Gardening with Your Children
Lisa Taylor, Children's Garden Coordinator

Kids and gardens go together like pie and ice cream, yet some parents are nervous about involving their children in gardening activities. At the Tilth Children’s Garden we have learned a few tricks that can make family gardening a wonderful, magical experience.

**Space.** Give your child a small area that they can dig in and call their own. Teach your kids how to walk in the garden. Kids like to jump across the beds, so keep the beds narrow—12-18 inches—and paths wide.

**Plants.** Teach them how to pick and eat plants. Emphasize that they need to ask before they pick or eat anything in the garden. As your children become expert harvesters, let them take over this garden task or help them start a side-business. Our son harvests asparagus in our patch, then I (acting as the produce buyer) pay him a price per spear. He takes great ownership of this and I get more asparagus (since I can’t manage to harvest them each day).

**Tools.** Buy small, sturdy tools. Stay away from cute kid tools, which are usually flimsy and will break under any kind of real work. Border-sized forks and spades are great for school-aged kids and adults. For the wee ones, find a sturdy hand trowel or D-handled spading shovels that are about two feet long.

**Bugs.** Your kids will teach you that plants are cool, but bugs rule! Start with bugs to teach your child how to care for other living things. Explore the insects and spiders living in your garden. Start a worm bin. Go on a micro-hike. Build some bug houses. Create a creature journal.

**Seeds.** Plant some seeds and chart their growth. Big seeds like beans or peas are great for little fingers to hold, they germinate quickly and grow big fast. In the Children’s Garden this spring, we had a lot of fun watching the spinach grow. We noticed the long, slender first leaves and how the empty seed hulls dangled at the end of the cotyledon until they flew away in the wind or fell to the soil.

**Trellises.** Make a teepee trellis and let bean runners vine all over it. It is a great hiding place for kids—a “magic spot” they will return to all season.

Share your love of gardening, but think like a kid. Work together at gardening tasks and focus on fun. Work when it is cool outside, take lots of breaks and celebrate your accomplishments. Most of all, gardening with your children is about having fun together.

**Record-Breaking Plant Sale Held**

Charged with the prospect of unique varieties of sustainably grown veggie starts, thousands of motivated shoppers turned out for the May 5-6 Edible Plant Sale. Under cloudy but dry skies, we had our biggest plant sale ever.

Each variety of vegetable, herb, perennial and flower was carefully selected by Seattle Tilth experts based on our region’s climate and soils. Even people who have been starting their own seeds turned out to take advantage of rare va-
Seattle Tilth Association is a non-profit organization and an urban chapter within Tilth’s regional network.

**Our Mission Statement**
Seattle Tilth inspires and educates people to garden organically, conserve natural resources, and support local food systems in order to cultivate a healthy urban environment and community.

**Board of Directors**
- Sara Coulter
- Justine Dell’Aringa
- Nancy Evans
- Willi Evans Galloway
- Eric King
- Beth Lenholt
- Brandon Pemberton
- Erin Randall
- Renee Rhone
- Craig Skipton
- Andrea Tousignant
- Liza Turley
- Nick Vikstrom

**Staff Members**
- Emily Bishton  Natural Soil Building Program (NSB)
- Lorraine Brooks  Natural Soil Building Program
- Liza Burke  Natural Soil Building Program
- Andrea Cummins  Natural Soil Building Program
- Kathy Dang  Demonstration Garden Coordinator
- Karen Luetjen  Executive Director
- Emi Morgan  Program Assistant
- Charlotte Moss  Bookkeeper
- Laura Niemi  Demonstration Garden Coordinator
- Sam O’Brien  Children’s Garden Assistant Teacher
- Amy Ockerlander  Natural Soil Building Program
- Colleen Quinn  Manager, NSB Program
- Angelina Shell  mc/NSB Volunteer Coordinator
- Lisa Taylor  Children’s Garden Coordinator

**Office Hours and Phones**
Monday–Friday, 10 am–5 pm or by appointment
- 206-633-0451 Office Phone
- 206-633-0450 Fax
- 206-632-1999 Executive Director
- 206-633-0224 Natural Lawn & Garden Hotline
- 206-633-0097 Master Composters/Soil Builders
- 206-633-5045 Volunteer Line

**Web site**
www.seattletilth.org

**E-mail**
Send to firstnamelastname@seattletilth.org

**Address**
Seattle Tilth Association, 4649 Sunnyside Avenue North, Room 120, Seattle, Washington 98103

**Seattle Tilth Newsletter**
- Bill Thorne  Editor
- Keala Hagmann  Design/Production

The Seattle Tilth Newsletter is published by the Seattle Tilth Association. Readers are encouraged to submit articles, ideas for articles, original artwork, and other commentary. All material should be mailed c/o The Newsletter to the address above or e-mailed to karenluetjen@seattletilth.org. Submissions will be printed as space allows. Seattle Tilth reserves the right to edit for interest, length, and style.

**Tilth** (ME, fr. OE, fr. tilian to till) (bef. 12c) 1: quality of cultivated soil
2: cultivation of wisdom and the spirit

---

**Down-to-Earth Gardens, Inc.**
_Nancy Tom, Environmental Horticulturist_
Drought-Tolerant & Low-Maintenance Landscape Design & Installation, Phased-In, or Entire. Pruning & Weeding, 100% Organic Lic.#DOWNTG*994Q0
Eastside Only 425.736.0420
downtoearthgardens.com

**Nature’s Helper NORTHWEST**
_Natural, Organic Yard and Tree Care by a Certified Arborist & Landscape Professional_
_The Best Choice for Children and Pets_

We specialize in:
- Landscape consulting, renovation and maintenance
- Professional tree pruning, removal and stump grinding
- Instant privacy landscaping
- Organic, safe soil and compost for your garden
- Pond installations, repairs and watering systems
- Outdoor lighting

_Outstanding References_
(425) 455-9638 or (206) 240-9766 (cell)
Licensed/Bonded/Insured • Lic#: NATURH1981P
www.natureshelpernw.com

**TOP:** Volunteers from Solid Ground harvest produce from the Wallingford Demo Garden to take to food banks. **BOTTOM:** The winners were clear in the voting for favorite tomato varieties at the Tomato Tasting at the 2006 Harvest Fair.

Save the dates!

**City Chickens Coop Tour**
July 14

**Harvest Fair/Tomato Tasting**
September 8

**Fall Fundraiser**
October 4
Moving from Good to Great: Our 2006 Annual Report
Karen Luetjen, Executive Director

In 2006, the staff and board of Seattle Tilth worked together to set a good organization on the path to greatness through strategic planning. Inspired by the work of Jim Collins, who wrote *Good to Great*, we spent hours in heated discussions to drill down to the core purpose of the organization and remind ourselves about what we do best. We discovered that we are a very idealistic bunch of people—we want to save the world. And we are completely confident that everything we teach helps with this mission.

Even as we were laying the groundwork for the 2007-2008 Strategic Plan (see page 7), staff were busy expanding what was already a very ambitious set of programs. The Demo Garden added dozens of new classes in P-Patches around the city and developed new two-day intensive classes in seed starting and other topics. Children's Garden educators piloted a new classroom program on recycling for fourth graders called “Waste Not, Want Not.” To manage the program growth, the Children's Garden seasonal intern position turned into a year-round teaching assistant position, and talented contract instructors helped meet the demand for more classes for children and adults. Meanwhile, the Natural Soil Building staff were laying the foundation for a new Web site to facilitate online ordering of composting bins and rain barrels from Seattle Public Utilities.

To achieve our program goals, we need the continued commitment of our talented staff of educators. To ensure that Tilth wages are competitive, we researched wages in similar organizations to debut a new wage structure beginning in January 2007, and we added a health plan in the fall. Improvements to our infrastructure in 2006 also included upgrading all computer software and recycling our bulky monitors in favor of flat screens, providing more desk space.

Volunteer hours soared in 2006, making events like the Edible Plant Sale and Harvest Fair possible. Thanks to the long-term commitment of volunteers of the Board of Directors, the momentum gained during the strategic planning work of 2006 set into motion the exciting developments of 2007.

For a full list of all donors, sponsors, grantors and other contributors, please see our Web site. Thanks to all members for helping us move toward greatness.

### Seattle Tilth Association 2006 Financial Statements

#### Statement of Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REVENUES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Educational contracts</td>
<td>$443,481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Fees</td>
<td>$66,636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales</td>
<td>$64,688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants &amp; Contributions</td>
<td>$34,757</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership Dues</td>
<td>$18,825</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Revenue</td>
<td>$820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Revenue</strong></td>
<td><strong>$629,207</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### EXPENSES

| Education/Programs/Events     | $499,068         |
| Administration                | $65,869          |
| Fundraising                   | $57,054          |
| **Total Expense**             | **$621,991**     |

| Revenue Less Expense         | $7,216           |

#### ASSETS

| Cash                          | $114,128         |
| Receivables                   | $89,036          |
| Fixed Assets                  | $16,117          |
| Inventory                     | $11,621          |
| Other Current Assets          | $1,114           |
| **Total Assets**              | **$232,016**     |

#### LIABILITIES AND EQUITY

| Current Liabilities           | $72,528          |
| Equity                        |                  |
| Unrestricted                  | $124,049         |
| Temporarily Restricted        | $35,439          |
| **Total Equity**              | **$159,488**     |

| Total Liabilities and Equity  | **$232,016**     |

Transitions

Justine Dell’Aringa and Nick Vikstrom recently joined the board of directors. Justine has been a "super volunteer" for many years, most recently at the Edible Plant Sale and at last fall’s Tilth Tractor Pull. Justine, a research scientist for Amgen, is taking the lead for the fall fundraising event scheduled for Oct. 4. Nick, an attorney at Keesal, Young & Logan, is an avid gardener and fan of the *Maritime Northwest Garden Guide*. He plans to provide reviews of Seattle Tilth’s contracts and policies.

Recent Grants

Seattle Tilth has received a $6,000 grant from the Hugh and Jane Ferguson Foundation to support operations and a grant of $1,500 from the Lake Washington Garden Club to support the Teaching Peace Through Gardening program. Earlier in the year, we received a $3,000 grant from the Peg & Rick Young Foundation, also dedicated to the Teaching Peace Through Gardening program, which is a multiple-session program offered at no charge to economically disadvantaged children through partner agencies such as the Atlantic Street Center.
Thank you to everyone who helped with our Edible Plant Sale!

Naoko Forderer  
Plant Wrangling  
Diane Siasocco  
Plant Wrangling  
Jen Mullen  
Head Cashier  
Justine Dell’Aringa  
Vendor  
Coordination  
Beth Lenholt  
Volunteer  
Hospitality  
Sara Coulter  
Volunteer  
Hospitality  
Andrea Tousignant  
Volunteer  
Hospitality  

Volunteers:  
Pete Adelman  
Nancy Allen  
Patricia Anderson  
Masayo Arakawa  
Leo Artalejo  

Lindsay Blackner  
Carol Blakley  
Wendelien Bolomey  
Brad Borland  
Tom Bowden  
Rita Bout  
Kelsey Broderick  
Loraicia Brown  
Jen Brownly  
Terri Bullert  
Sheila Calhoun  
Maria Callahan  
Kelly Cannon  
Cath Carine  
Rob Carr  
Sonja Cawlson  
Hallie Chouaniere  
Sharon Chung  
Gwen Colwell  
Bill Crawford  
Norm Crites  
Jenny Cugier  
Kate Dabe  
Laura Davis  
Larry Dillard
Record-breaking Plant Sale

Continued from page 1

rieties unavailable elsewhere. Who could ignore the promise of a cherry tomato variety called Peace Vine? People with silver in their hair were in search of Stupice tomatoes, a longtime favorite of Seattle gardeners. Volunteers sprinkled among the starts provided helpful information about care and watering for each variety.

At the end of the busy Saturday sales, more trucks arrived with plants for Sunday. Volunteers off-loaded the trucks and tagged all the plants, just as other teams did the week leading up to the sale.

It takes more than 250 volunteers and well over 1,250 donated hours to make the event run smoothly.

A number of “Super Volunteers” take on organizational and leadership tasks. Also, we received wonderful in-kind donations from supporting businesses.

The sale is the largest fundraiser of the year for Seattle Tilth, benefiting all educational programs and services, and we couldn’t do it without the amazing community of volunteers, members, neighbors and supporters. Thanks to all of you.
Photo: Audrey Beaman

We deeply appreciate the donations from:

Ballard Market
Cedar Grove
Composting
Essential Baking
Company
Fish Brewing
Company
Fred Meyer
Georgetown
Brewing
Company

Sylvia Wilson
Angela Winter
Louise Wong
Gail Workman
Christine Yarrow
Benjamin Ylvisaker
Christine Yokan
Darby Young
Lisa Younglove
Livy Yueh
Diana Yuen
Stephani Zador
Amanda Zych

Did we forget you? If so, please send a note to tilth@seattletilth.org so we can thank you in person and keep accurate records of the hours you contributed.

We deeply appreciate the donations from:

Ballard Market
Cedar Grove
Composting
Essential Baking
Company
Fish Brewing
Company
Fred Meyer
Georgetown
Brewing
Company

Granum, Inc.
Greenwood
Hardware
Hales Ales
Karam's
Mighty-O Donuts
Patty Pan Grill
Sol Colibri
Top Food & Drugs
Trader Joe's
Tutta Bella Pizza
Transformational: Seattle Tilth Board, Staff Outline Ambitious 2007–2008 Strategic Plan

The following plan was developed over the last nine months by board members, staff and advisors. We are eager to present the plan to you and request your assistance and involvement in achieving these exciting and ambitious goals.

Vision: Transforming the Seattle metro area into the organic gardening capital of the United States.

Seattle Tilth’s vision is to transform our community into the world capital of organic gardening. We will accomplish this ambitious goal by expanding the scope and geographic range of our educational and outreach activities. This capacity-building will result in increased access to organic gardening education and will provide our region’s residents with the knowledge and tools they need to widely adopt the organic gardening fundamentals we have taught for the past three decades.

With Seattle Tilth’s leadership and vision, our metro area will become the global leader in organic gardening. Our success depends on:

• Providing a growing list of world-class programs and educational resources.
• The leadership of engaged people, including our volunteers, members, staff and Board of Directors.
• Garden places that provide the classroom for both active and passive discoveries for all ages.
• Creating and maintaining strategic partnerships with like-minded organizations.
• A strategic public relations system to disseminate information that helps people adopt new sustainable practices.

The plan is comprised of five strategic elements:

1. Programs and Educational Resources

Programs and other educational resources are the backbone of Seattle Tilth. Programs are the media for disseminating our knowledge, inspiring others to grow their own food and adopt more sustainable practices.

Objectives for 2008:

• Add monthly programs that show the direct link between the activities we teach and improvements in wellness, the environment and community connections.
• Offer more than 50 programs in areas currently not served, especially the Eastside.

Strategies:

• Recruit, train and schedule volunteers for a new outreach program.
• Pursue partnerships (such as with the King County Library System and parks departments in Eastside communities) that will take our teachings to an ever-wider audience.
• Expand the educational content of existing communication tools, such as our Web site.

Outcome: A robust list of exciting programs and educational resources, both newly developed and existing, allows Seattle Tilth to teach more people how to live in an earth-centered, organic and sustainable way.

2. People – Volunteers, Members and Staff

People make all of our work happen. Keeping everyone engaged and excited about their roles and responsibilities is key to Seattle Tilth reaching its goals.

Objectives for 2008:

• Board and Committees at full strength by December 2007.
• Membership retention exceeds 75%.
• More than 50% of volunteers donate 20 hours per year.
• Staff compensation is in 75% quartile compared to other non-profits.

Strategies:

• Monthly board recruitment focus by Executive Committee.
• Launch a new wage system for staff in 2007.
• Launch a new contact database that manages information on volunteers and members and permits the efficient management of those key relationships.
• Create a reward and benefit system for volunteers.
• Revise the membership benefits system and communications.

Outcome: We have an extensive network of individuals who feel invested in Seattle Tilth and have opportunities to both contribute to the success of the organization and be rewarded for their work. Additionally, the community-at-large feels the positive impact of Seattle Tilth’s increased scope and success in providing organic gardening education.

3. Places – Our Garden Classrooms

Seattle Tilth’s gardens are part of our identity and brand, and they provide the classroom for both active and passive discoveries for all ages. We will teach a reverence for these places, and help the people that we teach to extend that care to their own places.

Objectives for 2008:

• Install covered teaching spaces in both Wallingford gardens.
• Develop and install signage program to unify spaces and connect to the Tilth brand.
• Refresh the classic elements of the garden, including the walkway, kiosk area and greenhouse.
• Develop a phased plan with stakeholders for future improvements.

Strategies:

• Identify optimal conditions to achieve educational goals in the garden spaces.
• Review the work from planning discussions in recent years.
Tranformational: Strategic Plan
Continued from page 7

• Contact potential key helpers to achieve objectives.

Outcome: Revitalized Wallingford gardens will engage and teach visitors year round through signage, enhanced layout and improved hardscaping. We will secure long-term access to these teaching spaces with a phased program of investment and improvement.

4. Partnerships
Seattle Tilth can extend its reach exponentially by collaborating with partner organizations whose missions are based on making our community a healthier and more vibrant place to live.

Objectives for 2008:
• We will form new partnerships in order to teach in 100 additional classes in a variety of settings. Priorities for partnership will include: the King County Library System; the Woodinville, Bellevue, Redmond, Issaquah, Bothell and Renton Parks Departments; the Acting Food Policy Council; and Solid Ground.
• A key criterion for partnerships will be the ability to measure changes in behavior, reductions in pollution, and/or increases in of the number of organic yards and/or gardens.

Strategies:
• Target geographic areas for outreach based on ZIP codes not represented or underrepresented in our contacts database.
• Develop program proposals, approach partners and seek funding to support new partnerships.
• Change staff structure as needed to support our increased outreach.

Outcome: A network of collaborative partnerships with like-minded organizations that are all working towards our vision of creating an organic and sustainable Seattle metropolitan area.

5. Public Relations
Seattle Tilth needs a clear, effective communications strategy to move our work forward and to achieve our goals for education and community service.

Objectives for 2008:
• Prove that we have saved King County residents $30 million in pollution prevention and sustainable practices.
• Prove that we have converted 30,000 yards from conventional to organic practices.
• Reach 300,000 more people (150% increase from present) through communications tools, including our Web site, e-newsletter, printed newsletter, brochures and outreach events.

Strategies:
• Determine and document current reach and audience of Seattle Tilth and estimate target audiences to achieve stated objectives.
• Create and implement Seattle Tilth communications plan and branding process.
• Develop new outreach tools such as mobile displays and print pieces.

Outcome: Seattle Tilth’s clear and effective strategic communications reach a wider audience, engage and inform political decision-makers, and ensure that our ideals become a reality throughout the region.

Tilth in the Community

Seattle Tilth made appearances at or partnered with the following organizations in recent weeks: IKEA Environment Fair, Safeco Neighborhood Academy, King County Natural Yard Care Neighborhood programs, North Cascades Institute Town Hall Event.

Interested in serving on the Tilth Board of Directors?
Call Karen at 206-632-1999 for details.
Join Tilth for a Class or Event This Summer

**Creating Garden Harmony: a Permaculture Workshop for the Urban Dweller**
*Thursday, June 7, 6:30–8:30 pm; Saturday, June 9 and Sunday, June 10, 10 am–3 pm*
**Good Shepherd Center Demonstration Garden**
This three-day workshop will provide participants with an introduction to permaculture and offer skills for interpreting and applying these principles in an urban setting. Participants will have the opportunity to create hands-on permaculture garden projects that offer the skills and experience needed to replicate them in their backyard. Topics include garden planning, natural patterns in the garden, inviting wildlife into the garden, and plant and people communities. This course is designed to inspire the city gardener to think and act more permaculturally and to provide resources for making further connections related to permaculture in the Seattle community.
Cost: $135 / $115 for Tilth members

**City Chicks – Starting with Baby Chicks**
*Saturday, June 9, 10–12:30 pm*
**Good Shepherd Center Room 140 (Senior Center)**
Seattle Tilth’s own Paul Farley will help remove all doubt about starting with chicks. This class will teach you how to raise chicks to be healthy, happy and productive egg laying hens. You will learn the most important considerations in caring for baby chicks, including chicken physiology, behavior, health, nutrition, housing and city regulations. This class also covers the wide variety of chicken breeds. Questions are encouraged. You will leave this class with everything you need to know to start raising chicks. This class is not recommended for children under 10. The class costs $32 per person or $25 for members of Seattle Tilth. Advance registration and payment is required.

**Third Thursday: Solstice Celebration and Urban Homestead Tour**
*Thursday, June 21, 7–9 pm*
**Location provided to pre-registered participants**
Tour a garden in the Broadview neighborhood created by a Tilth member and volunteer. See four kinds of fruit trees, veggies grown in beds and containers, chickens, garden art and more. After touring the garden, we’ll sit outdoors at the fire pit to enjoy poetry and libations. Bring a blanket to sit on and your favorite poem to share as the sun sets on the longest day. Space is limited to 30 people who must reserve a spot by calling Karen Luetjen at 206-632-1999. We will provide the address and directions the week of the event. Free admission.

**City Chickens Coop Design**
*Saturday, July 14, 9:30–11:30 am*
**Location provided to pre-registered participants**
Learn about the basic requirements needed to build a backyard coop and explore a working coop in the Magnolia neighborhood. Landscape designer Jennifer Carlson will present design ideas, materials resources, and practical considerations for creating a useful, comfortable coop. You’ll see dozens of designs from basic to elaborate. Jennifer is convinced that no previous carpentry skills or power tools are required! This class will be limited to 25 people so early registration is recommended. The class costs $32 per person or $25 for members of Seattle Tilth. Advance registration and payment is required.

**City Chickens Coop Tour**
*Saturday, July 14, noon–4 pm*
Seattle’s city chicken owners invite you into their backyards for a first-hand look at raising chickens. Discover the variety of breeds that might be nesting in your neighborhood, see how families integrate chickens into their organic gardening practices, and see the ingenious coops that shelter these flocks. Pre-order tickets for a family or a group of up to four people who are carpooling for $10.

**Third Thursday: Bike Tour of P-Patches with Bill Thorness**
*Thursday, July 19, 6:30–9 pm*
**Starts at Good Shepherd Center Parking Lot**
Join Tilth member Bill Thorness, author of the new guidebook *Biking Puget Sound: 50 Rides from Olympia to the San Juans* in a ride to P-Patch community gardens in Northwest Seattle. We will stop and briefly tour each garden. Bring a portable potluck dish to share at a picnic at one of the gardens. No need to register, just show up with your bike at the main parking lot of the Good Shepherd Center, 4649 Sunnyside Ave. North. Free admission. Bike helmets required.

**PlantAmnesty’s Fruit Tree Pruning Workshop**
*Saturday, June 16, 10 am–2:30 pm*
Summer pruning is recommended for fruit trees; some even prefer it to dormant pruning. Learn why from PlantAmnesty experts.
Sign up for a morning of fruit tree pruning instruction and an afternoon of live fruit tree pruning demonstrations in small groups. The workshop will take place at Meridian Park, adjacent to Tilth’s Wallingford gardens. Cost is $30 for the public and $25 for PlantAmnesty, Seattle Tilth or Seattle Tree Fruit Society members.
Naked Gardener: Asparagus

My 23-year-old stepson (aka “The Big Galoot”) is a fine, strapping young man with many excellent qualities, albeit he is of the generation that says “on accident” instead of “by accident,” and also “different than” instead of “different from,” and whose members do not generally bother to tie their shoelaces, or if they do tie them never untie them, but slip their shoes on and off regardless of knots, or laces, or obsolete conventions. We won’t talk about the saggy pants.

In the Galoot’s defense, I should acknowledge that he perfected the art of tying shoelaces at an early age, through a complicated, unconventional technique he devised himself. He tried to teach me this technique once. It involved making overlapping twists of the laces and intricate twists with one’s fingers, and seemed very much like the sort of knot-tying I failed to learn in my brief career as a Boy Scout. Inevitably I failed again.

He, on the other hand, having achieved perfection in this craft, joined his contemporaries and actually retired altogether from shoelace-tying not long afterwards, which would have been around his fourteenth birthday. How many of us can make such a claim?

How many of us knows what any of this has to do with gardening? Well, here’s the thing: at the last Tilth Annual General Meeting the new crop of leaders introduced themselves, and I was forcibly struck by their tender, youthful appearance. It’s a truism that as one grows older the younger generations appear to be younger and younger all the time. Those of us past the mid-point of life remember the uneasy discomfort we experienced the first time we submitted to the care of a doctor younger than ourselves. Now, for some of us, our leaders are younger than ourselves.

But this is wonderful news! Tilth has new, young energy at the helm and what could be better than that? I have no doubt they will take our organization forward into the next several years with vision, and vigor, and commitment. My table at that Annual General Meeting was mostly occupied by crusty geezers like myself, every one of us with a history of contributions to Tilth, all of them significant and some of them magnificent. Having made those contributions—having planted those seeds—these geezers have mostly stepped back from leadership positions, as is proper, to let those young, strong, powerful people assume control.

I recently met a man even older than I am whose life has been a wandering path. He and his wife made homes for themselves in many parts of the country, and at each of them he planted a garden. Asparagus still grows in all those places, enjoyed by others who reap the yearly harvest of his foresight, his love of gardening, and his labor.

The point of these anecdotes is to repeat the obvious truth (my wife claims it’s my forte) that everything we do has the potential to live on and improve the lives of those who will follow us. The particular privilege of being a part of Seattle Tilth is the opportunity to contribute to the cultivation of a community whose life can extend beyond our own. Our community is the soil in which our work is rooted; we all stand upon the shoulders of giants; and we inherit the goodwill and good work of the planters of asparagus who came before us.

“...if you want to have a good harvest the most important thing is to make the soil rich and cultivate it well.”

—Shunryu Suzuki, “not always so”

Classifieds

Cynthia Creasey, real estate agent specializing in gardens that come with houses in Seattle. Call 206-276-8392, Lake & Co. Real Estate.

Rain Barrels. 60 gallon, food clean, fully assembled with brass fittings and removable mesh screen. Available in black, terra cotta and blue. Excellent value, only $59 plus tax each (delivery and installation available). Call or e-mail me, Dan Borba, at 253-272-8173, naturalrainwater@yahoo.com. Harvesting the rain since 1999.

Green Light Gardening Consultation, design, and pruning lessons. Specializing in helping you create a wildlife-friendly and child-friendly garden with year-round beauty. Emily Bishton, 206-523-1774 or www.greenlightgardening.com

Worm composting on the Eastside? Red wigglers for sale. Call Judy, 425-868-2694, or e-mail judy1007@comcast.net.

Need help with your worm bin?

Good health begins in the soil.

Worm bins are a fun, earth friendly way to recycle food, reduce waste, and produce nutrient rich plant food. I provide professional consultation on all your needs from getting started to operating an existing bin more successfully. Individual, family, school, business, workshop rates. Exceptional quality worm compost also sold. Call Barb, Wiggle Worm Farm Owner, Master Composter, 206-297-7303.

See your garden with new eyes – Experienced and thoughtful pruning and personal instruction on how to manage your landscape. Katy 206-782-7113 or www.gardenvision.net

Wanna Be Farmer Seminars Free: 200 p.m. every third Sat., April–September at Jubilee Farm in Carnation, WA. Pursue your dream and tour the farm. To register, call 206-963-8196 or email paul@dreamdrafters.com. Paul is a lifelong farmer, educator and now a buyer’s agent with Dream Drafters Realty in Everett.

Hornets wanted all summer. Free, non-toxic removal of most from active, aerial non-sprayed paper ball nests about football size or larger. venomcollect4free@comcast.net, 425-485-0103.

House for rent 100’ riverfront. 3+BR/1BA. 2000sf. half acre organic/sustainable/permaculture. wildlife, kayak, bike path. Georgina. 206-444-9695

Join Seattle Tilth!

- New Member
- Renewing Member
- New contact information?

Name(s) ______________________________________________

Address _______________________________________________

City/State/Zip _____________________________________________

Phone ________________________________________________

E-mail ________________________________________________

Membership levels
- $30 Regular
- $50 Supporter
- $100 Sustaining
- $500 Lifetime
- $15 Limited Income

Adopt-A-Program Yes, I would like to make a tax-deductible contribution to support Seattle Tilth operations.

$______ per ○ Month ○ Year ○ Check ○ Charge ○ Invoice

Card # ___________________________________________ Exp ________

Name on card __________________________________________

Maritime Northwest Garden Guide
For an indispensable regional guide to year-round gardening enclose $12.50 (includes tax and postage) per copy. Please send me _____ copies.

Mail to Seattle Tilth, 4649 Sunnyside Ave N, Room 120, Seattle, Washington 98103

Hot Questions from the Natural Lawn and Garden Hotline
Contact the Hotline at 206-633-0224 or info@lawnandgardenhotline.org.

How can I tell if I have lace bug damage on my rhododendron?

You can start by looking for damaged leaves that will have yellowish or bronze dots on the upper sides and crusty or tar-like deposits of brown or black excrement on the lower sides. The whitish-tan insects, ⅛ of an inch long with lace-like wings (thus their name), can be found sucking the sap out of the lower part of the leaves. Immature lace bugs can be found in the same place in groups that look like brownish dots. Their feeding cycle runs from late May to mid September. In late May to early June, the immature lace bugs hatch on the leaves. They become adults by mid-June to early July and lay their eggs from late July through mid-September. The eggs overwinter on the midveins of the lower surfaces of the leaves and begin the cycle again the following May.

Rhododendrons that are in full sun are more susceptible to lace bug damage than those in the shade. Damage may end up being so severe that the plant will decline in health. If the damage and infestation are severe enough to warrant action, spray the affected areas with an insecticidal soap. Repeat sprayings will most likely be needed. There are also several types of beneficial insects that should be attracted to feed on lace bugs. They include lacewings (not to be confused with lace bugs), assassin bugs, minute pirate bugs, spiders and predacious mites. For more information on these beneficial insects, contact the Hotline or go to http://www.govlink.org/hazwaste/house/yard/problems/good-bugs.cfm. This excellent guide has pictures of several of these beneficial insects.

How much water does my lawn need in the summer?

You will be happy to know that your lawn needs far less water than one might think in July and August. One inch of water per week is the general rule. Your lawn will do best if you water infrequently but deeply. You should avoid frequent shallow watering because this does not encourage deep root growth and often leads to drought stress and thatch problems. It also encourages annual weeds, which respond to shallow watering. If you are thinking about letting your lawn go dormant or brown during the summer months, just make sure it gets an inch of water each month. Keep in mind your lawn can get its needed inch per week or month both by our natural rainfall and by you watering it. The best times to water your lawn are early in the morning or in the evening to avoid evapotranspiration.

You can easily measure the precipitation by taking an empty tuna fish or cat food container and setting it out on the lawn to collect the water. Check it with a ruler or make a mark at the one-inch line to see how much water has collected. You may want to put out several containers, as all areas might not get the same amount of moisture. For more information on proper watering or natural lawn care, contact the Hotline and request the Natural Lawn Care Guide for Western Washington and the Smart Watering guide. Both are free and may also be downloaded at http://www.savingwater.org/outside.htm.

Are compost and mulch the same thing?

The short answer is no. Compost is decomposed organic material used as a soil amendment and soil builder, and can be used as a mulch. Mulch refers to any type of organic material put down in a thick layer on top of the soil to help the soil retain moisture, suppress weeds and regulate temperature. Most mulches have not

Continued on page 12
decomposed or broken down very much. As the material decomposes, it slowly helps build the soil by adding organic matter. Besides compost, good examples of mulches are leaves, wood chips, grass clippings, coffee grounds and nutshells.

There are many benefits of using compost as mulch. Since it is already decomposed, it will work its way into the soil sooner, adding nutrients. Compost also makes an especially attractive mulch, but many types of mulch can look very nice when applied in thick even layers. One drawback to compost: it can be a nice medium for future weed seeds to take root. Other types of organic mulches do a great job at suppressing weeds, but take longer to break down into the soil and can take up some valuable nitrogen from the top layer of soil.

Either way, mulching is a great way to keep moisture in the soil during dry summer months, protect the soil from our winter rains, suppress weeds and improve the look of your plantings. To learn more about using compost or mulching contact the Hotline and ask for the free guide Growing Healthy Soils. The guide also can be found at http://www.seattle.gov/util/Services/Yard/Natural_Lawn&_Garden_Care/Growing_Healthy_Soil/index.asp.