

South Whidbey Tilth

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

Volume 31, Number 1

January/February 2013

Expanding South Whidbey Tilth's Power System

uring the last two weeks of November the electrical line from the pump house to the restrooms and pavilion was installed. The restrooms will be heated and have lights once the custodial room is insulated. The water has been retested and the results came back "satisfactory." Holes in the restroom roof temporarily stalled progress. A roofer was contracted and now volunteers are needed to install insulation in the middle section, the custodial room. Once the insulation is in, the ceiling covered and the room painted, a mop sink will be reinstalled. We want to have this completed by January 14, when the Calyx Community Arts School winter term begins.



Electrician prepares to lay hundreds of pounds of electrical wire into the 26-foot-deep trench.

The extended electrical line will expand South Whidbey Tilth's ability to hold more workshops and activities on its campus all year, enable Calyx to offer improved programs to their students and teachers, provide the Youngs' high tunnel hoop house with modest power and make music and programs more audible during the Farmers' Market season.

Perry McClellan, former land steward, volunteered his construction and project management skills to coordinate the work with both volunteers and trades workers. Land steward Anza Muenchow coordinated Tilth and Calyx volunteers. The trench digger was Brian Marshall.

Electrical Expansion, see page 4

Tilth's Annual Membership Meeting Is January 13 Overview of the Genetic Commons

will speak and illustrate An Overview of

the Genetic Commons, with an historical

look at plant genetic resources. The term,

commons, refers to a situation of col-

lective interest, such as open-pollinated

seeds, land held in common, etc.

Hear ye, hear ye, mark your calendars for 3 p.m. on Sunday, January 13 for South Whidbey Tilth's Annual Membership meeting. It will be held in Grigware Hall at Trinity Lutheran Church's community building by the highway, 18341 State Route 525 in Freeland. The meeting includes a business meeting, the election of four candidates to the governing council, a featured program and a potluck supper. The public is welcome to attend the program at 4 p.m. (suggested donation \$5) and invited to stay for the potluck at 4:45. The preceding membership meeting at 3 p.m. is open only to members. Please bring your own eating utensils and dishes to reduce solid waste; there will be complementary hot drinks.

a council of trustees of up to seven members. Each member serves a two-year

South Whidbey Tilth is governed by

This overview focuses on germ plasm development, screening, and selection for organic production systems during an era of climate change, habitat destruction, loss of agricultural land, and governance of intellectual property. Lewis will also discuss how to strengthen our plant genetic commons and guarantee public access, when current use of plant genetic resources has been dominated by large corporations and

We are delighted to present a parallel agriculprogram about genetic plant re-tural developsources by Laura R. Lewis, Ph.D. She ment agendas.

> This presentation was also made November 9, 2012, at the joint Washington State University (WSU) and Tilth Producers of Washington Sympo-



WSU press release. October 2011 Laura Lewis will share her work about plant genetics.

sium, Seeding the Future: Ensuring Resiliency in Our Plant Genetic Resources in Port Townsend.

A suggested donation of \$5 by nonmembers is welcome, but not mandatory.

Annual Meeting, see page 4 Genetic Commons, see page 4

Farewell to Bobby



Prescott photo

Bobby Crosby at one of the fine picnic tables he built for Tilth.

Bobby Crosby died November 27, 2012, from complications of a serious fall that occurred last spring.

Bobby built South Whidbey Tilth's sturdy picnic tables from wood harvested from the campus. He readily joined Tilth's work parties, generously participating in projects to paint, repair, cultivate and plant the campus.

All of us at Tilth who knew Bobby, express our condolences to Donita Crosby, his former wife, who is also a long-time friend of Tilth. He is also survived by his son, Lenny Crosby, and a granddaughter, Brittany Crosby. A celebration of Bobby's life was held at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Whidbey Island's meeting house on December 26, which would have been his 61st birthday.

Tool Care

Seattle Tilth Timeline on Facebook, 2012-25-11

Be sure your tools are clean and stored in a dry place for winter. Rusty? Scrub them with steel wool or 80 grit sandpaper and vinegar. Rub with oil for protection from moisture. Stick them in a bucket of sand with oil in it for excellent storage (motor oil, baby oil or household oil).

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.

2012 COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES

WASHINGTON TILTH REPRESENTATIVE AND ALTERNATE

PROJECT LEADERS

Native Landscape: JC May......360-331-1004 email JC

Water manager: VACANT

Community Garden: Anza Muenchow 360-579-2890 email community garden coordinator

Webmaster/Email: Marc Wilson......360-579-2890 email webmaster Calyx School: Lisa Kois917-859-4522 email Calyx

CONTRACT SERVICES

Market manager: Lynae Slinden.....360-341-4456 email market manager Newsletter editor: Prescott.......360-544-2278 email newsletter editor Bookkeeper: Jeanne Celeste......360-331-6135 email 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, email *Gary Ingram* or call 360-222-3207 or visit *swtilthmembership.yolasite.com*.

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, including meeting minutes and project reports. 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.

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

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS TO THE MARCH/APRIL ISSUE IS FEBRUARY 15

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: 360-579-2892

Email: info(at)southwhideytilth(dot)org
Website: www.southwhidbeytilth.org
Physical location: 2812 Thompson Road, off SR 525

Tilth Film Night Features Symphony of the Soil

I invited to Tilth Film Night, Tuesday. January 8 at the home of our local filmmakers, Mark Dworkin and Melissa Young. The event is free. Bring a potluck dish to share at 6 p.m. or come just for the film at 7 p.m. Mark and Melissa live off Log Cabin Road on Beaver Creek Lane in Clinton. Please R.S.V.P. and get directions by contacting them at 360-341-1269 or select to email Melissa.

Farmers' Market **Season Planning**

The 42nd farmers' market season for ■ South Whidbey Tilth begins Sunday, April 28 and continues every Sunday through October. Market committee chairperson Annapoorne Colangelo called the first planning meeting December 6. The next meeting is 5 p.m. on Wednesday, January 9 at Lynae Slinden's home in Clinton. The 2013 market policy will be developed.

A vendor orientation meeting is tentatively scheduled for Sunday, February 10 at Trinity Lutheran Church's community building on the highway in Freeland. Email Annapoorne for updates and to offer suggestions.

Market Conference

Washington State Farmers Market **V** Association's (WSFMA) annual conference is Friday through Sunday, January 25 to 27 in Vancouver, Washington. Over 200 farmers' market managers, staff, board members, farmers, volunteers and other professionals from across the state are expected to attend. It will be held at the Heathman Lodge. The keynote speaker is Sharon Yeago, former president of the Farmers Market Coalition, a national organization.

Our market manager Lynae Slinden plans to attend this year. To register visit the WSFMA website. For more information about the conference, call Lori Musgrave at 509-979-1051. For hotel reservations, go to Heathman Lodge website or call 1-888-475-3100.

Tilth members and their guests are Filmmaker Deborah Koons Garcia's earth. Yet most people are latest film, Symphony of the Soil, is a 104-minute documentary feature film that explores the complexity and mystery of soil. Filmed on four continents and sharing the voices of some of the world's most esteemed soil scientists, farmers and activists, the film portrays soil as a protagonist of our planetary story. Using a captivating mix of art and science, the film shows that soil is a complex living organism, the foundation of life on

soil-blind and "treat soil like dirt." South Whidbey Tilth members know how



critical and how complex soil quality is. This is what "tilth" means. This film, though preaching to the choir, will lend more substance to the walk we talk.

Plans are underway for a February film night. The film may be Greenfire or an episode of the Ken Burn's series Dust Bowl.

Making Friendship Soup at Calyx

by Lisa Kois, Calyx Cofounder

TX Te asked the kids to reflect on highlights from the fall quarter for this newsletter, and this is what they had to share.

"At Calyx we made friends and we made friendship soup! We learned music... ate snacks.... held chickens, and collected eggs.... And celebrated Día de los Muertos! We had fun in the box house, and we made a



Sarah Gillett photo

Calvx students performing their story. "The Five Birds" last October.

straw bale house. We drew and painted sunflowers from the garden. We collected honey from our beehive. We caught a vole, and we caught lots of potato bugs. We built a greenhouse. We wrote a story called "The Five Birds." At the Legacy Forest, we went to the labyrinth, and got gifts from the forest."

At Calyx this fall, we have been working on community formation, friendship and social learning, as we go about our daily business and busy-ness. And we have been busy this year! Learning how to care for ourselves, each other, and the earth and all its creatures is a big part of what we do at Calyx.

It's been a great beginning to a new

academic year, with lead teacher Sarah Gillett working with a team of adult mentors, including Eva Bisteur Gibson (Spanish), Anza Muenchow (gardening), Linda Good (music/Japanese), Lauren Atkinson (art) and Dawn Collins (puppetry).

Calvx began the fall with eight students and will begin winter quarter with 10 students. Because of space constraints, we have capped enrollment at 10 for the spring quarter. We are faced with

a space dilemma and welcome your ideas about solving this dilemma. In the meantime, we will continue to do what we do — learn and grow together, with nature and through the seasons.

Calyx Community Arts School is a multilingual arts and nature-based learning experience for children ages 5 to 9. Calyx offers a three-day program week, Monday through Wednesday, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m, and meets at the South Whidbey Tilth Campus and Legacy Forest (Chinook). South Whidey Tilth is its fiscal sponsor. For more information about our program, contact Lisa Kois or Marta Mulholland by email or call Lisa Kois at 917-859-4522.

Annual Meeting, from page 1

term. There are four openings this year, three two-year positions and a one-year term, due to a resignation. Nominations to the council are Edward Hueneke, Jo Stevens and Marta Mulholland. Nominations are open. Please contact Gary Ingram or Linda Good if you have a nominee to recommend or if you wish to be considered. See contact information on page 2.

Except for the president, officer duties are filled each year. Edward hopes to serve as finance chair again. Jo is willing to coordinate the land stewardship committee. Marta is interested in chairing education. The office of secretary is still open. President Linda Good, membership committee chair Gary Ingram and market committee chair Annapoorne Colangelo remain on the council for the last year of their terms.

Electrical Extension, from page 1

The licensed electricians were Lance Moore and his daughter, Golda. The roofer was Joe Berendt.

This enhancement is partially paid for through a Port of South Whidbey grant and donations from Tilth supporters. A big thank-you goes to Anza for writing the Port of South Whidbey proposal. Thank you to Jerry Stonebridge who donated \$495 worth of equipment used to dig the 390-foot trench and have it covered again.

The pavilion has always had 12-volt lighting and refrigeration from a battery bank charged by a solar panel. The 12-volt system will eventually be expanded to include more solar panels and a grid intertie to the 120-volt standard electrical system.

The trench work followed the salmonberry-filbert tree-lined

boulevard connecting the Tilth campus features from the Community Garden to the Farmers' Market to the forest. We'll be looking for helpers to tidy up and install mulch and wood chips along that route for an enhanced path that won't need mowing.

We welcome helpers who can do landscaping or insulation and painting. We also welcome financial contributions.



Perry McClellan photo

The trench for the electrical line extention is along the serviceberry-filbert boulevard from the pump house.

Genetic Commons, from page 1

Lewis is an agricultural geographer with an emphasis on biodiversity and environmental systems. She is currently the director of the WSU Jefferson County Extension service based in Port Hadlock. Her expertise is in genetic resource conservation and utilization of agrobiodiversity in traditional and small-scale farming systems.

She earned her bachelor's degree in agriculture at WSU in 1996 with a focus on crop, soil and horticultural science in world agricultural systems and sustainability. She also holds a doctorate in agricultural geography from the University of California, Davis.

Prior to coming to Jefferson County in 2011, Lewis served for five years as an assistant professor of biogeography at the University of Maryland in the Geography and Environmental Systems Department. Her research program includes applied ethno-ecology and agrobiodiversity in urban landscapes, with specific focus on food deserts, as well as agrobiodiversity in traditional African agricultural systems, and the conservation and restoration of economically important species. She has collected and studied seeds in Niger and Syria.

She also helps manage the WSU Farm Innovation Education and Leadership Development (FIELD) program in collaboration with the FIELD program board of directors, a group of farmers who spearheaded the establishment of the farmer internship program in Jefferson County.

It's Seed Ordering Time

There are several local and regional seed companies that offer unique seed, usually raised by organic methods. Right here on Whidbey Island, Tilth member Eric Conn of Full Cycle Farm is growing an ever-expanding variety of seeds. Check out his offerings on the *Full Cycle Farm website*.

Uprising Seeds raises and collects most of its seeds in Acme, Washington. It also sources seed from small family farms in Washington, Oregon, Northern California and Idaho. Explore what *Uprising Seeds* offers on its website. Contact the *owners by email* or call 360-778-3749.

The Osborne Seed Company in Mount Vernon has been in business for over 30 years. It now has both conventionally grown and organic seed available. Visit *the Osborne Seeds website* or call the company at 800-845-9113 or *by email*.

Here in the Puget Sound basin, we can grow so many incredible vegetables, shrubs and trees. But to get the best production out of our crops, we need to use the local seed and tree suppliers to find the best "cultivars" for our growing conditions. By cultivars I mean the specific genetic material in the species of plants we want to grow. — Anza Muenchow, South Whidbey Tilth Newsletter, January 2008.

Note: Anza Muenchow is stepping away from the column she's contributed in this newsletter since 2006. We invite a new volunteer to share advice about organic growing. Please contact *Prescott*, *newsletter editor*.

Vermicomposting the Easy Way

Dump, Cover, You're Done

by Todd Spratt, vermitech specialist, www.bugabay.com

For the past 36-plus years my family and I have considered our kitchen and table scraps not as waste but as a valuable

Tending Tilth's Worm Bin

by Linda Good

A fter the generous gift of a commercial-size BugaBay inground cedar vermicomposting worm bin from the Spratt family, we've now filled one side of the bin and are starting on the other. At present we have a plastic container with alpaca manure, but the Spratt family has also offered us some horse manure. I've been layering leaves during the month when Calyx is not in session. Any parents who are helping tend the chickens are welcome to bring food waste for the worm bins. This is a group effort and we can all learn together.

Recently I was concerned about standing water in the bin. Todd and Teresa Spratt and their son JaNoah opted to move the worm bin to slightly higher ground, and it sits just west of the pavilion near the salmon-stream garden in the market area.

resource. Just about any green material that comes out of our garden and yard is viewed as equally important. Why do we have such high regard for what many people think of as garbage? We took the word "waste" out of the equation.

We learned that with the help of the soil foodweb organisms and our BugaBay in-ground cedar vermicomposting system, we can convert our food



In a short period of time food scraps convert to the best soil amendment available — worm castings.

scraps in a short period of time to the best soil amendment available — worm castings are black gold! When you begin to discover what is actually hidden deep within those food scraps just waiting to be released, you understand their true potential and value.

Easy Vermicomposting, see page 6

Working with Seed: Creating Strong Farms

Learn how to assess, grow and improve crop seeds, 1 to 5 p.m. on Wednesday and Thursday, January 16 and 17 at the Greenbank Farm, 765 Wonn Road in Greenbank. These free workshops are a collaborative effort of Greenbank Farm's Agriculture Training Center and the Organic Seed Alliance (OSA).

Wednesday, January 16: Assessing the Best Varieties for Your Farm and Garden. Learn how to conduct your own variety trials and learn about how you can benefit from, and participate in, Greenbank Farm's Organic Seed Project and the Northern Organic Vegetable Improvement Collaborative (NOVIC).

- 1 p.m. Introduction to Greenbank Farm's Organic Seed **Project.** Learn how this project can serve you and how you can get involved.
- **2 p.m.** Conducting Variety Trials Workshop, presented by OSA; this workshop will teach you how to use variety trials as a tool for enhancing your farm's success.
- **3:30 p.m.** OSA's NOVIC **2012 variety trial report.** The 2012 NOVIC trials evaluated carrots, beets, peas, broccoli, winter squash and chicories. Learn which varieties did best this year. [South Whidbey Tilth did sweet corn seed variety trials in 2012; see the November-December 2012 issue of the *South Whidbey Tilth Newsletter.*]
- **4 p.m. Farmer input on 2013 NOVIC trials.** Offer input into the 2013 NOVIC trials and sign up to be a participating

trial grower.

4:30 p.m. — Greenbank Farm's 2012 variety trial report. The Greenbank Farm trialed carrots, open-pollinated beets, cabbage and kales this year; come learn results.

Thursday, January 17: Crop Improvement Workshop and Seed Grower Meeting. Learn the fundamentals of improving crop varieties on your farm and then coordinate your 2013 seed growing efforts with other growers while exploring collaborative marketing.

- 1 p.m. Fundamentals of Crop Improvement Workshop, presented by OSA. Learn the fundamental skills to develop and adapt seed varieties for your organic farm conditions.
- **3 p.m. Seed growers meeting;** coordinate your 2013 seed efforts (production and marketing).

4 p.m. — Seed swap and social

To learn more, email by clicking here, *Sebastian Aguilar*, or call him at 360-222-3171 or visit the following websites:

- Greenbank Farm's Organic Seed Project website
- Organic Seed Alliance
- NOVIC

Funding for these free workshops is by the Washington State Department of Agriculture Specialty Crop Block Grant Program, the Sustainable Path Foundation and the Organic Agriculture Research and Extension Initiative.

look at our compost

pail full

of apple

cores,

coffee

grounds/

filters, wa-

ter-melon

rinds, tea

bags, po-

tato peels,

orange

peels,

Easy Vermicomposting, from page 5



This is the future we see when we look at our table scraps — fresh food to come.

lettuce scraps, vegetable trimmings, etc., we see a fresh garden salad, a bowl of tomatoes, cucumbers or peppers. We see bouquets of fresh-cut flowers throughout the house, bowls of fruit and berries. We see all the wonderful produce that will come out of those table scraps. Why on earth would we throw that away? That's like throwing out all the nutrition, health, and enjoyment we can create from those table scraps. It's like throwing money away!

The BugaBay system

The BugaBay Vermicomposting System was developed and tested by me, a vermitech specialist, with over 36 years of research and experience with vermiculture, composting and organic gardening techniques. I have tried many different composting systems over

the years and love this relatively new system. It's not only efficient, it's effective and easy to use.

There is so

much outdated information floating around out there that makes worm composting seem complicated and difficult. Well forget the old ways, they are complicated, confusing and a lot of the information isn't relevant, in my opinion. Vermicomposting with a BugaBay worm box is as easy as Dump, cover, you're done. No sorting, no chopping, no turning, no hassle: it works.

What is vermicomposting?

Vermicomposting is a cold composting process below 90 degrees called "mesophilic composting" using red worms

When we (Eisenia fetida) in great numbers to facilitate the break down and stabilization of organic materials, converting it to the best natural soil amendment available: worm castings or vermicompost.

> A bit about worm castings, if you're not already familiar with the richest, living, organic soil amendment known to humankind and, more importantly, to plants.

Castings (worm poop) are dense but have a fine crumbly

soft texture that feels good to the touch. They have a rich dark color and a wonderful earthy smell.

Castings resist leaching but still have the moisture and they resist packing. Earthworm cast-



ability to retain Earthworm castings (worm poop) from our worm box have a wonderful earthy smell.

ings are alive with beneficial organisms like friendly bacteria, fungi, protozoa and nematodes. They contain nutrients like nitrogen, potassium, phosphorus, calcium, magnesium, trace elements, minerals, hormones and growth regulators.

All this is excreted by the earthworm in a concentrated, time-release, plant-ready form, and casting will not burn even the most delicate of plants.

Earthworms — invertebrates with backbone

Earthworms play a key role in the development of soil; they are a cornerstone species of the soil foodweb. I refer to them as the honeybees of the soil, pollinating the soil with beneficial microorganisms. They act like a mass transit system for other soil organisms aiding in the colonization of beneficial microorganisms throughout the soil.

Red worms (Eisenia fetida), the best composters

Red worms consume large amounts of organic debris, up to one-and-a-half times their body weight per day. They then grind and mix it in their gizzards with little particles of stone. Pulverizing this material creates more surface area on which beneficial soil microbes will feed and thrive. The gut of the earthworm also acts as an incubator for microbes, some of which are digested and some excreted, undigested.

The earthworm adds hormones, enzymes, growth regulators and other body fluids from inside and outside its body that are highly beneficial to a plant's health. All of this is held together by the sticky substances that microbes excrete along with body fluids of the earthworm. It is excreted as a well aggregated time-release pellet full of microorganisms,

Sound Waters Is February 2 in Oak Harbor

The 2013 Sound Waters conference is Saturday, February 2 website. The conference fee is \$40 with a discounted fee of \$25 ▲ at Oak Harbor High School in its large field house, where exhibitors old and new will have more room to display and share their information. The day also features a total of 65 sessions on topics including sustainability, wildlife, recreation, educating children, and history and culture.

This year's keynote speaker is Cliff Mass, PH.D., professor of Atmospheric Science at the University of Washington. His keynote address is entitled Global Warming's Impacts on the Pacific Northwest: Separating Facts from Hype. There will be an opportunity to ask questions.

Registration opens on January 5, visit the Sound Waters

for students and active Navy personnel.

South Whidbey Tilth is among the exhibitors. Volunteers are needed to prepare the display and to help set it up and staff it during breaks between sessions on the day of the conference. Please email *Prescott* or call her at 360-544-2278.

Whidbey Food and Farming News

The Grange Food News is a free newsletter that Christine Williams writes about food and farming on Whidbey. Sign up by emailing Chris or go to the Whidbey Island Farm and Food News blog maintained by Claire Acord, sheep raiser and Border collie trainer.

Easy Vermicomposting, from page 6

nutrients, trace elements, hormones enzymes, growth regulators and minerals.

Why is vermicomposting important?

When food waste is dumped in the trash it is the beginning of a long greenhouse gas-producing process that has a huge negative impact on our planet.

First, this so-called waste (in most cases) is hauled to a transfer station and then transported to a landfill which can be in another state. This all takes massive amounts of fuel which equals carbon dioxide (CO₂) and other pollutants released into our atmosphere.

Material in a landfill is buried deep below the surface and decomposes anaerobically (without oxygen). Anaerobic decomposition generates methane gas. Methane is 25 times more efficient at trapping heat in our atmosphere than CO₂.

Flushing food waste down the garbage disposal requires large quantities of water to wash it away to the sewage treatment plant. There the water and food waste must be processed and treated with chemicals. The so-called treated water is then discharged into our waterways some of which is used again for drinking water. The solids from the sewage must then be transported to a landfill and you know what happens to it there. [Langley composts biosolids to be sprayed as fertilizer.]

If you have a septic system your tank will need to be pumped more often if you're disposing food waste through your garbage disposal. The material that's pumped out of your tank goes to the sewage treatment plant. None of these option are sustainable, practical or healthy for the planet or, ultimately, for us.

Recycling your food waste at a central conventional composting facility is far better than any of the disposal options listed directly above, but you still have to collect and haul the organic material to the facility, where it must be converted and stabilized using machinery and heavy electric and gas-powered equipment. The finished compost must then be hauled back

to the point of use. This disposal option also releases large amounts of CO₂ and other pollutants into our atmosphere.

Let's recap

When you vermicompost or compost at home you eliminate the methane produced at a landfill, the carbon dioxide and pollution produced by transporting waste to a landfill or composting facility, you eliminate the waste water that must be chemically treated and the carbon, pollutants and packaging generated to haul soil amendments from wherever they were produced to your home or other point of use.

Once you start using an in-ground cedar vermicomposting system you will no longer consider your food scraps as waste but as a resource. The loop can be closed at home because you will convert all your green material resources to worm castings, among the richest, living organic soil amendments available. Then you will take your castings and use them to grow food, flowers, trees and landscapes. Anything you grow with your wonderful worm castings will capture carbon from the atmosphere. It's sustainable, it works and it makes sense.

This Compost

by Walt Whitman, from Leaves of Grass, last stanza of the poem

Now I am terrified at the Earth, it is that calm and patient, It grows such sweet things out of such corruptions,

It turns harmless and stainless on its axis, with such endless successions of diseas'd corpses,

It distills such exquisite winds out of such infused fetor, It renews with such unwitting looks its prodigal, annual, sumptuous crops,

It gives such divine materials to men, and accepts such leavings

from them at last.

BUSINESS OF SOUTH WHIDBEY TILTH

South Whidbey Tilth Council Minutes of November 8, 2012

by Anza Muenchow

Members present — Linda Good (president), Gary Ingram, Anza Muenchow, Edward Heuneke, Prescott, John Lee, JC May, Jo Stevens, Lynn Geri, Joseph Vasquez, Marta Mulholland

Meeting called to order at 6:05 after a delicious potluck.

Minutes from October 11 meeting approved for permanent record.

Finance committee — No Treasurer report this month as Edward needs more time to study Jeanne's bookkeeping report. He noted that we are operating at a deficit for the year thus far. At the December meeting Edward will analyze our current budget problems and propose a budget for 2013. The board did approve restoring the pay for our bookkeeper to her former rate of \$100/month, retroactive to the month of October.

December fundraiser is the Giving Tree at the Cash Store in Bayview. Tilth ornaments for \$10 will be delivered by Prescott and hopefully next year we can design a new ornament, perhaps with help from the Calyx art teacher and the kids.

Market committee — Lynae Slinden reported successful sales at the final market and, though our market income totals were down from last year, the cause could be the lack of charging booth [selling space] fees to vendors this year and not attracting sufficient vendors and

customers. The council members all reported that Lynae performed well as manager this year and agreed to ask her to continue as market manager for 2013. Lynae had a positive response but needed to hear the details of the contract before agreeing. A market committee meeting will be scheduled by Annapoorne and Lynae, hopefully in December, to begin planning for next season.

Education committee — The Calvx memorandum of agreement (MOA) for September 2012 through August 2013 was proposed. The key points of the MOA that needed discussion were the monthly lease of \$50 and concerns if the Tilth campus electricity isn't installed as projected. The council again reinstated their support of the Calyx and South Whidbey Tilth partnership and appreciation for all the new members Calyx has brought to Tilth. Calyx agreed to supply monthly reports to the council and to continue efforts toward obtaining its own 501(c)3. The Calyx MOA proposal passed; two Tilth members in attendance abstained and one opposed.

Earth Day planning is November 12 at 3:30 p.m. Contact Prescott to be involved.

Membership committee — Much appreciation to Michael Seraphinoff and A.T. Birmingham-Young for crafting the annual letter. Work party for stuffing envelopes will be on Thursday, November 15 at Gary's office, with Prescott helping with layout and Gary printing

enclosures, labels and letter.

The holiday party will be Saturday, December 15 at 5:30 p.m. Linda Good will arrange for the location details. All agreed on celebrating with the usual white-elephant-gift exchange and potluck party.

Tilth is actively recruiting new council members for 2013. Members are encouraged to contact recruitment committee members, Gary Ingram and Linda Good, if interested or if they know someone who should be asked. The terms are usually two years, though sometimes a one-year commitment would be sufficient. Linda Good has one more year as president, and board members Annapoorne and Gary will be continuing for 2013. Edward was invited to run for another term and he agreed to do so. Members are urged to please consider this great opportunity to serve, because much can be accomplished for South Whidbey farmers, consumers, environmentalists and youth through Tilth's education and outreach programs. The date and time of the annual meeting in January has not been set and a guest speaker is being sought to entertain and educate the Tilth membership.

Land stewardship committee Concern was expressed that the number of land-based projects was overwhelming Anza, the committee chair. Some effort was made to brainstorm ways to lessen the job. Dividing the job

into two categories (buildings/ construction and horticulture/ farming) was proposed. The land steward's primary responsibilities currently include: bringing electrical service to the market area; managing the community garden and children's gardens; controlling invasive weeds and pests; maintaining existing buildings, roads and the water system; developing contracts with individuals and organizations who are leasing (or hoping to lease) Tilth land (these include Native Plant Stewards, Dorcas and Matt Young, Calyx and BugaBay, LLC). Questions about including a Tilth farm stand were also discussed, including where and when it would operate and who would manage it. More volunteers are needed to take a leadership role in some aspects of the use and maintenance of the Tilth land. There was also appreciation expressed to volunteers, like JC May, John Lee, Prescott, Michael Seraphinoff, Lynn Geri, Marc Wilson and others who have offered considerable assistance with Tilth's land stewardship.

Joseph Vasquez is willing to move and reconstruct the farm stand. The discussion was tabled until the December meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Next meeting will be December 13 at Trinity Lutheran Church starting with a potluck at 5:30 p.m.and the meeting at 6 p.m.

South Whidbey Tilth Council Minutes of December 13, 2012

by Gary Ingram

The meeting began at approximately 6:04 p.m.

Council members present — Edward Hueneke, President Linda Good, Annapoorne Colangelo, Gary Ingram, Eric Conn and Anza Muenchow. Also present were Jo Stevens, Prescott, John Lee, JC May and Lynae Slinden.

The November 8 business meeting minutes, taken by Anza, had been approved by an earlier-

email vote.

Finance — The treasurer's report by Edward Hueneke included a review of financial reports including the 2012 budget versus the actual income and expenses. Edward also distributed the 2013 budget for the council to review. Questions about recent grants were brought up by John Lee and Lynae Slinden and further discussion occurred concerning the 2013 budget. Edward pointed out that to date, South

Whidbey Tilth is running at about \$3,500 in the red.

Land stewardship — The trench for the electrical line was dug with Stonebridge Environmental, Inc.'s mini excavator at a cost of \$495 which the company donated. Tilth paid the \$160 labor cost for the equipment operator. Calyx used the electricity last week.

Anza presented a draft of the lease proposed by the Youngs. After discussion, Edward moved

that the council accept the lease with a few minor corrections, Anza seconded and all approved.

Anza reported that the electricity installation is complete, but we still need minor repairs on the janitor's closet before replacing shelving and cabinets. In addition, a water test was completed and it passed.

Education - Eric Conn dis-

December 13 minutes, see page 9

December 13 minutes, from page 8

cussed options for education in 2013, possibly bringing in well known outside speakers, Lynae also talked about having educational speakers at the market. The classes we have been offering for the past years have dropped in attendance due to the number of other competing organizations offering the same type of classes. This was Eric's last meeting as the education committee chair as his term has expired and family commitments have become large due to the birth of their son.

Calyx: Anza gave a report on behalf of Calyx and will prepare a report for the January/February newsletter.

Market — Annapoorne Colangelo, the market chair, and Lynae proposed that the market will run in 2013 from April 28 through October 27 on Sundays. The last market day would include a party, as it did this year, with guest vendors, etc. The council approved the dates. The next market committee meeting is on January 2 at 5 p.m. at Lynae's home. The general meeting for vendors will be Sunday, February 10, 2013, with the location and time to be determined.

Membership — Gary reported that the annual holiday party has been organized by Linda Good. It is scheduled for Sunday, December 15, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. at

I I/we want to join South Whidbey Tilth There are

card to join or donate online, visit swtilthmembership.yolasite.com.

Living Green in Langley. Gary will ask Marc Wilson to send out an email to all members. The cost to South Whidbey Tilth for the room is \$25.

The annual membership meeting was scheduled for Sunday, January 13, 2013. Time and place to be confirmed by Prescott. Prescott is also working on connecting with a speaker.

South Whidbey Tilth will need nominations for three of the four positions. Anza and Eric are leaving the board and there is one open position. Jo Stevens has agreed to fill one position and Prescott has offered to mentor her in that position.

Adjournment — The meeting ended at 8:25 p.m.

Next meeting is Thursday, January 10 at Trinity Lutheran Church starting with a potluck at 5:30 p.m. (please bring your own eating utensils) and the meeting at 6 p.m. Every member of South Whidbey Tilth is welcome to attend and to bring business to the meeting. Contact President Linda Good with agenda items.

President's Message: Tidings of Joy from Goods' Woods, 2012



by Linda Good

The Tilth holiday party at Living Green was a festive occasion with creative and fun white elephant gifts exchanged.

Then Calyx had its end-of-the-year party at the same place, three days later, with exuberant

youthful energy complete with exploding kombucha.

Our annual membership meeting will be 3 to 6 p.m. January 13 at Grigware Hall. We'll be electing new South Whidbey Tilth Council of Trustee members and thanking Eric Conn and Anza Muenchow for all their hard work. If you might be interested in taking a turn on the council, there is lots to do, and we'd welcome your help. Laura Lewis of Jefferson County Extension Service will present "Overview of the Genetic Commons." It's a fascinating presentation about early plant seeds that evolved into more commonly known crops. She gave this presentation at the Tilth Producers' Conference in November.

May Tilth, Calyx and the Native Plant Stewards all prosper in 2013!

DONOR APPRECIATION

Thank you for the generous response to South Whidbey Tilth's annual fundraising appeal this fall. To date nearly \$2,000 has been recieved.

\$200+ Bruce Dobson Sharon Dunn anonymous* Wendy Ferrier John and Merritt Atwood Mary Alice Kois* Anne Hayden & Sheila Belanger Marc Wilson & Anza Muenchow Nancy Hepp \$100+ Gary Ingram anonymous Bliss Knorpp Linda Beaumont Ginny Kuehn** John Lee Judith Gorman Brian Lowey & Wendy Sundquist Frank Parente & Sally Nelson Janie Pulsifer** \$10 to \$50+ Suzanne Schlicke & Dennis Keough anonymous Nicholas Toombs Gale Austin Adel Brown Karine Johnson Werner

Donations were to the general fund unless designated with asterisks *electrical upgrade ** capital improvements

adults in my household who would like to have voting rights

Join Us or Renew

(Enclose \$25 annual dues for a single membership and \$10 for each additional person. One newsletter is mailed to each household.)
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 the South Whidbey Tilth Sustaining Fund.
☐ Please keep my/our donation anonymous. ☐ I/we authorize publication of my/our name(s) as a donor.
☐ As donors I/we want to receive the newsletter. (The newsletter is available for donations of \$25 or more.)
Name(s) Phone
Mailing addressZip
email I want to receive: □ email updates □ newsletter online
Please mail to: South Whidbey Tilth Association, P.O. Box 252, Langley, Washington 98260 or use PayPal or a credit

CALENDAR

JANUARY

- 8 Tilth Film Night, 6 p.m., Tuesday, potluck, page 3
- **9 Farmers' Market committee** meets, 5 p.m. Wednesday, 4849 Pearl Court, Clinton, *page 3*
- 10 To Market! to Market!, Part 1: Know your customers, 8:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m., Thursday, Skagit Station, Mount Vernon, host information: Northwest Agriculture Business Center
- 10 Business meeting, South Whidbey Tilth, 6 p.m., Thursday, preceded by a potluck at 5:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran community building
- **12 Cascadia Grains Conference,** Tacoma, call 360-867-2151 or visit the website
- 12 Calyx School work party, 10 a.m. Saturday
- **13 Tilth's Annual membership meeting**, 3 p.m., Saturday, at Trinity Lutheran community building, **page 1**
- 14 Calyx Community Arts School resumes winter session

FEBRUARY

- 2 Sound Waters, Oak Harbor High School, page 7
- 7 to 9 Organicology conference, hosted by Oregon Tilth, Organic Seed Alliance, Sustainable Food Trade Association and Organically Grown Company; registration open until January 15, Organicology website
- **10 Vendor Orientation, Tilth Farmers' Market,** Sunday, Trinity Lutheran Community building, details *email Annapoorne*
- **14 Business meeting,** South Whidbey Tilth, 6 p.m., Thursday, preceded by a potluck at 5:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran community building
- 15 Tilth Newsletter production begins for March/April issue,

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

send copy to the newsletter editor

21 Fresh Foods in Schools Summit, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Thursday, Moses Lake, email *Joan Qazi* or call 509-664-6691

MARCH

- **2 or 9, Washington Tilth annual meeting,** 10 a.m. at Seattle Tilth office, email *Prescott* for details
- **14 Business meeting,** South Whidbey Tilth, 6 p.m., Thursday, preceded by a potluck at 5:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran community building
- 21 23 Second Thriving Communities Conference, Local Living Economies, at the *Whidbey Institute*

Tilth Membership Directory

Enclosed in this newsletter (or attached, if emailed) is an updated membership directory, *only* for members of South Whidbey Tilth. Partners and Associations will not receive a directory. The directory is intended to promote cooperation and friendship among our members. We ask members to honor each other's privacy. Look for your membership renewal date. The date is also displayed on your address label. Please renew before this date.

We apologize for any errors and encourage you to contact the membership chair *Gary Ingram*.

> Donor Appreciation9 President's Message:9 8...... £1 Jecember 13 8...... 8 new Movember 8 shrinutes of Movember 8 This Compost T..... swell grimma has boo? Sound Waters Working with seed workshop...5 Tending Tilth's worm bin5 Easy Vermicomposting5 It's seed ordering time Friendship soup at Calyx3 Market conference.....3 Market season planning3 Farewell to Bobby..... What Is Tilth? The Genetic Commons.....1 Annual membership meeting..1 Tilth's power system1 CONTENTS

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

