My husband, Randy, doesn’t want to plant anything unless he can eat it. One day I pointed to a beautiful foxglove flower, and he half-heartedly nodded his head, but when I told him the botanical name of the plant is *Digitalis*, his eyes lit up. Being in the medical business for many years, Randy knew that the term digitalis is applied to a powerful drug used in the treatment of serious heart conditions. But the plant is toxic, so don’t eat it!

A genus of about twenty species of herbaceous perennials, shrubs, and biennials, *Digitalis* is native to western Europe. The best-known species, *D. purpurea* (pictured on cover), is a reseeding biennial that’s sun, shade, and drought tolerant and can be found in your grandma’s garden, woodlands, and today’s perennial borders. The scientific name means “finger-like” because its blossoms can easily be fitted over a human fingertip.

The tubular flowers are produced in shades of purple to pink to white, and now even peach, on two- to three-foot high spikes in late spring, and bees are mad for them. As an extra bonus, they’re deer resistant. When two different colors of the flowers are grown in a garden, plants that mature from seedlings will flower in various blended colors as the result of cross-pollination caused by wind and bees.

For those of you who would like to try a foxglove that your grandma may not have grown, there’s *Digitalis parviflora* ‘Milk Chocolate’, a rare species from Spain. It blooms in early summer with small reddish-brown flowers on spikes to two feet high. This long-lived perennial has narrow evergreen leaves with white veins. Milk Chocolate foxglove is a subtle plant that needs a position near the front of the border, preferably in front of a plant with variegated or chartreuse-colored foliage to emphasize the dark-colored flowers.

Providing striking color and architectural height to borders, another choice is Rusty Foxglove, *D. ferruginea*, originally found on the Croatian island of Krk in the Adriatic Sea. A reseeding biennial or short-lived perennial, it has eye-catching creamy to pale golden-brown pendulous funnel-shaped blossoms with rusty burgundy interior veining. In late spring to early summer, they form a basal rosette of dark green semi-evergreen leaves. I saw a combination of five Rusty Foxgloves planted with *Melianthus major* (Honey Bush) and red coleus in a garden. Striking! The three- to four-foot flower spikes are attractive to hummingbirds, which hover near the tubular flowers, and to birds which will flock to the seedheads in the fall. Plants and seeds are readily available from mail-order nurseries.

*Digitalis lutea* is a charming self-seeding perennial bearing yellow tubular flowers on spikes two feet high in late
spring. Small Yellow Foxglove has been cultivated since the sixteenth century in Britain. One seeded itself in one of my containers that was planted with blue-flowering Clematis durandii, and I was thrilled to see a hummingbird enjoying the nectar from the dainty flowers. Like most foxgloves, starting these from seed is incredibly easy. Sprinkle a few in three-inch pots filled with potting soil. Press seeds lightly into the soil but don’t bury them, as they need light to germinate. I like to set the pots indoors under grow lights in a tray to bottom-water them, but let them dry a bit between waterings. You can also sprinkle the seeds on prepared soil right in the garden in May or June.

When DIGIPLEXIS® ILLUMINATION® ‘Flame’ was introduced several years ago, it took the gardening world by storm. An intergeneric hybrid, it was created by crossing hardy Digitalis purpurea and its subtropical relative, Isoplexis canariensis from the Canary Islands. At first, growers thought it would be hardy in our area, but no such luck. However, because of its long bloom time, it’s worth planting as an annual. The exotic-looking blooms of pink flutes with Creamsicle orange centers are packed on two-foot-high spikes, and as with all Digitalis, bees can’t get enough of them. Because the flowers are sterile, it will not reseed, but instead, it puts its energy into blooming. When the initial flower spire fades, if removed, numerous smaller side shoots will produce more flowers. Additional cultivars such as ‘Berry Canary’ have been introduced, but they seem to lack the vigor of ‘Flame’.

If grandma were around today, she wouldn’t know which foxglove to choose. But why choose one when you can grow them all!
Our featured plant is part of the Ericaceae and its genus is named for Pehr Kalm, an eighteenth-century student of Linnaeus. Experts at the Royal Horticultural Society have designated Kalmia as one of its “Plants for Pollinators,” and ‘Minuet’ is a well-known dwarf cultivar among enthusiasts due to its compact nature and distinct bands on its flowers. This Mountain Laurel is also a Great Plant Pick (GPP) of Washington State—awarded to honor exceptional specimens in the maritime Pacific Northwest.

It is easy to care for this award-winning plant. Acidic soils, coupled with ample amounts of water, light and dappled shade are best. Be warned, however: laurels should not be ingested, as grayanotoxins cause severe discomfort and depolarize nerve, muscle and heart cells.

‘Minuet’ is a multi-stemmed shrub which has an average height and spread of three feet—perfectly compact for small gardens, containers, hedges, underplants, and middle border masses. It should be mulched annually and have its faded blooms removed to encourage bushy growth.

Pair the broad leaves and gnarled nature of ‘Minuet’ with hues from gold, chartreuse or silver plants to achieve GPP’s “exceptional color contrasts.” Moreover, couple the shrub with purple, pink or dark green plants for GPP’s superb “garden partners.” Notable companion plants include Azaleas, Scotch Heather Calluna vulgaris ‘Annemarie’ (which needs full sun in the Pacific Northwest), Carpenteria californica ‘Bodnant’, Cyclamen hederifolium, Ophiopogon planiscapus ‘Nigrescens’, Pinus nigra ‘Marie Bregeon’, and Rhododendron yakushimanum ‘Ken Janeck’. GPP also recommends ‘Minuet’ be used as an understory shrub for Paperbark Maple (Acer griseum) or Cercidiphyllum (Katsura Japanese Maples).

You can see Kalmia latifolia ‘Minuet’ in the Rock Garden and in the Shorts Ground Cover Garden at the Bellevue Botanical Garden.

In the history of Northwest gardening, there are a few personalities whose passion and energy just lit up the landscape all around them and will continue to do so for as long as there are gardeners in the world. Edwin (Ned) Wells was one of those remarkable people. He is pictured here, third from right, with (left to right) Thomas Hobbs, Valerie Easton, and Richard Hartlage.

Ned was a force in this area’s gardening community almost from the moment he opened Wells Medina Nursery in 1971. It wasn’t just that he had expertise and drive, which he did in abundance. What really set him apart and attracted gardeners of all abilities to him was his boundless delight and joy in plants and gardening— a joy that was highly contagious according to Ned’s two daughters, Lisa Freed and Wendy Wells, who now operate the iconic nursery together.

“If Dad had a ‘tag line,’ it would be ‘Gardening for the Joy of It,” says Lisa. “Many people would come by often just to ‘see what was new and to visit with Ned.’ One family I remember used to come almost every Sunday. Their children later told us they thought going to the nursery on Sunday was [the same as] going to church.”

“He wanted gardening to be for everyone,” adds Wendy. “He loved to show customers new plants and trees. He liked new and unusual plants, but he always stressed that the nursery ‘had

continued on page 11
I heard that you recommend fertilizing with alfalfa meal. Is it really that great?

A: Alfalfa meal is horse food, so I’m not surprised that people are a bit skeptical when I recommend using it as fertilizer. Alfalfa meal doesn’t contain high amounts of the main three nutrients (nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium) usually found in plant foods, but it’s packed with micro nutrients, growth regulators, and amino acids that tell your plant: “Bloom you fool, bloom!” My favorite recipe is to combine the alfalfa meal with an organic flower food. Adding organic fertilizer provides additional micro nutrients and minerals that are necessary for healthy growth but that are missing in alfalfa meal. As a general guideline, apply two cups of alfalfa meal with the recommended amount of organic fertilizer around the average sized tea rose or similar sized plant. I apply alfalfa meal to a wide variety of annuals, perennials and flowering shrubs and I’ve also found it to be a great all-around fertilizer for tomatoes and other fruit-producing summer vegetables. Alfalfa meal is fairly alkaline, however, so avoid applying it to acid loving plants such as rhododendrons, blueberries and camellias. Don’t make the mistake I did of applying it to a blue flowering hydrangea. Hydrangea flowers become pinker in alkaline soil, and after I worked alfalfa meal into the soil around my ‘Blue Wave’ hydrangea, the previously sparkling blue flowers turned the ugliest Pepto-Bismol pink I’ve ever seen.

Make the first application in early April. Perennials that bloom only once per season, such as peonies and lilies, generally require only one application when growth begins in spring. To keep repeat bloomers such as roses, clematis, dahlias, Scabiosa, and torch lilies flowering away all season, apply the above recipe about once every six weeks starting in early April through the end of August. Feeding delphiniums right when they die back after flowering encourages them to regenerate quickly in order to rebloom in late summer.

There are a few things to be aware of when using alfalfa meal. Wear a bandana or hold your breath when you apply it. Like any dusty grain, you don’t want to breathe too much of it. Also, keep the alfalfa meal in a metal can. I found out the hard way how many mice live in Western Washington because they all feasted in my garage the same night! Fortunately, alfalfa meal does not attract rodents once it’s worked into the soil. Finally, don’t mix alfalfa meal into the planting hole as is often recommended. The meal heats up when it’s breaking down and can cause desiccation by drying out the soil in the root zone.

Most quality nurseries sell alfalfa meal, but it can be a bit expensive, so some folks buy it at feed stores. Most feed stores, however, carry alfalfa pellets rather than meal. Don’t use the pellets with minerals that are intended for rabbits as they’re harmful to plants. You can use the pellets without minerals, but they work much better if you fill a bucket one-third full with pellets and then fill it to the top with water. If you do this in the evening, the next morning you will have a bucket of “alfalfa schluck.” Use the same amount of schluck in combination with organic flower food as you would with meal. The good thing about using schluck is that it isn’t dusty and you won’t have to hold your breath.

Follow my advice and fertilize repeat blossoming plants every six weeks with alfalfa, and then get ready for an amazing display as your repeat blossoming plants make blooming fools out of themselves all season long!

Congratulations to Ciscoe Morris, who was selected to receive the prestigious 2020 B.Y. Morrison Communications award. This award is part of the American Horticultural Society’s Great American Gardeners Awards. The award was announced in March, and he will be presented with the award at a ceremony in Virginia in June.
The Waterwise Garden at the Shorts House opened in 1994. Since its beginning, the goal of this display has been to show visitors that gardens can use less water and still be low-maintenance and attractive. Through expert design, consistent principles, and a group of dedicated volunteers, the Waterwise Garden is a beautiful Garden with a healthy message.

The Waterwise Garden is divided up into four sections: East Edge Part-Sun Entry Grove, Shady Woodland, Sunny Kitchen Garden, and West Edge Full-Sun Garden. You can explore these areas and get ideas for your own garden and learn some Natural Yard Care practices to take home.

Signs in the Waterwise Garden explain specific practices to reduce water use. Several of these signs were updated this year with thanks to a grant from the King Conservation District. You can also pick up information about Natural Yard Care from Bellevue Utilities in the Shorts House or the Welcome Room.

Here some gardening principles that the Waterwise Garden promotes:

**Right Plant, Right Place:** Pay attention to how much sun an area gets, as well as whether the soil stays wet or dry. Choose plants based on their needs and group plants with similar water needs together. This will allow you to water more efficiently.

**Upgrade your Lawn:** Lawns tend to require extra water. Remove lawn where you can, starting with shaded areas, spots with poor drainage, and steep slopes that make maintenance difficult. Reducing lawn footprint will also provide you with extra planting areas—fun for you and healthy for the local biome!

**Target Irrigation:** Drip irrigation and soaker hoses deliver water to the soil level where water is needed. When designed and installed properly, drip irrigation maintains soil moisture in the root zone but does not water where there are no plants. Soaker hoses seep water all along their length, so are less targeted than drip lines. However, they are easy to install and move around. Both systems have less evaporation and runoff than spray irrigation.

**Water strategically:** Your soil may have retained more moisture than you think, even if the surface looks dry! If soil an inch below the surface is moist, you can wait a day before checking again. The more you check your soil for moisture, the better you’ll know which areas in your garden dry out quickly and which retain moisture.

**Compost and Mulch:** Compost retains soil moisture, adds nutrients to the soil, supports beneficial organisms, helps reduce compaction and erosion, and can improve soil structure. Mulch (which can be woodchips, bark, compost, gravel, or leaves) applied to the surface slows weed germination and can insulate the soil against extreme temperatures. Mulching is an easy first step to reducing your water consumption, and it looks good too!

**Watch the Weather:** The Pacific Northwest climate usually means heavy rains in the winter and almost none in the summer, and not all plants thrive in those extremes—and the hotter, dryer summers we’ve experienced in the last few years are likely to continue.


The Waterwise Garden is co-sponsored by Bellevue Utilities with support from community volunteers. Grant funding for Waterwise Garden interpretation signs provided by King Conservation District.
No plants, no planet,” read banners hanging near the entrance of the Royal Botanic Garden in Sydney, Australia. Gets your attention, doesn’t it? This searing maxim, backed by additional admonishments on placards posted throughout the grounds, compels visitors to consider the effects of human-induced climate change and habitat loss on the flora that gives us life. Further along banners warn, “No plants, no food” and “No plants, no medicine.” According to Kew Gardens, while more than fifty-five hundred species of plants provide food for human consumption, an even more astonishing number—nearly eighteen thousand—are used medicinally. Three of the most prominent are Salix alba (white willow), the source of aspirin; Papaver somniferum (opium poppy), from which morphine and other pain relievers derive; and several species in the genus Cinchona, the raw material of antimalarial quinine.

Plants have been the basis of remedies and cures from time immemorial in cultures across the planet; lists of medicinal herbs are found among the earliest written records from Egypt to Mesopotamia and China. In the first century, Greek physician, pharmacologist and botanist Dioscorides wrote De materia medica, a five-volume encyclopedia on plant-based medicines that held sway in Europe and the Arab world for fifteen hundred years. It was rendered obsolete only in the late Renaissance by scholars such as Swiss botanist Gaspard Bauhin, and about one hundred years later by English polymath Thomas Browne, who endeavored to catalog native European and introduced Asian and African plants as well as the vast body of botanical specimens arriving from the New World.

Building on the groundbreaking work of Bauhin (for whom a genus of flowering tropical trees has been named), Browne realized the need to develop a systematic method of sorting and naming plants to simplify accessing their beneficial qualities. Nevertheless, he deemed himself not up to the task. In 1658 he mused, “a large field is yet left unto sharper discerners to enlarge upon this order, to search out the figured draughts of nature … to erect generalities, disclose unobserved proprieties … affording delightful Truths confirmable by sense and observations.” The “sharper discerners” Browne called for would emerge a century later with Carolus Linnaeus, the Swedish biologist credited with perfecting scientific (binomial) nomenclature, the designation of a unique, universal identifier—genus and species—for every living thing.

Among the first targets of this new system of taxonomy, which we now call botanical Latin, was the messy mass of medicinal plants. Vernacular (common) names were ambiguous and often resulted in confusion, as a particular herb might be known by a dozen folk names. In the case of medicinal plants, mistaking one for another might result in great harm. This is still a cause of concern today whenever people seek out traditional remedies but fail to vet them adequately: The common name “ginseng,” for example, is used for at least fifteen separate species of plants, each with distinct properties and varying effects on the human body.

Curiously, despite Linnaeus’s scientific approach, the new Latin-based name was often derived from the folk term. The spotted-leaf lungwort, used to treat pulmonary illnesses, was dubbed Pulmonaria officinalis by Linnaeus himself. (The specific epithet “officinalis” refers to plants sold in an apothecary shop.) Similarly, Hepatica nobilis, formerly called in common parlance “liverwort”—not to be confused with the unrelated, yucky, flattened, moss-like pests infesting our greenhouses—was so named because the shape and color of its leaves brought to mind a diseased liver, much as the splotches on Pulmonaria did for infected lungs. A set of pretty ferns commonly called spleenwort due to the shape of the...
When gardeners talk about insects, the discussion is, often as not, about how to get rid of a pest that is laying siege to a favorite plant. Organically inclined gardeners generally try to accomplish this without the use of insecticides. That failing, the next best hope is to find a weapon that vanquishes only the critter in the crosshairs without causing collateral damage.

Recently, however, scientists have begun urging gardeners and farmers to pause when faced with a pesky insect and consider first if there are other fellow insects that might be able to solve the problem at hand. As it turns out, this “insect versus insect” approach to pest control is not only a great choice for gardeners, it may also help to save life on earth as we know it. Surely this is a worthwhile goal if ever there were one.

There is an enormous body of research available today that makes it clear that humans had better rethink their relationship with bugs—or else. A full three-quarters of all known plant and animal species on this planet are insects, but their numbers are dangerously declining or even threatened by extinction, according to Dr. Anne Severdrup-Thygeson, professor of conservation biology at the Norwegian University of Life Sciences. She is one of many scientists making the compelling and urgent case for the need to support existing beneficial insect populations.

This decline in insect populations is bad news indeed for the entire ecosystem. The famous biologist E.O. Wilson, not one to pull his punches, put it this way: “The truth is that we need invertebrates, but they don’t need us... If invertebrates were to disappear, I doubt that the human species could live more than a few months.”

It is one thing to sound the alarm, of course, and quite another to take the all-important step of actively working to help make things right. Fortunately, there is a growing list of things even small-scale gardeners can do to make a positive difference in their own gardens and in the world.

For starters, those on the forefront of addressing this enormous and complex issue are providing new ways to think about and interact with bugs. Today’s scientists begin by dividing insects into roughly two groups: the beneficial and the just plain bad.

Most insects, by far, fall into the beneficial group. These are insects that handle a mission-critical list of tasks essential to all life on earth. Pollinators, such as bees and butterflies among others, are the best-known and appreciated. They are responsible for most food crops and flowering plants. No pollinators, no groceries. Other beneficial insects, however, are equally indispensable. Scientists further divide them into predators, parasites and decomposers, and you wouldn’t want to do without a one of them, either.

Predators feed on other insects, many of which are on gardeners’ most-wanted lists. Ladybugs, for instance, are astonishing little predators, tough as tanks, that can eat fifty to sixty aphids a day with a chaser of mites, mealy worms and leaf hoppers, according to Tiffany Taylor in her article “22 Beneficial Insects to Protect Your Garden and How to Attract Them.”

Parasites, such as the parasitic wasp, live inside small insects or even insect eggs and eat their host creature from the inside out. These wasps, for instance, destroy the eggs of cutworms, aphids, scale, mealybugs gypsy moths and other true pests.

Even the lowly decomposer category of beneficial insects plays a vital role. As Dr. Severdrup-Thygeson explains, ninety percent of all plants that sprout and grow are left “lying on the ground.” Decomposer insects eat this rotting material (plant and animal) and return the nutrients it contains back to the soil. Without their tiny bite-at-a-time operation, new life could not grow.

If you want to deploy and support beneficial insects in your own landscape, here is a short list of steps, drawn from numerous sources, that home gardeners can take to get started:
Get to know your good bug allies. One easy place to begin is with Tiffany Taylor’s list of beneficial insects. Taylor has clear photos and descriptions of what beneficial insects can do to support your gardening efforts and what they each require in return. From ladybugs to ground beetles, green lacewings to hover flies, this is a capable and ready crew. (Note: Taylor includes praying mantis on her list, but not every expert considers them allies. They are voracious eaters, but not the least bit discriminating in their tastes.)

In planting, aim for diversity. Not every beneficial insect needs the same environment to thrive. The National Pesticide Information Center (NPIC) notes that, “The more complex and diverse your garden landscape is, the more likely beneficial insects will call it home.”

Try not to use insecticides or pesticides. If you have your back to the toolshed wall, however, NPIC urges selecting “biological pesticides” that are made to target specific insects or insect groups, and they link to a suggested list of products.

Provide fresh water and shelter. Many insect experts advise providing a source of fresh water for the good bugs in your garden. A shallow dish of water or even a small muddy patch can help them survive and stay, according to an article published by the Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley called, “Beneficial Insects: A Few Good Bugs.” The article also stresses the importance of providing a moist, shaded environment.

Support efforts to create larger scale habitats that can help stabilize at-risk insect populations. It is important to retain “wilderness zones,” says Severdrup-Thygeson. This can mean keeping dead snags and stumps in forests, maintaining (or restoring) belts of trees and bushes along creeks, or planting borders of wildflower meadows along roads and fields.

Spread the word. David MacNeal, author of Bugged: The Insects Who Rule the World and the People Obsessed with Them, told National Geographic writer, Simon Worrall, that insects are “the lever pullers of the world.” They are, MacNeal notes, “the invisible force working throughout the world to keep it running.”

Perhaps making that insect work more visible to more people is also a necessary first step in this critical effort.

For more information, please consult the resources listed below.

**Resources**
- National Pesticide Information Center. "Beneficial Insects in the Garden." (npic.orst.edu/envir/beneficial/garden.htm)
- Tiffany Taylor. “22 Beneficial Insects to Protect Your Garden and How to Attract Them.” Morning Chores (morningchores.com/beneficial-garden-insects)
spore capsules on the fronds, Linnaeus consequently dubbed *Asplenium*. He assigned the genus *Aristolochia* (meaning “best childbirth”) to the vine called birthwort due to its centuries of use in inducing expulsion of the placenta after childbirth.

The suffix –wort comes from an Old English word for herbaceous plants, medicinal or not. It is present in more than 150 common names, such as St. John’s wort (*Hypericum* species) and spiderwort (*Tradescantia* ssp.). The first portion of -wort words takes one of several themes: a likeness to human organs, or a medical condition the herb was believed effective against (barrenwort, feverwort, goutwort, and my favorite, wartwort), or a resemblance in the plant’s foliage or flowers (figwort, knotwort, moneywort, pennywort).

Before you rush outside to munch on some pulmonaria, consider this: The four examples cited above flow from the debunked Doctrine of Signatures, a pseudoscience. This principle held that herbs resembling human body parts were gifts from the divine, signaling they should be used to treat illnesses affecting said organs. Prevalent since the time of Dioscorides two millennia ago, this theory held sway into the nineteenth century and was surely a cause of death as well as cures. A prime case is *Aristolochia*, the so-called birthwort. We now know that its active ingredient, aristolochic acid, is a carcinogen that also causes severe kidney and liver damage.

Today scientists are investigating the medical potential of plants with renewed fervor, racing against time in the face of habitat destruction that endangers the world’s flora. It’s paying off: Close to home, our own *Taxus brevifolia* (Western yew) is the source of paclitaxel (better known by its brand name, Taxol), proven effective in the treatment of several cancers. Further afield, a tropical vinca from Madagascar, *Catharanthus roseus*, produces the alkaloids vincristine and vinblastine, used to treat leukemia and lymphoma. Its generic name, derived from Greek words for “cleansing” and “flower,” testify that *Catharanthus* has long been used in healing. (According to Kew, alkaloids are “nitrogen-rich compounds produced by plants, which help stop animals or insects from feeding on them.” Well-known examples include nicotine and caffeine.)

Back in Sydney’s Royal Botanic Garden, visitors who stop to admire regal stands of *Castanospermum australe* trees learn that potent alkaloids in their seeds may inhibit the viruses that cause HIV, hepatitis C and dengue fever. Research has already established their efficacy as analgesics and anti-inflammatory agents. It’s up to us to support such investigation, press for preservation of native flora, and heed the call to action implied by the aforementioned banners. There is no Planet B.
With the arrival of April and daylight saving time, there are precious few valid excuses to stay inside on these ever-lengthening, light-drenched afternoons. Your garden is calling, so get out there and tackle a few of these tasks!

Clean up left-over winter debris such as matted leaves, ornamental grass thatch and decaying fern fronds. This process presents a golden opportunity to check for slugs and dispatch them quickly without the use of chemicals, which often cause heavy collateral damage to pollinators. Allow bulb foliage to wither completely and turn brown before tugging it out.

Spread organic mulch and compost (around a two-inch depth is optimal for most plants) over your garden beds, making sure not to smother shallow rooters such as rhododendrons. Cut back hardy fuchsias and half-hardy broadleaf evergreen shrubs such as *Acca sellowiana* (pineapple guava) as much or as little as you’d like. For spring blooming hardy shrubs such as *Kerria japonica*, rhododendrons, forsythias and lilacs, wait until they’ve finished blooming before pruning.

Plant vegetable seeds when the danger of frost is past in your neighborhood (this varies widely: in much of Seattle and Bellevue it’s mid-March, but can be as late as May 1 in low-lying areas such as Woodinville). Most seeds germinate best when soil temperature is consistently above fifty-five degrees, although warm-weather items such as beans and sweet corn need sixty degrees.

Take your houseplants outside for a few hours on mild days and give them a spring cleaning with a delicate to moderate shower from the garden hose. Be sure to keep them in the shade to avoid sunburn and let them air dry before taking them back inside.

For free advice on garden topics, including plant identification and plant problems, visit one of the many clinics conducted by the Master Gardener Foundation of King County at dozens of locations around the county, including every Saturday, April 18-October 3, from 10am to 2pm at BBG. For more information, visit www.mgfkc.org.

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**Ned Wells, continued from page 4**

good basics, too’—things that were dependable and that every northwest garden should have.”

Although Ned was retired from his beloved nursery for nearly twenty years, it never seemed like he was, according to his daughters. “When we’d arrive in the morning, we’d often find a list of ‘suggestions’ from Dad, who had come by earlier,” says Lisa. “Even when he was abroad on one of his many trips, we’d get two-page, hand-written faxes of his suggestions.”

It was probably inevitable that Ned’s passionate love of gardening and plants would lead him to become involved with Bellevue Botanical Garden (BBG), which he helped to found and tirelessly supported. “I remember 1997, the first year we had colored lights in the Garden d’Lights display,” recalls Denise Lane, Bellevue Botanical Garden Society board member. “I was the chair of the project that year and Ned sent us five hundred dollars to help cover the extra costs. It was so like him.”

Ned’s habitual generosity never left him. When he passed away in 2018, there was a special parting gift for the Garden left in his will. “Dad was always very enthusiastic about BBG--who wouldn’t be?” his daughters note. “He was very proud of it. He went to see the new Aaron Education Center when it opened and was so excited and pleased to see that the Garden had become truly world-class.”

“You could say that the nursery and BBG really grew up together,” Lisa and Wendy note. “Those were exciting times. There were lots of new plants and ideas, and Dad often took us to the Garden. He also made sure that nursery staff went to BBG to look at special things and to be inspired.”

You can be sure that great ideas flowed both ways between the remarkable Ned Wells and BBG. Thanks to his generous bequest to the Garden, his love of gardening will touch even more people, continuing to help inspire and foster new gardeners for decades to come.
**Spring 2020 Classes**

Unless otherwise noted, classes are $25 for BBGS members and $35 for non-members. Pre-registration required. Register at bellevuebotanical.org/classes.

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**Tour Heronswood and Windcliff**

Words & Photo by Nita-Jo Rountree

Back by Popular Demand! When we offered this tour last spring, it sold out in a nano-second, so we’ve talked Dan Hinkley into offering it again! And this time, registration will be open to BBGS members only for the first two weeks!

Join Dan and BBGS hosts for a very special day in Kingston and Indianola on the Kitsap Peninsula. You will provide your own transportation to Heronswood (directions will be provided) where the tour will begin. Heronswood is the world-renowned garden founded by Dan Hinkley and Robert Jones and is known for its amazing inventory of rare and unusual trees, shrubs, vines, and perennials.

After lunch at Heronswood, which is included in your registration fee, we will visit Windcliff, the exotic, private garden of Dan Hinkley and Robert Jones. Windcliff sits high on a bluff overlooking the Puget Sound, with a picture-perfect view of Mount Rainier in the distance. *Agapanthus, Eucomis, Hydrangea*, and plants from around the world will be in full, glorious bloom, and there will be an opportunity to purchase plants.

Both gardens will be at their summer peaks, so don’t miss this incredible opportunity! Registration opens on April 1 and is open to only 30 people.

**Thursday, July 23, 10am-3pm**

$70 BBGS members, $90 nonmembers ($30 of the registration fee is a donation to support Heronswood Garden)

Register at bellevuebotanical.org/events and navigate to the July calendar. Between April 1 and April 15, you will need to sign in with your user name and password so we can identify you as a current member.

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**Garden d’Lights Orientation.** Taught by Garden d’Lights Volunteers. Thurs., April 2, 10am-12pm. Free. Meet the volunteers, find out what they do, and consider joining the team.

**Kokedama Workshop.** Taught by Weina Dinata. Sat., April 4, 10am-12pm. $55/$65. Includes all the materials for assembling your moss ball, a step-by-step breakdown of the process, and helpful care tips.

**Mini-Habitat Living Centerpiece Family Class.** Taught by Weina Dinata. Sat., April 4, 2-3:30pm. $45/$55 (cost is per centerpiece). Learn how to create a mini-habitat centerpiece using PNW native plants in a repurposed lamp globe.

**Designing the Compelling Photograph (3-part series).** Taught by Ray Pfortner. Part 1: Wed., April 8, 6:30-8:30pm; Part 2: Sat., April 18, 6:30-8:30pm; Part 3: Wed. April 22, 6:30-8:30pm. $75/$95 (covers all three sessions). Learn about composition principles, a range of creative settings, and camera handling.

**An Inside Look at Ukraine’s Natural World and Environmental Challenges.** Thurs., April 30, 6:30-8:30pm. Free. Learn about Ukraine’s natural world, its botanical gardens and national parks, and its environmental challenges.

**Basic Plant Propagation,** Thurs., May 7, 6:30-8:30pm. The class will cover taking cuttings from shrubs and trees, dividing perennials, propagating plants, and starting seeds.

**Mindfulness in the Garden: Awakening to Spring.** Taught by Deborah Wilk and Jessica Hancock. Fri., May 8, 10:30am-12pm. Using elements of Mindfulness Meditation and Shinrin-Yoku (Japanese Forest Bathing), we will stroll slowly through the vibrant spring Garden.

**In the Garden of One’s Imagination: A Photographer’s Journey (lecture & workshop).** Taught by David Perry, Lecture: Sat., June 20, 10-11:30am; Workshop: Sat., June 20, 12-4pm. Lecture only: $10/$15. Lecture & workshop: $65/$80. David Perry will offer a playful framework from which to picture the plants we love.

**Environmental Education in Irkutsk, Central Russia** Sat., June 20, 6:30-8:30pm. Free. With Svetlana Sizykh from Irkutsk State University. Svetlana is fluent in both Russian and English and is excited to introduce the Irkutsk Botanical Garden to you.

**Botanical Acrylic Painting for Beginners.** Taught by Terry MacDonald. Sat. June 27, 10am–2pm. $45/$55. Create two projects and learn the basics to get started painting with acrylics.
After graduating from the University of Oregon with a degree in Landscape Architecture, Jeffrey Bale worked in an office for a whopping twenty minutes before he went “running out the door,” but he points out that one of the most enjoyable benefits of his training was “learning about important gardens around the world.” He spends every winter visiting many of them. This year was his thirty-seventh winter abroad, and he went to Paris, Egypt, Jordan, and Israel.

It was an early trip to Spain and Portugal that introduced Jeffrey to the “Art of Mosaic.” When he returned home, he taught himself how to build pebble and tile mosaics and frequently uses them to embellish his garden designs for clients (including at Dan Hinkley’s Windcliff) and for himself. He has also studied the art of stone carving in India.

Jeffrey’s view of “Pleasure Gardens” is almost mystical; he sees salient details that many of us would miss. During his PowerPoint presentation, he will show us some of the gardens he has encountered during his worldwide travels, including the famed Alhambra in Spain.

If you’ve had the pleasure of visiting the Portland garden of Bob Hyland, and his partner, Andrew Beckman, you know that these are a creative, plant-crazed duo. Bob has vast experience in public garden work (eight years at the Brooklyn Botanic Garden, five years at the San Francisco Botanic Garden, and seven years at Longwood Gardens), and he had a thriving garden center and design business in New York’s Hudson Valley. Andrew was formally the garden editor for Martha Stewart Living magazine and is now the editorial director for Timber Press. Oh my!

Currently, Bob continues to design gardens and container plantings and owns Contained Exuberance, a garden shop in Portland that sells pottery, fountains, benches, and hanging planters. He feels that matching the container to the house architecture and light conditions is just as important as the plant selections that go in them. His pots and plant-driven container designs have been featured in Hudson Valley magazine and even The New York Times. For more information, check out his website, www.hylandgardendesign.com.
Horticulture Volunteers Needed
By Cynthia Welte and photo by Anita White

You can join horticulture volunteers who weed, mulch, prune, and plant in the Garden! We don’t require volunteers to be plant experts or experienced gardeners—you just need to be willing to work hard, learn as you go, and work outdoors, rain or shine.

These are the regular work parties:

- Tuesday mornings: work with city gardeners in central areas like the Urban Meadow and Courtyard Gardens.
- First and third Wednesdays: work with Bellevue Utilities in the Waterwise Garden.
- Thursday mornings: work in the Perennial Border with the Northwest Perennial Alliance.
- Monthly on the third Wednesday: work with the Washington Native Plant Society in the Native Discovery Garden.

In addition, many of our Garden partners would love extra help! The Dahlia Display, Fuchsia Garden, and Rock Garden all need volunteers to keep them healthy and looking good.

To volunteer with us you can apply online at bellevuebotanical.org/volunteer, or contact the Volunteer Coordinator, Cynthia Welte, at 425-452-6826 or cwelte@bellevuewa.gov.

Save the Date!

Heronwood and the Bellevue Botanical Garden Society will present our first joint day-long symposium, Conversing with Eden, on Saturday, September 19, 2020 at the Bellevue Botanical Garden. The all-female cast of speakers includes professors and historians from Harvard University and Hunter College, a garden designer and author from England, and the Curator of Plants from Monticello. Book signings will take place after the lectures.

Tickets go on sale June 9, 2020 at www.bellevuebotanical.org/events

November 16, 2019 - February 15, 2020
What’s New!

If you’re looking for rainy day activities, we carry instructional books, activity books, games and puzzles. Visit the Trillium Store and discover wonderful items for all ages that will encourage a love of nature and an appreciation for the Garden.

**The Art of Botanical Drawing** by Agathe Ravet-Haeveermans is a beautifully illustrated introductory guide to the techniques of botanical painting and drawing. The author discusses in detail how to use various media and materials. Through observation you will learn to draw a wide variety of flowers, plants, and leaves, as well as their textures and structures, $19.99.

**1001 Ants** by Joanna Rzezak is a charmingly illustrated book for children and families. Follow the daily journey of ants as they discover animals, insects and plants that share the garden, $16.95.

New to Cavallini Papers & Co. are puzzles created with images of vintage illustrations from the Cavallini archives. Each thousand-piece puzzle is available in a wildflower, herbarium or arboretum design, $21.95.
Good to Know!

The Pleasure Garden, a lecture by Jeffrey Bale, Wednesday, April 15, 7pm

GiveBIG Washington! GiveBIG is coming up on May 6! Please consider donating to the Bellevue Botanical Garden Society. You can give that day, or schedule your gift beginning on April 22. Visit givebigwa.org to learn more.

Mother’s Day at the Garden, Sunday, May 10, 11am-3pm

Tour of Heronswood and Windcliff, Thursday, July 23, 10am-3pm

SAVE THE DATE! Arts in the Garden, August 29 & 30, 10am-7pm Saturday; 10am-5pm Sunday


SAVE THE DATE! Deer Resistant Drama, a lecture by Karen Chapman, Wednesday, October 21, 7pm.

Take a Docent Tour! Free public docent-led tours of the Garden take place every Saturday and Sunday at noon. We can also provide a free private docent tour for groups of up to 50 people. Find the request form at bellevuebotanical.org/request-a-docent-tour.

Connect with Us!

Mother’s Day at the Garden

Sunday, May 10 • 11am-3pm

Kids’ posy-making for Mom • Live music • Plein Air Artists

Refreshments at Copper Kettle Coffee Bar

Shopping at Trillium Store

Celebrate this special day with your favorite Mom

by bringing her to the beautiful Bellevue Botanical Garden!