Suzanne Tabert—April Meeting Speaker

Medicinal Herbs in the Garden

Suzanne Tabert, bioregional herbalist, is director of herbal education and herbal mentor at the Cedar Mountain Herb School. An herbal medicine instructor for 30 years, Suzanne teaches with great passion and excitement, bringing her wealth of herbal knowledge to students in an engaging and vibrant manner. She is the primary instructor at CMHS and an adjunct faculty member at Bastyr University.

Suzanne’s lecture to our Club will include information about common herbs like sage, rosemary, oregano, peppermint, and thyme that not only bring beauty and pollinators to your garden, but are antimicrobial and antifungal to boot! She’ll lead us in exploring the folklore, medicine, care, and feeding of these herbs plus blue elder, monarda, fennel, echinacea, lovage, and more medicinal plants that can be easily added to your garden to build your herbal apothecary.

When you have purchasing needs for your spring gardening and yard projects, remember our local businesses and others who support our community activity. Sponsors for our 2016 Garden Tour were:

**Steuber Distributing Company**

and

**Girard Resources & Recycling, LLC**

(SGC Club members receive discount for purchases)
With nothing to fear but the fear of rain itself, a few of us got soaked down at the Gazebo on the City’s Clean-Up day, if not in the mood for standing around to take pictures. So thanks to Bobbi Cross, Thea Weczorek, Terry and Steve Macauley and myself, for showing up and beating back the brambles and other weeds invading from the river bank, earning our hot toddies waiting at home. Last year’s larger crew in better weather did such a great job, with weeding and mulching – the place was still in pretty good shape, thankfully. We did the best we could, but unlike other years, have to report there was no sign of the usual city support – no clipboards, mulch, nor tools and clean-up supplies to be seen. In addition to us, volunteers from a local church brought power tools for trimming the walkway and steps down to the river, so we weren’t the only ones. Perhaps the city’s new administration could use some gentle recommendations for next year. Arranging a date with no drizzle would be perfect.

By the time you read this, the sun must have shined again, we will have had two potting parties at the home of Aleta and Bob Mueller’s, and several of us will have gorged at the Snohomish Education Foundation Breakfast at Glacier Peak High School. Even if you miss the last two, hopefully you will have a chance to get out with sunshine or not, to pot up some of your perennial darlings. While we do not encourage the spread of noxious, aggressive, rampagers – we do find good homes for your libertine, profligate groundcovers you love too much to destroy. We never have enough vegetable and edible starts to meet demand. It has been wonderful to see more natives, even tricky-to-start ones, showing up. Fun fact: Coming to the aid of native plants is part of the club’s mission statement.

Meanwhile the mailbox has been full of amazing grant proposals. The April meeting is when we get to see who wins what awards after review by the Grant Committee and approval by the Board.

Thanks to everyone who has helped out in fund-raising efforts, from the Fall Auction, the Plant Sale, (coming up soon on April 28-29) and the Garden Tour to support another part of our mission statement: Encouragement of civic plantings. (Awarding grants for beautification projects is spelled out under the club’s Bylaw Objectives). Applying this kind of information is a privilege of Board members, who also come before you in April with a new slate of Candidates for the Board of 2018-2019, for all members to then vote on at the May meeting.

For pure delight, the Easter Parade is not to be missed. I have on good authority that we will know one of the officials. Come to the meeting and find out which of the club’s past-president has been honored with the esteemed position of Snohomish Easter Parade Judge. The club’s performance – where we show up with Jerry Stanberry’s cool old red truck festooned with floral abundance, and we in our most festive gardening garb handing out flyers for the Plant Sale—is a good opportunity to enact the first part of our mission statement: To stimulate knowledge and love of gardening, and in the hammiest way possible.

-Laura Hartman, President
March 13, 2017 SGC General Meeting Notes

The meeting was called to order by President Laura Hartman at 7:03 pm.

Treasurer’s report: Balance in the treasury is $29,072.57

The Gazebo cleanup date was corrected to March 18th, from 9-11 am.

Scholarships and Grants – Lynda Quinn

• The Snohomish Education Fund Breakfast will be held March 30th from 7:30-8:30 am
• Carol Robinson has reserved a table at the breakfast.

Easter Parade – Bobbi Cross

• The parade is down 1st Street on April 15th
• Come around 10 am and gather around Jerry Stansberry’s little red truck

Friendship Tour – Bobbi Cross

• We have 21 gardens so far
• Need one more garden for the Aug 20th and Sept 10th tours
• Please call Bobbi to get on the list.
• Bobbi is looking for a co-chair for the Friendship Tour
• Pat Shinner – a succulent expert will be on the tour on June 11th

Plant Sale – Roberta Alley

• The Plant Sale is April 29th – the last Saturday in April starting at 9 am
• Potting parties will be held at Aleta Mueller’s home on Mar 29th and April 1st
• Come anytime of the day to bring your plants to be potted or to just help out.
• Aleta’s phone number is 425-359-8198 (It was incorrect in the first edition of this year’s directory)
• If you are potting your own plants, please get them in pots by April 1st in order for them to get established.

Veggie Garden – Laura Hartman

• The SGC purchased seeds this year for the veggie garden
• We also have a few from last year that should still be viable
• If you would like to get some starts going for the veggie garden or the plant sale, contact Laura to get some seeds.
• Work will start in the Veggie Garden the weekend after Mother’s Day in May.
• McDaniel’s also donated some seeds

June Social – Zoe Busch (chair)

• This year’s June social will be at the home of Ann Sterley

(continued on page 4)
March 13, 2017 SGC General Meeting Notes (continued)

Announcements:

- McDaniel’s is looking to hire someone full time for their garden center

Door prizes were won by: Donna Lee, Joanne Howell, Ginny Read, Sue Folkerts, Thea Weczorek, Rhonda Schlupp

The Meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

-Andy Blair, SGC Secretary

SGC Annual Plant Sale is Just Around the Corner

Please bring your friends, neighbors and family to the Plant sale on Saturday, April 29th, 9 AM to 1 PM at The Farm at Swan’s Trail, 7301 Rivershore Rd., 3.5 miles west of Snohomish. You’ll be amazed at all the wonderful plants you’ll find there at VERY reasonable prices. Remember…..the early bird gets the best plants. Let’s get the word out! We’ll have handouts at the April meeting to give to your friends.

Bring your plants to donate in clean pots and identified with pot sticks (we’ll have pot sticks at the meeting) to The Farm on Friday, April 28th, 10 AM to 2-ish or so. It’s still not too late to divide and pot up plants from your garden. If you don’t have plants to donate, please volunteer to help at the set-up or plant sale day.

We have a Garage Sale there too!! Please donate gently-used garden related items and bring them on setup day, Friday. A big Thank you goes out to Wendy Bruington and Val Rude for taking this on. Any questions….contact Val at 360-629-7621. We need cardboard flats from grocery stores…..the ones that hold veggie cans or beer. We need those to put plants in for customers on Plant Sale day.

Thank you to all the volunteers who helped pot plants at the potting parties and to all the gardeners who shared plants. Below is a picture after last year’s April 29th potting party.

Huge THANKS to all of you who have already volunteered to help! Sign-up sheets will be available at the meeting again, IT’S ALL FUN !!!!! Feel free to contact Roberta Alley robertaalleygarden@gmail.com if you want to join us and missed the sign-up sheets at the meetings.

-Roberta Alley, Plant Sale Chair
Welcome, New Members

Wendy Cash, Granite Falls
Pam Garrison, Marysville
Barb & Ken Gehring, Snohomish
Geri Mensonides, Granite Falls
Jean Wagner, Everett

Wendy Cash was born in Snohomish, grew up in Mountlake Terrace, lived in the California desert for 30 years, and has returned to the Seattle area, living first in Lynnwood where she began a private nursery, and finally moved that endeavor out to the rural area near Granite Falls. The nursery is a small business, with no store front, that sells plants to the public through craigslist and social media. Starting with cuttings from existing plants, she makes new ones and sells them in 1 and 2 gallon sizes for $5-7!

Wendy’s earlier career (she is “retired”) was in Information Technology in the aerospace industry. She is happy to now spend her days planting sticks in the ground and watching them grow! She started this business to counteract the high pricing of plants she discovered when she wanted to create a nice landscape for her home. The overhead is kept low through enlisting the help of her husband with the plumbing and electrical needs, and of her nearby children and nephew for the heavy lifting chores.

Wendy and her husband have 3 children, 9 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren, with another on the way. Other keen interests of hers are cooking and quilting (but those get pushed aside when gardening season gets under way). She is also finishing her Master Gardener training.

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Pam Garrison volunteered at the recent Natural Plant Sale in Monroe and met a few of the Club members who also served as volunteers for that event. That’s how she found us, and though her membership will likely be relatively short due to a planned move to Port Orchard once her home is built there, she will find a way to get involved in Club activities. She is learning to build a forest permaculture at her future residence, with a grove of walnut, filbert and fig trees – all of which will be new to her. She wants to plant things for the deer to eat as well, in order to keep them away from the more important plants! She has a long history as a casual gardener, creating a pleasant environment around her home; but these spaces have not been anything she would call a formal garden – nothing anyone would want to tour, she says.

Pam’s previous career was as a public affairs officer for the U.S. Army. At the same time, she served as an Army Reservist part-time, so she is a military veteran. She lived on Guam for 11 years and did some tropical planting there. At one time she wrote a book on Washington wine, available online. When she came to Washington in 1984, there were 4 or 5 wineries in the state. Now she’s been told there are about 900! She is a quilter and a voracious reader, and she works on her art skills through adult coloring books. Pam lost her husband last summer and fills the empty space with a variety of interests. She has 4 children, none of whom are gardeners. But she says that they do come to pick her blueberries when they are in season!

(continued on page 6)
Barb and Ken Gehring retired and moved to Snohomish 3 years ago after 50 years in Juneau, Alaska (where she says there are many beautiful gardens). They both worked for the State of Alaska for 30 years, he as a purchasing agent and she as an accountant. They own a condo in Seattle, but it was somewhat boring there as there is “no place to putter.” So Ken Googled “fishing lakes” and they found a house on a sizeable property with an established, gorgeous garden (she wouldn’t change a thing) – on Panther Lake. They are enjoying their new community and have made many new friends, also being active in the Senior Center and the American Legion. Barb says they joined our Club because she was aware that meetings are held at the Center, and they hope to learn more about how to take care of their garden.

Geri Mensonides worked for 30 years at Providence, where she loved her work as a nurse specializing in vascular access therapy. Now on her Granite Falls farm, she says, “every time I pull out morning glories and their roots, I think I’m in someone’s vein again!” She got rid of her horse, so she started a new garden by the barn. And that’s one of the reasons she is often found at the local nurseries, buying whatever is blooming, “All the nurseries know me by name!” She said that “Christine” at the former Machias Nursery is the reason she joined the Garden Club.

Geri says she doesn’t have a gorgeous garden. She likes country life and working in the soil, preferring to put things in pots to reduce the peskiness of weeds and slugs. She also loves and collects old things, many of which wind up in her gardens. What she really wants to be is an artist. So that she can be identified at Club meetings, Geri mentioned that she is tall, and she often wears a hat – because “I don’t like my hair these days!”

Jean Wagner, who has been gardening for 30-40 years, has more time for it following her retirement as a teacher of elementary “highly capable” students. She has honed her skills through the self-taught method as well as from the shared knowledge of her mother and sister, great gardeners both. She’s lived in the area bordering Snohomish/Everett/Mill Creek for 14 years and chose our Club for membership from perusing the web site, attracted by the variety of activities and significant involvement of members.

Jean’s newly realized free time has also allowed her to take up more formal training in acrylic and oil painting, a long-time interest nurtured as an art major in college. She appreciates having the time now to pursue it more seriously. Besides painting, gardening and reading, a large devotion of Jean’s time in retirement is directed toward her 9 grandchildren who all live nearby.

Pam Wanser, Profile Procurer
Speaker Notes from March Meeting

Early Season Gardening: Get your Edibles Growing

Bill Thorness

Pop quiz. Who advised planting a thimble full of lettuce seeds every Monday? (answer on back page)

Our March speaker was Bill Thorness, author of Cool Season Gardener, Edible Heirlooms, and Biking Puget Sound as well as host of his own website and blog “Cool Season Gardener” (http://coolseasongardener.com). At the start of his talk, Bill noted the tradition of planting peas in February which to some gardeners is almost a sacred ritual. He feels that February is a bit too early to be planting those here, but if you must, go ahead. He did say, however, that peas sown later will catch up to those early birds.

Bill divides the Pacific Northwest year into seven seasons, six cool and one warm: early middle and late Spring, Summer, early and middle Fall, and Winter. Since we have so much cool weather here, we need to look beyond the traditional Summer crops to those that will grow more nearly year ‘round. In this way, we'll not only feed ourselves most of the year, we'll broaden our culinary horizons as well. Excellent crops for this part of the world are carrots, brassicas and Asian greens.

According to Bill, the best investment you can make for your edible garden is a soil thermometer. When the soil reaches temperatures of 40° to 45°F, it is safe to plant peas, mustard, lettuce, Asian greens, wild greens, endive and radishes. Once these early seeds have sprouted, they generally keep going, though it is often good to cover them. In fact, cloches or other covers can be used to warm the soil, thus making it possible to plant earlier. At soil temperatures of 50° - 55°F, it is safe to plant brassicas, onions, leeks, beets, parsnips, turnips, rutabagas, spinach and potatoes.

Bill spent quite a bit of time explaining techniques for prolonging the growing season. According to “Daves Garden”, in Everett there is a high risk of frost between October 26th and April 6th, and frost is likely to happen between November 13th and March 19th. It is unlikely before October 7th and after April 25th. Frost can actually be a benefit to some edibles, because their defense mechanism converts some starches into sugars, making them sweeter. Unfortunately, frost also kills many growing crops and prevents sowing others. The season can, however, be extended several ways. Raised beds are good for this because the sides of the beds can retain heat and keep the soil warm in the nights. Stone beds are particularly good for this.

Probably the most common season extending technique is using some kind of cover over your plants. These can be cloches, the most familiar of which are bell-shaped covers with vents, but which can be made from other materials including plastic soda or milk bottles. Hoop houses are used for larger areas and can be made by constructing hoops from bamboo poles or PVC pipes and covering these with 4 – 6 ml thick plastic sheeting. These should be sitted in summer for ventilation. Cold frames can be constructed elaborately or can be improvised using old windows or bricks and covered with polycarbonate. Bill showed photos of his own green and happy edibles which he had sheltered with cloches and cold frames through the bitter cold spells of our winter. These vegetables can go all winter in a cold frame, but in really cold weather it may be advisable to add some insulation such as Reemay garden fleece. Made of spun polyester, it allows sun, air, and water to go through, but retains warmth.

Another edible gardening aspect Bill covered is the importance of crop rotation, particularly when dealing with members of the same family which are susceptible to the same pests and diseases. Good examples of these are solanum (e.g. tomatoes and potatoes), allium (e.g. garlic, onions, leeks) and brassica (e.g. broccoli, cabbage, brussels sprouts). Members of the same families should not be planted in the same beds in

(continued on page 8)
consecutive seasons. Bill also advocates a rotation which maintains the fertility of garden beds. This Fertility Rotation starts with leaf crops (e.g. lettuce), proceeds to root crops (e.g. beets), then to flower crops (e.g. broccoli) and to fruit crops (e.g. tomatoes or peppers). This maintains fertility by stimulating the whole food web in the soil.

Another technique suggested for keeping soil healthy was the use of cover crops. This is a crop (Bill uses a mixture) that is planted in the garden in the fall and allowed to grow through the winter. In late Winter (end of February or early March), the crop is chopped down and dug into the soil. If there is lots of biomass, it may be best to rake part of it up and add to your compost. The rest is dug into the soil and allowed to rest there for a few weeks before planting. Another thing that is good to do at the same time is find and remove the eggs of snails, slugs and leaf miners. This will lower the number you have to deal with later in the year.

Finally, Bill spoke to his desire (and that of many of us) to be able to provide home-grown food deep into the coldest months. He used Thanksgiving as his example; he wanted to provide something from his garden for the big feast. Although Bill actually supplied celery for the stuffing last Thanksgiving (best variety – Redventure) his example crop for this talk was Amish Deer Tongue lettuce, which takes 45 – 55 days to maturity. The problem was when to plant in order to have it ready at just the right time. He pointed out that it isn’t enough just to count back the days and plant the seeds. Due to Fall being unpredictable, it is necessary to allow one-to-two weeks “Fall Factor”. In addition, Bill noted that he wasn’t going to harvest all the lettuce at the same time, so suggested adding another five days to extend the harvest period. These calculations resulted in a planting date of September 30th. On the other hand, said Bill, you could always simply take the advice of Thomas Jefferson!*  

* quiz spoiler!

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*We extend our sympathy to the Girard family on the recent loss of Laurent Girard, owner of Girard Resources & Recycling LLC.*
Snohomish Easter Parade
Saturday, April 15th
Don’t Miss the Fun This Year!!!

Join us for the Easter Parade on Saturday, April 15th, in downtown Snohomish. Many have signed up already for this fun and enjoyable event to promote the Snohomish Garden Club and our annual Plant Sale which takes place on April 29th. Grab your gardening gear and/or decorated hat and join us between 10:00 AM and 11:00 AM at parade line-up between Union and Lincoln on 1st Street – look for Stansberry’s little red truck. This event is always a lot of fun and great exercise to boot! Please note – the parade route is less than one mile long and you can even hitch a ride back to the start in the little red truck. Sign-up sheets will be available at the April meeting. If you need more information or a little nudge to get involved call Bobbi Cross at 425-397-7301.

(This is a reminder of what our annual Plant Sale is all about….taken from SGC Member Info #101 which can be found on the www.snohomishgaradenclub.com website)

Annual Plant Sale #101

The Snohomish Garden Club holds three major fund-raising projects during the year and the annual plant sale is the first….always the last Saturday of the month of April. Here is an opportunity to sell your excess plants, buy new ones, network with other gardeners while helping the Club build the treasury that will fund the community activities we’re involved in.

The fun begins when club members are working in their gardens in the winter-turning-to spring months. Instead of throwing away the excesses that are crowding out other plants in your garden, pot them up for the plant sale or just set them aside to be taken at a later date to a “potting party” where pots and soil are available and where club volunteers will gather to make ready for sale day. Or, if you enjoy starting seeds, get some salad bowls or sweet peas started for the sale. The sale is held at The Farm at Swan’s Trail, 7301 Rivershore Road west of Snohomish.

Two of the coordinating projects with the plant sale are the flea market and the raffle. Gently used gardening tools and other garden/lawn/home related items are good sellers. The raffle prizes are donated by local businesses and/or members and sold to members, friends, family, co-workers and neighbors.

As sale day approaches and on day of sale there are several tasks that will require some volunteer labor and/or contribution:

- Distributing advertising posters to local businesses
- Handing out plant sale flyers at the Easter Parade on March 26th
- Donating to the raffle (hand-crafted garden art, work bench, garden seating are popular raffle items)
- Selling raffle tickets
- Moving tables and other materials from storage locations (Trucks and pickups welcome!)
- Set-up and organization at the sale site
- Food preparation for those hard-workers at the sale
- Receiving, organizing and pricing plants
- Helping sale-day visitors select plants
- Tallying and checking out customer purchases
- Clean-up at end of sale day.

Volunteer sign-up sheets are distributed at the monthly meetings preceding the sale or you may contact the plant sale coordinators and let them know you want to be involved.
THE WHISLTING GARDENER
First Week of March—Signs of Spring

Considering all the cold and wet weather we have had and evidently will continue to have for at least the first half of April I could easily just refer you to my To Do list for both February and March and you would probably be just fine (you can find those articles on my website at www.sunnysidenursery.net). For myself I am easily 2-3 weeks behind schedule, especially in my veggie garden where I would have loved to have had my cool season veggies planted by now. I have to keep reminding myself that there is still plenty of time.

Speaking of not being too late, one of the most frequently asked questions I get this time of year is: “Is it too late to prune?” The answer is unequivocally: “No, it is not too late to prune”. You can still prune your fruit trees and vines and shrubs and roses or whatever looks like it needs to be whipped into shape. I have pruned roses as late as mid-April and cut off considerable new growth without having a deleterious effect on them. In fact, one of the benefits of pruning roses late is that the aphids go to everyone else’s roses first while mine are still leafing out. Here are a few more pointers for the month.

ROSES—Feed them with an organic rose food such as E.B. Stone Rose and Flower Food and if you are feeling generous add a handful of lime, Epsom salt, and alfalfa meal around each rose and scratch it into the soil. There are lots of options for controlling insects and disease and whether you choose natural or synthetic do something now. And don’t forget to plant a few new ones too.

LAWNS—April is the month to resurrect an ugly lawn or plant a new one. Make it happen this month. Your local garden center can help you figure it out.

PERENNIALS: you will find a good selection of early blooming perennials in the nurseries this time of year. When planting any plant consider using some Liquinox Start. It contains several nutrients along with yucca extract and is cheap insurance in my book. I have personally used this product for over 60 years and wouldn’t garden without it. And of course don’t forget the compost and fertilizer.

BULBS: it’s time to plant summer blooming bulbs such as dahlias and gladiolas and lilies. Add bone meal to the hole (it contains 15% phosphorus which helps root growth).

WEEDS: Same old story, a Hula Hoe and some mulch almost always does the trick.

LANDSCAPING: Once the soils are dry enough to work it is fine to get going on our landscape projects. Remember that while the fun part might be the plants the most important part of a successful landscape is in the ground work and the drainage. Spend the time and money to install good soil and proper drainage and everything else will naturally fall into place.

ANNUALS: I know it’s hard to believe but I am already seeing sweet alyssum and lobelia and million bells on the tables in the nursery. While some of these will take the cold temps don’t try and plant geraniums and begonias and marigolds (even if you do see them at Costco). Save your money for when the soils are warmer.

If the sun comes out take a mental health day and stay home and work in the garden, you’ll be glad you did.

Steve Smith is owner of Sunnyside Nursery in Marysville and you can send your gardening questions to him online at info@sunnysidenursery.net
Directory Changes/Additions

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-Kathy Seufert, Membership Chair

At all meetings......
Greet our new members and thank them for their membership and helping hands.
They infuse us with new enthusiasm, ideas, and volunteerism.

FRIENDSHIP GARDEN TOURS 2017

This year, starting on June 11th, we are excited to present twenty-two member gardens for your enjoyment. The gardens reflect the members’ hard work and great love of and for plants. We’ve tried to give you a variety of types of gardens, be it a work-in-progress or a revitalization of an old garden and some of the gardens have surprises such as fairies or unusual plants. This is also a great chance to get to know our fellow garden club members and share ideas while spending a pleasant Sunday afternoon out and about. The booklet will be handed out at the May meeting and June social and if a person is unable to attend one of these events they can call Bobbi Cross at 425-397-7301 or foxybird1@comcast.net and she will arrange to get one to you.

-Bobbi Cross – FT Co-chair
Answer to pop quiz: Avid gardener and sometime politician, Thomas Jefferson.