
**SILENT AUCTION WRAP UP**  
**8:00-8:30 PM**  
Bellevue Botanical Garden  
Education Center  
12001 Main Street, Bellevue  
\$45 tickets available at:  
[www.heronwoodgarden.org/events/](http://www.heronwoodgarden.org/events/)  
Registration limited to 150

Join Dan Hinkley and Jim Fox for an evening of elucidation and folly at the Bellevue Botanical Garden as they each discuss their favorite plants.

The proceeds of this special 60-minute lecture ("Unless Jim predictably goes over his allotted time," says Dan, who wanted to do interpretive dance instead but had to be talked down) will be used to help underwrite a weekend symposium to be held in February devoted to the genus Mahonia, the "Oregon Grape" family.

Fox and Hinkley have undertaken the task of bringing scholars of a single genera of plants from around the globe to the Pacific Northwest for an intense but assuredly gratifying endeavor of better

understanding Mahonias and their kin. The symposium will be limited to 50 registrants.

Superb silent auction items will be available at the lecture, including extremely rare plants (those would be the ones Hinkley will be discussing - ad naseum); a few mundane varieties (Jim's specialty, because he's more humble); a rare Graham Stuart Thomas art print of one of his watercolors numbered and initialed by him; and a tour and dinner for six at Hinkley's home and garden, Windcliff.

Register at:  
<http://www.heronwoodgarden.org/events/>



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### Northwest Perennial Alliance

The Northwest Perennial Alliance is a community of friends, neighbors and experts who share a passion for gardening in the Pacific Northwest. Everyone is welcome.

Website: [www.n-p-a.org](http://www.n-p-a.org)  
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#### Membership:

Memberships are \$35 for individuals, \$45 for household, \$75 for business, \$20 for students. The membership year runs from January-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 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 to the extent allowable by law. Donations are used to support our educational programs, including Open Gardens, lectures, workshops, the NPA Border and student scholarships.

#### Submissions and paid advertisements:

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