



# South Whidbey Tilt

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

Volume 30, Number 6

November/December 2012

## Market Season Summary and High Energy Finish

*by Annapoorne Colangelo, market committee chair and Lynae Slinden, market manager*

Another Tilt Market season has come and gone, having provided us with wonderful (and sometimes unusual) organic produce, good cooked food and beverages at the Laughing Cat, entertainment and farm events.

Many thanks to the ever-present vendors Michael Seraphinoff, Eric Conn, Jane Wilson, Anza Muenchow and her interns, Louise Holloway-Stanley, Frank Parente, Ginny Kuehn, Melanie Sceva, Wendy Ferrier, Jody Crane, Dean Campbell, Karen Epifano and Sherrie and Bob Wendt. And, of course, much gratitude to Prescott, not only for keeping the Laughing Cat functioning smoothly, but also for being ever present to serve Tilt. A big thanks to Christina Kahn who contributed stability and sanity to the Laughing Cat and food service. And, thank you, Kym Saephan, for lovingly preparing your scrumptious and heart-warming food! Let's all support her at her eatery, Whidbey Rice, in Greenbank on the highway.

We began the season with a shocker during our premarket cleanup day. In the process of preparing his booth, Paul Iddins found himself lacking his usual energy and feeling some abdominal pain. Fortunately, Judy Brown, a Whidbey General Hospital (WGH) nurse who was volunteering that day, discovered him resting in his car, took his vital signs, called 911 and stayed with Paul until the ambulance arrived and took him to WGH. From there he was medevaced by helicopter to the University of Washington hospital and had surgery that afternoon. Thanks to Judy and her good judgment, Paul is still with us. Though he was missed while recuperating, he returned

**Market season, see page 4**

### *Halloween Highlights*

On the last day we held the Halloween celebration — what fun we had, didn't we? Thanks to all who contributed in many ways. Special thanks from Louise Holloway-Stanley, Lynnda Solfield and myself, Annapoorne, to all of you who donated baked goods and to those who purchased them. The sale was a success — we made just a tad over \$207. Those of you in costume were great and the children were particularly fun to watch and talk with. The music by Bob Effertz and friends and the Tim Donovan Band was great. Puppeteer Dawn Collin charmed everyone as she strolled about with Goaty and friends. Calyx Community Arts School provided children's activities, including face painting by Sarah Gillett. The children also played music.

BugaBay conducted a two-hour worm compost workshop; thank you to Todd Spratt, vermitech specialist, and his wife, Teresa, and son JaNoah. Todd built and donated a brand new in-ground worm bin and conducted his popular workshop on how to use it. The donated bin was loaded with red worms, compliments of Janet Hall of the Extension Service Waste Wise program.



© Don Miller, Delicate Light Photography

Little Sage Guthrie gives Goaty, the marionette, a hug. Dawn Collin is at the controls. Behind is Sarah Gillett, the Calyx lead teacher, dressed as a witch.

We welcomed several new vendors: Craig Vrungus's Kettle Corn, Jim Warren's Heritage Custom Woodworking, Elijah Bonesteel's Slow Moving Water, Amber Manning's Nubian Sun Jewelry, Jessica Lyle's Cloud Island Design and art, crafts, and clothes by Tara Slinden and her friends, Tam and Sarah, who journeyed over from Seattle to help close the market season.

Although many had left by the time the bonfire was lit, those who stayed had a good time and the wreath was burned without mishap. Thanks to Mike

**Halloween party, see page 6**



Matt Holtby photo

Jones and Merrill Walther model their extraordinary painted faces at the Market Halloween Party. Behind them is Meadow Holtby, a young assistant to the Calyx school.

## Step into Leadership

The South Whidbey Tilth Council of Trustees is looking for four candidates interested in serving on its governing board. Elections will be held at the annual membership meeting in January 2013, members will be asked to choose four council members.

Remaining on the board through 2013 are trustees Gary Ingram, Annapoorne Colangelo and President Linda Good. Eric Conn and Edward Hueneke will have completed two-year terms. Anza Muenchow announced she is unable to complete the second year of her term. Also there is an open unfilled position.

A candidate must have been a member of South Whidbey Tilth for at least one year as of January 2012 and have some familiarity with and commitment to the mission of this organization. This familiarity can best be gained by attending council meetings (second Thursdays at 6 p.m. at the Trinity Lutheran Church community building) or by joining others in work parties or committee work. The amount of work required varies with the position within the council, ranging from two or three hours per month to many hours — your choice. Attendance at the monthly council meeting is required of all council members.

This year's council will be looking for candidates who are willing to serve as secretary or as a chairperson to one of the five standing committees.

Except for the president no trustee is elected to a specific office. The council meets after the election to choose one of the following six duties: secretary, finance and fundraising (treasurer), land stewardship, education, market, and membership and public relations.

The list of current offices held by each trustee is always available in the "What Is Tilth?" box on this page of the newsletter. If you would like to join the governing council of South Whidbey Tilth, please contact any of the council members listed on that page. For more information about

**Council positions, see page 6**



## 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

President: Linda Good ..... 360-221-6439 *email president*

Finance/Funding: Edward Hueneke 360-331-5806 *email treasurer*

Secretary: VACANT

Membership: Gary Ingram ..... 360-331-0373 *email membership chair*

Education: Eric Conn ..... 360-321-2805 *email education chair*

Land Stewardship: Anza Muenchow 360-579-2890 *email land steward*

Market: Annapoorne Colangelo ..... 360-579-3735 *email market chair*

### WASHINGTON TILTH REPRESENTATIVE AND ALTERNATE

Prescott ..... 360-544-2278 *email Washington Tilth board rep*

### PROJECT LEADERS

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

Water manager: Bob Wendt ..... 360-579-5844 *email Tilth water manager*

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

Webmaster/Email: Marc Wilson ..... 360-579-2890 *email webmaster*

Calyx School: Lisa Kois ..... 917-859-4522 *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](mailto:Gary.Ingram@swtilth.org) or call 360-222-3207 or visit [swtilthmembership.yolasite.com](http://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 JANUARY/FEBRUARY ISSUE IS DECEMBER 20

### 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](mailto:info(at)southwhideytilth(dot)org)

Website: [www.southwhidbeytilth.org](http://www.southwhidbeytilth.org)

Physical location: 2812 Thompson Road, off SR 525



# In Praise of Homegrown Organic Celery

by Anza Muenchow, Maha Farm and Forest



Though we had a late start, this was a great growing season. The cool wet spring seemed to stretch for too long, but then we enjoyed a long, warm, dry summer. We are glad we had plenty of irrigation equipment, because we needed all of it. So, now is the time we can relax a bit and reflect on a few successes.

My favorite success was our celery crop. Perhaps the long cool spring and early summer helped us, since celery thrives in cool, damp weather. I chose celery this year because in previous years I have grown too many brassicas (bok choy, arugula, cabbage, broccoli, gai lan, etc.). I was having difficulty with my crop rotation maps because most of my beds needed a break from that family of plants. I am avoiding the dreaded club root fungus that can persist in the soil for years and is a major pest of the brassica family in our climate. Club root can be controlled by adding lots of garden lime to “sweeten” the soil (raise the pH) and maintain a strict crop rotation schedule. So, celery was the choice this year, though it takes many more days to mature, unlike those quick brassicas.

Celery seeds need to be started indoors about eight to ten weeks before the last frost date. The germination rate was unlike all my other plant starts. It germinated anywhere from 10 to 25 days after planting. I kept thinking it was bad seed or something, so I bought more seed and kept trying. In each tray I’d see maybe four or five seeds sprout and then wait and wait. I seeded another tray or two and wondered if I had not watered enough, or too much, or if it was too cold or too hot or something. Then a few more seeds would sprout and then a week later another couple would sprout. With patience, I finally saw

that they were all sprouting and filling my trays. Oooops, I had too much celery. I tried to sell some trays of seedlings, but few people were interested as it is not a common crop in our area. We planted lots of celery out in our garden. It thrived. I am still cutting it here in November. We sold a lot at market. It was a delicious, crisp, sweet crop we enjoyed for months. Some of the early harvested plants resprouted from the roots that I had unintentionally left intact. I was eating those second-harvest stalks in my soups and salads during the last week of October. I dried some leaves and stalks with onions and carrots and ground them into a powder I use for veggie soup stock. I’m hoping to gather some celery seed from one plant that bolted in our hoop house. Guess it got too warm in there for it to continue to produce new stems. Hot and cold temperatures seem to cause celery the most problems, as it will bolt if it is stressed. Keep it well watered in a rich soil. It had only a few pests: some minor slug and later aphid damage. No leaf miner or root maggots. Look for these plant starts next spring in the garden stores or local farm stands. Conventional celery bought in grocery stores is usually heavily sprayed with pesticides, so it is great to be able to grow your own, using organic methods.

Because winter time is book reading time for home gardeners, let me recommend a series of books I am finding entertaining. This series is referred to as the *Ringling Cedars of Russia* and it follows a mysterious young woman from Siberia whom my friend calls “the patron saint of backyard gardeners.” The first book is called *Anastasia*, written by Vladimir Megré in novel format, though many report it is a true story. It is a short uplifting read, though I am probably going to get the whole series and read them all. This mystic, spiritual character has sparked a backyard food growing, back to the land, ecovillage-like movement in Russia and through much of eastern Europe. This book reveals Anastasia’s philosophy on humankind’s relationship to Nature, the Universe and God, as well as on lifestyle, education, nutrition, spirituality, love, family and beneficial plants. It is very fun to share this book with you.

Have a cozy winter and watch for the new, exciting seed catalogs coming soon.

## Organic Coffee Ordering

Bulk Café Mam organic fair trade coffee will be ordered monthly through the winter until the Tilth Farmers’ Market opens in the late spring. To get on the emailing list for notifications, please contact *Gary Ingram* by email or call 360-222-3207. A pickup point has not yet been established, but when the shipments arrive you’ll be contacted.

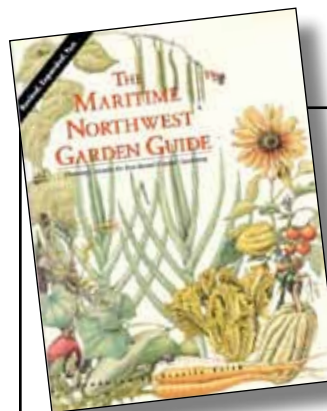
Coffee may be ordered in five or two-and-a-half pound bags and cost \$44 and \$22 respectively for regular whole bean bags; \$48.50 and \$24.25 for decaffeinated whole beans; and 30¢ per pound ground. For a description of each roast and blend, visit the *Café Mam website*.

The coffee you purchase is shade grown using organic methods by the Mam people of the Sierra Madres in Mexico. It is distributed by Royal Blue Organics in Eugene, Oregon. They donate two percent of sales to *Northwest Alternatives to Pesticides*. Coffee sales are marked up slightly to benefit South Whidbey Tilth.

## The Best Gift to a Gardener!

### *The Martime Northwest Garden Guide*

To buy a copy contact 360-544-2278 or [info@southwhidbeytilth.org](mailto:info@southwhidbeytilth.org)



A month-by-month manual tailored to our climate and growing season and useful for beginning to advanced gardeners. The 78-page guide outlines each month’s garden tasks and lists hundreds of vegetable, herb and flower varieties to plant. It also includes strategies for year-round gardening, articles about organic gardening techniques and activities for kids.

**\$15**  
includes tax

## Market season, from page 1

healed and ready to go with his wonderful woodworks along with his wife, Tinker, and her trEATS. Thanks to both of you for doing the rest of the season at the market.

In addition to the usual vendors, we had several guests, including Susan Knapp, with homemade clay smudge stick holders, flower frogs, and the like; Kirsten Clausen's homemade soaps; Don Bindner's beef jerky; glass works by Maria Garcia of Northwest Glass; also Sherren Anderson's Glassworks; pizza by Woodfire Pizza; tasty dishes by Kim McJury, the Leftover Queen; Good Food by Edward Hueneke; Todd Peterson's honey; Linda Morgen's dolls and fabric art; Sharon Babcock's sewn gift items; Blackberry Moon's regional produce and cheese through the Jacobson family; Cordula Hetland's woolen works; Olga von Innus and Todd of Small Crop; Gudrun Johnson's hand painted porcelain and china; Christine George's popular wooden spoons and Gary Ingram's farm fresh eggs. Joining us this year as a full time vendor was Don Miller and his wife with his Delicate Light Photography. Thanks to each of you!

Thank you, Linda Good, for providing musicians of all sorts and thanks to everyone who entertained us.

Thanks to Molly and Anna Petersons for coordinating the informative Sheep to Shawl monthly presentations every second Sunday. Along with a cadre of spinners and weavers, they sheared two sheep, cleaned, carded, and spun the wool, then wove two beautiful shawls.



This shawl draped over a chair represents all the stages of the six-month Sheep to Shawl process. It was knitted into six-inch-wide strips from wool carded at market in July, then dyed deep red, blue and gold. This wool was prepared and spun in as many variations possible, from yarns in strands of each single, vibrant color to strands mixed with multiple colors.

Unseen, but ever ready, was Pete Little. Thank you for maintaining the cleanliness of our restrooms and helping to put up tents, sweeping the pavilion, and getting the market ready to open at 11. He, Edward Hueneke, Ginny Kuehn and Louise Holloway-Stanley were always present to help set up and break down the market. A huge thank you to all of them.

And, what would we do without the generosity of Jill and Dave Campbell at Island Recycling? They not only took our recyclables, but also accepted our trash without charge. Let's continue doing our best to keep trash at a minimum!

And, a huge thank you to Drew Kampion of *Drewslist* for getting the word out every week and to Prescott for preparing the press releases and newsletters.

This story would not be complete without acknowledging the hard work of the market committee last winter. Key members were Anna and Molly Petersons, Jane Wilson, Edward Hueneke, Anza Muenchow, Wendy Ferrier and Prescott. The group reframed the market fee structure as an experiment to attract more vendors, developed a minimalist advertising plan utilizing *Drewslist* and news releases, and hired a market manager. Its greatest success was securing Lynae Slinden, just back from Peace Corps service in Ukraine, as the market manager. Lynae worked tirelessly with vendors, planned a new market design and traffic flow layout and managed its set up and break down. She prepared promotional pieces for *Drewslist*, provided timely reports to the Tilth Council of Trustees, wrote and secured grants from the Port of South Whidbey for market promotion and to extend the grid electricity line to the restrooms and pavilion, which will benefit the market, the Calyx program, the future hoop house and more.

## More Than a Market

Our 41-year-old market, now on South Whidbey Tilth's 11-acre Sustainable Agriculture Campus for the past dozen years, is really more than just a market. Calyx Community Arts School has graced our land with their unique cob playhouse, children's garden and sensory garden (sponsored by the Whidbey Island Garden Tour — in progress under the direction of Lynn Geri) and, of course, the delightful children!

The Native Plant Stewards members continue to promote native plant salvage and conservation in the upper meadow. They just completed their annual Native Plant Focus Month. Instead of a one-day event, members and volunteers staged educational displays and a plant sale every week in October. Thanks to them for stewarding our campus so well.

Adding to the interest of the campus next year will be Dorcas and Matt Young's high tunnel hoop house. Bugabay will be utilizing some of our campus to make and demonstrate worm bins and greenhouses and will be sharing their gardening expertise.

We made our first stab at coordinating the annual spring plant sale, usually orchestrated solely by Friends of Friends Medical Support Fund as its fundraiser. It was a learning experience, which, hopefully, will assist in next spring's sale being even more fruitful. Thanks to Friends of Friends for its assistance and for sharing the profits with us!

Thank you to all who helped create an enjoyable annual summer feast/fundraiser in August, especially Edward Hueneke for cooking the well received salmon and those who brought potluck items and contributed the raffle items.

It was a busy year with lots of changes and hopes of continued success in 2013 and beyond.



# Sweet Corn Variety Trial Results

by Eric Conn

This past summer, South Whidbey Tilth participated in a sweet corn variety trial. This was a collaboration with the Organic Seed Alliance (OSA), as a part of Northern Organic Vegetable Improvement Collaborative (NOVIC). The goal of the trial was to compare 10 early sweet corn varieties, all grown with the same conditions and cultural practices. One of the 10 varieties is a new one being developed specifically for organic growers, and this “field trial” was a way to test it against existing varieties that farmers are growing. The 10 varieties that we grew were: Temptation, Luscious, Bodacious, MDseL:Cycle 4, Top Hat, Tuxana, Amaizing, Spring Treat, Sugar Buns, Stowell’s Evergreen, plus a border row of Golden Bantam. This variety trial would not have been possible without the wonderful volunteers that did the work, so a huge thanks to Prescott, Michael Seraphinoff, JC May, Edward Hueneke and Judy Brown, as well as Anza Muenchow for coordinating the tiller.

The project started by getting the growing site ready. The field (roughly 1,000 square feet) was prepped by tilling in all the weeds growing on the spot, then tilling it again two weeks later when some of the weed seeds and roots had started growing again. After this initial tilling, two pickup truck loads of alpaca/goat manure were spread on the field. This was dusted with a light application of lime, and then the field was tilled again to mix it all in.

Planting happened on May 24, during a period of warm weather. Studies have shown that planting on a warm day is one of the most important factors to getting good sweet corn germination for northern growers, so we planted on a nice warm day. About a month later, on June 26, we counted how well each variety germinated, and then started weeding. Because of the long, wet spring, we didn’t have to water until August, but we did have to do a lot of weeding.

The next round of data collection was the 50 percent silking date, with the earliest variety (Spring Treat) on August 6, and the latest variety (Stowells Evergreen) on September 1. Then came the fun part, harvesting and tasting!

We did the first harvest and taste test on September 6, with Temptation, Sugar Buns, and Spring Treat being ready. Although Temptation had very good germination and vigor, the tasting crew felt the taste was just mediocre. Spring Treat, on the other hand, had very good flavor and therefore was our top pick for the earliest slot. The harvesting continued



Prescott photo

The field of sweet corn varieties growing on the Tilth Sustainability Campus. The photo was taken July 30.

through September, with the last harvest on October 6.

The varieties that stood out for us were Spring Treat, Luscious, and MDseL:Cycle 4. Luscious was a surprise for us because it started out weakly, with relatively poor germination, but the taste made up for it at the end. It was very unusual, with an “explosive, sensational, mouth-feel” to it. These exceptional eating qualities make it worth considering for starting in pots and transplanting, in order to compensate for the poor germination. MDseL:Cycle 4 was a good performer, starting out slow but finishing very strong. It had very good flavor, large ears, and a high yield. For these reasons it got our top pick for the mid and late season slots. This is the variety being developed for organic growers, and we are eagerly awaiting its availability on the market so we can start growing it!



Prescott photo

Taste testing the corn was the best part. Pictured from the left are Eric Conn, Judy Brown, Edward Hueneke and Michael Seraphinoff.

This trial was very informative because it really showed the importance of variety selection. If we had just grown one of the varieties that did poorly, we might have thought it was something that we had done, or a soil or weather issue. Growing them side by side, however, made it very clear that some varieties are poorly adapted to our conditions and others are well adapted. This could mean the difference between total crop failure and a bountiful harvest! Hopefully this information will be helpful to you, not only for growing sweet corn but also for reinforcing the importance of variety selection for any crop. The full data sheet is available on request.

## It's a Boy



Britt and Eric Conn have a new baby boy, born November 3. Congratulations!

# Nesting Box Installed for Barn Owl Habitat at Tilth



© Dan Lockshaw photo, owling.com

Barn owl

by Janie Pulsifer

The Barn owl, *Tyto alba*, long regarded by farmers as an ally, hunts in pastures and meadows and other open spaces. It is a small owl, mostly white underneath, especially when illuminated by the headlights of a car. The feathers on its back are a mix of grey and gold.

The Barn owl doesn't hoot but rather shrieks or screams — a sound less musical than the similar sound of begging juvenile Great Horned owls — and they have very acute hearing. Scientists have documented that a Barn owl can catch a rodent by using only its sense of hearing.

While some believe the fluctuating supply of rats, mice and baby rabbits largely controls the Barn owl population, others think that the lack of quality nesting sites have a lot to do with their decreasing numbers. Barn owls are cavity nesters — using holes wherever they find ones big enough and safe enough. People once built barns with an airy loft for storing hay. The air circulation in the loft helped keep composting hay cool, avoiding barn fires. *Tyto alba* was happy to make its nest in such barns — thus the common name.

Barn owls are also pressured by competition for rodents with Barred and Great Horned owls, as well as direct predation — Great Horned owls will attack and kill Barn owls.

## Tilth Giving Tree Ornaments

Look for ornaments representing your favorite nonprofit organization at the Bayview Cash Store in December. Once again Goosefoot is sponsoring the Holiday Giving Tree decorated with ornaments for sale.



South Whidbey Tilth will have its colorful wooden ornament depicting the Farmers' Market poster. The suggested donation is \$10. Your purchase directly supports South Whidbey Tilth.

## Council positions, from page 2

how South Whidbey Tilth operates, download the bylaws from the [South Whidbey Tilth website](#), in the last section about organization and "Click here to see them."

All qualified members from our chapter interested in serving on the council are encouraged to contact a council member or membership chair [Gary Ingram](#) (360-331-0373).

Barn owls tend to hunt from fence posts, road signs, and other perches lower to the ground than those used by the bigger owls, leaving them more vulnerable to being hit by cars as they fly across a road.

One (or hopefully one of a pair) has been sighted or heard on the Tilth land on Thompson Road on occasion in the winter and spring over the past several years, but on the whole I have seen fewer of them both there and

around Deer Lagoon. I collaborated with George Potter, who found a suitable nesting box plan on the Internet and agreed to build and install the box in the upper forested area on the South Whidbey Tilth Sustainability Campus where it faces an open meadow. Let's hope it attracts a family of Barn owls. Go visit



Nick Fowler photo

Mark Fessler, Janie Pulsifer and Prescott help guide the nesting box into position.

## Halloween Party, from page 1

Cotton, District 3 Volunteer Firefighters, for informing us about the qualifications for the fire pit and anything else we needed to know to keep it safe. Added thanks goes to Corey Graves for moving the fire pit out of the Children's Sensory Garden. Thank you also to Clinton FoodMart, which donated caramel wraps for the apples donated by Norm Brocard from his brother's heirloom orchard in Oregon. Thank you, Norm.

Last, but not least, the weather cooperated — no rain or wind! Perhaps it was due to the extra canopy we borrowed from Meerkerk Garden. Thank you to Joan Bell and Susie Reynolds for arranging that loan.



Nick Fowler photo

Barn owl nesting box mounted at the edge of the forest in the upper meadow.

the site quietly.

Thank you to Mark Fessler and Prescott for helping George and me get the box installed. Thanks Nick Fowler for taking pictures of the process.



## BUSINESS OF SOUTH WHIDBEY TILTH

## Tilth Council Minutes of September 13, 2012

by Edward Hueneke

The regular business meeting of South Whidbey Tilth was called to order at 6 p.m. by President Linda Good on Thursday, September 13, 2012, at Trinity Lutheran Church's Grigware Hall. Council trustees present were Edward Hueneke, Gary Ingram, Eric Conn and Anza Muenchow. Also present were Prescott, JC May, Lynn Geri, Karen Epifano, Marta Mulholland and Lynae Slinden.

The minutes from the July 2012 business meeting were unanimously approved though the council wasn't sure about the time frame stated by Matt for his and Dorcas's signing of a lease with Tilth and the set up of their high tunnel hoop house.

**Finance** — Arrangements were made for writing the annual fund-raising letter by Michael Seraphinoff and it will be assembled Thursday, November 15 at 10 a.m. at Gary's office.

Edward and Linda arranged for a time to meet at Whidbey Island Bank to open accounts for South Whidbey Tilth.

Edward discussed capturing and reporting event revenues and expenses in such a way that each event's revenues and expenses are readily available.

**Membership** — Gary will utilize newsletters to remind members of membership renewal.

**Education** — Eric is directing the gathering of data while harvesting the sweet corn variety trial at the Tilth campus. The program is conducted by the Northern Organic Vegetable Improvement Cooperative nationally and by the Organic Seed Alliance in Washington State. The goal of the project is to find improved varieties of non-GMO crops suited for northern climates.

Eric congratulated members of Tilth who participated in partnership with the Grange for a successful display at the Fair this year. Prescott said a blue ribbon was awarded to Tilth for its educational display about toxins in watering hoses. The Grange will

host a celebration dinner September 18 at 6 p.m. at the Hall.

**Land stewardship** — A discussion occurred as to how Native Plant Stewards (NPS) can protect its various projects on the Tilth campus from interference. It was noted that youth from the community occasionally recreate there. Signs stating "No Trespassing" and flags placed at projects are two steps that might help. Better communication between NPS and other groups utilizing the land was another suggestion.

**Calyx** — Marta reported Calyx had a great summer involving 33 children, but because the sessions were one week at a time, it was difficult to insist each family become Tilth members since some children only came to one themed week. She says they'll build a membership into the tuition fee for each school year starting September. The new school year will have Calyx at Tilth Monday and Tuesday, the other two days are at the Legacy forest. They may be less at Tilth when the weather gets colder.

Anza read a draft of the Calyx/Tilth land use agreement. It states Calyx will pay \$50/month rent. The document will be reviewed at the next meeting. Prescott asked if there was a procedure in the document for a maintenance schedule for kitchen/restroom cleaning and supplies, chicken feeding, trash and recycling process, etc. Marta agree to include it.

Lynn Geri asked if work could begin on the Sensory Garden around the playhouse. She reminded us that the council had approved the playhouse construction in July. The council members present at the July meeting had walked the area and given input about potential conflict of land use. Lynn reported there is a limed ring defining where the hedged area is enclosing the garden area. Calyx intends for the area to be a welcoming part of the Tilth campus, open to any visitor or

member. She pointed out on her diagram where the fire pit is being moved and some concern was expressed that it may be too far from the kitchen. It will be reviewed at the market this Sunday, September 16. Lynae wants an area established for the end of the season bonfire.

**Action item:** Linda moved that Calyx may begin the construction of the Sensory Garden. Gary seconded the motion. The motion was approved by all.

**Market** — Lynae reported that the Freeland Chamber of Commerce will put Tilth on their map. She asked if the board was interested in becoming a member of one or more chambers. She suggested that Tilth should better define what it is and where it wishes to go in the future.

Lynae requested more timely communication from the vendors and musicians with the market manager so that visitors to the market will not be expecting something or someone to be there and be disappointed.

Lynae inquired as to the interest and help in expanding the October 28 season ending market. Invitations will be sent to vendors from other markets Island-wide; other ideas were children's activities and a bonfire.

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### Port of South Whidbey grants

Lynae and Anza submitted grant requests to the Port of South Whidbey and reported two grants were approved.

The total funds awarded were \$4,000. One grant is for funds to promote the Farmers' Market. The other was to fund bringing electricity from the pump house to the bathroom building. Total funds requested were over \$5,000 and Tilth (with Calyx) will plan strategies to match the balance.

Lynae clarified the awards from a conversation with the port manager: the financial priorities are funding for the advertising including the three memberships and the rack cards/

ferry placement which will cost \$1,632 leaving \$2,368 for the electrical project. (They were less enthused about the state highway sign because of previous funding issues of signage by the port.) Matching funds of the profit from the raffle was about \$125 of the \$450 for tickets sold. If the cost for the electrical project will be about \$3,450 based on Anza's bid estimate and \$450 for the trenching, the amount needed from Tilth, Calyx, and possibly the Youngs will be approximately \$1,082. Anza will submit an application for additional funding to the Puget Sound Energy Foundation.

Plans are to try to do the electrical project in October before winter freezing.

**Tilth Sustainability** — Anza inquired as to interest in selling the western (less developed portion) of the campus, using the proceeds to pay off the land loan. Karen, who had raised the issue of financial sustainability of Tilth at various points of the meeting, suggested a member might purchase the lot and gift it back to Tilth. She, Anza, Lynae, JC and Gary agreed to be on a subcommittee of Land Stewardship. The goal of the committee is to explore how to make South Whidbey Tilth sustainable, with the proposal to sell a portion as only one of several options.

**Rental agreement** — Prescott circulated a draft rental agreement to be reviewed and discussed at the October 11 meeting. The need for an agreement arose when we loaned the large canopy to the Meerkerk Garden Music Festival. Anza reminded us that it had just been repaired for \$175 and future arrangements should include a rental fee.

**Next Meeting** — The next South Whidbey Tilth business meeting will be held October 11, 2012, at Trinity Lutheran church's Grigware Hall. The meeting is preceded by a potluck at 5:30 p.m. Every Tilth member is welcome to participate in the potluck and attend the meeting.

## BUSINESS OF SOUTH WHIDBEY TILTH

## Tilth Council Minutes of October 11, 2012

by Prescott, volunteer

The regular business meeting of South Whidbey Tilth was Thursday, October 11 at Trinity Lutheran Church in the community building. Members met at 5 p.m. for a baby shower for Britt and Eric Conn. A potluck dinner followed. President Linda Good called the meeting to order a little after 6 p.m.

**Present** — Council members Linda Good, Annapoorne Colangelo, Anza Muenchow, Eric Conn and Edward Hueneke. (Gary Ingram was unable to attend but sent his report by email.) Other members in attendance were Prescott, JC May, Lynae Slinden and Perry McClellan; as well as a guest, Teresa Spratt. Britt Conn excused herself before the business began.

**Minutes approval** — The September 13 meeting minutes were amended under new business, appointing a subcommittee of Land Stewardship to explore how to make the organization sustainable. The proposal to sell the western portion was amended to read as only one of the options to be proposed. All approved the amended minutes.

**Finance report** — Edward pointed out the approximate \$1,500 loss of income from the previous year on the finance report. The loss is due to the experimental change in Farmers' Market fees — no selling space fee and 10 percent sales commission with a \$200 ceiling.

A new checking and savings account with Whidbey Island Bank was opened last month. The checking account at Wells Fargo will be transferred later when the current supply of checks are used up.

A letter for Tilth's insurance claim regarding Lynae Slinden's hand injury was received reporting non-coverage for contract labor. Edward proposed a discussion be added to the agenda about ways to help Lynae with her medical costs.

He also noted the bookkeeper is putting in extra time handling

the Calyx tuition and payments. He recommended the monthly payment to the bookkeeper be restored to \$100 per month.

**BugaBay land use proposal** Teresa Spratt and her husband, Todd, operate BugaBay, a family business. They wish to lease the southeastern corner of the Tilth campus for a demonstration garden using sustainable soil building methods, such as vermiculture and other soil building techniques. They expect to promote their business, providing worm castings to sell and more.

**Action item:** Prescott stated the following motion: South Whidbey Tilth is committed to farmer incubation advocacy and welcomes collaboration with BugaBay to lease the southeastern corner of the property for a soil building operation and demonstration site. The Spratts will meet with the land steward chair to develop an agreement for review at the November 8 business meeting. Anza seconded the motion and all approved it.

**Announcement:** BugaBay is offering a worm compost workshop on October 28 during the last Farmers' Market party day. Todd has built a \$200 commercial worm bin to donate. The Extension Service Waste Wise program is providing red worms.

**Signage on the highway** — Linda called for a discussion of the sign application to the Department of Transportation (DOT). Lynae had submitted the application last month following a commitment from the Port of South Whidbey to reimburse Tilth for a sign on the highway and the first year of the permit cost. Daniel, a DOT representative, had stopped by the sustainability campus at a time Linda had been there and asked a number of questions and provided more information.

Lynae offered some background information about signage including Island County's sign ordinance. She reported there is a new draft of that ordinance, pending:

1) The county allows one on-site sign that is a maximum of nine

square feet [in a rural zoned parcel]. The sign next to the scarecrow on the fence is the one that was permitted and built to meet county requirements. Informational signs are permitted, for example, on the farm stand; it is exempt from the new code.

2) The temporary banner signs can be moved closer to the fence as long as it is not in the state right of way. Visibility from the south would be greatly improved if the posts could be moved. They cannot become permanent and their use may be more limited next year depending on adoption of the new ordinance.

3) Sandwich boards are only permitted on the property advertised and only one per business. It can be a maximum of six square feet. No off-premises boards are allowed (there are also state restrictions). They suggested that staggered signage on the state right of way are not allowed and could be confiscated and/or fined.

4) The state highway directional signage applied for is similar to that for Bayview, as several people have requested. It is the only additional signage Tilth can get on the highway. Because of the market's limited season and hours, the only category Tilth would fit for such a sign is "Recreation" which would include the entire Tilth campus, not just the market. This would be for such activities as walks, rest rooms, a farm stand and visiting the proposed children's gardens. The sign could include "South Whidbey Tilth Sustainability Campus and Farmers' Market" with logos for both. Costs would be about \$500 for the sign and \$360 for the first year (and each following year). The Port approved funding for the sign and first year if the state approves the permit. Following years would be the responsibility of Tilth. The pending application is based on a desire to direct people to the Tilth campus for its various uses, i.e. more than a market.

**Action item:** Edward moved that the application to the DOT remain

and the question of purchasing and maintaining the sign will be revisited if the application is granted. Annapoorne seconded the motion and all approved.

**Land steward report**  
**Youngs' high tunnel hoop house:** Anza passed around several copies of the Youngs' third draft of their quarter acre lease agreement. She feels it is looking good. Regarding item #10 detailing permission to visit the area, Prescott suggested a provision, "unless specifically invited by the tenant." No further action was taken at the meeting.

**Electrical line to the restrooms:** Anza explained the cost of putting an electrical line to heat the restrooms has changed from \$2,200 to a \$4,500 job. She introduced Perry McClellan, former land steward, who has agreed to coordinate the project. Perry came with large drawings to illustrate an updated proposal. A 16-inch trench needs to be dug from the pump house, 160 feet to about the middle of the exterior wall of the restroom, south side. The trench must be hand dug just around the buildings to avoid any water or power lines, but a machine can do the bulk of the trenching. The solar hot water heater may need to be moved a little east for access. A 200-amp capacity power box will be installed on the pump house. Perry proposes extending the line 65 more feet toward the market area where a post will be mounted for a power box to service the pavilion and market needs. Conduit will be laid and covered over immediately for the safety of all who use the campus. The 2.5-inch conduit will have a cord within to pull the wire through later. He also suggested an additional box in the ground near the Youngs' area in case they decide to fund and install a 20-amp power post later. He suggested more than one of such boxes could be considered along the 160-foot conduit, if within the

**October 11 minutes, see page 9**



# President's Message: Sharing the Bounty



by Linda Good, president

This is the time of year when we especially value our root cellar. When we bought our property 45 years ago I was glad there was a root cellar, though my husband, Leonard, has also used it as a paint locker and a place to store brewing equipment. I have a book by Mike and

Nancy Bubel, *Root Cellaring, the Simple No-Processing Way to Store Fruits and Vegetables*, and since this year has been a good year for apples we've had it full of bushels of apples waiting to be

pressed into juice or other apple delights. I've also been grateful for the tomato and chanterelle harvest, and hope Tilth readers share this satisfaction.

Thanks to everyone who shared our end of market season Halloween party. Gracias to Lynae for her first year as market manager.

Please watch for and read the letter you'll be getting in late November from the South Whidbey Tilth Council of Trustees and consider renewing your membership and making a donation to further our educational mission on the campus and in the community.

## October 11 minutes, from page 8

rated amp capacity. Lynae will contact a potential volunteer to dig the main trench. Everyone agreed it makes sense and cents to go with the expanded plan. The annual fundraising letter will include a mention of the electrical line.

Anza will coordinate a work party to dig the trench around the buildings and do the cover-up. Perry will contact the electrician for an update of the original bid cost. He will also contact the "Call before you dig" agency.

**Calyx agreement with Tilth:** Anza reported the agreement is not ready to review.

**Education report** — Eric reported the sweet corn seed variety trial data is completed, he'll send it in and receive payment. The report will be published in the Tilth newsletter. Prescott added most of the corn stalks have been cut down and set aside for decorating the Halloween party

and use by anyone interested. Crimson clover has been sown as a cover crop.

**Market report** — Annapoone reported plans for the last market are moving forward. She showed the proposed fliers to be handed out to market customers during the next two weeks. She described requirements by the fire department for an open fire, particularly if the current burn ban is in place. The fire pit must be in a four-foot area lined with concrete or metal and 25 feet of bare ground surrounding it. Should the burn ban be lifted before October 21, Lynae agreed to call the Fire District 3 Deputy Chief Mike Cotton for revised regulations.

For the bake sale, donations of baked goods are needed with ingredients listed.

Lynae described the overall plan of activities, vendors and events. She asked Linda to see

if the Tim Donovan Band would bring their equipment early. She said Blackberry Moon is bringing a cider press and will provide pumpkins for carving or decorating.

**Action item:** Anza moved Lynae's request for permission to explore wine, beer and/or hard cider tasting. It was seconded by Linda and approved by all.

**Newsletter report** — Prescott distributed a list of potential items to be included in the November/December issue of the newsletter. The deadline for production is to start October 19. She asked if it needed to be changed. Several people hoped it could be delayed so that the Halloween event could be included. The new deadline for articles is Friday, October 26.

### New Business

**Medical expenses:** Lynae sustained an alarming hand injury while putting up the market banners during the summer. Her

contract with Tilth is small but still a contract. Tilth's insurance only covers members, employees and volunteers. Her out-of-pocket expenses are significant.

**Action item:** Edward moved that Lynae receive \$150 toward medical expenses. Linda seconded the motion and everyone approved.

**Adjournment** — the meeting adjourned about 8:15 p.m.

### NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is 6 p.m. on Thursday, November 8, preceded by a potluck at 5:30. Anyone is welcome to attend and bring business. Only members of South Whidbey Tilth may vote with council members. The meeting is at Trinity Lutheran Church in Grigware Hall of the community building by the highway, 18341 State Route 525 in Freeland.

## Join Us or Renew

I/we want to join (renew my/our membership to) South Whidbey Tilth. There are \_\_\_ adults in my household who would like to have voting rights. (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 address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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 to join or donate online at [swtilthmembership.yolasite.com](http://swtilthmembership.yolasite.com).

CALENDAR

NOVEMBER

- 8 Business meeting, South Whidbey Tilth, 6 p.m., Thursday, preceded by a potluck at 5:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran community building
- 9 Ebey's Forever Community Potluck, 6 to 8:30 p.m., Friday in the Crockett Barn, Coupeville; bring food, plates and utensils
- 9-11 Tilth Producers Annual Conference, Growing Forward: Holistic Management for Organic Farms at Fort Worden State Park in Port Townsend
- 12 Earth Day 2013 planning meeting, 3:30 p.m., Monday, Bayview Cash Store
- 13 Grange class: Cooking with Carlos, Cajun/Latin Fusion, 7 p.m., Tuesday; Chef Carlos Dennis will be bringing taste samples from the new menu at the Langley Bakery and Eatery; class is free, but donations are welcome to cover the cost of the ingredients; Deer Lagoon Grange Hall on Bayview Road
- 15 Mailing party, South Whidbey Tilth fundraising letter, 10 a.m. at Coldwell Banker Tara office in Freeland
- 22 Whidbey Gives Thanks, 3 to 6 p.m. Thursday, Thriving Whidbey Community Potlucks at Bayview Hall

DECEMBER

- 13 Business meeting, South Whidbey Tilth, 6 p.m., Thursday, preceded by a potluck at 5:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran community building
- 20 Newsletter deadline for South Whidbey Tilth January/

February issue, submit articles, photos, ideas to Prescott or call 360-544-2278

JANUARY

- 10 Business meeting, South Whidbey Tilth, 6 p.m., Thursday, preceded by a potluck at 5:30 p.m. at Trinity Lutheran community building

SAVE THE DATE

February 7 – 9, 2013 *Organicology conference*, hosted by Oregon Tilth, Organic Seed Alliance, Sustainable Food Trade Association and Organically Grown Company; registration now open until January 15

ONGOING

Work days at the Tilth Sustainability Campus, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesdays; for details contact Anza Muenchow by email or call 360-579-2892

Volunteer Needs

Fall and winter are wonderful seasons to plant trees and shrubs and to weed and cultivate. I'm looking for people to join me. Let's find a time and day that is convenient. Contact Prescott by email or call 360-544-2278.

Calyx is looking for people willing to take a shift feeding their chickens. If you can help, email Marta Mulholland or call 360-331-7621.

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