



South Whidbey Tilth

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

Volume 32, Number 2

April/May 2014

Farmers' Market Season Begins

Despite the steady rain on May 4, the 43rd season of the South Whidbey Tilth Farmers' Market opened. Linda Good and her Island Strings students performed impressively while dancers wove ribbon around a May Pole.

There were a wide variety of vegetable starts adapted to our climate, including several different varieties of tomato, both cherry and slicing for sale.

Produce vendors Lesedi Farm, Full Cycle Farm, Gourmet Organics, Tom's Market Garden, Nettle Hollow, Maha Farm and Forest, J & R Flowers and Vegetables and Do Re Mi Farm and have been selling asparagus, rhubarb, spinach, peas, radish-

es, romaine and butterhead lettuces, arugula, bok choy, chives, pea greens, mustard greens, mint and more. Later in the season Hunters Moon Farm is bringing blueberries

Local artisans include the Herbal Workshop soaps, Mulberry Hill Alpacas and Thistledown Handwork, Louise Holloway Stanley's original artwork and Pam Winstanley's hand painted silks. Meet booksellers Amy Eames and Chris Peterson of Through the Reading Glass.



Michael Seraphinoff photo

Linda Good's Island Strings students performing at Tilth Farmers' Market May 4.

Water Conservation Workshop

Sign-up now to learn about water conservation in the garden and help South Whidbey Tilth install a watering system in its pea patches. Marc Wilson and Grier Blumenschine will lead a workshop on Saturday, May 24 from 10 a.m. to noon. Bring a notebook and gloves. Drinks and snacks are provided.

This class is free to South Whidbey Tilth members and \$30 for nonmembers. Please email South Whidbey Tilth, click on the green text to register by email or call 360-544-2278 for information.

The month of May is Puget Sound Starts Here (PSSH) month. Tilth is offering this workshop to illustrate how to conserve water, save energy and reduce nutrient runoff by using natural systems to build soil with good structure that retains nutrients and water. Soil with good tilth

grows healthy plants resistant to diseases. Excess watering can lead to washing nutrients out of the soil and into Puget Sound. Water wisely by using a watering system that minimizes use and waters your plants, not your weeds.

This project is partially funded by a PSSH mini grant. South Whidbey Tilth is a member of the Whidbey Education, Community and Outreach (ECO) Network through which the PSSH block grant was procured. This year's Whidbey ECO Network's theme is *Whidbey Waters Are in Your Hands*. The mission of its members is to work together to spark action to improve the health of waters around Whidbey Island.

Thank you also to the Whidbey Island Garden Tour for additional support.

Dorcas Young of Lesedi Farm has both produce and ready-to-eat hot soup and samosas. Edward Huenke is vending from the pavilion kitchen offering his well-known breakfasts and lunch entrées.

Thank you to vendors and Tilth members who are helping with setup and cleanup. Please continue to pitch in when you come or check with Market Manager Kirsten Clauson for direction.

Don Miller of Delicate Light Photography gave South Whidbey Tilth a framed copy of his collage of farmers' market images. It proudly hangs in the east restroom at the Tilth Sustainability campus. See who you recognize.



Support the Garden Tour June 28

South Whidbey Tilth is one of the beneficiaries of this year's Whidbey Island Garden Tour (WIGT) and, with a successful tour, our materials for the water metering and conservation project will be funded.

The tour is from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, June 28. There are five unique gardens this year. At each there will be a sales tent featuring plants from that garden as well as gift items from local artists. Check out the gardens on the [WIGT website](#) (select green text for hyperlink to website).

While you are on the website, buy tickets to the tour.

Or volunteer to help make it a success by selecting "Get Involved" on the menu. All volunteers receive two tickets for the pre-tour (or tour if you are working the pre-tour) and a ticket to the volunteer party. Some ways to help before June include tickets sales, plant labeling and keeping lists current.

Bulk Coffee Orders

Now that the South Whidbey Tilth Farmers' Market is open, bulk organic coffee orders can be made at the Laughing Cat in the pavilion through October 26. When you leave an order, it's usually available the following Sunday at the Farmers' Market. Orders will likely be placed every two or three weeks. If you are not already on the email list to be notified when an order is being compiled, email [Prescott](#) (select green text) or call 360-544-2278.

Thank you to Gary Ingram for providing this service all winter.

The prices are:

- whole bean coffee, 5 lb. bag for \$44, decaf is \$48.00
- whole bean coffee, 2.5 pounds bag is \$22.50, decaf is \$24.50
- ground beans add thirty cents per pound
- 12 or 16 ounce cans are \$10 or \$11

Ask for a brochure describing the available roasts and blends or visit [Café Mam's website](#). (Click on green text.)



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.

2014 COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES AND OFFICES

President: Prescott..... 360-544-2278 *email president*
 Finance/Funding: Edward Hueneke . 360-331-5806 *email treasurer*
 Secretary: Jean Nelson..... 360-331-5191 *email secretary*
 Membership: Marc Wilson..... 360-579-2890 *email membership*
 Education: VACANT
 Land Stewardship: Kirsten Clauson.. 360-579-1820 *email land steward*
 Market: Tom White 360-331-6062 *email Farmers' Market chair*

PROJECT LEADERS

Native Landscape: J.C. May 360-331-1004 *email native landscape leader*
 Education chair: Michael Seraphinoff 360-544-2278 *email education chair*
 Community Garden: Kirsten Clauson 360-579-1820 *email land steward*
 Webmaster/Email: Marc Wilson..... 360-579-2890 *email electronic communications*

CONTRACT SERVICES

Market manager: Kirsten Clauson 360-579-1820 *email market manager*
 Newsletter editor: Prescott..... 360-544-2278 *email newsletter editor*
 Bookkeeper: Jeanne Celeste 360-331-6135 *email 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 360-579-2890 or email [member database](#) 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.

THE 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

President's Message: Changes in Bylaws and on Council



by Prescott, president

So many people have stepped up to get the grounds ready for the Farmers' Market and the growing season. At the end of the Tilth Farmers' Market opening day on May 4 we were all quite tired and wet. However, I was not as frazzled as I usually am. I attribute this to the strong team of volunteers we have. Market Manager Kirsten Clauson and the market committee members ironed out a lot of the details in this year's chore list so that everyone's heart was on the success of the market and each person's mind was on the details to make it all work. Please remember to ask how you can help when you visit the market this season.

Two elected members of our governing council resigned this past winter. Gary Rassner-Donovan and Bliss Knorpp had already made significant contributions, but realized they could not continue. Happily Marc Wilson agreed to step into Gary's role as chair of the membership and community relations committee. He was also nominated to join the council and agreed to serve. Michael Seraphinoff, already an education committee member, agreed to assume Bliss's role as committee chair, but declined a nomination to the council.

Bylaws Amendments

It has been 14 years since the South Whidbey Tilth Association bylaws were approved and implemented. In those years we've learned what works and what need tweaking. Some of the reasons follow.

Tax exempt status update: We are a chapter of a larger Tilth organization, currently known as Washington Tilth Association. However the nearly 40-year-old umbrella organization has evolved through several eras. The Washington Tilth board has found it doesn't have the capacity to continue and has invited each chapter to assume its own federal tax exempt status. Therefore we are removing the

language in our bylaws referring to our chapter status.

Requirement to publish meeting minutes: As a more mature organization, we use our newsletter to engage our larger community in activities that support our purpose — promoting healthy and sustainable food growing and consuming. Publishing our business meeting minutes is not always appreciated by the casual reader and may leave us liable if taken out of context. A bylaws amendment will remove the requirement that meeting minutes be published in the newsletter. This does not mean the meetings are closed or that the minutes are not available for review. We may set up a website page to make them available. Every member of South Whidbey Tilth is welcome to participate in business meetings.

Adding a vice president, treasurer and committee duties: The officer composition for the council was initially idealistic. For example, we do not have a treasurer, only a president and secretary. There is an amendment stating the treasurer is the chair of the finance committee. It has proven a challenge to incorporate fundraising activities as part of the finance committee and the bylaws amendment proposal would call the office as the finance and audit committee. Fundraising activities are proposed to be incorporated into the membership and public relations committee as development. An additional trustee position of vice president is being proposed too. This would bring the council members to a maximum of eight rather than seven. It is intended for the vice president to provide a smoother transition to the presidency

as well as to cover any incapacitation of the president.

Decisions by email: Electronic communication is ubiquitous now, affording online discussion and decision making. The bylaws amendments include language allowing email decision making, including future amendments to be made through an electronic poll.

Decision making: When making decisions as a group, it's always best arrive at a decision that promotes unanimity and good will. Our current bylaws allow for both consensus decision making and majority rule. It's sort of like being half pregnant — not possible. We are proposing to go with majority rule for expediency.

At this time, these bylaw amendments must be mailed by U.S. Postal Service to each member in good standing, postmarked no less than 10 days and no more than 30 days prior to the meeting at which the amendments will be considered. That meeting is Thursday, June 19 at 6:30 p.m. at the South Whidbey Tilth Sustainability Campus. In case of bad weather it will be at Trinity Lutheran Church's community building next to the highway in Freeland.

Members, current with their dues and who receive their newsletter by mail will have the bylaws amendments attached and those who get the newsletter by email will receive them by mail.

Please look over the proposed amendments, mail back your ballot and comments and/or plan to bring the ballot to the June 19 meeting.

June 19 is the very day of our founding 32 years ago in 1982, so there'll be birthday cake!

Seed Growers Discuss Online

by Sebastian Aguilar, Greenbank Farm School Training Director

Are you involved in organic seed production, breeding or trialing? Are you interested in networking with others in our region doing the same work? If

so, please consider becoming part of the Northwest Organic Seed Growers' online discussion group. To sign up, please visit <https://groups.electricembers.net/lists/info/nworganicseedgrowers> and subscribe.

Vets Welcome to Grow Food for Their Families and Community



Prescott photo

Pete Little, left, and J.C. May prepare the rich soil for one of the WVRC garden beds in the South Whidbey Tilth Community Garden. Contact J.C. about joining this project.

The Whidbey Veterans Service Corps (WVSC), a project of the Whidbey Island Veterans Resource Center (VRC), has interested military veterans preparing, planting and harvesting two pea patch plots in the South Whidbey Tilth Community Garden this growing season. This provides veterans a place to grow some of their own vegetables, as well as provide surplus vegetables for other veterans, their families and the Good Cheer Food Bank.

Vets will have a chance to learn about and experience the beneficial and healing powers of gardening, growing their own food and of being of service — giving back to their community. The VSC mission is to provide opportunities, especially to younger returning vets from Iraq and Afghanistan, to apply military service skills and mission teamwork abilities to service projects for one another and their families and to give back to the South Whidbey community at large.

South Whidbey Tilth members Pete Little and J.C. May have prepared mounded beds enriched with compost in which interested veterans can plant vegetables and flowers.

On April 12 the WVRC held a work party and orientation to decide what to plant in the garden plots for summer harvest. One longer-range plan is to build raised beds to accommodate those in wheelchairs. The veterans' pea patch plots are sponsored by the WVRC and South Whidbey Tilth.

Interested veterans may contact [J.C. May](mailto:J.C.May@wvrc.org) by email (green text is an email link; just click on it).

Guess-the-Seedling Drawing

Among the many activities organized for the 2014 Earth and Ocean Month on Whidbey Island, Earth Day itself was celebrated at the South Whidbey High School.

South Whidbey Tilth and over a dozen other organizations set up displays in the school commons to promote our various efforts to preserve the environment.

The public circulated through the exhibit before attending the screening of *Thin Ice* on April 22.

High-schoolers visited many of the displays the following morning during three different periods. Anza Muenchow spoke about gardening to three separate classrooms. Tilth challenged visitors to guess nine seedlings. Each person learned from the activity and put their score sheet into a drawing. Kritsine O'Kelly won a set of seedlings on April 22. Jansen Wicher won a set the next day. Thank you to Anza Muenchow who provided the beautiful little plants.



New Commercial Kitchen Ready for Business

Food processing facilities that are open to smaller-scale businesses are often hard to find, but essential for selling prepared foods legally. With the launch of the new South Whidbey Commercial Kitchen, producers may now rent an approved commercial kitchen by the hour, complete with six-burner stove, gas and convection ovens, refrigerator and freezer. Created by Island County to provide kitchen space for new or existing food businesses, the facility also features rentable storage lockers for kitchen tools, small appliances and nonperishable dry goods, and is available to both the licensed professional and hobby cooks and bakers.

The commercial kitchen is located in the Island County Fairgrounds in Langley. Reservations will be accepted by the County's project partner, the Northwest Agriculture Business Center (NABC). Through a dedicated webpage, users will be able to view the requirements for use and download a simple application to mail in with payment and proof of insurance. The rate is \$15 for the first hour and \$10 for each additional hour; lockers are available for \$15 per month.

For more information on this new opportunity or to make a reservation, please email [NABC](mailto:NABC@nwabc.org), call the office at 360-336-3727 or visit the [NABC website link](http://www.nwabc.org).



It's Going to Be a Tomato-growing Year!

by Anza Muenchow

The prediction is for a warmer than average spring and summer. It is time to start thinking about one of our favorite garden fruits: tomatoes. Yes, tomatoes are a fruit because they contain seeds. Picture the vine-ripened, homegrown tomato; almost nothing like it in a summer salad. However, getting a good homegrown tomato can be a challenge in our cool summers, so here are some suggestions to help you.

Select a tomato variety that is suited for our climate. Local nurseries, farmers' markets and community plant sales will have good Northwest varieties. Consider buying your tomato starts from our farmers' markets when they open in May. These local growers will have many tried and true varieties to choose from including salad tomatoes, cherry tomatoes and the sauce or plum tomatoes. It's fun to grow a few of the heirloom types, though many require hotter summers and less rain than we have. Typically, these are grown in hoop houses (aka high tunnels).

There are two types of tomato vines: the shorter "determinate" type and the taller, "indeterminate" type, which needs to be staked. I like the indeterminate type because I can harvest about 20 pounds of tomatoes from each plant. The determinates are just small bushes and give only about 10 pounds of fruit. Some of my favorite indeterminate varieties are Early Girl, SunGold Cherry and Fantastic. For a cherry tomato, the SunGold is especially sweet. Sweet One Million is also a great cherry because the plant gets so big and produces so much fruit. You may have a problem with the skin on cherry tomatoes cracking when you pick them, but both the SunGold and the Sweet One Million are somewhat crack resistant.

The heritage or heirloom tomato varieties are very popular. These varieties have been passed down through generations for their flavor and simple backyard seed production. Cherokee Purple and Brandywine are heirlooms that can produce well in our cool summers if given early protection with a cloche. Recent research suggests that tomatoes with green striping on their shoulders will be sweeter types though they often do not look like the classic tomato. But remember that the classic looking tomato was bred for storage and color, not taste.

Always plant your tomatoes in the warmest, sunniest spot

in your garden. They need at least 10 to 12 hours of bright sunlight, often doing better on the south side of a building. Practice crop rotation, keeping track of where you planted tomatoes the previous year. Some diseases can be persistent in the soil, such as tomato blight. For setting fruit, night temperatures need to be above 50 degrees Fahrenheit, except for the Stupice or Glacier tomato varieties or a few other ultra-early types which will set fruit at lower temperatures.

For soil preparation, work some good compost into the soil before you plant, but don't add extra nitrogen fertilizer.

Nitrogen is good for growing greens, but for a tomato plant, much nitrogen encourages too much leaf growth and not enough fruit growth. Tomato plants don't need a lot of water, just a couple times a week during our dry summers. Use a mulch of weed free compost, like Cedar Grove Compost, around the base of the plant to keep the soil moist and to control weeds.

Keep water off the leaves of a tomato plant. Water the soil at the base of the plant. Drip watering systems or soaker hoses are recommended. Tomatoes are susceptible to "blight," which is a water

born infection that turns tomato leaves and stems brown and ruins the fruits. All tomatoes die of this blight in October, but less rainfall and careful watering can keep you harvesting from July until mid-October.

Speaking of harvesting, there are many ways to eat your delicious, homegrown tomatoes. Besides fresh in salads and sandwiches, my favorite way to prepare tomatoes is to roast them. I fill the bottom of a baking dish with sliced onions and garlic. Then I core the tomatoes, line them up on the onions and drizzle olive oil on them. Bake at 450 degrees for about an hour, until the shoulders are starting to brown. Yum, my mouth is already watering. Get those tomatoes started!

Missing Soil pH Meter

Whoever borrowed the South Whidbey Tilth soil pH meter from the garden storage shed, please bring it back. There are a lot of eager gardeners wishing to know how much dolomite lime to add to their gardens after the winter rains have increased the soil acidity. In the future there'll be a sign-out sheet for those wishing to use it.



Illustration here is an example of what it looks like



These young tomatoes were watered with a soaker-hose system and a bed of straw to keep the soil damp and water off the fruit and leaves, to avoid tomato blight. This crop, grown at South Whidbey Tilth, stayed disease-free well into late September.

BUSINESS OF SOUTH WHIDBEY TILTH

South Whidbey Tilth Business Meeting Minutes, February 20

by Jean Nelson, secretary

Present — council members Prescott, Bliss Knorpp, Edward Hueneke, Jean Nelson, Kirsten Clauson and Tom White (arrived later). Also present Dorcas Young, Linda Good and J.C. May.

After a short delay the meeting was called to order by President Prescott at 6:20 p.m.

Acknowledgement was made of the appointment of Kirsten Clauson to the council and position of land stewardship chair. The appointment was made by a unanimous vote via email earlier in the month.

The January 16, 2014, council minutes as posted in the newsletter were approved.

The resignation of council member Gary Rassner-Donovan was acknowledged. He was serving as membership and community relations chair, leaving that office vacant.

Treasurer's report — Edward reported that there wasn't much new to report. There are no changes and nothing highly irregular to report. The checking account balance is \$5,865 as of February 20.

The check signing names have not been updated as yet. Edward will check with someone at the bank to find out whether Linda needs to be present and whether the Council minutes are required. He will then contact Prescott and set a time to go to the bank. In addition the names still need to be changed on the other bank accounts.

Edward has looked at the possibility of getting a different rate on the certificates of deposit (CDs) in the Sustainability Account at Plus One Bank. Currently Tilth has five CDs with one CD for \$9,000 that is getting one percent interest. The possibility of getting one percent or more again is highly unlikely so he suggested taking the savings account and cash in a couple of the CDs as they mature and seeing if we could get an account that would

give us more.

PayPal account: Nothing has happened for about six months. At one point it was active with membership dues and donations coming in. Edward would be notified of payments, he would transfer the money to the bank and notify the appropriate people with the information. About a month ago \$663 was transferred and since then nothing. Edward has not been receiving notification from PayPal, so he will ask them to look into that and see if there is something wrong with the account. Prescott will also look into this situation.

Education — Education chair Bliss Knorpp reported that almost half of the year's monthly educational workshops are booked. February 22 – Pruning with Gary Ingram; March 8 – Beginning a Garden on Whidbey with Michael Seraphinoff; April – Saving Seeds, saving from growing your own garden with Eric Conn; May – Noxious weeds with J.C. May and September – Mushrooms with Linda Good. Some other possible workshops were suggested to Bliss such as vermiculture with Bugabay and compost with Janet Hall of Island County Extension Service Waste Wise program.

Land stewardship — Kirsten reported on the Saturday work parties held from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. She will update the Facebook page if the work party is cancelled. Last week they put up about 20 feet of hardware cloth around the Community Garden, along with weeding. She is coordinating an orientation on the maintenance and usage of the tiller. It might be in April and possibly lead by Leonard Good. Leonard will be fixing some of the piping and could possibly work on the water system.

Whidbey ECO Network report — J.C. spoke about the Whidbey Education, Communication and Outreach (ECO) Network meeting he and Edward attended. ECO Network wants to do some

informational and educational workshops during the open Market time as they have done in the past. He plans to explore this with both market and education chairs.

Also from the ECO Network meeting, Susie Richards of Service, Education and Adventure (SEA), another member of the network, has gotten the South Whidbey High School to host an Earth Day Educational Event on April 23. Susie suggested that perhaps Tilth would like to have a booth display for the event. The movie *Thin Ice* will be shown on Tuesday the 22 so the booth will need to be set up for that and a volunteer available. The education committee will handle this.

The *Whidbey ECO Network's* website has a "Spotlight" section that features different organizations each month. They plan to feature South Whidbey Tilth for the month of April. This would involve pictures, articles, etc. Everyone agreed that this will be a good way to bring attention to Tilth. J.C. had mentioned the Veteran's Resource Center pea patches at Tilth and those at the ECO Network were excited, so information about that project will be included in the spotlight, as well as other items, such as the pub talk on March 5 that Anza will be doing on water conservation in the garden.

Grant proposals — During the January Council meeting it was decided that Tom, Lynae and Anza would work on a grant proposal to the Port of South Whidbey for March submission. It is suggested that it be postponed until August and make the proposal for 2015 for promotional materials. The previous grant from Port of South Whidbey was very useful. It was used to supply electricity to the pavilion and to promote the Farmers' Market, thus increasing income.

The South Whidbey Garden Club grant application for \$500 was submitted. Thanks to Prescott, Kirsten and Gary Rassner-Donovan.

Kirsten has submitted the proposal to be on the 2014 Whidbey Farm Tour.

Community Garden Contract — Kirsten opened the floor for discussion on the new Community Garden Contract draft to lease pea patch plots. The fee is up \$5 from last year mostly to help cover the cost of the new metering system and water drip irrigation system. Several items have been added to the existing contract including the need to clean up the garden after the growing season before winter. The council had been sent a copy via email and had a chance to look at the contract before the meeting. There was discussion concerning item 7 and the definition of the word "maintain" and the action that if not maintained when it would be determined that the plot would be forfeited. After some discussion it was viewed that contracts can be looked at on a case-by-case basis. Suggested wordage is "maintenance would be to the best of your ability." The plot forfeiture would be more closely looked at if there is a waiting list. One council member noted that a standard should be in place when pea patch users sign the contract.

An orientation meeting at the beginning of the growing season is being planned to review contract details.

The Council discussed putting up more signage indicating the placement of the compost piles and how the land steward could be more communicative with pea patchers.

Action Item: Motion was made to accept the Garden Contract as drafted by Kirsten with small corrections. It was seconded and, with no objections heard, the motion was passed.

Young's land lease — The discussion then turned to the lease agreement with Dorcas Young and the electricity and water issues connected with that. At this

February meeting, see page 7

February meeting, from page 6

time Dorcas is working under the conditions of the third draft of her lease with South Whidbey Tilth. Because of time constraints in getting the project going she is moving forward on faith that the final lease agreement will be okay and will include the initial points she agreed to. The length and payment terms of the lease has not changed. She is concerned about adequate electricity and water. At this point she is unsure about the water pressure of the irrigation system. Edward will email to council members the pressure information he found on one of the pumps. Tom indicated that the pressure can be regulated from the installed pressure tank.

Dorcas also indicated that she ran the water through a filter and found it to be somewhat clogged. While the main waterlines are off during freezing weather, she is running a combination of hoses directly from the pump house. She will get together with Prescott and Kirsten to review the lease agreement with the desire on both sides to make it work. She will work with other Tilth members to resolve the water problem.

Market report — Prescott shared that at the last market committee meeting the person who was going to cook in the kitchen will not be doing so this year. Edward has stepped in and will be the chef this summer. Dorcas has agreed to

vend as concessionaire as well, but not in the pavilion kitchen.

Market manager: Kirsten has agreed to be the official market manager taking on the responsibilities of that position and will be receiving the weekly \$30 from the vendor sales commission as agreed.

Action item: Prescott recommended the council accept the placement of Kirsten Clauson as the new market manager. It was moved, seconded and, with no objection heard, the motion passed.

Market vendor policy: The market committee recommended that the market policy be the same as last year (with changes in the dates) and that Tilth invest in another nursery license to be held by the market. Anza will be the point person when the market manager needs help. There will be a disclaimer encouraging anyone who has nursery stock or plant starts to sign a form saying that the plants are disease free. Kirsten handed out the revised policy to everyone.

Action item: There was a motion made to accept the policy as adapted but to leave room for minor editorial changes. Motion was made, seconded and passed with a call for aye or nay.

Edward indicated that he would be getting in touch with the state department of revenue to get the nursery license. The market committee is also recom-

mending that Tilth renew their membership with the Washington State Farmers' Markets Association (WSFMA) for \$200. The renewal is due by March 3 and Edward indicated he would be handling that.

Action Item: Motion was made and seconded to renew the membership with WSFMA and passed with a call for aye or nay.

Education at the market plan: Bliss was asked about needed support for the upcoming workshop on Saturday. Prescott will come early to make coffee and get the heat turned on. The time of the workshop, 10 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., also includes the regular Saturday volunteer work party for those who want to help.

Promotion and advertising: Prescott informed the council that the Tilth orchard and fruit trees will be the subject of a featured article in the April 9 *Green Guide* which is inserted in all the Sound Publishing newspapers on Whidbey. [The article actually appeared in the *Whidbey Spring Home and Garden* insert in March.] A reporter with the Whidbey Newspaper Group interviewed Prescott and Michael and took pictures of them in the orchard. He also talked with Gary Ingram. The *Green Guide* has asked that we supply a logo for \$25. It was agreed to use the colored Tilth sign image as our logo in the *Guide*. It was also proposed that we spend \$50 for our ad in the

Islander publication. Prescott will submit an improved ad and make sure we get lots of details.

Action item: A motion was made and seconded to do the *Green Guide* logo and the *Islander* ad. The ayes carried and the motion was passed. This is in addition to our existing listings and advertisements currently with *Puget Sound Fresh* and a possible promotion with *Whidbey's Country's Farms*.

Other business — Tilth was contacted by Gary Esh of the Washington Public Interest Research Group with a request to add our signature of support to a letter drafted to Robert Edwards, chief executive officer (CEO) of Safeway. The letter is asking Mr. Edwards and Safeway to support its customers by agreeing to label their store brand products for Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) ingredients.

Action item: A motion was made and seconded to sign on as an organization in support the letter to Safeway's CEO requesting GMO labeling. The ayes carried and the motion was passed.

Health department — Edward has been in contact with Sally Waters from the county health department concerning salad greens packaging and food handler permits and will follow through on that issue and obtaining the needed permits.

The meeting was adjourned about 7:40 p.m. due to lack of time.

Special Long Range Planning Session, February 20

After a short break council began discussion on South Whidbey Tilth's long range plans.

South Whidbey Music Festival — Due to other commitments Russell Clepper, who has coordinated the music festivals held at Tilth, asked that the festival take place the first weekend in July as opposed to the last week in June. He knows someone who has offered the use of his lowboy trailer for a stage. Russell is working to add a headliner act along with our local musicians. The event is officially free to the public. If not, the permit and musician costs would be much higher. So a

suggested donation is requested of visitors. Possibly getting cash sponsors for the event and a camp-out Saturday night to help set up was discussed. The festival has grown each year with the musicians' "take" increasing. The lineup this year should be a good draw.

Water System Installation — We have some funding pledged in August for this project. The land stewardship committee will meet with all the users to work out a schedule for watering. Prescott distributed a copy of the grant proposal pictures of water hose manifolds and meters currently

used at the Langley Community garden. We need an advocate with knowledge of plumbing and irrigation. The Langley layout was discussed as well as the system Dorcas is using. Layout, meters, timers, etc., all need to be handled, as well as the water pressure. Tom volunteered to meet with Kirsten to help gather the preliminary information needed to move forward. A tentative meeting is March 1.

Use of tiny house — The Council decided that because of no immediate need, Tilth will turn down the offer from Christina Moats to

purchase her building.

Farm stand construction — Growers may possibly to coordinate with Dorcas to sell their own produce at the stand.

This is a good opportunity to take advantage of the additional traffic from her Community Supported Agriculture customers to bring awareness to Tilth's activities. Raw material left from the original farm stand that blew over a couple years ago could be used. It was suggested that perhaps Hearts and Hammers could

Planning session, see page 8

Planning session, from page 7

help construct a solid long-term building for Tilth. Another building suggestion was to use students of a University of Washington program. Tom and Edward will meet at 9 a.m. on February 22 before the pruning workshop to look at the where and what of a farm stand.

Membership Survey — Marc Wilson has signed up for a month's usage of Survey Mon-

key. Marc has offered to generate a membership survey. The questions listed in the market committee's minutes were reviewed. There were several additional questions suggested by the group. Prescott will work with Marc on this.

Action item: A motion was made and seconded to take part in the survey. Motion passed.

Donation — Edward added an

additional finance item. He has received a request for funding from Whidbey Environmental Action Network (WEAN). WEAN is a community partner engaged in the environmental and agricultural sustainability of Whidbey Island.

Action item: A motion was made and seconded to donate \$50 to WEAN with a note of thanks. With one abstention, the motion carried.

Annual events — Whidbey Island Area Fair is earlier this year — July 31 to August 3. The Garden Critter workshop will need to be moved. Prescott will check with Deer Lagoon Grange. The education committee will help organize the display booth and the vegetable-fruits-grains department stewards at the fair. With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

South Whidbey Tilth Business Meeting Minutes March 20

by Jean Nelson, secretary

Present — Council members Susan Prescott, Edward Hueneke, Jean Nelson, Kirsten Clauson and Tom White. Also present J.C. May and Michael Seraphinoff.

The meeting, held in Grigware Hall at Trinity Lutheran Church, was called to order at 6:38 p.m. by President Prescott.

Announcements and introductions — Acknowledgement was made of the resignation of Bliss Knorpp from the South Whidbey Tilth Council and as chair of the education committee. Thanks and welcome to Michael Seraphinoff for accepting the committee position.

Prescott's signature (replacing that of Linda Good's) has been added to the signature card on accounts at Whidbey Island Bank.

We received a very nice note from the South Whidbey Garden Club declining our application for \$500 toward our water metering and drip irrigation project. They praised our work and encouraged us to keep making our community a better place.

Representatives from the Whidbey Island Garden Tour (June 28, 2014) have asked for volunteers. Complementary tour tickets and tickets to the volunteer party are some of the thank-you perks. Sign up on the [Garden Tour's website](#). Tilth is among the beneficiaries this year.

The next Tilth Film Night will be Tuesday April 8 at 6:30 p.m. at Mark Dworkin and Melissa Young's home. There will be a potluck followed by the movie — *A Place at the Table*. R.S.V.P. to

360-341-1269.

Minutes approval — Motion was made and seconded to accept the February 20, 2014 Council minutes. With no opposition, the motion was approved.

Treasurer's report — The monthly budget versus actual and balance sheets were reviewed. A copy of the Business License and Food Establishment License was given to Kirsten to display at the market. Copies of the Farmers' Market Food Handlers application were given to Kirsten to have on hand. A copy of a volunteer time record was handed to everyone. Volunteer hours are looked at in connection with our nonprofit status and when we do grants. They are to be returned to Edward when full.

Action Item: A motion was made, seconded and approved to add Susan Prescott's name and signature to replace Marc Wilson at One Pacific Coast Bank. With no discussion and no objection motion was approved. Edward Hueneke's name will remain. The minutes from this Council meeting will be needed by One Pacific Coast Bank to replace Marc Wilson's signature.

Market committee — Market manager Kirsten Clauson and market committee chair Tom White reported that South Whidbey Tilth will be a part of the Whidbey Island Farm Tour this year.

Kirsten reported that vendor contracts are coming in and that there are two new vendors this year in addition to the returning vendors. Tom reported that since

there wasn't much interest shown from the vendors to participate in a permanent farm stand, it was decided that the stand would be tabled at this point. Dorcas Young has indicated she is open to sharing the tent she will be using as a farm stand at Tilth in connection with her Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. Kirsten reported on the progress of the Sunday Market signage. She will use the excess plywood at Tilth as well as new plywood. Kirsten will use a pattern at \$2/apiece to have the letters cut from. Pete Little will assist and will donate his time.

Education committee — Michael commended Bliss on a job well done in lining up the workshops for the year. It was suggested that the workshops be open to donation from those attending. The next workshop will be in April by Eric Conn. The subject will be, "Saving seeds, saving from growing your own garden."

J.C. has agreed to move his May workshop on noxious weeds to June so as to make room for a hands-on workshop involving the water irrigation installation. People are needed that can organize, teach and lead volunteers to install the proposed water system. Prescott and Michael will contact several possible people.

Land stewardship — There was a discussion about the terms of the Lesedi Farm land use agreement with Tilth that both parties will address.

There are three new pea patchers signed up so far. Kirsten is pulling together a general pea

patch orientation and a workshop on the usage and maintenance of the tiller. The tiller education will be required for all pea patch renters. Mark Gmerek has volunteered to help with the maintenance. The oil must be checked each time and the gas to be provided by the user. After some discussion it was decided that it was best that tiller use be delegated by just one person for consistency with maintenance.

The soil pH meter is missing and it was suggested once a replacement is purchased that a sign-out sheet be used.

J.C. announced that there would be a workday and orientation on April 12 from 10 to 11 a.m. for those using the veterans' pea patches.

Leonard Good has reconnected the water to the spigot on the line to the upper meadow. He will repair the split hydrant collar and add an additional water spigot — or install a bleeder valve below.

Edward announced his intention to repair the pavilion roof, check out the water damage in the kitchen area and paint several other areas. J.C. will look through the excess paint on-hand and check out the transfer station in Coupeville.

Kirsten has not made a firm decision concerning the mowing contract for the market.

Action item: It was moved, seconded and unanimously passed to donate \$20 to Local Harvest.

Membership and community relations — For the time being,

March meeting, see page 9

March meeting, from page 8

Prescott is filling this vacancy, but is hoping that someone will step up and take over. Gary Ingram continues to maintain the database, but there are some details that need to be addressed. Prescott has a potential candidate in mind and will contact that person.

Old Business

PayPal account — Edward reported on the difficulty he ran into trying to get an answer concerning the PayPal account problem. It appears that they will only deal with Gary Ingram, so Gary will be asked to move forward on dealing with that. Kirsten went on the Tilth website and performed a test donation/membership and found that all the buttons were working.

Market manager agreement Prescott handed out a revised Market Manager Agreement replacing the word “contract” with “agreement” and added “volunteer” Market Manager. This is basically an agreement between the Market Manager and the vendors. Under the “agreement” and “volunteer” wording, the Market Manager can then be covered under the Tilth insurance in case of injury while performing Market Manager duties. Edward has volunteered to keep track of the money flow between the vendors and the Market Manager. Jean volunteered to assist. Kirsten

asked to postpone accepting the agreement until April’s meeting, so she could review it more carefully.

Lesedi Farm lease — The lease agreement between Lesedi Farm and Tilth has been signed and payment has been made for 2014. Copies were given to Dorcas, the finance officer and secretary to file.

Whidbey Eco Network Mini Grant — Prescott informed the Council that application has been made for a \$611 mini grant under the Education, Community and Outreach (ECO) Network “Puget Sound Starts Here” block grant. If approved, this will replace the South Whidbey Garden Club grant that was denied earlier this year. Our April “Spotlight” for ECO Network will focus mainly on the ongoing water conservation that South Whidbey Tilth is involved with, along with the Veterans’ pea patch, pictures and text of Anza’s Pub Talk, etc. Prescott is working on the write-up and will distribute a draft.

Member survey — Regarding the membership survey, Marc Wilson has decided to renew his Survey Monkey contract for another month. Marc will send a draft of our proposed questions for review.

New Business

Bylaws amendment — South Whidbey Tilth is in the process

of applying for its own 501(c)3. Edward and Marc have been helping Prescott with the application. When completed, Tilth will no longer be a subsidiary of the Washington Tilth. Prescott handed out a copy of the existing bylaws with proposed changes marked for the Council to review. It has been 14 years since South Whidbey Tilth became an association. Washington Tilth was to fold effective March 31 of this year, but will remain in force until all the subchapter 501(c)3 applications are filed with the Internal Revenue Service. (We can function as a tax exempt organization while our filed application is pending approval.) Along with removal of all references to Washington Tilth, some of the proposed changes include changing the number of Council members from seven to eight, designating a vice president position, and more definition of the open Council positions when seeking new Council members. Once the bylaws are approved by the Council, they must be sent to all Tilth members for approval. A certain percentage of member approval is required. It was agreed that each Council member fully review the draft and be prepared to make some definite decisions at the next Council meeting April 17.

Calyx summer camp — Prescott

has received a proposal from Calyx to use the Tilth campus for their summer camp again. It will be running for four weeks, four days a week from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. In addition to each family having a Tilth membership it was proposed that Calyx contribute \$30 to cover the propane and water usage.

Action item: A motion was made and seconded to accept the Calyx proposal with parents joining as Tilth members and a \$30 usage fee. The motion carried.

Earth Day — Volunteers are needed to help with the Tilth display for Earth Day at South Whidbey High School April 22 and 23. There will be many other activities going on the month of April, and, among them, Andréa Linton will be at Gordon’s on Blueberry Hill on April 17, giving a talk on farm fish versus wild fish. All activities will be posted on the *South Whidbey Tilth* website.

Sustainability Banquet — It was proposed that the Field to Table Sustainability Banquet be held on Wednesday August 13. Further details will be discussed at the next meeting.

Adjourn — With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:34 p.m.

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 + \$10 x ____ (number of additional household members) = \$_____

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 use PayPal or a credit card to join or donate online at swtilthmembership.yolasite.com.

CALENDAR

MAY

- 15 Business meeting of South Whidbey Tilth**, Thursday, 6:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran community building
- 18 Danny Ward** on saxophone Sunday at Tilth market
- 24 Water Conservation in the Garden workshop**, Saturday, 10 a.m. to noon, see [page 1](#)
- 25 Brian Kenney** performs fiddle tunes, Sunday at Tilth Market
- 25 Honeybee Life on Whidbey Island** with Ziva Naph-tali, noon to 2 p.m. in Tilth orchard; free class to learn about alternative beekeeping methods and what living on Whidbey Island is like for honeybees; may be cancelled if rain is heavy

JUNE

- 1 The Muse and Eye** perform Sunday at Tilth market
- 1 Deadline for Tilth newsletter**, June/July issue, send ideas, pictures, articles to [Prescott, editor](#)
- 2 Island County Septic 101 and 201 class**, Monday, 5:30 to 9 p.m.; Coupeville Recreation Hall; register on the [Island County Septic Training website](#); attend and your name is entered into a drawing to win a \$100 rebate for a septic inspection or the installation of lids and risers. Attend both classes, pay \$25 and you could be certified to inspect your own conventional gravity or conventional pressure system



SOUTH WHIDBEY TILTH ASSOCIATION

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

- 4 Billings Middle School workday** at Tilth, helps welcome, contact [South Whidbey Tilth](#)
- 7 Food Lust**, Saturday, 5 to 10 p.m., [Cascade Harvest Coalition](#) fundraiser, Camp Korey, Carnation
- 8 Nick Toombs** performs 12-string creations Sunday, at Tilth market
- 15 Safety Pin Café**, Sunday at Tilth market; select green text to go to the café's blogspot
- 18 Onsite Waste Water Training Center field trip**, Wednesday, Puyallup, call 360-544-2278 to join a car-pool; a Whidbey ECO Network member opportunity
- 19 Business meeting of South Whidbey Tilth**, Thursday, 6:30 p.m. at South Whidbey Tilth Sustainability Campus, see [page 3](#)

SAVE THE DATE

November 7 to 9, Tilth's 40th Anniversary Conference, Vancouver, Washington; [Reimagine Agriculture](#); information on the [Tilth Producers of Washington](#) website

ONGOING

- Saturday work parties** to maintain the Tilth Sustainability Campus, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.; for information email the [Land Steward](#) or call 360-579-1820
- South Whidbey Tilth Farmers' Market**, Sundays, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. through October 26, see [calendar](#)

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