

May 2012

# garden time

A Digital Monthly Magazine for Your Garden & Home

## Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden

Portland's Crown Jewel  
Sparkles in the Spring

**PLANTS THAT  
ATTRACT  
HUMMINGBIRDS**

**Saffron Crocus**

*Tsugawa Nursery's*  
**Brian Tsugawa**



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-Jeff Gustin, President

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## What a Difference...

What a difference a year makes, or even a couple of months. We are in the early stages of what looks like a great spring. Last year I think I remember one weekend of nice weather. This year it is looking like we are getting a break. The warmer, sunny weather has been showing up on the weekends and the rain has stayed in the middle of the week. It looks like this trend will continue for at least the next few weeks. We can only hope!

Spring is also the time for new plants and plantings. We recently planted up a couple of baskets and pots for around the garden. One of the favorite plants for baskets and containers is the fuchsia. Check out this month's story about these summer beauties. There are so many varieties that it can be hard to choose one for your container. Just know that you can't go wrong, since most of the ones you will find at your local garden center will perform well. Just remember to keep them watered and fertilized for a summer full of blooms. Fuchsias are also great plants for hummingbirds. In our 'Backyard' section this month we have other great plants that will draw these fast and furious feeders to your backyard.

Of course weeds are making their appearance again. I recently received an e-mail promoting a weed control product, and they claim in a recent survey that "96 percent of homeowners say spending time outdoors reduces stress." However, "47 percent report that unruly weeds are a source of stress" and "46 percent say weeds kill their enthusiasm for the outdoors." I have to say that with all this nice weather, we have gotten ahead of our weeds this season in the garden, and I do feel less stress! In the next month we will be doing a story on the Garden Time TV show about all the different methods for getting rid of your weeds. In this month's WTDITG (What To Do in the Garden) we talk about covering your weeds with newspaper or cardboard and compost to get rid of them. Be watching the TV show for more weed control ideas.

Finally, Robin from the *Fusion* crew tells us about the importance of 'Curb Appeal'. All this spring work can get you only so far if you are looking to improve the outward appearance of your home. You don't have to be selling your home to want it to look good. It creates an impression for everyone who comes to your home. Robin gives us some helpful tips on not just landscaping, but also on home colors and how to tie everything together.

We would also like to take the time to thank everyone who came out for our 10th anniversary of the GardenPalooza event. This year we had one of those GREAT weather weekends and it showed, as people were able to take their time shopping and enjoying the day. It is hard to believe that it has been 10 years (it is our 7th for the *Garden Time* show and 4th for the *Fusion* program), but we are excited to continue the GardenPalooza event for many years to come! We would also like to thank the Romaines, the owners of Fir Point Farms, for hosting our event again this year. They are a great couple and we are proud to call them our friends!

**Happy Gardening,**

**Jeff Gustin, Publisher**

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## In this issue...

### Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden

adventures....pg. 4

### Hummingbird Plants

backyard....pg. 6

### Brian Tsugawa

hortie....pg. 9

### Fuchsia Baskets

got to have it....pg. 14

### Saffron Crocus

eats....pg. 16

### Curb Appeal

home....pg. 18

### May Gardening

wtditg....pg. 22

### Gardening Events

play time....back cover



# One for the Rhodies

A delight in any season, this crown jewel sparkles most in the spring.

by William McClenathan



Each year right around Mother's Day there is a very special garden just breaking into its yearly glory. Nestled beside Reed College and Eastmoreland Golf Course on SE 28th Ave resides the beautiful Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden.

This historic garden has been around a long, long time. William S. Ladd, who served two terms as the mayor of Portland in the 1800s, was the original owner of the property. He named it Crystal Springs Farm. The oldest rhododendron in the current garden was planted prior to 1917. In 1950, the development of a test and display garden was initiated by the Portland Chapter of the American Rhododendron Society. The owner of the Statesman Journal at that time, Sam Jackson, donated 27 acres on Terwilliger Blvd. for the display and test gardens. However, the topography was too steep and deemed unfit for the required use. That's when Claude I. Sersanous, a member of the group selecting the site, suggested its present location.

Although abandoned and overgrown with blackberries and brush, through the combined efforts of the Portland Chapter of the Rhododendron Society, countless volunteers and the support of K.P. Keyser, the gardens began to flourish. In 1956, the first rhododendron show was held in the gardens, but it was not until 1964 that it acquired the name countless people worldwide know it by today, Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden.

The stunning waterfall at the entrance has rocks that came from Mt Hood and Mt Adams, with landscape architects like Ruth Hansen and Wallace K. Huntington working on the design over the years, plus countless volunteers, it really has become a world-class garden to visit.

With more than 2,500 varieties of rhododendrons, azaleas and companion plants in the garden, there is almost always something to see. Keep in mind that the majority of these plants have been either donated directly to the garden by volunteers or interested individuals or purchased with money that





has been donated to the garden. And, even though spring is breathtaking, never discount the rest of the year. The varieties of trees share their amazing colors into fall and winter. Because of Crystal Spring Lake surrounding much of the garden, birds and waterfowl are always abundant.

For almost half of the year the garden is free. Admission is free to all from the day after Labor Day through the month of February. A \$3 admission fee is charged between 10:00am-6:00pm, Thursday through Monday, March through Labor Day. Admission is also free for children under 12 and Friends of Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden.

The hours of the garden are:

**April 1-September 30:  
6:00am-10:00pm**

**October 1-March 31:  
6:00am-6:00pm**

Maintaining Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden is a massive undertaking and they are always looking for volunteers. To learn more about volunteering or Garden Tours, email [csrgvol@me.com](mailto:csrgvol@me.com) or call 503-823-5121.

Another thing to remember: Mother's Day is glorious there. You will not only be able to visit the garden but they also have an annual plant sale. This year it will be Saturday May 12th and Sunday May 13th. For more information on the plant sale you may call 503-771-8386.

Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden is a jewel in the crown of our fair city. Be sure to catch its glimmer soon.

**For more information  
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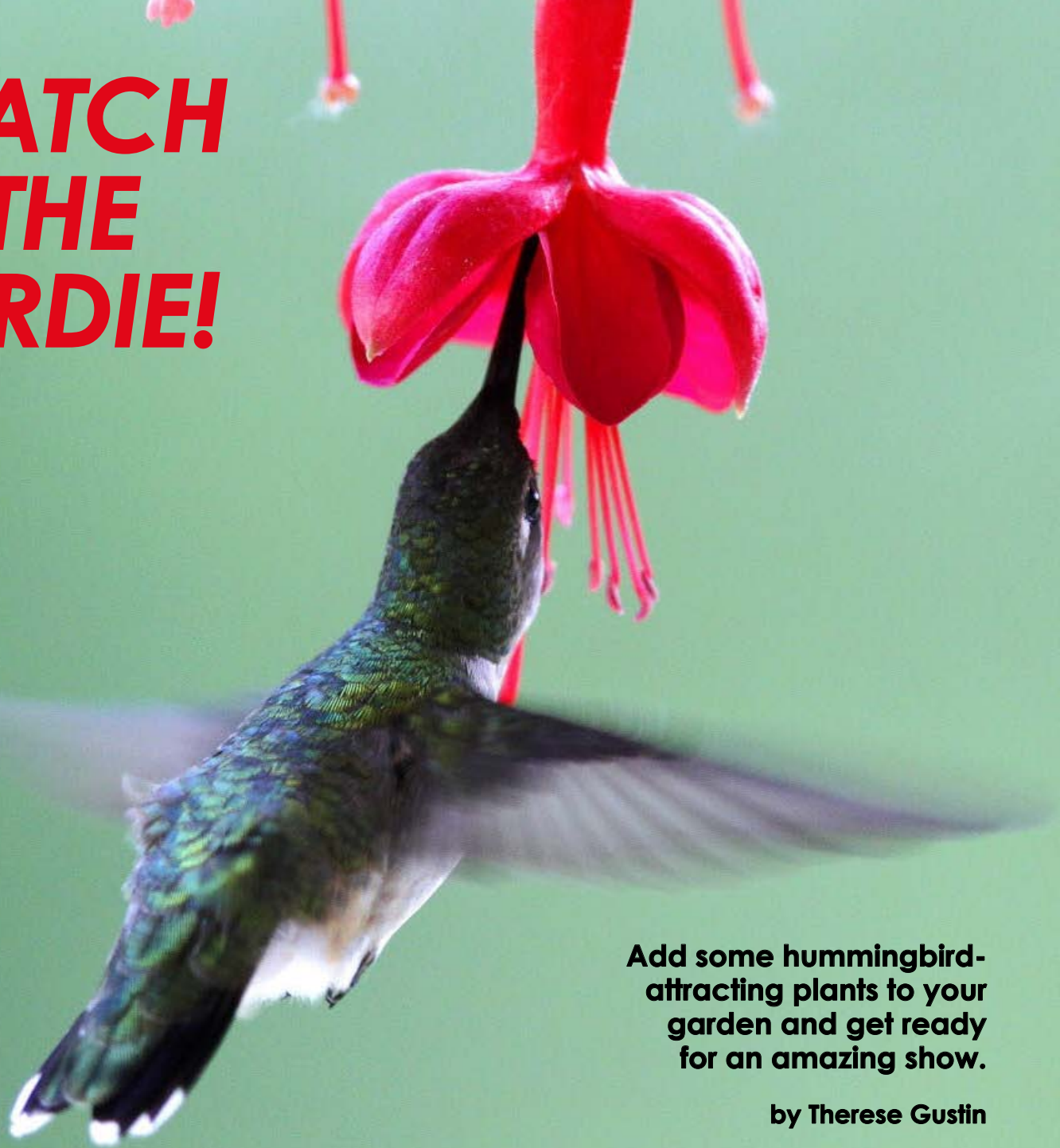
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# WATCH THE BIRDIE!



**Add some hummingbird-attracting plants to your garden and get ready for an amazing show.**

**by Therese Gustin**

Several years ago, while I was working in the shrub beds at a wholesale nursery, I heard a loud buzzing noise overhead. I looked up to see two hummingbirds circling and dive-bombing the Cape Fuchsia (*Phygelius*) where I was weeding. Even though there were several 3 to 4 foot high Cape Fuchsia shrubs in the area, they both had their minds set on the one plant where I was working. Not only did I discover that hummingbirds are quite territorial, I also realized that the nectar of *Phygelius* is irresistible to a hummingbird.

Luring hummingbirds to your garden is as easy as planting a few irresistible varieties of perennials or annuals. Hummingbirds have no sense of smell so the fragrance of a flower doesn't matter to them. They are very visual and are attracted to a flow-

er's color (especially red) and a tubular or trumpet shaped flower to accommodate their long beaks.

When planning your hummingbird garden, keep in mind its location. You should be able to see it from a window. After all, what good is having hummingbirds in your garden if you can't watch them! It is also important to have both sun and shade available. Hummers like to flit around in the sun but they also need shade to rest, cool off and build their nests. Ideally you should locate your garden near a shade tree. A source of water is important too. Birdbaths provide a refreshing location for drinking and bathing and adding a mister to your birdbath provides a cooling shower for the tiny birds.

Now for the fun part of planning a garden to attract



hummingbirds, the plants! I have selected five of my favorites, but there are hundreds of varieties to choose from that will provide a natural source of nectar.

**Phygellus or Cape Fuchsia** This hard-working easy to grow perennial is a favorite of hummingbirds. It comes in a variety of colors including yellow, orange, red and purple, blooms from spring well into the fall and most varieties grow about three feet tall and three feet wide. They thrive in sun but can handle shade as well. Once established, Phygellus are drought tolerant. The pendulous, tubular flowers attract hummingbirds for many months. No hummingbird garden should be without at least one Cape Fuchsia.

**Penstemon** The many varieties of this summer/fall flowering perennial not only provide a great source of nectar for hummingbirds but add incredible beauty to your summer garden. From pastel pink, lilac and yellow to vibrant reds and purples, the flower spikes of Penstemon beckon the little

hummers to partake of its nectar. Penstemon varieties thrive in well drained soil and grow in full sun to partial shade. They range from 12 inches to three feet tall, depending on the variety. Cutting back the spent flowers will encourage more blooming. They make a great cut flower too... that is if the hummingbirds are willing to share them with you!

**Agastache** Another hummingbird favorite are the many varieties of Agastache or hyssop. This sun-loving perennial likes well drained soil and once established is drought tolerant. It is a summer blooming perennial which can reach heights from 18" to three feet depending on the variety. In keeping with the color pattern of the previous plants, Agastache flowers come in yellows, oranges, pinks, purples and reds.

**Ribes sanguineum or Red Flowering Currant** This Pacific Northwest deciduous native shrub is a must-have in any garden. Its vibrant fuchsia red pendulous flowers shine in spring and have the



Phygellus-Cherry-Ripe

PHOTO CREDIT: BLOOMING NURSERY



Penstemon-GrapeTaffy

PHOTO CREDIT: BLOOMING NURSERY



Ribes sanguineum

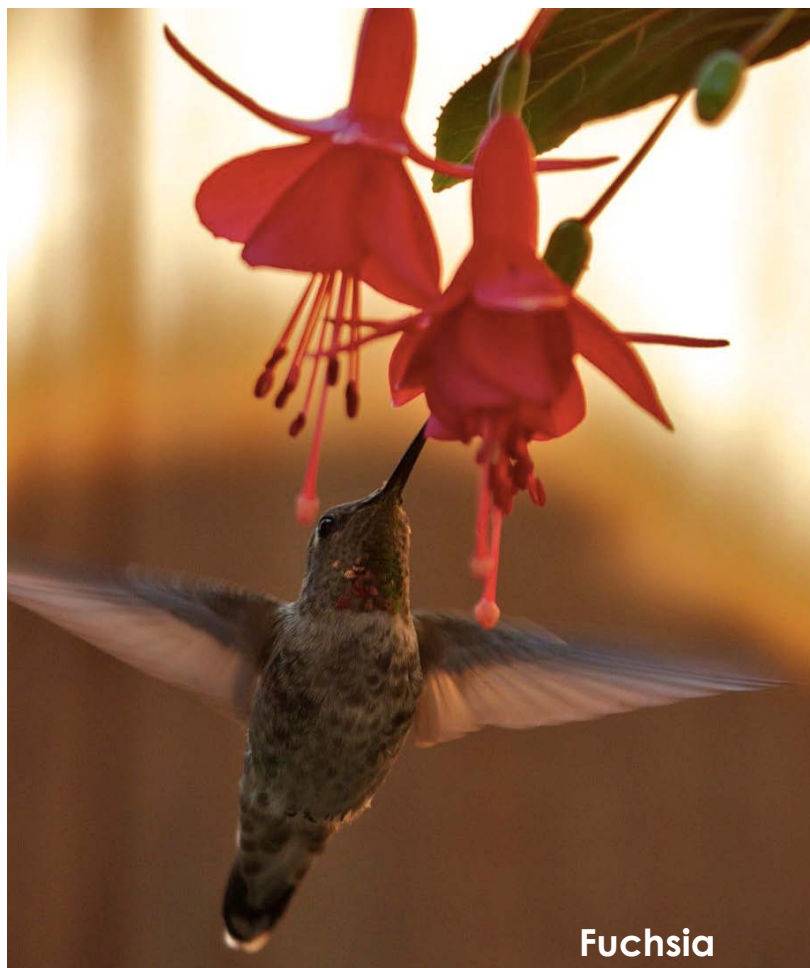


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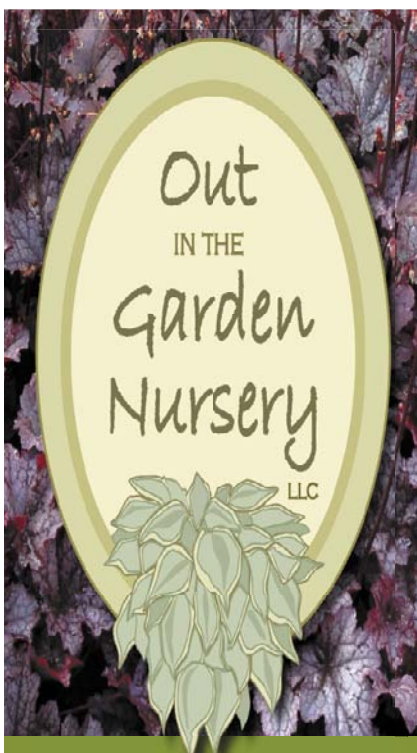




Petunia



Fuchsia



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added benefit of attracting hummingbirds early in the season. These shrubs can reach 6 to 8 feet tall and just as wide and can grow in partial shade but flower more profusely in the sun. You can't miss these beauties in the early spring when their flowers positively glow!

**Petunias and Calibrachoa** Even annuals can appeal to hummingbirds. A hanging basket of brightly colored trailing petunias or million bells can attract hummingbirds up close to the house. One advantage of annuals over perennials is their long flowering season ensuring many months of hummingbird watching.

These are just a few of the many flowers that will encourage hummers to your garden. Visit your favorite local independent garden center and discover some varieties to enhance your landscape. Add some hummingbird attracting plants to your garden and get ready for an amazing show.



# The Pride of Two Nations

**Brian Tsugawa and the Tsugawa family have turned their Japanese heritage into an American success story.**

**by William McClenathan**

Every garden center has a history. Some are amazing and rich and others are fresh and new. As I sat down with Brian Tsugawa on a cold, wet Tuesday morning I was anticipating what I might hear about his company and its history.

Unless you are a Native American Indian, every single one of our families came to this country from somewhere else. Brian's family came from the island nation of Japan, a nation already rich in horticulture. His grandparents migrated and settled in this area. But it was Brian's father George that really kick-started the family into farming in America. In the late 1940s, George, along with his beautiful wife Mabel, began growing strawberries in Woodland Washington. At this same time they also started their family, which would bring them six children. Marty, Mary, Lori, Karen, Dan and Brian. In many ways, the 1950's were glory days for America. Nowhere did this prove truer than for the Tsugawa family. Strawberries were one of Oregon's major crops and were highly prized for their flavor and size. Times were good, the farm was doing well and the kids were all getting older and starting to help out on the family farm.

As kids often do, Brian was thinking he wanted to do something else. Rain and mud, little pay, long hours... "Perhaps," he thought, "I'm just not cut out to be in the farming industry." He went to college to earn his landscape design degree and while doing



that, he went to work at Thriftway in Woodland for the produce department. He was happy. His paychecks were big and he was even lined up to become manager.

That was not to be, because mother Mabel had decided she wanted a garden center. And why not? The kids were grown, she loved plants and gardening and had quite a savvy mind for business. A nursery that had closed became available right there in Woodland, so in January of 1981 it became the property of the Tsugawa family and two months later in March, heralded the Tsugawa name.

It was not long before Brian was back working with his family. This time though, instead of being in the fields, he was heading up a landscape department for Tsugawa's new garden center. Although landscape businesses seem to be everywhere now, back in the mid '80s, there were far fewer of them, so Tsugawa's landscape department was doing great. But at that same time, strawberry production was being moved more and more down to California and the Garden Center was growing. All these changes, comingled with a harsh economy, were the impetus for the family to drop the landscape department and concentrate on the retail location. They also started



growing more cane berries to offset the loss of strawberry sales.

During this time Brian's oldest brother Marty was heading up the nursery. Then, early in the first of this century, tragedy struck with the untimely death of Marty. Loss is always harsh for us, but the loss of the eldest son is often devastating to a family. After the broken hearts were mended, the family's strength knitted them together. They have a plaque in memory of Marty at the nursery, and every time I see his smiling face on that plaque, it makes me smile. Having the plaque there keeps Marty relevant to the nursery, which allows those of us who never had the pleasure of knowing him to pay him tribute.

Today, Tsugawa's sits on 5 acres and is filled with amazing plants. The garden center pays homage to the rich heritage of Japan by offering one of the best Bonsai selections in the Pacific Northwest, and teaching people about that ancient art form. Also, they most likely have the best



Mabel and George Tsugawa

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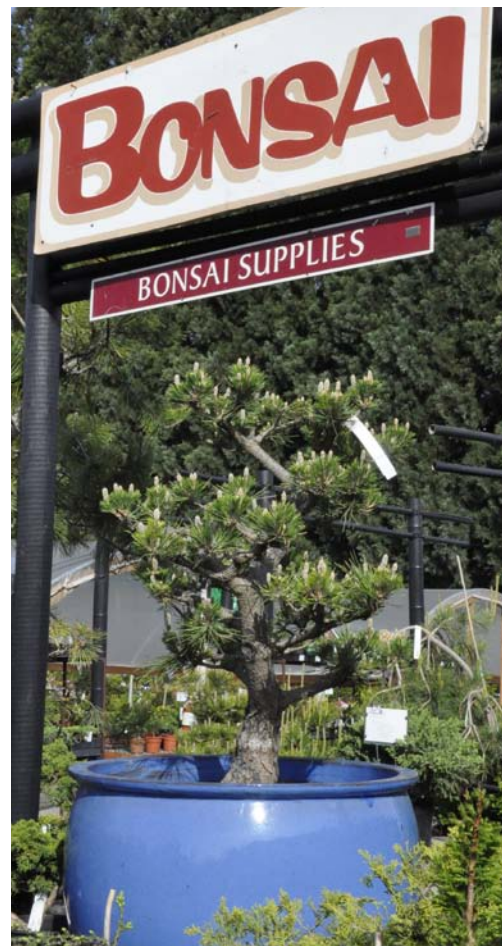




selection, both in species and sizes, of Japanese Maples. Add to that one of the most complete pond, Koi and aquatic departments and you get a glimpse into their proud Japanese history, a history that was really guided by Mabel.

Then, last year, this amazing

matriarch of the Tsugawa family passed away. Brian told me of memories as a child working with her in the garden at home, and even as an adult, the excitement Mabel always had when visiting growers or going to plant shows. The loss of life is tragic but it's often the little memories that affect us deeply for years to come.





When given time, they allow us to rise above the sorrow and carry on with life. Mabel would have wanted it that way, and the Tsugawa family is doing it, every day.

Mabel was often known as the Popsicle lady because of her habit of handing them out during warm weather. She, like her son Marty, will be missed always, but never forgotten.

George and Mabel must have done something right. Brian runs the Garden Center, Dan does the farming and growing and Karen works at the nursery, along with her beautiful daughter Jenny, which hopefully implies that there will be a Tsugawa at Tsugawa's for many decades to come!

It was a privilege to write this story and to share the outstanding history of the garden center we know as Tsugawa Nursery.

I walked away feeling great pride

and admiration for two nations: Japan, for allowing us the family Tsugawa and America, for being a nation that accepts people from all over the world and encourages them to fulfill their dreams.

If you would like to share in the Tsugawa dream, you can find them next to Interstate 5 in Woodland. They really are "Growing beyond the ordinary."



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# Double Delight

Hanging one Fuchsia basket is like getting a “two-fer.”

by Judy Alleruzzo

The words “Ladies Earrings” conjures a picture in many women’s imagination of diamonds and pearls, but for us plant junkies, we see clusters of bright royal purple and deep magenta Fuchsia flowers dangling from a hanging basket. Spring in the plant world is the time to hang a new Fuchsia basket on the front porch to admire and to feed the Hummingbirds.

As you watch the feeding frenzy of these beautiful little birds, it’s amazing to think Fuchsias were discovered over 300 years ago on the Caribbean Island of Hispaniola by Father Charles Plumier, a Catholic Missionary. He found the ancestor of this favorite flower and named it after his friend, German botanist Leonhart Fuchs. The majority of Fuchsias are native to Central and South America and found in cool, damp, forested regions. There are also four Fuchsia species found native to New Zealand. Many years after this discovery, Fuchsias found their way to England according to a 1789 issue of Botanical Magazine. Plant geeks, then called *enthusiasts*, started to breed the Fuchsia plants. Selecting for better flowers and plant forms, more Fuchsia plants were brought to the attention and delight of gardeners. Not much has changed over the ages, has it? Years and years went by and Fuchsias traveled to the U.S. In the 1930s, plant breeders at The University of California Botanical Garden at Berkeley began creating larger and new flower colors and forms. Their Fuchsias were the forerunners of our favorite Fuchsia varieties of today.

There are about 100 separate Fuchsia species and these days there are over 8000 Fuchsia varieties. Within those numbers are the trailing Fuchsia varieties for baskets and shrub form Fuchsias for garden beds and containers.

The lovely flowers of trailing, basket-type Fuchsias are found in many petal forms of singles or doubles with large or small flowers. When looked at closely, you can see the Sepal which is the outer petal also called the calyx and found on top of the flower. The



Sepal is sometimes curved back like a Chinese lantern. The Corolla is below the Sepal and can be a single tube, semi double petals or double petals. The colors of Sepals and Corollas are varied from deep purple-almost-black paired with deep maroon to pastels flowers in light pink and coral. There is also pure white, white and red, deep blue and magenta, the list of lovely flower color combinations goes on and on.

So I have been rattling on about Fuchsia flower’s forms and colors but what about Fuchsia fruit? Fuchsia fruit or Fuchsia Cherries are edible with subtle flavor and texture similar to a grape. You can even make Fuchsia Cherry jam. Just add lots of sugar! It’s best to pinch off these Cherries so the plant’s energy goes back into flower production.

Did I mention that Fuchsias are Hummingbird magnets? These hanging baskets are like diners for hummers and offer months of nectar for these tiny birds.

It’s also a great pastime to watch the flying antics of Hummingbirds feeding on Fuchsia flowers. They get very territorial with their feeding stations so hang one basket on the front porch and one in the back. The Hummers will have twice the flowers and you’ll have two vantage points to watch all the fun. Fuchsia baskets are best grown in morning sun with afternoon shade or all day dappled shade and sun. Avoid late afternoon sun which can burn the flowers



and leaves. Keep the soil evenly moist.

In mid to late summer, check your Fuchsia baskets for dryness in late afternoon. Our hot dry winds may cause the baskets to dry out faster. They may need a second daily watering.

For fertilizer, use a slow release formula and a once a week water soluble solution.

You may also need to pinch back the trailing foliage if it is getting leggy. The hanging baskets will look their best if foliage is dense.

During the season occasionally check the Fuchsia baskets for insect pests like Aphids, White Fly and Spider Mites. For these pests you can use Safer Soap, Neem Oil or Bonide Eight to rid the plants of these pests. Follow package directions.

If you have loved your hanging baskets all season and cannot part with them, you can overwinter the plants until the next growing season.

Before the first frost, store in a cool dry place where the basket will not be exposed to freezing temperatures. Trim back the foliage to 3-4 inches. Don't worry if the rest of the leaves drop off, that is normal.

Keep the soil minimally moist. You are just saving the roots. The tops will grow back. In Spring, acclimatize the baskets back outdoors after danger of frost is gone. This is usually around May 1st. Take your baskets outdoors in the daytime for 3-4 days and return them back indoors at night. Keep plants moist but not too wet. If any stretched pale stems or leaves grew over the winter, trim them off.

Start to fertilize at half strength of directions, when you see new growth. Once the plant is growing

actively resume a regular fertilizer program. When the days get longer and warmer, you will soon see new Fuchsia flowers.

I always think Fuchsia flower baskets are a "two-fer". I get beau-

tiful flowers all spring and summer plus I get the added bonus of Hummingbirds.

Bring a few home to decorate your home and the Hummers will follow you from the garden center!



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# Sugar and Spice!

**Lovely to look at, *Crocus sativa*'s other allure is a rare treat, indeed.**

**by William McClenathan**

Each year Crocus are a delightful harbinger of the spring season. But did you know that one member of this family also produces one of the most expensive and sought after spices in the world?

*Crocus sativa* is the botanical name for the saffron crocus. Even if it did not give us saffron, the plant is delightful. Growing each year from a corm, it shoots up a few strappy green leaves followed by a delightful flower of lavender to soft purple. Within this cup of beauty lies the real treasure though. Looking closely,



you can see three strands (stigmas) of a burnt red color. These simple threads are saffron.

The plant itself is rather easy to grow. In our area, one does need to be sure to give it excellent drainage, but other than that, it requires little attention from man. As with many spices, a little goes a long way. But even so, to be able to reap this plant's unique flavorful bounty, you would need more than just one as each blossom yields only three stigmas. And to get one pound you would need around 210,000! And if things go right you can get about 8-10 pounds per acre of land. That is why saffron is so expensive. Plus it has to be handpicked with a tweezer-like tool. The retail cost of a pound of saffron generally is around 360.00 to 380.00 dollars or .80 cents a gram.

Because it is a native to southern Europe and Asia, *Crocus sativa* is grown as a crop in places like Spain, Portugal, France, India and Iran where rain fall is low. That is why if you want to grow it in our area you need to provide it with great drainage. *Crocus sativa* will last in the garden for about 15

years and while the mother plant may die, the cormlets (the tiny bulbous baby crocus that appear on the side of the mother plant) that she produces will carry on. However, when used in the production of saffron, they are generally replaced every 2-5 years and in some nations like France, they are treated as an annual and replaced every year. The stigmas must be dried immediately, either over embers or in the sun, to protect them from mold and decay. During this process, they lose 80 percent of their weight. It is said that one pound of saffron takes up to 400 hours of work. Because of its long history, the humble Saffron crocus has had much effect on human kind.

Many of us are aware of its culinary uses. Saffron's unmistakable smell (a combination of hay and honey) and taste (pleasantly bitter, slightly metallic) are signature notes in many famous dishes, including France's Bouillabaise, Spain's paella, Valencia, Italy's risotto alla Milanese and India's biryanis. And finally, there is its provenance. The threads that constitute saffron are actually female sex organs (the stigmas)



of a small--and, ironically, sterile--purple flower. Saffron is nothing if not exotic, and the more you learn, the more exotic it becomes.

The oldest unambiguous reference to saffron--in a Greek fresco dating from 1500 BCE--depicts women gathering and making medicine from crocus flowers. Alexander the Great sprinkled it into his bath water to heal his wounds. Cleopatra sprinkled it into her bath water to enhance love-making. The Romans stuffed their pillows with it to prevent hangovers; when that failed, they added it to wine to cure hangovers. On the Indian subcontinents, saffron is still used in Ayurvedic Medicine to prevent diabetes and treat liver disease, urinary problems and rheumatism. Its coloring power has become idiom in India, where people speak of "saffronizing the truth" and "saffronizing History." In ancient Persia, saffron tea was a cure for depression, and in Iran today they still say that if you eat too much saffron you could laugh yourself to death. Sir Francis Bacon, the great English essayist and philosopher, maintained it was saffron that "maketh the English sprightly."

But today, it is most widely used in cooking. Unless you're making a slow-cooked meal, it is best to soak saffron in warm water (saffron is water-soluble; it cannot be extracted in oil or butter) for at least 20 minutes and up to 24 hours. Then add the solution, threads and water, to the dish while it is cooking, as in Bouillabaisse and Paella." It is also VERY expensive. So if you are finding saffron for a couple of bucks, it is probably not pure saffron. The first thing to emphasize about saffron is that there is no substitute. A recipe might suggest turmeric or safflower ("Mexican saffron") instead, but all that will give you is a saffron-like color. Nothing can replace the flavor and aroma of real, high-quality saffron. The second thing to emphasize is that, as an old adage goes, "saffron is expensive to buy but cheap to use." Its flavor notes, bitter and metallic, are wonderful only in tiny quanti-

ties. Too much gives food a medicinal taste. A gram of saffron costs \$10, but will flavor 20 to 40 dishes.

Unfortunately, you usually cannot taste or smell saffron when you are buying it, so you have to shop with your eyes; as a general rule, the deeper the color, the higher the grade. Look for vivid crimson threads with no broken-up debris at the bottom of the package. The threads naturally have white or pale yellow ends (styles), but these have little potency and should be a very small fraction of the whole. In very high (i.e. expensive) grades (coupe in Spanish, sargol in Iranian), these ends are trimmed. Avoid ground saffron because it is easy to adulterate and it doesn't keep very long. Whole saffron can be stored (in a cool, dark place) for at least three years; ground saffron should be used within one year.

Or avoid all that hassle and won-

dering if you are getting pure saffron and grow your own. That way you will know exactly what you are getting. I find it so amazing and intriguing that plants can have such a grand effect on humanity. They secretly sequester themselves in our history, our memories and our lives thus bringing a bounty of different values to our existence.

Crocus sativa will not only beautify your garden, it could potentially spice up your entire life.



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# Curb Your Enthusiasm

Giving your house that extra pizzazz starts at street level.

by Robin Burke, Fusion co-host

The interior of my first, new car looked as good the day I sold it, as it did the day I drove it off the lot. For seven years, I kept that Volkswagen impeccable. I didn't eat or drink in it; I cleaned it; I vacuumed it; and, I wiped it down regularly. But, you never would have guessed all that by the way it looked on the outside. It was painted cherry red back when auto paint had to be waxed to stay shiny. I hated waxing that car, and couldn't even pay my little brother to do it. By year four, it was a dusty pink. You could say it lacked "curb appeal."

I treated my VW much like some people treat their homes-- dotting on them inside, ignoring them outside. It's the perfect time of year to step back and take a long, hard look at the exterior of your home, and ask yourself: Does it look inviting, charming and fresh? Or, does it look outdated, boring and slightly scary?

Curb appeal is absolutely necessary if you're thinking about selling your home. If you're not planning to sell, but get a little embarrassed when a friend or co-worker drops you off, or worse, your kids have their friends drop them at the corner, then it's time to do something about it.

Think of it as dressing up the outside of your home for a night on the town. For some, that means clean socks, sandals, and a swipe of lip gloss. But if you really want your home to look welcoming, you'll need to do better than just a new doormat.

Your budget will dictate how far you're able to go up the "Curb Appeal" scale. From simply pruning trees and bushes to building a grand facade, each step will make you a little prouder of your abode, however humble.

Where to Start?

The best way to boost curb appeal depends on whom you ask. For instance, a remodeler may say it's the improvement of the porch, the windows, and the architectural details. Go to a local nursery and you'll likely hear it's the amount of trees and flowers that matter most.

The first decision is determining what's most important to you. It may be the front door, the walkway leading to the porch, or the landscape.

## Landscape

Landscape designer and nursery owner Alfred Dinsdale says, "Your eye should be led to the main entry without too much thinking. Less is more." He believes the best impression is one that doesn't



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come at you all at once, but has a focal point, such as plantings grouped together, that leads you to the entry, "to maintain a sense of discovery."

To start, your yard or garden should appear well maintained. At the very least, it should be weeded and mowed. From there you can begin adding layers to your landscape, enhancing what you already have planted. Now the question is, "Do you hire a professional landscaper to help you with a design?" Dinsdale says garden elements should work together. A qualified designer can help you develop a theme, even simplify and improve the flow.

"We see lots of things in gardens and magazines that appeal to us," Dinsdale says, "but trying to mix too many elements can lead to a disappointing outcome. A designer can help choose what to put in and how to coordinate the garden. This can end up saving you more than the cost of the designer. Plus,

having a paper plan to follow and note location of irrigation, lighting etc., can be a big help."

There is no ignoring your landscape if you hope to boost curb appeal. Real estate expert and author of "197 Ways to Improve

the Curb Appeal of Any House", Ken Wood says, "It could be as simple as adding a flower bed or planting a tree."

If you are hoping to sell your home for the maximum asking price, curb appeal could be what

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gets you that offer. Wood says, "It's well known that potential buyers make up their minds in the first few minutes of seeing a home. How your home presents itself from the road can actually make or break the sale. You can make a world of difference in how your home is perceived by adding a boxwood hedge or simply fertilizing and weeding the lawn."

## The Front Door

Landscape is important, but it's not the only aspect that will improve the appearance of your home. Personally, I think the front door is the real invitation to your home. It should be friendly and deliberate, not an after thought. A brightly painted front door is cheery and welcoming; a wood stain is warm and inviting; and, the classic black is beautiful and timeless. Click here for the basics of how to paint your front door: [www.fusionnw.com/video2009.htm](http://www.fusionnw.com/video2009.htm).

Some other front door tricks:

Update hardware—handle and lock, knocker, doorbell.

Add symmetry to either side of the door with matching urns or tall pots planted with greenery and flowers.

Adorn it with a seasonal wreath or swag.

## Tidy Up

Selling your home comes at a



price, or at the very least a lot of elbow grease. Even if you're Meticulous Mary or Tidy Ted, there is some outdoor housekeeping to be done.

Local real estate broker Malia Premi has a list of "must-do's" for sellers that is particular to the wet climate of the Pacific Northwest.

She says, "First impression is everything and you only have seconds to initially attract a potential buyer. Therefore, it is vital that a seller considers the following:

Pressure wash siding, decks and walkways.

Clean windows and gutters, and check downspouts.

Make sure trees and bushes don't block light from any window.

Kill any mold and mildew around the property.

Mow the lawn, eliminate weeds, and rake and dispose of leaves,



especially if it's a wooded lot."

## Color

Premi is part of a team of brokers who work for Lee Davies Real Estate, but in her prior profession she worked in marketing as a designer. She says, although there are many important aspects of curb appeal, "color" is king.

"Paint color is most important because color tends to affect people's moods and can create a positive or a negative setting. Drive around your neighborhood," Premi advises, "and find color schemes that are appealing to you, then apply them to your own home."

Take color an extra step by planting flowers and flowering shrubs that coordinate (not necessarily match) with the color of your house or of the door and trim. It will make the entire picture looked pulled together.

Keep in mind that color trends are, well, trendy. You don't want





to use a paint color that is obviously a fleeting fad. Talk to an expert at your local paint store who is well versed in color trends and can help you be in front of the trend, and not repainting in just a few months.

### Budget

If you're planning to sell your home, now or some time in the future, it's nice to know that some of the money you spend on curb appeal now, will be reimbursed when you sell.

Premi says, "The most cost-effective projects in terms of value recouped are exterior replacement projects such as:

Siding and window replacements - 70% or more of costs recouped

Mid-range garage door replacement - 84% of costs recouped

Upscale, fiber-cement siding replacement - 80% of cost recouped

Wood deck additions - 73% of costs recouped"

"View all repairs and improvements," says Wood, "with the idea that you'll make back your money three, five, or even ten times over." It could be the addition of a new portico, or simply the flowers lining your walkway that sways a potential buyer toward making an offer.

There are several TV shows and magazines that feature improving the curb appeal of a home. Don't be one of those homeowners who suddenly sees value in their home because of a few minor improvements that they neglected to do while living there. Enjoy your living space now, by making it a pleasure to come home to.

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# WTDITG

The month of May is the best of all worlds. Most of the Spring flowers are still in bloom. The weather continues to get warmer and, occasionally, teases us with an almost-summer-like day. And, the fruits of our labors (figuratively and literally) start to reveal themselves. It also ushers in the arrival of plant-harming insects. Be vigilant! Your plants are counting on you to protect them.

## PLANNING



~ Get ready to hang your flowering baskets. This is the best month for getting a basket or three to hang outdoors and show off your green thumb to all the neighbors. Use a good flower fertilizer every other watering to get the best results.

~ Get the watering system ready for summer irrigation. Check hoses for leaks and the sprinklers

to make sure they still work well. This would be a good time to create a more automatic drip irrigation system for the gardens!

~ Keep a check on soil temperature for veggies you can plant out this month. Most of the warmer season veggies will be able to go in this month.



## PLANTING

~ Divide your stored dahlia clumps and plant the tubers. Dahlias produce more flowers on thicker stems if lifted in the fall and then divided in the spring and replanted.



~ Flowers & Annuals: Plant out gladiolas, begonias, canna lilies, dahlia and lilies bulbs. Planting after

mid-month should be safe for all these annuals: marigolds, asters, fuchsias, wax begonias, geraniums, daisies, salvias, snapdragons, stock... in other words, most all the annual flowers!

~ Perennials like carnations, candytuft, delphiniums, daylilies, phlox, cone flowers, lavender and heuchera are just a few of the varieties of perennials you can plant right now.

~ Landscape planting now still

gives the plants a good head start on a strong root system before the summer heat sets in.

~ This is the month to plant your Rose bushes. They also make a great Mother's Day gift!



~ Tomatoes and other warmer weather veggies can go in now.

## TASKS, MAINTENANCE & CLEAN-UP

~ Watch for late frost! This is the time of year the late frosts can do the most damage when plants have flower buds ready to burst and we get all excited and plant out everything we can find. Cover the tender plants when frost is forecast with Harvest Guard protective yard and garden cover.

~ Remove Rhododendrons spent flower heads as

soon as they are done blooming. This is mostly for appearance because the plants will set buds for next year even if they are not deadheaded.

~ Protect young plants from slugs with Bonide's Slug magic. Be on the lookout for the little eggs that resemble white B-Bs. Using Bonide's Slug



# What To Do In The Garden MAY

Magic is safe around pets and breaks down into usable iron for the plants to consume.



~ Monitor plants for insects like aphids and spittlebugs and the like. Most control can be handled with a burst of water from the hose or hand picking off.

~ Be on the lookout for codling moths on apple and pear trees. Adults typically emerge in May-June. Pheromone-baited traps can be used to reduce populations of male moths. Remove brush, debris, and culled fruit from orchards. Remove loose

bark to eliminate possible hiding places for cocoons. Wrap trunk with corrugated cardboard or burlap to trap migrating larvae. Periodic removal of these tree wraps to destroy cocooning larvae, can help a lot.

~ Watch for notching insect feeding damage on rhodys and other broad-leaved evergreen plants. This could be the root weevil and it is a bit harder to detect. Go out at night with a flashlight to see them eating your rhodies or place some paper below the plants at night and tap on the plants. If you hear the little 'plops' of something dropping onto the paper, you may get to see the sneaky root weevil adults. Once the soil temperature is 55F or above you can use the safe

organic 'Beneficial Nematodes' around the plants if the weevils are found. BN are safe to use and work up to two years to totally destroy root weevil adults and grubs.

~ Over seeding a grass lawn or starting from scratch: May is a good month for both of these tasks. Fertilize the lawn once every two months



for optimal color. Mow a bit higher as the weather warms. If you have used a moss killer on the lawn, don't put down grass seed for at least 6 weeks after that application.

## VEGETABLE GARDEN

~ Vegetables - Monitor soil temperature to see when you can safely plant out the warmer season crops. Wait until the soil is consistently above 70 F to plant out basil, cucumber, eggplant, melons, peppers, tomatoes and pumpkins or squash.

Plant anytime in May by seed: Arugula, Asian greens, snap beans, broccoli, brussels sprouts, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cilantro, sweet corn, dill, kale, lettuce, green onions, parsnips, potatoes, radishes, slow bolting spinach, swiss chard, turnips.

Plant out these starts in May (waiting for warmer soil temps for above mentioned veggies): Artichokes, basil, beans, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, celery, collard greens, cukes, eggplant, kale, leeks, lettuce, onions, parsley, peppers, squash, swiss chard, tomatoes and watermelon.

~ Consider planting the veggie garden in what is called 'intensive planting' style AKA 'wide-row gardening. This will pro-



duce the most amount of produce from your space available! Traditional practice of planting long rows is not as productive as planting closer together and in 3-4' wide blocks. The benefits of closer planting; easier to mulch, less weed growth, snap to water, little wasted space and the cool shade created by the foliage for soil and roots.

~ Control many vegetable insect problems by covering the crop with a row cover, like Harvest Guard.

~ Control the many below ground insect pests like root maggots safely by using Beneficial Nematodes once the soil temperature has reached 55 F or warmer. These little microscopic creatures seek out and consume over 230 soil dwelling garden pests.



~ Control weeds by covering them, in between the rows, with layers of wet black and white newspaper or cardboard covered with compost.





# PLAY TIME

## Gardening Events Around Town

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### **Hulda Klager Lilac Days**

**Through May 13, 2012 • 10:00am - 4:00pm**

**Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens, Woodland, WA**

Open most days for your enjoyment! \$2 entry fee.

### **28th Annual Spring Fair**

**Saturday May 5, 2012 • 9:00am-5:00pm**

**Sunday May 6, 2012 • 9:00am-4:00pm**

**Clackamas County Event Center, Canby, OR**

Hosted by the Clackamas County Master Gardeners. Located one block North of Highway 99-E in Canby, Oregon.

### **Tomatoes Tomatoes Tomatoes**

**Sunday May 6, 2012 • 1:00pm**

**Portland Nursery (Stark), Portland, OR**

with Tracy Turner of Westwind Gardens. Come discover the secrets to growing bountiful tomatoes in Oregon. Join Tracy Turner, of Westwind Gardens, and learn everything you ever wanted to know about tomatoes. She will discuss planting times, cultural requirements, fertilizing needs, watering systems, and much more. There's nothing like home-grown tomatoes!

### **Edible Container Gardening**

**Saturday May 12, 2012 • 1:00pm-2:30pm**

**Portland Nursery (Division), Portland, OR**

Join Maggie Stuckey, author of Bountiful Containers, and learn how to grow healthy and productive edibles in containers. Maggie will cover everything from selecting your container and edibles, to watering and fertilizing needs, to great combination ideas. Maggie will demonstrate how to create an edible container, and one lucky person will get to take it home! Pick up a copy of her book after class and have it signed by the author.

### **Celebrate Miniature Roses**

**Saturday May 12, 2012**

**Heirloom Roses, St. Paul, OR**

Bring Mom and a pot and you can plant a 'free' miniature rose for her.

### **Oregon Plant Fair**

**Saturday May 12, 2012 • 9:00am-2:00pm**

**Alton Baker Park, Eugene, OR**

A very festive sale set outdoors in beautiful Alton Baker Park near the river in Eugene. An especially good mix of vendors with everything from alpiners, grafted conifers, to heirloom and exotic vegetable starts. I always go home with something from here! Garden art for sale too.

### **Little Sprouts: Herb Planter for Mom**

**Saturday May 12, 2012 • 11:00am**

**Garland Nursery, Corvallis, OR**

### **Mother's Day Plant Sale**

**Saturday & Sunday May 12 & 13, 2012**

**Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden, Portland, OR**

For more information on the plant sale you may call 503-771-8386.

### **Bonsai Society Exhibition**

**Saturday-Sunday May 19-20, 2012 • 10:00am-6:00pm**

**Portland Japanese Garden, Portland, OR**

Included with Garden admission.

### **Anniversary Celebration**

**Saturday May 19, 2012**

**The Greenhouse Catalog, Salem, OR**

The Greenhouse Catalog is having an anniversary celebration in appreciation to their local community. On Saturday, May 19th, the Greenhouse Catalog will host a free workshop titled, "The Essentials to 4-Season Growing Success," from 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. for gardeners seeking ways to grow fresh food year-round on a budget. Starting at 10 a.m. until 3 p.m., the company will offer a wide-variety of free gardening demonstrations, refreshments, and special anniversary prices on So-lexx brand greenhouses and garden accessories from their retail store. Growers of all ages can plant their own seed starts to take home. Smaller-aged growers can enjoy the activities planned just for them. Everyone will receive a gardening gift bag while supplies last. The Anniversary Celebration takes place at company headquarters at 3740 Brooklake Rd., NE., Salem, OR.

### **Espalier Fruit Trees: Training & Pruning**

**Saturday May 26, 2012 • 4:00pm**

**Portland Nursery (Division), Portland, OR**

Beautiful and interesting, espalier fruit trees are a great option for folks who want to grow fruit at home but have limited space. Join Monica Maggio, Arboretum Manager for the Home Orchard Society, and see if these space-efficient fruit trees are a good fit for you and your site. She will discuss the basics of planting, pruning and general maintenance for espalier fruit trees.

### **LOOKING FOR MORE?**

You will find more events and updated information on the Garden Time Events Calendar  
[www.gardentime.tv/events.htm](http://www.gardentime.tv/events.htm)