



South Whidbey Tilth

Cultivating community action to build a sustainable, environmentally sound and socially equitable food system

Volume 37, Number 3

Fall 2019

Whidbey Celebrates Its Bounty

Whidbey Island Grown Week is just around the corner. September 27 through October 6, local farmers open their gates, chefs and food producers collaborate to create dining experiences, artisans, purveyors and educators share their products, craft and knowledge, all in a week-long celebration of local food.

Events include farm-to-table dinners, farm tours, the Cider Festival at the Pacific Rim Institute, the Harvest Faire at Greenbank Farm and the new Whidbey Island Harvest Festival at the Langley Fairgrounds (see related article). This list only scratches the surface. The week is jam-packed with opportunities to learn and love everything food and



everything Whidbey. Consult the list of events, which is continuously updated on the Whidbey Island Grown website, whidbeyislandgrown.com/whidbey-island-grown-week-2019.

And don't forget the Tilth Farmers' Market, where we celebrate local food and craft every Sunday, through October 13. South Whidbey Tilth is a proud member of Whidbey Island Grown.



South Whidbey Tilth to Participate in First Whidbey Island Harvest Festival

The new Whidbey Island Harvest Festival takes place October 3 through 6 at the Whidbey Island Fairgrounds in Langley. The Port of South Whidbey, the Vintners and Distillers Association, Whidbey Island Grown, Whidbey Island Arts Council and the Langley Chamber of Commerce worked together to make this festival a reality in 2019.

Classes

Thursday and Friday are devoted to classes and workshops. Our own Tilth members and Island County Master Gardeners, Anza Muenchow and Tom Vincent, will be teaching six classes (\$10 each or six for \$50):

- **Food Lover's Garden**—tips on successfully growing your favorite foods, taught by Anza, October 3, 9 to 10 a.m.
- **Organic Weed and Pest Management**—weed control techniques including crop rotation, pest exclusion and beneficial insects, taught by Anza, October 3, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
- **Building Good Soil**—understand how to improve the soils on Whidbey, taught by Anza, October 3, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.
- **Compost, Fast or Slow**—design and build a composting system for your site and needs, taught by Tom, October 4, 9 to 10 a.m.
- **Gardening Year Round**—season extension techniques and planting schedules, taught by Anza, October 4, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
- **Starting Your Vegetable Garden (for beginners)**—choosing the garden site, the basics of site preparation, choosing your seeds, and planting, taught by Anza, October 4, 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

If these classes don't have you busy enough, there are many more classes and seminars to choose from—everything from floral jewelry design to bats. To see the complete list and to preregister for any workshop, go to the Visit Langley website, visitlangley.com/store.

On the weekend, revel in celebrations because Saturday and Sunday are filled with live music, tastings, craft and food sales and activities for the whole family. You can make a scarecrow or carve a pumpkin. Read more on the Visit Langley website, visitlangley.com/lp/whidbey-island-harvest-festival.

South Whidbey Tilth will have a booth at the Fairgrounds both Saturday and Sunday, so stop by and say hello.



An Often-Overlooked Piece of the Puzzle: Washington's Farmers Can Help Address Climate Change

by Cat Kelly

When it comes to climate change, the debates over how best to find solutions and to equitably distribute the benefits of an ever-cleaner economy tear across partisan lines. But through a partnership among environmental groups, farmers, Republicans and Democrats, we can show that we can come together and address climate change through approaches such as the recently proposed legislation, Washington State Senate Bill 5947.

Led by Senators Schoesler (R) and McCoy (D) with equal bipartisan support, SB 5947 aims to create a grant program which would aid farmers and ranchers in implementing improved sustainable farming methods. It would help and reward farmers for voluntarily reducing the quantity of fossil fuel and

water inputs per unit of agricultural output; for improving soil health by utilizing no/low-till methods, grazing, cover crops, and biochar/manure applications; and for practicing agroforestry by adding new trees to prairie and agricultural lands in order to store additional carbon.

Farmers are directly impacted by climate-related events, such as droughts, forest fires, and flash floods, and SB 5947 is designed to help them adapt and become increasingly resilient to these events, while working towards a solution that will promote sustainability for generations to come. This bill has the support of several organizations including Carbon Washington, American Farmland Trust and the Nature Conservancy, as well as positive testimonials from many farmers.

However, we are asking for more involvement from communities across the state before 2020's legislative season. In particular, we are seeking the advice and wisdom from our farming community to inform the bill's design and process. If you would like more information regarding the bill and its current political history, go to the Washington State Wire website at washingtonstatewire.com/op-ed-the-climate-bill-with-bipartisan-support.

If you would like to get involved or offer your thoughts or questions, please follow this link to Carbon Washington: carbonwa.org/carbonwas-sustainable-farms-and-fields-campaign.

Together we can secure a future that will benefit our communities, our state, and our nation at large.

Cat Kelly is currently a junior at the University of Washington majoring in environmental studies with a minor in environmental cultures and values. Her career focus is sustainable agriculture, though she is still exploring options within the field.

She wrote this article in the context of her communications and outreach internship at Carbon Washington, though that group is working with several organizations on this issue, including American

Farmland Trust, the Tulalip Tribes, PCC Community Markets, the Washington Forest Protection Association, Audubon Washington and The Nature Conservancy.

In the near future, Cat will help put together a *Climate Science on Tap* event this fall with a focus on sustainable agriculture. She'll also be a peer teaching assistant for professor Eli Wheat in his newest class, *Food Systems for Sustainability*.

Market News

Journalist Kate Poss and her husband, Bill, visited the Tilth Farmers' Market Sunday, July 23 and were inspired to do a story for Kate's blog, *This Is Whidbey*. You can read the article at thisiswhidbey.com/2019/08/01/earth-food-and-art-are-the-heart-of-south-whidbey-tilth-farmers-market.



Have a look at the brand-new bamboo poles donated by Rufus Rose for the roadside market flags. Alex Martinis is making new flags. Thanks

to Rufus and Alex for freshening up our high-flying colors.

The market always needs volunteers to help set-up and break-down. Come and help at 10 a.m. or 2:15 p.m. Sundays through October 13.

Volunteer
Opportunity

Sandara Ziva Naphtali (1954 to 2019)



When Ziva didn't respond to emails or phone calls this spring, we figured she was off to Israel or onto a project of some sort. It was with great alarm and sadness that we learned that she had died. She is survived by her son, Justin, of Connecticut and her sister, Cindy, in California. She has a granddaughter and another grandchild on the way.

Ziva had managed her honeybee hives in the Tilth orchard since 2011. She taught beekeeping to children in the Calyx Community Arts School when its campus was at Tilth.

Three of the hives are occupied this season. The Whidbees (Whidbey Beekeepers Association) are handling the relocation of the hives. Ziva chose the Warré-style hive developed by the French monk, Abbé Warré. He sought to mimic nature as European honeybees made their hives in hollow tree trunks, and his style of hives simulated the pattern of adding compartments from the bottom. Ziva's description of the Warré-style hives is in the May-June 2011 issue of the *South Whidbey Tilth Newsletter*, www.southwhidbeytilth.org/newsletters/TilthNewsletterMayJune2011.pdf.



WHAT IS TILTH?

Tilth (tilth) n. [fr OE Tilian = th]
a. the quality of cultivated soil,
b. the cultivation of wisdom and the spirit.

MISSION

South Whidbey Tilth Association is an educational association, the purpose of which is to support and promote biologically sound and socially equitable agriculture. Our commitment is to advocate, study and teach agricultural practices consistent with stewardship of the natural world. We promote and demonstrate principles and practices of sustainable agriculture, as well as cultivate a variety of opportunities for local market gardeners and farmers. The organization is organized exclusively for educational and scientific purposes under Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

2019 COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES AND OFFICES

President: Prescott.....	360-682-8642	president@southwhidbeytilth.org
Vice President: Lynae Slinden	360-632-4451	lynae@whidbey.com
Finance: Edward Hueneke	360-331-5806	edgrant012@gmail.com
Secretary: Leah Claire		osmfarm@gmail.com
Membership, PR & Dev.: Andréa Linton	360-221-1310	membership@southwhidbeytilth.org
Education: Anza Muenchow.....	360-579-2890	education@southwhidbeytilth.org
Land Stewardship: Ida Gianopulos	503-730-0199	landsteward@southwhidbeytilth.org
Market: Kirstin Clauson.....	360-395-8842	market@southwhidbeytilth.org

PROJECT LEADERS

Native Landscape: J.C. May	360-331-1004	mayjc45@gmail.com
Community Garden: Ida Gianopulos	503-730-0199	landsteward@southwhidbeytilth.org
Community Produce: FRed Rouge		comm.produce@southwhidbeytilth.org
Webmaster/Email: Marc Wilson.....	360-579-2890	info@southwhidbeytilth.org
Newsletter editor: Janet Richards.....	425-361-9242	janetri9@outlook.com

CONTRACT SERVICES

Market Manager: Kirstin Clauson.....	360-395-8842	market@southwhidbeytilth.org
Bookkeeper: Jeanne Celeste.....	206-200-6732	bookkeeper@southwhidbeytilth.org

MEMBERSHIP

South Whidbey Tilth membership is \$25 annually. Additional people in a household may join for \$10 each. The newsletters can be received by email or by USPS mail. To update membership information, contact Membership at membership@southwhidbeytilth.org or leave a message at 360-321-0757. Membership renewals are due every June and members can expect a reminder.

ABOUT THE NEWSLETTER

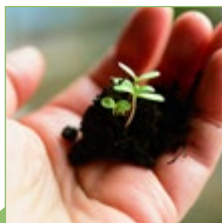
The South Whidbey Tilth newsletter is a bimonthly publication of South Whidbey Tilth Association. The primary purpose of this publication is to foster communication among our membership and friends with information about our mission and our organization. A newsletter subscription is \$25. We encourage submissions of letters, articles, book reviews and photos. The editorial committee reserves the right to edit for clarity, style and concision. Advertising and opinions in this newsletter are not necessarily the policy of the South Whidbey Tilth Association.
Newsletter committee: Janet Richards, A.T. Birmingham-Young, Stevie Linton, Prescott, Paula Richards and Andréa Linton.

ADVERTISING RATES IN THE NEWSLETTER

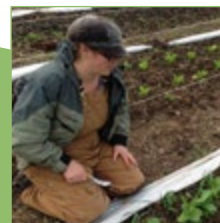
Full page \$70, half \$40, quarter \$22 and eighth \$12. **Classified ads** are also available for a dime a word.

Mail: South Whidbey Tilth
PO Box 252, Langley WA 98260
Phone: 360-321-0757
Email: info@southwhidbeytilth.org

Website: www.southwhidbeytilth.org
Facebook page: www.facebook.com/SouthWhidbeyTilth
Physical location: 2812 Thompson Road, off State Route 525



Learning as we grow



Winter Seeds, Spring Shoots, Summer Flowers and Autumn Fruits

by Leah Claire

We're heading into the last weeks of the market, and peak-season tomatoes, eggplants, peppers and plums are overflowing the baskets and tables. Even for me and my commitment to an iconoclastic agricultural calendar, it's hard to see early August as autumn; it's easy to think of it as harvest season when I'm confronting my fear of spiders ten feet up in a plum tree, or staring down a mountain of tomatillos and cucumbers with nothing but my wits,¹ the internet² and a water-bath canner to help. As the novelty of hot-weather fruits and vegetables builds into a surfeit and then an oppression, my search engine fills up with "salsa NCHFP", "tomatillos healthy canning", "NCHFP pickles", and "healthy canning cherry tomatoes" over and over and over again, the very important safety considerations that go with putting up food colliding with my rampant paranoia. Jumping into water-bath canning, for me, requires a long lead-up of reading and rereading recipes, warnings, tips and advice until I can put it off no longer, my freezers full of freezer jam and my counters full of tomatoes. After a full day of gathering my materials and reserves I tend to leap into the first batch after the child's bedtime, which invariably results in standing over a massive steaming cauldron full of glass jars at midnight. Fortunately, after that first success, much of the fear of water bath canning subsides and, until the jars run out, late night canning continues to stem

the tide of an abundant harvest.

In between batches of jam, tomato sauce, tomatillo salsa and pickles—so many pickles—the harvesting itself is a constant. (The cucumber-hating teenager is happy to eat half a pint of bread-and-butter pickles at a time and equally enthusiastic about a good fermented kosher



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dill pickle; what magic beyond salt and water is it that transforms the despised cuke into the beloved pickle?) Many a gardener's back has turned on a zucchini patch in August only to discover that the plants had been waiting for the opportunity. Cucumbers are also especially good at hiding; in fact, I'm always surprised and delighted by how well plants hide their fruits. One of the things I love most

about growing food is the opportunity to taste the produce at all the different stages of ripeness, and another is learning the plant's sneaky ways. It's easy to miss a tiny pickling cucumber hiding behind a leaf; more startling is passing right over a foot-long slicing cucumber camouflaged in a not-very-large plant.

As August wears into September, other people become significantly more open to the changing of the seasons. If you can get a pumpkin spice latte on your way to back-to-school shopping, it's almost inarguable that fall has arrived. Sure, the leaves aren't turning on the trees yet, but if I don't get back out to the plum grove with an extension ladder, it'll be the end of the harvest before I can blink. Saving seeds for next year begins to weigh on my mind. My neglected and guilt-inducing pea and bean arbor is averting catastrophe and providing the seeds for next year's pea and bean arbors (carefully tended, I'm sure). The act of seed saving is unbelievably rewarding. Whether picking a perfectly ripe fruit or splitting open a dried pod of jewel-bright Cherokee black beans, I find the actions of contributing to a plant's life cycle satisfying on an evolutionary level. Saving seeds isn't about saving money, though it is always a pleasure to rely less on any supply chain. You never know when a seed company like Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds will invite anti-Indigenous, white-supremacist Cliven Bundy to be a speaker at a big event, as they did this

¹ Not a reliable source of safe canning instructions.

² Often not a reliable source of safe canning instructions, which is why I highly and only recommend the sites for the National Center for Home Food Preservation and www.healthycanning.com.



The Importance of Trees

by Janet Richards

Trees are good at carbon sequestration. They take CO² out of the air, use the carbon to create biomass, and then hang on to that carbon in their roots, trunks and branches for decades, sometimes centuries.

In a recent study reported in *Science Magazine* (“The global tree restoration potential,” *Science*, 05 Jul 2019: Vol. 365, Issue 6448, pp. 76-79), researchers attempted to measure just how much tree cover the Earth can currently support. In October 2018, a special report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) proposed that in order to limit global warming to 1.5°C by 2050, we would need to increase forests by one billion hectares. But can the Earth support that many additional trees? That’s just what this study set out to determine.

They created a predictive model that first measured existing tree cover in protected areas (places with little human impact) and projected potential tree cover onto new areas under current environmental conditions. To determine if these new areas could support tree cover within existing ecosystems, they used soil and climate data.

They then subtracted out agricultural and urban areas. Their result; the Earth can currently support an additional .9 billion hectares of canopy. Very close to the one billion that IPCC researchers called for. This would eventually store about 205 gigatons of carbon, roughly two-thirds of the anthropogenic carbon burden to date (around 310 gigatons).

Reforestation that much land would not be easy; the study was blind to public versus private property, and climates will change in the course of any reforestation project. But the good news is that over 50% of the tree restoration potential is in Russia, the United States, Canada, Australia, Brazil and China—all countries with economies that can support large restoration projects. The study also created a map that can be used to assess restoration opportunities with data on existing natural ecosystems and biodiversity.

A lofty plan worth attempting, not only for the carbon sequestration, but because trees cool the landscape, improve the small water cycle, provide wildlife habitat, and nurture our souls. Whether we think globally or locally, planting .9 billion hectares of trees will happen one tree at a time.

Tilth Fruit Comes into Season

by Andréa Linton and Prescott

The Tilth campus is home to many fruit and some nut trees; the results of decades-ago planting by several Tilth members, including Michael Seraphinoff, Myrna Twomey, Barbara Kolar and Mark Fessler.

This is the time of year to stroll the grounds and discover the grapes, apples, pears, plums and walnuts. As they ripen, the harvested fruit will be available at the Tilth Farmers’ Market on Sundays through October 13. The late summer Gravenstein apples were harvested and sold at the Community Produce booth. The Asian and Seneca pears, as well as Gala and Liberty apples, will be available. The ripening season for the Blue Pearmain, Russet and Wolf River apples is too late for the market.

If you would like to help with the harvest or if you’d like to buy these late-ripening fruits, contact Prescott at 360-682-8642 or prscot@whidbey.net to arrange a time. Please remember that fruit grown at Tilth in the common areas of the Campus is intended to be an economic resource for our organization. It will be

Tilth Fruit on page 6

A Note About Trees

by Michael Seraphinoff

A number of us have been reading *The Overstory, a Novel*, by Richard Powers, which explores the human relationship to trees. That got me to thinking about trees on the Tilth campus. It is easy to see how we were persuaded to plant and nurture trees that give us fruit and nuts. But other trees have persuaded us as well. For example, the Garry oaks of Oak Harbor. We found their look appealing and enjoyed their green shade on the streets of the city. So, one of our members, Myrna Twomey, was motivated to gather acorns from a park and plant them in pots and later she gave them to others of us, who planted them on the Tilth land, and others still fenced them and nurtured them along. And now we have an oak meadow and three thriving oaks at the entrance. This is not simply chance or whimsy. This is our friendly relationship with these trees—thriving together for our mutual benefit.



FRed Rouge, photo

This year's Gratitude Dinner gave us much to be grateful for: an abundance of food, relaxing music, a lucrative auction and raffle, good company and the warm breeze that makes summer evenings at the Tilth campus special.

Learning, from page 4

year, saying, "...we want to bring together a broad diverse group of folks through gardening. Peace through gardening." Their insistence that gardening and seed-saving are uniquely apolitical ignores that this land's original gardeners and seed-savers are largely dispossessed, that their various peoples' tragedies are relegated to settler school history books, and that it is somehow acceptable to call a seed variety "Trail of Tears."

Seed saving is satisfying and economical and allows me to disengage with another small aspect of capitalism, and every disengagement with expansive capitalism is a reason to celebrate. Even more, following the trail from the fruits I harvest now to the seeds I'll save from them to planting those seeds this winter and later in the spring, then watching them grow as if by magic, and finishing the cycle again next summer, is engaging in a process that for most of human history was an integral and inextricable part of our humanity. As we move into a climate-unstable future, we need more people saving seeds and interacting with more land on a basis of collective stewardship. This is a lifestyle and cultural shift that holds the promise of healing some of the harm that we have wrought, but also of healing some of the pain that we as humans feel when our actions are so terribly linked to climate crisis and the death it brings.

Tilth Fruit, from page 5

available for sale when ripe; please do not harvest this fruit for your own use, however taking a few for tasting is fine.

Wolf River Apple

One of the early apple trees established in the South Whidbey Tilth Community Garden was a Wolf River. It appeared to have died, but last year it revived and this year the fruit is gloriously present. This apple is really large, so two or three are enough for a pie. It has a mild, sweet flavor and the ability to hold its shape when cooked. The Wolf River apple is famous for smooth, creamy apple butter. It is resistant to scab and is cold-hardy. Wolf River is an old heritage apple that emerged from the seed of the Russian Alexander apple.



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Around 1856 William Springer packed his family and possessions onto a wagon and began heading south from Canada to Wisconsin. Somewhere en route he stopped along the shores of Lake Erie and purchased a bushel of apples, believed to be Alexander, itself an old apple originating in Russia and imported into this country in the 1800s. When he reached his destination in Wisconsin, he planted a handful of Alexander seeds along the banks of the Wolf River that ran through the middle of his new farm. From these chance seedlings arose the Wolf River apple.

From "Wolf River Story" by Big Horse Creek Farm, Ashe County, North Carolina; posted March 6, 2014; bighorsecreekfarm.com/wolf-river-story.

Tree of Life Mural Project

by Cherri Forrest

Adding to the growing buzz at South Whidbey Tilth is a \$500 matching funds grant from Hand in Hand Partners, generously offered to our Tree of Life mural project by musician Yana Viniko during Tilth's annual South Whidbey Acoustic Music festival.

According to their mission statement, "The Hand in Hand Partners (HIHP) is a private nonprofit funding entity created in 2014. Operating through Vanguard Charitable, HIHP seeks to provide matching grant funds to qualified 501(c)(3) organizations to benefit their community fundraising goals relating but not limited to education, the arts, environmental and social services, with preference for smaller, locally-based enterprises in the Puget Sound area." This



fund is a perfect match for the Tree of Life mural project. By sharing a positive message of regeneration, the project's intent is to enhance, strengthen or renew our sense of community, conversation, face-to-face contact and a quality relationship with the land.

All of Tilth's market buildings will receive varying degrees of creative enhancement, and most will feature flora and fauna found in and around the Salish Sea. Exceptions include the pavilion—home of the Laughing Cat and OSM Eats—and the forthcoming entryway farm stand, which will feature designs inspired by the abundant produce so lovingly nurtured by our local growers.

With the HIHP grant, all community



President's Message: Autumn Notes

by Prescott, president

On September 9 we harvested Tilth's walnuts. After letting the skins dry for a few days, I husked them and my hands are stained a lovely brown. It's a reminder to connect with fiber artists next year so the skins can be used for dye. Last season we harvested about 100 nuts, but they weren't

husked soon enough and the nut had a bitter taste. We harvested those nuts around August 31 so that the squirrels wouldn't get them all. This year I decided to push the ripening another week and discovered the heavy crop had diminished with only 30 nuts left. Still in their shells, they are now drying above our wood stove to be ready for the Community Produce booth at the market. Anyone with experience harvesting walnuts in western Washington, I'd be interested in your process.

Seeking Candidates for the Tilth Council of Trustees

The South Whidbey Tilth Council of Trustees will begin the process to establish a Nominating Committee at the September 19 business meeting. The committee seeks to nominate qualified candidates for four of the eight positions on the 2020 council. The two-year terms of positions 1, 2, 4 and 6 will have been completed by the annual membership meeting in January. Those positions are currently held by Prescott, president; Lynae Slinden, vice president; Ida Gianopulos, land steward and Kirstin Clauson, market committee.

A trustee candidate must support the purpose and principles of South Whidbey Tilth; have been a member of the association for at least one year at the time of nomination; and must have made some contribution or show involvement during the year prior to nomination, such as active participation in a committee, a volunteer project, contributions to the newsletter or attendance at business meetings. Exceptions to this rule may be allowed by the Nominating Committee for a person with special qualifications or a person who has been a member for one year of an organization with similar goals. Please email your willingness to serve or your candidate suggestions to info@southwhidbeytilth.org. You may also call or mail the same to any of the council members listed on page 3.

donations will be matched up to \$500 and are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. Your sponsorship for this project can be in your name, in honor of someone special or in the name of your business. If you would like to be a part of this—and we at Tilth hope you will—please contact Cherri at treasureourisland@gmail.com.

As before, the sponsor's name for all donations, be they cash, in-kind, volunteering or materials, will be honored and added in at the roots,

feeding the painted tree on its "Donor Wall of Gratitude."

The mural project seeks to raise awareness of South Whidbey Tilth and its many projects, increase membership and attract more events to the Tilth campus, such as seasonal celebrations, more classes, demos and a field dance! Check out the earlier article about this project at www.southwhidbeytilth.org/newsletters/eTilthNewsletterAugust2018.pdf and look for more updates in the next newsletter.



Making the Tilth Campus More Attractive to Pollinators

by Ida Gianopulos

Thanks to a grant from this year's Whidbey Island Garden Tour, South Whidbey Tilth is ready to begin the first phase of a project to redesign the entrance to the Tilth campus and install a native plant and pollinator hedgerow. The Garden Tour grant is funding materials for an informational kiosk that will greet visitors, and plants to landscape the area immediately surrounding the entrance gate and part of the hedgerow extending along the north property boundary.

The plantings will emphasize native plants that provide food and shelter for a wide variety of native pollinators, particularly native bees, many of which are experiencing declines. Some species that were once common in lowland western Washington are now vulnerable to extinction due to habitat loss, widespread use of a new class of pesticides known as neonicotinoids and diseases spread by managed bees. Native bees play a large role in crop pollination, and are the primary pollinators in many native ecosystems. Increasing habitat is a critical step in helping these important insects, and Tilth's prominent location and educational mission makes the campus an ideal place to demonstrate how to provide quality habitat.

Many people are surprised to hear

that there are more types of bees than just honeybees. In fact, bees are an incredibly diverse group of insects, with more than 20,000 species globally, and 4,000 species in the United States. Even here in Washington, we have 800 different species of native bees. The familiar honeybee is a European import, not a North American native.

Some examples of bee groups in North America include: bumblebees, mason bees, long-horned bees, wool carder bees, sweat bees, leafcutter bees, miner bees, digger bees, plasterer bees and cuckoo bees. Most native bees are solitary, meaning they don't live in hives, but rather, individual females build and provision nests in which to lay their eggs. Many of their common names reflect the materials and methods they use to build their nests. About 70% of solitary bees are ground-nesting, making their nests in small underground cavities, while the other 30% nest in abandoned beetle burrows in wood or inside hollowed-out branches or twigs. Because they do not have a colony to defend, most solitary bees are fairly docile and unlikely to sting.

Bumblebees are the only truly social bee in North America, living in small colonies and sharing work, and even making a small amount of honey

to get the colony through bad weather days when they are not able to forage. While bumblebees may seem common as they buzz through your raspberry patch in spring, you are most likely only seeing a handful of the 23 species native to Washington. Some species that once were common, such as the western bumblebee, are now at risk of extinction, and rarely seen.

Inspired by the work of the Xerces Society, a nonprofit organization dedicated to protecting invertebrates and their habitats, one of the major goals of the entrance landscaping project is to raise awareness of the diversity of native bees and other pollinators, and to encourage others to plant bee-friendly landscapes. The project will include educational signage identifying the different plant species and other habitat features in the landscape, as well as other helpful tips, such as purchasing plants labeled as neonicotinoid-free from nurseries.

You can help! Volunteers are needed to help with site preparation and planting. Watch for upcoming work party announcements, or contact landsteward@southwhidbeytilth.org for more information.



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Fair Buzz



Native Bee Educational Display set up by Paula and Janet Richards, Prescott and Tom Vincent.

At the Whidbey Island Fair this past July, South Whidbey Tilth made an educational display about native bees, which earned a blue ribbon. With the native bee message situated between the Whidbee’s honeybee exhibit and the Conservation District’s native habitat brochures, the Ag Building buzzed with information about pollination.

Tilth provided a table for “rolling your own” native bee nests from paper, with many sample nests (and often Tom Vincent) around to provide inspiration.

The worktable for making vegetable critters was popular again this year. There was hardly enough room to display all the creations.

Even though the Fair happens early in the growing season, there were still a number of beautiful produce entries, such as herbs, apples, honey, early vegetables and compost (yes, compost can be beautiful; it generated the most questions from visitors). Someone managed to produce a nice big, orange pumpkin by July!

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped set up and steward the Ag Department building during the Fair.



People’s Choice Veggie Critter 2019, created by Carl Kohlhaas, a 4th-grader at the Whidbey Island Waldorf School

Join, Renew or Donate to Tilth’s Projects

Join South Whidbey Tilth. A single household membership is \$25 and \$10 for each additional adult household member. One newsletter is emailed or mailed to each household. *Please list each member’s name.* Enclose \$25 (for one) + ___ (number of additional household members x \$10) = \$_____. Membership renewals are June of each year. If you missed this year’s date, please do it now.

I am interested in volunteering: event planning, gardening or landscaping, other

I/we also want to make a \$_____ donation to help with the goals of South Whidbey Tilth, a nonprofit corporation, EIN #91-1456495. Contact me about estate donations to South Whidbey Tilth’s Sustaining Fund.

Please keep my/our donation anonymous. I/we authorize publication of my/our name(s) as a donor.

Name _____ Email _____

Name _____ Email _____

Name _____ Email _____

Mailing address _____ Town _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Mobile _____ I want to receive: email updates newsletter online

Please mail to: South Whidbey Tilth Association, P.O. Box 252, Langley, Washington 98260, or send via PayPal.

CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

- 27** through October 6 Whidbey Island Grown Week, see events at <https://whidbeyislandgrown.com/whidbey-island-grown-week-2019/>
- 29** ZooFit with PJ, Sunday at 12 p.m. at the Farmers' Market, make a bath scrub
- 29** Farmers' Market Sunday, 11 a.m. to 2 p. m. with singer Maliyah Tucker

OCTOBER

- 1** Farmer's Shadow garden discussion group, Tuesday 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Bayview Sears House, 2812 E Meinhold Road, Langley
- 3-6** Whidbey Island Harvest Festival at the Langley Fairgrounds, see events at <https://visitlangley.com/lp/whidbey-island-harvest-festival/>
- 3-4** Food Growing Class Series given by Anza Muenchow and Tom Vincent, register at <https://visitlangley.com/store/>
- 6** The RFs swing and rock at the Farmers' Market, Sunday 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- 6** Tilth film night, *The Biggest Little Farm*, Sunday 6 p.m. potluck, 3821 Beaver Creek Lane, Clinton
- 7** Whidbey Island Growers Association potluck, Programs & Opportunities through the Farm Bill, Monday 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the WSU Extension Office in Coupeville
- 13** Farmers' Market, Sunday 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. last of the season

- 17** Business meeting, Thursday 6 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran's annex, Freeland

NOVEMBER

- 3** Tilth film night, Sunday 6 p.m. potluck, 3821 Beaver Creek Lane, Clinton
- 4** Whidbey Island Growers Association potluck, Market Research for Farmers & Local Business Tools, Monday 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the WSU Extension Office in Coupeville
- 5** Farmer's Shadow garden discussion group, Tuesday 6 to 7:30 p.m.
- 8-10** Tilth Alliance Conference, Yakima, <http://www.tilthalliance.org>.
- 21** Business meeting, Thursday 6 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran's annex, Freeland

DECEMBER

- 1** Tilth film night, Sunday 6 p.m. potluck, 3821 Beaver Creek Lane, Clinton
- 1** Content due date for the winter Tilth newsletter, contact janetri9@outlook.com
- 2** Whidbey Island Growers Association 3rd annual holiday potluck, Monday 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Cove Café on the wharf in Coupeville
- 3** Farmer's Shadow garden discussion group, Tuesday 6 to 7:30 p.m.
- 19** Business meeting, Thursday 6 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran's annex, Freeland