

the *Bamboo Shoot*

March 2014

*** *It's Spring,*

time to plant, prune, explore and refresh ourselves and our yards. The nursery is full of spring fragrances, from evergreen clematis "Snowdrift" cascades of white perfume, to the heady hyacinth's smell that reminds one that spring is here. Life renews in Spring, it has been here always, but it shows its physical presence through the budding leaves and flowers everywhere.

We lost my father last week. He was 92, getting up there in age, wisdom, aches and pains. He lived a full life and has gone on to a new life with my mother and others before him. It is so hard to lose those that we love; we want their physical presence by us, with us, sharing our life's events, hold their hand. One day we can, the next day we can't.

But Spring reminds us that life is always with us. A plant drops leaves in the fall which decompose and become compost for next year's growth. A tree is blown over by a winter wind

storm; gradually the wood rots, the trunk becomes a nurse tree for ferns and baby trees, insects, moss. We are all part of this circle of life too, not just physically but in our hearts and shared memories, life's experiences. As I watch my father's grandchildren, I know that he lives on, in the laughter, the love, and lives that we create based

on the generations of family that have gone before.

The single swelling of the pussy willows have lifted my heart as I know there is a never ending circle of life, and that our dad is with us as we get the nursery ready for

Spring, watching the blooms, greeting smiles, sharing the gardener's love for the earth, our community and each other. Thank you, Dad, for giving me life. Thank you everyone for giving us support and love. We hope that we can always be part of your community support in your lives and gardens. See you at the 2014 Home and Garden Show or at the nursery this Spring!

*** *Lisa* ***



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THIS MONTH : : : : : : : : : : *in your* GARDEN

- Plant cool season crops such as onions, kale, lettuce, and spinach, use starts or seeds.
- Time to mow your lawn, mow it at a longer length the first mowing. Fertilize with a high nitrogen fertilizer.
- Spread our garden compost over garden and landscape areas to improve plant health.
- Fertilize shrubs and trees with a complete slow release fertilizer.
- Prune spring-flowering shrubs after blossoms fade.
- Fertilize caneberreries using band fertilizer, broadcast fertilizer or a complete fertilizer or manure.
- Divide hosta, daylilies, and mums.
- Plant insectary plants (e.g. Alyssum, Phacelia, coriander, candytuft, sunflower, yarrow, and dill) to attract beneficial insects to the garden.
- Top dress the soil around daphne and lilac bushes with lime or bone meal for better blooms next year.

PUTTING THE “Oh!” IN



What is Organic? In the chemical world, organic matter that has come from a once-living organism, is capable of decay or the product of decay, or is composed of organic compound. In the gardening world organic refers to the science and art of growing fruits, vegetables, flowers, or ornamental plants by using methods that use limited or no chemicals, pesticides and follow certain practices agriculture that can be certified. Most organic methods work on sustainability methods of growing and food production.

For the vast majority of its history, agriculture can be described as having been organic; only during the 20th century was a large supply of new chemicals introduced to the food supply. In 1939, Lord Northbourne coined the term “organic farming” in his book, from

his concept of the farm as organism, to describe a holistic, ecologically balanced approach to farming, as opposed to what he called chemical farming which relied on imported fertility and could not be self sufficient or an organic whole.

These days, garden centers offer non GMO seeds (genetically modified organism), organic vegetable starts, and organic compost. Some items are government certified, others are not certified due to the cost of certification but are essentially organic.

At Laurel Bay Gardens, we offer a wide range of organic fertilizers, insect sprays, seeds, and plants, along with a full line of organic soil amendments for your landscape. Come by today and we will help you put the “Oh!” in organic!

Adding Beneficial Insects To Your Garden

Many people think “insect” and “pest” as the same thing. Did you know that most insects are not pests? Many insects are very useful. Some are pollinators of fruits, flowers, and vegetables, while others help control insect pests. There are three types of beneficial insects: predators, pollinators, and parasitoids.

PREDATORY insects eat large numbers of other insects. Many predatory insects feed on only certain types of insects (e.g., lady beetles eat mostly aphids), while others feed on a wide variety of insects.

Common predaceous garden insects include lady beetles, praying mantids, green and brown lacewings, and ground beetles. Spiders, predaceous spider mites, and centipedes also are important predators in a garden ecosystem. Insect pollinators include several bee and fly species. Honeybees,

bumblebees, orchard mason bees, and syrphid flies are the most important for pollination.

PARASITIDS are insects that live on or in a host insect, feed on the host, and usually kill it in the process. Most parasitoids are small, stingless wasps or flies that lay their eggs in or on specific host insects. The eggs hatch, and the larvae feed within or on the hosts.



Invite beneficial insects to your yard by providing food such as blooming plants for pollen and nectar. Both the cabbage and aster

plant families are great for beneficial insects. Many non flying predators such as ground beetles and spiders need a place to hide from their enemies. Groundcovers and coarse mulches such as bark dust and straw provide this habitat. Beneficial insects also need water. If you do not use overhead irrigation, sprinkle your plants lightly early in the morning to provide water.

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