



South Whidbey Tilth

Serving farmers, gardeners and consumers interested in environmentally sound, sustainable and socially equitable agriculture

Volume 33, Number 2

April/May 2015

Crop Diversification, Wildcrafting plus Fairies

Botanist and naturalist Michael Pilarski shares his understanding of human interactions with nature and spirit in an evening presentation at Unity of Whidbey at 5671 Crawford Road at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 15. Pilarski is best known for his engaging and informative workshops on the ecology, identification and uses of native plants. However, in his capacity as president of the nonprofit environmental organization, Friends of the Trees, he also ventures into more mystical realms at times. Donations are welcome at the door.

This evening presentation occurs in the middle of a two-day visit to Whidbey Island, which is part of a larger North Cascades workshop tour throughout April. He also presents two workshops exploring the plant world from a science-based and practical vantage. The first is 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Wednesday, April 15, *1,000 Crops for Northwest Farmers*. It covers how to increase crop diversity and productivity on small farms, including wider cultivation of both culinary and medicinal plants. The cost is a sliding scale of \$20 to \$50. It also takes place at Unity of Whidbey.

The next day Pilarski presents *Wildcrafting Edible and Medicinal Plants for Home Use and Income* at the Pacific

Michael Pilarski, see page 4

Market Season Starts May 3

Opening day for the South Whidbey Tilth Farmers' Market is Sunday, May 3. The opening chime is 11 a.m. Island Strings performs from noon to 2, featuring the annual May Pole winding and lots of lively tunes to hear while shopping and enjoying lunch.



Prescott photo

Tom White is one of many farmers with fresh produce for sale at the market.

Several vendors will have bedding plants to get your garden off to a quick start. Edward Hueneke returns as chef in the kitchen and Dorcas

Market opening, see page 8

Earth Day Celebrated All Month Long on Whidbey



Earth Day is officially on April 22, but a month full of activities — collectively known as Whidbey Earth

and Ocean Month — has been organized by a dozen or more Island nonprofits and religious congregations.

Pulling it all together and also organizing their own events is the Whidbey Earth Day Committee, consisting of representatives from: Citizens Climate Lobby, Whidbey Chapter; Whidbey ECO Network (Education, Communication and Outreach Network); Goosefoot; Greenbank Farm; Service, Education & Adventure (SEA); and South Whidbey Tilth.

Activities for 2015 include two all-day festivals, lectures,

*A complete schedule is available at the **Whidbey Earth Day website**. Check it often for updates as the month proceeds. [Click the logo.]*

art shows, a half-day of activities at the South Whidbey High School, and a series of science talks and discussions at pubs and wine bars. Member churches of the Greening Congregations also have nondenominational activities planned.

A complete schedule is available at the **Whidbey Earth Day website**. Check it often for updates as the month proceeds. Like it on Facebook too.

Events include:

- **Saturday, April 18: Welcome the Whales Festival** in downtown Langley, featuring speaker James Sumich, author of *E. robustus: The Biology and Human History of Gray Whales*, in addition to children's activities, a parade, music and a beach celebration.

Earth Day, see page 4

Wiki for Farmers

from Michele Catalano, executive director of Tilth Producers of Washington

Tilth Producers is seeking articles written by growers and other agricultural experts to share as the foundation for Tilth Producers' new Wiki for Farmers! The Wiki for Farmers will mirror Wikipedia as a free-access, free-content encyclopedia-like database. By using a mix of research-based articles, farmer narratives, tips and methods about farming, this Wiki will provide a platform for the exchange of information.

Join our interactive community to share your knowledge. We encourage submissions by farmers (both beginning and experienced), agricultural researchers, and farm advocates. Wiki submissions about all topics related to organic and sustainable agriculture including growing practices, research-based work, curriculum and more are welcome.

Like Wikipedia, when you author articles for the Tilth Producers' Wiki other users may offer edits and comments. By allowing growers to add their "two cents," the Wiki for Farmers will build an invaluable collection of knowledge to benefit our community.

Ready to use Wiki for Farmers? For current members of Tilth Producers of Washington, accessing the Wiki is easy!

How to submit:

1. Login using your username and password to the [Tilth Producers' website](#). The process for posting to the Wiki is similar to posting a classified ad or internship posting to the website.

Having trouble logging in? Email [Tilth Producers](#) or call 206-632-7506.

2. Look for the "Wikis" tab on the left side menu of your User Dashboard, and click "Add Wiki."

3. Once you have a blank form, title your submission and be sure to select an appropriate Wiki Category on the right hand bar. Submissions are allowed a maximum of 1,000 words.

Submission Guidelines:

- Pictures are allowed as long as all permissions for sharing the image

Wiki for Farmers, see page 9



WHAT IS TILTH?

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

South Whidbey Tilth Association is a nonprofit corporation and a chapter of Washington Tilth Association.

MISSION

Washington Tilth Association is an educational and research association, the purpose of which is to support and promote biologically sound and socially equitable agriculture.

South Whidbey Tilth Association is a diverse network of people working cooperatively within our organization and in the community. 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.

2015 COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES AND OFFICES

President: Prescott.....360-544-2278 *Tilth president*
 Vice President: OPEN
 Finance: Edward Hueneke360-331-5806 *Tilth treasurer*
 Secretary: Jean Nelson360-331-5191 *Tilth secretary*
 Membership: Marc Wilson.....360-579-2890 *Tilth membership*
 Education: Michael Seraphinoff360-5442278 *Tilth education*
 Land Stewardship: Dorcas Young..360-331-4064 *Tilth land steward*
 Market: Tom White360-381-0012 *Tilth market*

PROJECT LEADERS

Native Landscape: J.C. May.....360-331-1004 *Tilth native landscape*
 Community Garden: Linda Good ...360-221-6439 *Tilth pea patches*
 Webmaster/Email: Marc Wilson.....360-579-2890 *Tilth email/website*

CONTRACT SERVICES

Market manager:*Tilth Farmers' Market*
 Newsletter editor: Prescott.....360-544-2278 *Tilth newsletter editor*
 Bookkeeper: Jeanne Celeste.....360-331-6135 *Tilth bookkeeper*

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, one per household. To update membership information, contact Marc Wilson at 360579-2890 or email [member database](#).

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. Submissions of letters, articles, book reviews and photos are encouraged. 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.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO THE JUNE/ JULY ISSUE IS JUNE 1

Newsletter committee: A.T. Birmingham-Young, Michael Seraphinoff, Gary Ingram, Stevie Linton, Prescott and Marc Wilson.

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.

HOW TO CONTACT US

Mail to: South Whidbey Tilth
 PO Box 252, Langley WA 98260
 Phone: 360-544-2278
 Email: [info \(at\) South Whidbey Tilth \(dot\) org](mailto:info@SouthWhidbeyTilth.org)
 Website: www.southwhidbeytilth.org
 Facebook page: www.facebook.com/SouthWhidbeyTilth
 Physical location: 2812 Thompson Road, off SR 525

Tilthy Soil Means Healthy Veggies — Learn How

by Marc Wilson



Marc Wilson, Maha Farm and Forest, selling produce at the Tilth Farmers' Market.

Here on South Whidbey Island, we are incredibly fortunate to have glacial outwash plain soils that are rich in minerals and consist of layers of sand and fine sediments, potentially creating soil that is good agricultural land. We have a long history of agriculture, probably thousands of years. The native people farmed Camas on the prairies, cleared with fire. The Western settlers used animals, machinery and fire to clear and plant crops. Sometimes the tilth, the fertility of the soil, plummeted when exposed to clearing and tilling. But other places did well. Knowing our soil and helping it to be healthy is our primary task as farmers, in order to use our land productively over time.

We now know a lot about how to grow food in a lot of different environments. However, remember the importance of selecting an appropriate plant for a particular environment. Without making major changes to your landscape, if you have wet soil, amendments are not going to make the soil appropriate for upland species. Similarly, you can only go so far amending sandy soil so it will hold enough water and nutrients to grow most vegetables.

First, what kind of soil do you have? What is the water table in the winter, the spring, the summer and the fall? You want soil that is damp, but has enough air in it for the plants to breathe. Good soil structure has about 50 percent space between soil particles (i.e. sand, clay). The space provides channels for water and air to reach the roots. If you compress the soil, you may destroy its structure making it less fertile. Work the soil when it is damp, not wet, and minimize walking or running machinery on the soil in order to maintain structure. Protect the soil from winter rains with cover crops or other covers. During the summer drought period, water deeply and less often to encourage roots and the soil biota to grow deeply.

Once we have a handle on the structure of the soil,

we inevitably want to consider the nutrients. Is the compost enough? What other nutrients do we need to supply? If you have a good supply of organic material already in the soil and a good amount of clay, such as a sandy loam, you will need to supply Nitrogen (N), Phosphorus (P) and Potassium (K) to your plants. These are the three numbers on fertilizer bags, usually in this order. There are a number of other minor nutrients. In most places on south Whidbey, most of the other nutrients are found in our granite dust soil, Canadian Rocky mountains ground up and carried here by the ice sheet and by rivers. The nutrients are available in slow release form in compost. Manures and animal-derived meals are some of the best sources of these major nutrients.

A final detail related to nutrients is the acidity of the soil. Pretty much all soils in the Northwest are acidic. Rain dissolves carbon dioxide in the atmosphere to form a mild acid. By adding amendments, we return the soil to a more neutral state so all the minerals in the soil will easily dissolve and be available to the roots.

The last, and perhaps most important factor in the tilth of soil is the soil biota. The organisms in the soil do a lot of work to make the minerals and the organic matter in the soil available to a plant when it is needed. A healthy population of soil organisms, including fungi that may be transporting nutrients over long distances, helps assure that the vegetables will be healthy. We can amend the soil and add these organisms directly to the plants with compost teas. And we can grow these organisms by recognizing what kind of soil we have, how much or how little water we have in the soil and then amending with the right amount of nutrients for the short term and organic material for the long term.

I will teach a class on what to do in your garden from noon to 2 p.m. on Sunday, April 19 where we can continue this discussion and explore how to maximize the tilth of our soil.

I will also teach a workshop on installing garden irrigation on Saturday, May 16. We hope to get several of the Tilth Community Garden plots hooked up with drip irrigation systems that day and will be continuing installations throughout the early summer.

Join us for this class What Makes Good Soil Sunday, April 19 Noon to 2 p.m.

South Whidbey Tilth Sustainability Campus
2812 Thompson Road, off SR 525, Langley

Come to the classroom by the market

Cost

\$8 for Tilth members
\$15 for nonmembers

Email **Michael Seraphinoff**

or call
360-544-2278

Earth Day, from page 1

- **Earth Day, Wednesday, April 22:** South Whidbey High School, a half-day of educational activities with participation by the school's student Green Team.

Skagit Valley College in Oak Harbor hosts a keynote with Steve Rothboeck, workshops and more from noon to 6:30 p.m.

- **Saturday, April 25 is the Earth Day Festival at the Greenbank Farm** from 1 to 6 p.m. At 1 p.m.

Kevin Zobrist, Washington State University Island County Extension forestry specialist leads a native trees and plants nature walk. At 2 p.m. Rick Baker of Whidbey Watershed Stewards presents *Chemistry CO2: Ocean Acidification*. At 4 p.m. keynote speaker Kristin Ohlson, author of *The Soil Will Save Us* speaks. Prior to her talk, Island Strings performs at 3 p.m. followed by the annual peace picture at 3:30. Other activities include tours of the solar farm and the Greenbank Farm School. There will be kids activities, music and networking displays from local environmental groups. After 6 p.m. enjoy an evening community dance with PETE.

- **Service days run all month** for work parties, including: South Whidbey State Park, Saturday, April 18 from 9 to 11 a.m. to clean up the campgrounds. Meet in the parking lot near the restrooms and campsites. Questions? Email [Kathy Stetz](mailto:KathyStetz@whidbeytilth.org).

Scots Broom Removal at Double Bluff Beach, April 18 from 1 to 4 p.m., the focus is on Scots broom removal but information on other noxious weeds in Island County will also be presented. Contact [Janet Stein](mailto:JanetStein@wsu.edu), WSU Island County Noxious Weed Program Coordinator, 360-678-7992.

Blackberry-Pull Work Party, Crockett Lake, Coupeville on Friday, April 24 from 9 a.m. to noon. Sponsored by [Whidbey Camano Land Trust](http://WhidbeyCamanoLandTrust.org). Signup on their website.

- **Art exhibitions** at the Bayview Cash Store, 5603 Bayview Road, Langley:

ACT • DENY • ADAPT: Responses to Climate Change

On view April 17 to May 31, this exhibit showcases recent research on climate change, responses to the looming crisis and solutions to decrease carbon emissions.

Celebrating Mother Earth

Through April at Blooms Winery Taste for Wine & Art, featuring shell art and pottery by Carol Rhodes, painting by Anna Davis and Sharon Tryon, and photography

SOUTH WHIDBEY TILTH will have displays at both the April 22 event at South Whidbey High School and April 25 at the Greenbank Farm. Come by and play the "Guess the Seedling" game, a challenge of your gardening knowledge. Identify each seedling on a scoresheet, then put it in a jar for the drawing to win a flat of seed starts.

If you can help with the displays on either day, contact [Prescott](mailto:Prescott@whidbeytilth.org) or call 360-544-2278 (click green text for email).

or relax and linger longer.

- *Nine Days of Prayer* booklet and video, to conclude on Earth Day, download a copy of the booklet, click green.
- Additional lectures and educational forums as well.

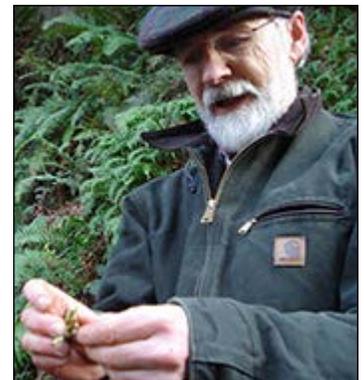
by Elizabeth Atly.

- **Science While Sipping** pub talks, bringing short talks and discussions to restaurants, wineries, and pubs.

Septic Systems @ Bayleaf, Friday, April 24 from 4 to 6 p.m. at 101 NW Coveland Street in Coupeville; Island County Public Health staff help home owners make sense of their septic systems. Come with your questions. Beer, wine, cheese and chocolates are available for purchase. Stop in for a minute

Michael Pilarski, from page 1

Rim Institute in Coupeville. The workshop from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. covers wildcrafting of native and medicinal plants, their identification and uses, and the potential for income, with an emphasis on responsible, sustainable harvesting. The Pacific Rim Institute is located at 180 Parker Road, two miles south of Coupeville, off State Route 20. The cost is \$50 and preregistration is helpful. Please register at the [Inland Northwest Permaculture Guild website](http://InlandNorthwestPermacultureGuild.org). Choose the Whidbey Island box.

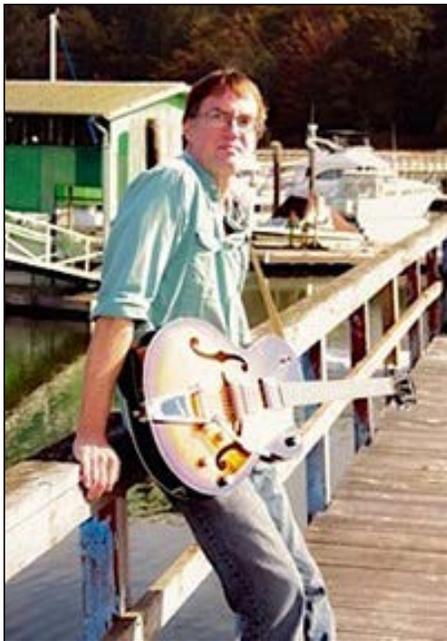


Michael Pilarski

Michael Pilarski has wildcrafted medicinal plants commercially for 17 years and also farms medicinal plants. He is familiar with both the maritime and the inland Northwest species. He makes herb tinctures and infused oils. He combines the science of herbs with the magic of herbs through his studies in plant spirit medicine. Michael has initiated and organized many herb gatherings including the Northwest Herbal Fair, the Montana Herb Gathering and the Spokane Herbal Fair. He is the author of many books and articles including *Growing & Wildcrafting Medicinal Plants in the Pacific Northwest* and the *Ethnobotany and Ethnoecology Resource Guide*.

Both workshops are cosponsored by Friends of the Trees and South Whidbey Tilth. Please let us know you are coming to one or all events; email [Michael Seraphinoff](mailto:MichaelSeraphinoff@whidbeytilth.org) or call 360-544-2278.

Music and Skills at the Market



Woody Virgil performs May 31.

Linda Good has been busy lining up wonderful live music for the 26-week-long market season. Michael Seraphinoff, as education committee chair, is lining up programs for the season too.

Linda is looking for performers for May 10, 24 and 17 and June 7, 14, 21 and 28. Woody Virgil is singing May 31.

Email Linda or call 360-221-6439.

For program presentations during the market email Michael or call 360-544-2278. When you click the green text your email program opens and your message is addressed.

Acoustic Music Festival

It's mostly an all-female lineup for the Sixth Annual South Whidbey Acoustic Music Festival (SWAM) featuring Siri Bardarson, Gloria Ferry-Brennan, Debbie Zick and Kimmer Morris, Joann Quintana and Nancy Nolan, to date. Save the date, Sunday, June 28 from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. The event takes place during the Tilth Farmers' Market and vendors are encouraged to stay open through the last act.

Russell Clepper steps in to get the event rolling. He could use people to help with setup the day before, Saturday, June 27, and the morning of, to:

- help with sound
- work the donation jar(s) throughout the day
- help with parking
- take pictures or sketch
- help with cleanup and breakdown
- bring coolers with ice packs for shoppers to keep their produce cool while enjoying the show

Contact Russ by email or call 360-632-0593.

Did you take any pictures of last year's festival on July 6? We need them. Check out the festival development on Facebook, South Whidbey Acoustic Music Festival.

Guest market vendors are welcome the day of the event. See the agreement form on the market page of the [South Whidbey Tilth website](http://SouthWhidbeyTilth.com) or email [Tom White](mailto:Tom) or call 360-381-0012.

Calyx School Returns

by Lisa Kois, Calyx Community Arts School director

With Spring comes the promise of new life. And the Calyx Community Children's Art Garden is very much alive these days! The Calyx kids are back each Thursday. Calyx's chickens, Pooh and Kanga, are back too. The garden is being transformed by Calyx mom and mentor, Sumer Eberhart, who brings an artist's touch to the garden. Stop by and check out the new spiral garden design and shade structure. Coming soon will be a bean and pea tunnel.

One feature of the garden that we encourage all Tilth members and visitors to use is the pan gamelan hanging on the garden's west fence. The sound of the Calyx



Sarah Gillett photo

Calyx kids begin each Thursday playing the pan gamelan.

kids playing this community percussion instrument can be heard as they begin each Thursday at Tilth. The gamelan is a traditional Indonesian ensemble instrument that is played by the community on special occasions. The Calyx gamelan is made of upcycled pans, each with a different tone. During one of Calyx's summer camps, a Calyx visiting mentor, Blaine England, helped Calyx summer camp kids make the instrument out of disused pans. He taught them about gamelans, where they came from and how they were played, and helped them drill holes with hand drills and reshape the metal pans, transforming old pans into a community instrument. All of this while they learned science, math, social studies and geography. This is an example of the Calyx experience, which is filled with rich and creative hands-on learning in all academic subjects.

Calyx is happy to be back at Tilth each Thursday this spring, and is looking forward to another four weeks of summer camp at Tilth. Camp begins the week of June 29 and finishes the week of July 20. Each week of camp runs Monday through Thursday from 9:30 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. For more information email [Director Lisa Kois](mailto:Director) or call her 917-859-4522.

Certified Naturally Grown: A New Way to Identify Pesticide-Free, Non-GMO Food

by Radha McLean, EcoWatch | News Report, March 22, 2015

Eco-conscious shoppers now have an alternative to organic food that has been certified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) as **Certified Naturally Grown** (CNG). The equally pesticide-free method of farming is being used by a growing number of small farmers who cannot afford the expense of getting an organic certification from the USDA.

Naturally grown farming, considered to be the grassroots alternative to certified organic agriculture, requires a national certification by the CNG. The CNG conducts rigorous oversight to assure that all food labeled Certified Naturally Grown is grown without the use of synthetic chemicals or genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

“Certified Naturally Grown is like the USDA’s National Organic Program in that our certified producers must follow similar standards, farm without the use of synthetic chemical inputs or GMOs, and farm to support biological diversity and ecological balance,” Alice Varon, CNG executive director, told *Mother Earth News*.

Some benefits of the CNG certification include the facts that it costs less and takes less time to get, compared to the USDA’s certified organic program. The CNG’s certification and inspection documentation is also available online, thus simplifying the paperwork process for participating farms.

“The cost of the National Organic Program — both in terms of money and paperwork requirements — is too much for many small farmers to afford,” according to the CNG website. “This is even more true for farmers that grow a wide range of crops all at once, typical of the diversified family farms we serve, but not common among the large mono-crop farms typical of agribusiness operations. This is a shame because growing many different crops at once is a safer and more ecologically sustainable practice. The soil is worked in different ways, and disease and pest problems are significantly reduced.”

There are currently more than 700 CNG farms and apiaries in North America.

Awareness is growing among the public regarding the importance of eating organic, naturally grown food. However, many people may not realize the sheer quantity of toxic pesticides found in conventionally-grown produce.

In fact, a recent study conducted by scientists at the University of Washington School of Public Health and published in *Environmental Health Perspectives* shows just how much



Photo detail of Full Cycle Farm produce at the Tilth Farmers' Market

Farmers are now able to, with permission from the USDA, call their products “Certified Naturally Grown” if their produce is pesticide-free and GMO-free. This is an excellent alternative for farmers who cannot afford an organic certification.

pesticides conventional produce contains. The government-funded report looked at individuals who ate similar amounts of fruits and vegetables, and found that those who reported eating organic produce had significantly lower levels of organophosphate (OP) pesticides in their bodies compared with people who ate conventionally-grown produce.

“For most Americans, diet is the primary source of OP pesticide exposure,” said lead author Dr. Cynthia Curl, who conducted the research while a PhD student at the School of Public Health’s Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences. Dr. Curl is now an assistant professor at Boise State University’s School of Allied Health Sciences. “The study suggests that by eating organically grown versions of those foods high in pesticide residues, we can make a measurable difference in the levels of pesticides in our bodies.”

Organic or naturally grown food not only contributes to healthier people, but it can help reverse climate change. According to the white paper, *Regenerative Organic Agriculture and Climate Change: A Down-to-Earth Solution to Global Warming*, “We could sequester more than 100 percent of current annual CO₂ emissions with a switch to widely available and inexpensive organic management practices, which we term ‘regenerative organic agriculture.’” (from the *Rodale Institute*.)

Editor’s note: Thank you to Annapoorne Colangelo for recommending this article. Find the link on the *Nation of Change* website. (Green text signifies a hot link, just click it.)

Farmers are now able to, with permission from the USDA, call their products “Certified Naturally Grown” if their produce is pesticide-free and GMO-free.

Community Gardeners Meeting April 16 at Tilth

Community gardeners have been busy getting their pea patch plots tilled and planted. Pete and Prescott did some measuring of the gardens and a plot map draft has been done so the plot assignments can be more easily determined. Linda and Leonard Good created markers for each plot.

Linda Good, the pea patch liaison, is calling a meeting of the community gardeners and land stewardship committee at 5 p.m. on Thursday, April 16 at the Tilth Sustainability Campus. Topics to be discussed:

1. Plan to attend the irrigation workshop in the morning on Saturday, May 16 and plan to install irrigation materials. Marc Wilson will instruct.
2. Review the plot map and discuss fees and boundaries.
3. Prepare a seasonal watering schedule plan. It is needed to maintain adequate water pressure for everyone. Pressure drops when too many people are watering at the same time. Dorcas's automatic system is designed to come on in cycles at night. The Native Plant Stewards may need two days each week for about four hours each day this year. Plan for heavier water use during the Farmers' Market operation on Sundays from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
4. Learn how to fill and refill the water tank in the garden to use for reserve garden watering.
5. Organize the eight-hour commitment each gardener has agreed on to honor to maintain the common areas: this includes the shared pathways, compost piles, mowing of



This reserve water tank in the garden has a hose fitting underneath and a lever to turn on water. A line, pictured left, fills it from the main line.



The compost pile on the east side of the community garden needs turning to compost the plant in the foreground, burr chervil.

open areas, caring for the fruit trees and raspberries, maintaining fences, weeding around fencing and gates. Extra hours are available to those not able to pay their full fee.

6. Plan to

move the compost piles outside the gardens to help control vole damage in the gardens. Good vole control means keeping paths and perimeters mowed close to the ground.

7. Review the tiller use and maintenance.
8. A process for communication may include a white board to post messages on the pump house. A plot map and maintenance schedule could be posted there.

Thank you to community gardener Trevor Anderson for the manure he put in the worm bin container. The worm bin is located just west of the pavilion in the market. Community gardeners are welcome to use the compost in the worm bin and to add to it. Consult Linda Good for details.

Campus Work Days

Regular work days at the South Whidbey Tilth Sustainability Campus have begun. Usually we meet Saturdays 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Bring a lunch and join us. If another day or time is better, email Prescott or call 360-544-2278. If the weather is bad, check with her to see if the work day is cancelled.

Bob Wendt and his nephew, Heath Adams, have been contracted to mow the market and parking areas.

Louise Holloway Stanley and Ted Stanley did some volunteer weed whacking around the market booths. Pete Little and Prescott scoured the pavilion floor inside and out. The fruit trees have been pruned and sprayed with lime sulphur. However, the tent caterpillars are on the move and several of us have been picking off the tents and egg cases as best we can. One application of *Bacillus thuringiensis* has been applied.

Jenny Grisewood donated fir and cedar seedlings and they've been planted in and near the forest on the south boundary (along the highway).

The crabapple trees along the driveway are in gorgeous bloom. The beds around them need to be weeded and mulched, a good work day project.

Under the direction of Sumer Eberhart, a Calyx mom, the children's garden has been beautifully redesigned. Check it out. The students are at Tilth every Thursday until the end of May, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Heavy equipment that may endanger the children should not be used at that time.

Lesedi Farmer Dorcas Young already has a healthy crop of arugula and other greens in her hoop house. Her neighbor, Tom, is building a farm stand on her quarter-acre parcel. Dorcas is the land steward on the Tilth council of trustees. She's often at the campus and keeps contact with the other gardeners. Her family obligations demand more of her time in April, so she may be less able to be around for a bit.

Pete Little will be installing two more hydraulic water stands, one in the lower garden and one inside the Lesedi hoop house.

President's Message: Reflecting on Why Farmers and Environmentalists Need Each Other



by Prescott, president

Don Stuart's presentation March 22 about his book, *Barnyards and Birkenstocks: Why Farmers and Environmentalists Need Each Other*, raised some interesting issues about how farms can be structured to protect wildlife habitat, water quality and ecosystems.

Sharon Dunn, both a Tilth member and Greenbank Farm management group member, forwarded this hopeful message to me the next day.

"It was so nice to see you at yesterday's successful event. Thank you so much for the support of South Whidbey Tilth in advertising and for your hands-on help. I've already had a call this morning from someone saying '...you know, I think Whidbey is an example of what Don Stuart was talking about with the [Greenbank] Farm, Whidbey Camano Land Trust (WCLT), [South Whidbey] Tilth, the Conservation District working on things like organic farming, native plantings, etc.'"

Sharon added, "I am wondering how we can capitalize on this. More conversations to be had."

I know the Island County Comprehensive Plan is currently being updated and it is an ideal time to get involved to create win-win options for farmers, ranchers and environmentalists. If the county took leadership, more could be accomplished.

Island County's Ordinance update regarding agricultural activities near Critical Areas was completed in the Fall of 2006, however its adoption is pending due to a lawsuit filed by Whidbey Environmental Action Network (WEAN). WEAN does thorough research and usually wins these arguments — generally a good thing for the wild places on Whidbey and Camano Islands.

Our neighboring counties are also wrestling with these ideas. Skagit County started a program to integrate farm and environmental preservation some years ago. Lots of interesting activity is also going on in King and Snohomish counties.

Snohomish County's goal to preserve farmlands and restore fish and wildlife habitat had few practice guidelines to resolve conflicts in the county's land use and development code. A Sustainable Lands Strategy, Phase 1 Framework Report was developed in 2011 for that purpose.

Further research of models in other counties and even other states is needed to present to our county officials and advisory board members. All our concerned organizations need to collaborate in this. We have a wealth of knowledge in the WCLT, WEAN, Whidbey Island Conservation District and Whidbey Audubon Society, among others. Collaborative problem solving is key to moving ahead.

Note: Speaking of collaboration, Kathy and Mervin Floyd of

Slow Food Whidbey Island approached me about partnering in activities. Let's look for fun things we can do together toward mutual enjoyment of food and how we raise it.

We enjoy a partnership with Deer Lagoon Grange, sharing duties in the agriculture department at the Whidbey Island Area Fair.

Marc Wilson and Dorcas Young have attended the Whidbey Island Food Security Coalition meetings, and our members regularly attend Whidbey ECO-Network events. The list of partnerships is growing.

South Whidbey Tilth members, when you have an idea for a project and need the involvement of a wider community, there are a number of groups to collaborate with. By representing us, your involvement benefits us all, especially when you bring back what you learned.

Just in: Tuesday, April 8 the Port of Coupeville agreed to extend the Greenbank Farm management group contract another five years.

Market opening, from page 1

Young serves her unique samosas, soups and more, as well as selling her fresh produce. Enjoy hot coffee and tea from the Laughing Cat. Bulk coffee orders are taken from the window, available usually every two weeks.

There is still room for more vendors, please email **Tom White** or call 360-381-0012. Download the market policy, agreement and rules from the market page on the **South Whidbey Tilth** website. The early signup rate of \$25 for the season expires April 22.

To date, seven of our farmers are signed up to accept the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program coupons for seniors and mothers. The market also can accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) cards. We hope to be able to improve device reception at the market so that SNAP and credit/debit cards may be used more easily.

South Whidbey Tilth has over 170 members. You are all invited to participate in the many volunteer opportunities available. Maintaining the weekly Farmers' Market requires help with basic setup and cleanup, greeting visitors and keeping a count, assisting vendors so single vendors get a break, assisting in the Laughing Cat serving beverages and food and washing dishes. Other tasks include weeding the market grounds, managing recycling and trash, cleaning the restrooms, setting out banners, flags and wooden letters, distributing posters and more.

See you all at the market, rain or shine!

Working with Retailers for Pesticide Reduction in Puget Sound

North Sound training:

Wednesday, May 6, Edmonds, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Join Seattle Tilth as they roll out a new toolkit designed to help retailers promote alternatives to toxic pesticides and discuss proven strategies to increase retailer participation. In addition to learning about how to use the new toolkit, participants will learn from experts in a moderated panel discussion. These panelists have built effective partnerships with retailers to affect behavior change in their own communities.

Panelists are Gwen Vernon, Cascadia Consulting Group; Denise Walz, PRR: Experts in human powered change; Jane Mountjoy-Venning, Thurston County Department of Environmental Health and Jennifer Johnson, Thurston County Department of Health.

Learn more and register with [Seattle Tilth](#) on its website. Anyone from South Whidbey Tilth planning to attend, please let [Prescott](#) know in an email. Click on the green text to be taken to a website or an email address.

Wiki for Farmers, from page 2

are provided.

- Content of articles can be edited by users of Tilth Producers Wiki at large.
- Tilth Producers staff reserves the right to edit submissions for content and grammar.
- Views and opinions on this Wiki are not necessarily the opinions of the WSU Small Farms Program or Tilth Producers staff, board of directors, or other stakeholders. We reserve the right to remove submissions or comments that are in any way disrespectful to the community.

See [Wiki for Farmers on the Tilth Producers' website](#). If you have any questions about using Wiki for Farmers, please contact us at 206-632-7506 or [email us](#).

[Editor's note: a number of South Whidbey Tilth members and some of our supporters are also members of Tilth Producers. It is a sister organization that promotes sustainable, organic farming throughout Washington state. Visit the [Tilth Producers](#) website to learn more about how you can get involved.]

Film Night Finale April 28

Join us Tuesday, April 28 at 6 p.m. for a potluck before viewing a movie. The film has not been determined by press time. It may be *Queen of the Sun* or *The Seeds Will Save Us*. Check the Tilth website calendar or Facebook page for updates. South Whidbey Tilth Film Night is at Mark Dworkin and Melissa Young's home in Clinton. It is helpful if you R.S.V.P. to 360-341-1269.

Tilth Film Nights will resume in the fall. Got ideas for what to see? Contact [Melissa Young](#) or [Mark Dworkin](#) (click the green text for a hot link to email).

Fred Olson Has Passed On

Longtime Tilth member Fred Olson died in early April after a massive stroke. He is survived by his wife Carol. Fred was a seeker of meaning and had a rich career teaching literature and studying religion. His memorial was held April 9 at Saint Hubert's Catholic Church followed by a reception at Langley United Methodist Church. The couple were instrumental in founding the One Drop Zendo in Freeland, and they have been active in the community for over 25 years.

Join, Renew or Donate to Tilth's Projects

Join or renew your South Whidbey Tilth membership. A single household membership is \$25 and \$10 for each additional adult household member. One newsletter is mailed or emailed to each household. *Please list each member's name.* Enclose \$25 (for one) + ___ (number of additional household members x \$10) = \$_____

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

CALENDAR

APRIL

- 12 Grange Month Open House**, Sunday 3 p.m. at Deer Lagoon Grange
- 15 1,000 Crops for Northwest Farmers** with Michael Pilarski, Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Unity of Whidbey
- 15 Emerging Alliance between Humans and Nature Spirits** with Pilarski, Wednesday, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at Unity of Whidbey, see [page 1](#)
- 16 Wildcrafting Edible and Medicinal Plants** with Pilarski, Thursday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Pacific Rim Institute, see [page 1](#)
- 16 Tilth Community Gardener and Land Stewardship meeting**, Thursday, 5 p.m. at Tilth campus, see [page 7](#)
- 16 Business Meeting** of South Whidbey Tilth, Thursday, 6:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran community building, nursery
- 19 Tilthy Soil Means Health Veggies** class with Mark Wilson, Sunday, noon to 2 p.m.
- 22 Earth Day** at South Whidbey High School, Wednesday 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.
- 25 Bayview Farmers' Market opens**, Saturday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.
- 25 Earth Day Celebration** at the Greenbank Farm, Saturday, 1 to 6 p.m. see [page 4](#)
- 28 Tilth Film Night**, Tuesday, 6 p.m. in Clinton, see [page 9](#)

MAY

- 3 South Whidbey Tilth Farmers' Market opens**, Sunday, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.



SOUTH WHIDBEY TILTH ASSOCIATION

A Nonprofit Corporation and a Chapter of Washington Tilth
 Post Office Box 252
 Langley, Washington 98260
www.southwhidbeytilth.org

Please renew your membership, contact Marc for your renewal date. See page 2.

- 6 Training for Pesticide Reduction**, Wednesday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Edmonds, see [page 9](#)
- 16 Water irrigation workshop**, Saturday morning, at the Tilth campus, watch for details
- 21 Business Meeting** of South Whidbey Tilth, Thursday, 6:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran community building, nursery

JUNE

- 1 Tilth June/July newsletter deadline**, please send articles, suggestions, pictures to [Prescott](#), editor
- 18 Business Meeting** of South Whidbey Tilth, Thursday, 6:30 p.m. at Tilth Sustainability Campus
- 20 Whidbey Island Garden Tour**, Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., click green text for information
- 28 South Whidbey Acoustic Music Festival**, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., see [page 5](#)

ONGOING

- Work day at the South Whidbey Tilth Sustainability Campus**, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Bring a sandwich for noon break, updates posted on [garden page](#) of the website, or Facebook/South Whidbey Tilth
- Tilth Farmers' Market every Sunday**, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

SAVE THE DATE

- Whidbey Island Area Fair**, August 6 to 9
- Whidbey Island Farm Tour**, September 12 to 13

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