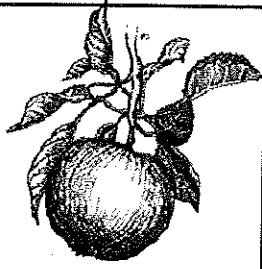




the Bee Line



Volume 25

Spring 2005

Newsletter of the Western Cascade Fruit Society

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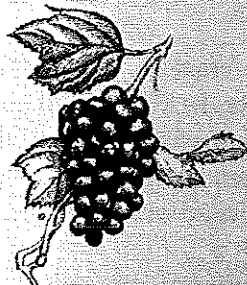
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24th Annual Spring Meeting on Saturday, March 12th

by Mark Lee, editor

The 24th Annual Spring Meeting of Western Cascade Fruit Society will take place on Saturday, March 12th, from 10:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M., at Rainier View Christian Church in Parkland, WA. This is the same location as last year. Tahoma Chapter is hosting the meeting. (See directions at the end of this article.)

Dr. Bob Norton's 10 AM seminar, "Propagating Cherries," is not to be missed. Don Stewart will cover "Using and Sharpening Your Tools" and WSU County Extension members will lecture and demonstrate throughout the day on "Preserving the Harvest." The WCFS Annual Meeting will begin at 11 AM. Members will be asked to vote on the

following amendment to Article IV of the bylaws which concerns the Board of Directors: "The immediate past president shall be a Board member for one (1) year after leaving office."

Admission is \$3.00 per person or \$5.00 per family and includes a raffle ticket. Additional tickets are available at 50¢ each. Raffle items will be announced on the day of the sale, to include a WCFS hat and an orchard mason bee block. Tickets will be drawn at various times throughout the day. You must be present to win.

For those in the Society who would like to learn to graft or who are already skilled, this sale is an exciting opportunity to pick up some scionwood of uncommon cultivars of apple, European and

Asian pear, plum and cherry, fig and others. Plenty of cider apple and perry pear wood will be on hand. The many tables will be arranged with bundled and labeled scionwood. Carmen Franco and Leonard Jessen will make sure you won't leave empty handed and they'll be on hand to answer any questions.

Plan ahead by making a "shopping list" of the scionwood you're looking for. Scionwood will be sold at a very reasonable price per stick and a wide variety of rootstocks will also be available at reasonable prices. WCFS members are also encouraged to sell their fruit plants or related items, with ten percent of sales to Tahoma

(Continued on page 2)



**Saturday, March 12th
10:00 A.M to 3:00 P.M.**

The BeeLine is a quarterly publication of the Western Cascade Fruit Society, a non-profit 501(c)3 corporation in the State of Washington.

Annual Meeting (continued from page 1)

Chapter. Please call 253-863-7074 if you have an interest.

Talks will be given by Dr. Robert Norton, Don Stewart and members of WSU Extension. This is the day's program...

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| 10:00 -11:00 AM | "Propagating Cherries" - Dr. Robert Norton |
| 11:00 -1:00 PM | 24th ANNUAL WCFS SPRING MEETING EVERYONE IS WELCOME !!! |
| 1:15 PM - 2:00 PM | "Preserving the Harvest" - WSU Extension |
| 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM | "Using and Sharpening Your Tools" - Don Stewart |

Dr. Norton formerly headed WSU Mt. Vernon before his retirement. He also planted the first apple trees at the Mt. Vernon Research Station. Dr. Norton is currently on the advisory board of Western Washington Fruit Research Foundation and is a member of Vashon Island Fruit Club.

Don Stewart is a Master Gardener, arborist and Tahoma

Chapter member. Bring your strait-edged clippers, loppers, and other garden tools with you to be sharpened. For a nominal fee Don will sharpen them during the show. All proceeds support Tahoma Chapter.

Classes on grafting and a video on pruning techniques are scheduled throughout the day.

Directions to the church:

From the North - take I-5 to the 512 exit and go East. Stay in the right lane to the next exit (Steele) street. Follow this South as it turns into Spanaway Loop Road. The church will be on your left.

From the South - take I-5 to the Puyallup/512 exit and go East. Take the next exit onto Steele Street which turns into Spanaway Loop Road. As above, the church will be on your left.

Zing - A Crack Resistant Cherry from Turkey

by George Ing, Good Fruit Grower magazine, October 2004

In June 1997, I saw the cherry in orchards in Turkey and later in supermarkets in England. I was very impressed with its characteristics. I had scionwood sent to the U.S. Department of Agriculture quarantine lab in Prosser, Washington, in early 1998.

The wood was heat treated, then released to a postquarantine site on our farm. Using all scionwood available, 115 trees were propagated in 2003, and we planted those in our orchard at Hood River, Oregon, last spring. C & O Nursery of Wenatchee, Washington, propagated about 1,500 Zing trees last year and has those for sale.

The cherry's origin is unknown. In Turkey it is marketed as Zero-900, Salihli, Pis Pis, 0-900, Dalbasti, 0-900 Ziraat, and Napoleon. To try to stratify naming, I coined the word Zing.

What is Zing? It greatly resembles Bing and is four to five days later, which may fill a missing marketing link between Bing and later varieties. Several years of tests on the Firmtech machine show scores similar to or higher than Bing. The 2004 score was 305, which is good. Fruit has excellent flavor and stores well with good stem color retention. I tracked it in European stores in 1997 and 2002 and was impressed with its presence and stability.

Zing blooms a week after Bing and Van, which

reduces spring frost risk, but it will need a late-blooming pollenizer. In Turkey, that is generally Schneiders or Starks Gold, but Regina is effective in tests.



In my opinion, the greatest virtue of Zing, however, is its resistance to rain cracking. In 2001, with 1.27 inches of rain over a two-day period, Zing had 11 percent cracks while Bing was 58 percent and Van 62 percent cracked. Lambert, while immature, had 28 percent cracks. In 2002, with about one inch of rain, both Bing and Van were cracked about 50 percent while Zing was 4 percent. In 2004, with rain well ahead of harvest, our Bings packed out 57 percent while Zing had no cracking.

Now, let me list my perception of the negatives. Zing may not be a huge cherry, perhaps more like Bing. It does not appear to be a "bullet" in terms of firmness, again more like Bing.

Therefore, if you are interested in a cherry variety that you know you will be able to harvest, pack, and ship, no matter how much rain falls, Zing fits.



Message from the President

by Judi Stewart, WCFS President

Greetings fellow members, There was a time when WCFS members readily traveled around Puget Sound and worked side by side while helping organize our fruit shows and events. Unfortunately, we just don't get around today as much as we did years ago. Our population is ever-increasing, the roads are crowded, fuel prices have risen and many of us have taken on additional responsibilities and we lack leisure time. Instead of scooting around, we compensate by throwing ourselves into cyberspace. Our computer lights are glowing and we're spending more time researching and Googling than ever before. We order from far away places at 2 am with the click of a mouse and find ourselves up at dawn checking emails.

Gadgets, buttons, beeps and bells cannot replace the satisfying feelings and emotions we have when we take the time to get together at our chapter meetings and workshops. Nothing takes the place of a one-on-one discussion with our friends and fellow members who are willing to give and share their ideas, experiences and fellowship. So when you do get together at your monthly meetings and the room is filled with your wonderful faces and voices and as you "talk fruit," look around and know that there's a wealth of information in that room. What you have to say is important and your presence is appreciated by everyone there.

I hope you'll be there on March 12th at our Annual Meeting. See old friends and make new ones, and have all your grower's questions answered. I hope you'll locate that scionwood you've been searching for. Or listen and learn from Leonard Jessen as he works his craft and you walk away with a newly grafted tree. You are a member of the largest society of enthusiastic fruit growers in the Puget Sound area. WCFS membership is on the move and you make it happen.

I've asked all the Board members to bring their chapter's ideas for controlling codling moth and apple maggot to our Annual Meeting. WCFS will take the initiative and work to develop plans with other

organizations in our area in order to educate our neighbors, and ourselves, in halting the spread of these pests. These orchard pests have been the cause of lost crops and resources of time and money. Please discuss your suggestions for this chapter-wide project with your chapter members so that your representatives can bring your ideas to the Annual Meeting.

The rootstock order is due this month. Paul Gotz will be handling the distribution. This is the first time we've offered Pyrodwarf and Krymsk 1 rootstocks. WCFS will make a number of these rootstocks available to WSU Northwest Washington Research and Extension Center at Mt. Vernon for their trial plots. I'd like to ask those of you who are grafting with these rootstocks to keep accurate records of your grafting results and report your findings to us. WCFS will continue to investigate new rootstock material in hopes of improving the performance of fruit culture in the region.

I'd like to congratulate and welcome to the WCFS Board of Directors our newly elected chapter presidents, David Connors of Seattle Tree Fruit Society and Michael (Mike) Shannon of Peninsula Fruit Club and Tahoma Chapter's new president, Dr. David Ekland. We offer our thanks to outgoing presidents, Marlene Falkenbury, Mel Armstrong and Valerie Chapin for jobs well done.

In January, North Olympic and Clallam Fruit Clubs donated \$500 and \$100 respectively, to Western Washington Fruit Research Foundation to advance fruit horticultural programs for the benefit of the general public and the small farmer. WCFS applauds their efforts to increase public awareness of research which supports the minimal use of pesticides.

I hope you're out there working the soil, taking pleasure in the budded trees and the longer days.

Sincerely,
Judi Stewart

*Your thoughts and suggestions are always welcome and comments will be kept confidential. My mail and email information is listed on the Board directory.

Welcome to New Members

It was reported at the last Board Meeting that WCFS now has 409 members! Here is a partial list of our newest members. For those not listed, please be patient as we become more organized next time.

Peninsula Fruit Club

Nenita Arcega, Silverdale
Rosanne Carlson, Hansville
Kay Kauffman, Hansville

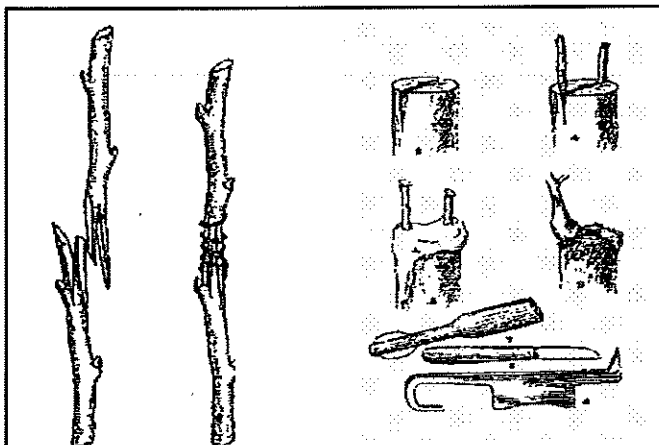


PFC to Host Grafting Workshop

by Mike Shannon, Peninsula Fruit Club

I want to send out an invitation to our grafting workshop. It will be held on March 5th from 11:00 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. at the Country Nursery and Garden located on the Seabeck Highway. Apple, Pear and Plum rootstocks will be available, along with many different antique scions. This has been an annual event for our club for about 17 years.

See our flyer below.



Peninsula Fruit Club Annual Grafting Workshop

*Learn how to graft on your
own fruit trees.*

We will have

*Rootstock and scion wood
available for*

Apple, Pear, and Plums

(We have Antique apple scion wood)

Where: *The Country Nursery
and Garden*

on the Seabeck Hwy NW

When: *March 5, 2005*

Time: *11:00 AM to 3:00 PM*



STFS Spring Fruit Show Mar 12th

by David Conners, STFS

Seattle Tree Fruit Society announces our upcoming new **Spring Fruit Show** at Seattle's Ballard High School on Saturday, March 12th from 10 am - 4 pm.

Talks will be presented during the show. Topics to be discussed include

- (1.) The importance of creating and maintaining good soil structure;
- (2.) The importance of bees in the pollination process;
- (3.) The best home orchard fruit and berry varieties to grow in your back yard or orchard in Western Washington. This discussion will be headlined by Mt. Vernon's Gary Moulton and Raintree's Sam Benowitz);
- (4.) A planned Q & A session on the above topics and others by all of the above speakers and others from STFS.

Admission is \$3/person or \$5/family.

We hope to have contests for the best homemade items: pie; applesauce; and jam, jelly, or preserve.

WSU Research Center Revitalized

Good Fruit Grower, Jan 1, 2005

Washington State University's field station in Mount Vernon is undergoing an extreme makeover. Groundwork has started on an \$8 million facility.

The WSU Board of Regents approved a revitalization plan for the Northwest Washington Research and Extension Center at Mount Vernon in May 2004. Funding comes from revenues generated from WSU land sales of approximately \$6 million, with an additional \$500,000 from Skagit County. The remaining \$1.5 million will be raised from private sources, including local and regional agricultural groups.

"We're embarking on a great challenge," said Debra Inglis, interim director of the Mount Vernon center. "We have a new name, a renewed regional mission to focus on agriculture and horticultural crops, a new facility is coming, and we have new programs."

Demolition of the existing building will begin in spring. The new facility should be completed by the middle of 2006. The new building will house a demonstration kitchen, regional WSU offices, greenhouse, several laboratories (tissue culture, fruit and vegetable, insect rearing, weed science, and water quality), and a video conferencing room.



Tips for Collecting Scionwood

by Judi Stewart, NOFC

With our annual scionwood exchanges coming up, I thought it would be good to review some tips on scionwood collection.

Scionwood contains growth hormone

The terminal bud on stems produces a hormone, auxin, which prevents branching. Auxin also delays maturation and fruiting. Different terminal buds on the same tree produce different amounts of auxin. If a large amount of auxin is produced, later fruiting results; conversely if a small amount of auxin is produced, early fruiting is produced.

Select wood to promote early fruiting

Since scionwood is collected from one year old wood, all scions are directly associated with a terminal bud. Generally, the more vigorous the growth, the greater the amount of auxin is available. Scions taken from the laterals have the least amount of auxin; therefore, they will fruit earlier when grafted. Terminal stems have a slightly higher amount of auxin, and so will fruit later. Water sprouts have the most auxin and they take almost the same amount of time to fruit as if the tree was planted from seed.

So to promote early fruiting, definitely follow this rule: DO NOT collect water sprouts.

Taking the cuttings

Keep your pruners sharp. Cut only healthy wood from known cultivars. Use alcohol or a dilute bleach solution to wipe your pruning blades when moving from tree to tree. Cuttings should be about a foot in length and about 1/4" in diameter with prominent and well developed buds.

Storing the scionwood

Put the scionwood in a plastic bag with a moist paper towel and place the bag in your refrigerator taking care that it doesn't freeze. One year, I put my wood low and against the rear of the refrigerator and it froze. I lost a year's wood. Make sure you properly label the scions. There's nothing worse than having a fist full of unidentified scionwood.

Upcoming Events

Northwest Flower & Garden Show
February 9th to 13th
Seattle Convention Center

Home Orchard Society
Scion Exchange and Rootstock Sale
March 5, 2005 10am - 4pm
Clackamas County Fairgrounds
694 NE 4th Ave, Canby, OR

Spring Show and WCFS Annual Meeting
March 12, 2005 10 am - 3 pm
Rainier View Christian Church
12305 Spanaway Loop Rd, Spanaway, WA

Chapter Rootstock/Scionwood Exchanges/Grafting Workshops
March 1st - North Olympic Fruit Club
March 5th - Peninsula Fruit Club
March 8th - Clallam Fruit Club
March 12th - Seattle Tree Fruit Society

Rootstock delivery - mid-February

NAFEX Annual Meeting
September 8-11, Santa Cruz, CA

California Rare Fruit Growers
September 8-11, Santa Cruz, CA
Year of the Apple

BeeLine deadlines for submission
May 1, Summer '05
August 1, Fall '05
Nov 1, Winter '05
Feb 1, Spring '06

Farmers Markets - check www.pugetsoundfresh.org

7th Annual Salt Spring Island Apple Festival
Sunday, October 2, 2005



Chapter News

Clallam Fruit Club

President

Erik Simpson (360)683-6684

7pm, 2nd Tuesday each month

Clallam County Commissioner's Chambers

223 E. 4th St., Port Angeles

December - potluck, 24 attended. Drawing for bee house and orchard bees. Watch "Broken Limb" DVD.

January - Pruning demo by Chris Austin of Sequim. Gary Heaton talks on blueberry pruning. Mike Owens talks on tomatoes.

February plans - Soil Conservation discuss soils for fruit trees, soil samples.

March plans - March 8 scionwood exchange, rootstock and scion for sale. Also election of officers.

North Olympic Fruit Club

President

Karen Page (360)732-4008

7pm, 1st Tuesday each month

Tri-Area Community Center

10 West Valley Rd. at Rhody Drive, Chimacum

January, February - Pruning demos given while pruning at orchards of Norris Short and Christina Leaf.

Feb - Speaker is Greg McPherson of Tiny's Frutique of Wenatchee, on grafting.

March - Rootstock and Scion Exchange at March meeting.

Peninsula Fruit Club

President

Mike Shannon (360)373-9489

7pm, 2nd Thursday each month

Eagles Nest Building, Room 100

Kitsap County Fairgrounds

1200 NW Fairgrounds Rd., Bremerton

Grafting Workshop scheduled for March 5 at the Country Nursery and Gardens, 11:30-3:30.

George Boggess and crew will continue with the grafting workshop at local schools that has been in service for several years.

Starting in April, the monthly meeting will move to the Bremerton Parks and Recreation Building.

Club may do a project selling blueberry plants and grafted trees at the county fair.

Piper Orchard Chapter

President

Ron Schaevez (425)745-8844

work party time 10am-3pm, 3rd Saturday of each month

(except July, August, December)

Piper Orchard

950 NW Carkeek Park Rd., Seattle

The harvest was good this past year.

Seattle Tree Fruit Society

President

David Conners (206)782-7352

9:30am, last Saturday of each month

(except December)

Center for Urban Horticulture (Douglas Classroom)

3501 NE 41st St, Seattle

Dec - Discussed lessons learned from Fall Fruit Show. Debated moving to common renewal date. Held elections.

Jan - Planning Spring Fruit Show in March.

Feb - Hosting booth at Northwest Flower and Garden Show, along with WWFRF.

Mar - Spring Fruit Show at Ballard High (Seattle), Mar 12, 10am-4pm

Tahoma Chapter

President

Dr. David Ekland (253)531-4931

7pm, 1st Thursday each month

Rainier View Christian Church

12305 Spanaway Loop Rd., Spanaway

January - Fred Ferguson gave presentation on noxious weeds. Booklets on weed ID handed out. Organized nominating committee. Officer elections coming.

February plans - Hosting Annual Spring Meeting of WCFS, and Scionwood Sale.



WCFS OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

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Walnut Grafting Tips

by Judi Stewart, NOFC

California black walnut is the most common rootstock for walnut in California but has not been recommended for use outside California due to its susceptibility to blackline disease (caused by hypersensitive reaction to cherry leaf roll virus). Grafting is commonly done on 1-year old seedling rootstocks in nurseries, but many growers prefer to plant ungrafted stocks and graft in the orchard after the rootstock becomes established. One year old walnut wood tends to be hollow or has a chamber. Therefore, WCFS ordered 2-year old Manregian (*Juglans regia*) walnut rootstock.

Walnut trees are sap producers just as sugar maples are in New England. Walnuts produce some of the sweetest sap. But we don't have here the extremes of temperature as in Maine and in order to produce the sugaring sap, walnut trees would need the freezing cold temperatures at night and the sun in the morning.

Walnuts are one of the more difficult fruit trees to graft. Bench grafting or bud grafting walnuts are probably the best methods available to us. In order to handle the walnut sap, you have a few options. You can decapitate the rootstock a week before grafting, slash the rootstock in several places or drill a hole right through the trunk with a small diameter bit and allow the sap to run. Don't worry, it'll heal over.

It's also not a good idea to graft in cool spring temperatures as the graft union itself requires warmth. Hold your rootstock in moist sawdust. In fact, bury the

entire rootstock in the sawdust and keep it in the shade. When you're ready to graft, aim for 80 degrees. A brown paper bag over the scion with a twist-tie seal to below your graft union will give you about a ten degree advantage. Or create an artificial environment by grafting in the greenhouse. Use the black electricians tape if you graft in the field because you'll want the additional warmth around the graft.

Professional grafters create an artificial heat environment by resting only the graft union against an 80 degree hot water pipe. They use insulation directly above and below the graft. The rootstock is buried or planted in a cooler medium. So graft in the greenhouse in May or June if you can. All nut trees need higher temperatures for successful grafting.

There are many different modifications of budding to use on walnuts and budding can be an easier method. Don't worry if you try grafting walnuts and you're unsuccessful. The trees will still grow wonderful nuts. But grafted walnut trees will bare in about 2 to 3 years instead of the usual 7 to 10. Grafting also dwarfs the tree.

Walnuts and related species are generally deep-rooted and strongly tap-rooted if no restrictive layers are present in soils. Walnuts want at least 30" of fertile soil and at least 25" of water, though 35" is better. They're intolerant of soil flooding and salinity. Walnuts need fertilizer with high nitrogen and do not tolerate shade. Lime your soil if it's acidic as a more neutral pH is preferred. Walnut cultivars Cascade, Supernut and Chopaka were all developed in Washington.

Wine grape research has new focus

Good Fruit Grower, Feb 1, 2005

Though earlier research at the Mt. Vernon station centered on white wine varieties, the latest emphasis by Gary Moulton, a WSU horticulturist, is on red wine grape varieties and Pinot Noir rootstocks.

Puget Sound wineries recognize the growing consumer interest in red wines. Until Moulton's research, they had little information about cool-season red wine grape varieties. "That was the one hole in the research that had been done before," said Brent Charnley, president of the Puget Sound Wine Growers Association and owner of Lopez Island Vineyard and Winery. "Now, with the research under way, we're poised for a dramatic increase in the number of varieties grown in the Puget Sound area."

Moulton began wine grape varietal trials in 2000 to identify varieties and rootstocks suitable for western Washington. He is evaluating red and white grape cultivars from cool climate areas, with emphasis on earlier ripening red varieties that have name recognition, complex flavor, and potential for high quality. He is also studying rootstocks for Pinot Noir to find one that promotes earlier ripening.





Greetings from the Vashon Island Fruit Club

The first informal gathering of what is now the Vashon Island Fruit Club was held in the spring of 2004 to see if there was an interest to continue as a group to promote fruit tree and berry education. Dr. Bob Norton, with his deep knowledge and commitment, was our spark to set us on the road to a formal Club formation. On June 29, 2004 we had our first general meeting to elect officers, approve our Club name, and our Club mission statement.

Our adopted mission statement is to “Promote the successful growing of fruit in an environmentally responsible manner, through the education and enthusiasm, and thereby improve fruit production and fruit products on Vashon-Maury Island”.

The VIFC membership grew from the initial meeting of ten people, to 46 people on October 3, 2004, to 64 people as of the January 18, 2005 quarterly meeting.

The key to our upward membership growth is the monthly hands-on Saturday workshops and the educational topics following each quarterly meeting. After all, acquiring fruit tree knowledge is what drew us together. Most of us are home owner novices at choosing and taking care of fruit trees and berries. Our president, Carol Eggen, and the other officers have tirelessly led us through the growth of a new club.

At our October 3, 2004 Harvest Fest/quarterly meeting, we appreciated Presidents Judi Stewart, Mel Armstrong, and Eric Simpson making the trip to Vashon to share details of WCFS. We look forward to eventually joining WCFS for all the advantages that a larger fruit organization can offer.

And thanks again to Judi for extending the invitation to have an article in the BeeLine newsletter about our new Club.

Jerry Gehrke

Secretary, VIFC



Good Fruit Grower Renewals Due

Now is the time to renew or place an order for Good Fruit Grower. Subscriptions begin in July. The WCFS group subscriptions are discounted to \$17 instead of the \$30 regular subscription price. This is because we send one check from WCFS which pays for all subscriptions. Check out the magazine’s website: <http://www.goodfruit.com/>.

Make your check payable to Western Cascade Fruit Society (WCFS), noting on the check that it’s for Good Fruit Grower. Mail your check for \$17 and the coupon to: Patti Gotz, WCFS Treasurer, 1007 NE 71st St., Seattle, WA 98115. Checks must be received by May 30th.

Sign Me Up For A Good Fruit Grower Subscription

Name _____ Phone _____
 Email _____
 Street _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Mail to: Patti Gotz, WCFS Treasurer, 1007 NE 71st St., Seattle, WA 98115

Review of the STFS Fall Fruit Show

by Jack Pedigo, STFS

Our October 23rd, 2004 event was the first time a Western Cascade Fruit Society affiliated Fall Fruit Show was held in a mall. Our location was Factoria Mall, south Bellevue. Instead of a traditional two day (Sat. & Sun.) fruit show, ours was a Saturday only event.

Setup started at 7:00 am and went smoothly, thanks to a large group of STFS volunteers. The show was scheduled to begin at 10:00 am, and the crowd started building shortly after 9:30 am. Luckily the show only needed finishing touches after 9:30; we were going full tilt by 10:00 am. "Busy" best describes the attendance throughout the show. The lectures were standing room only, the tasting tables handed out taste bud teasers galore, Mt Vernon research station sold out their apples, the area looked like a hive full of busy bees. The crowd started to thin out after 4:00 pm and we started closing the show shortly before 6:00 pm. Scott Lynch from Duvall, WA won the Correll cider press. I'm tempted to give his address and phone number for those wanting to press some cider.

After many months of preparation it was gratifying to see the show come off without a hitch. Don Peterson and John Lindroth were the primary driving forces behind organizing this show. We owe them a BIG pat on the back, and more. (I was just along for the ride.) Planning the 2004 fall fruit show started in early spring with fine tuning continuing until show day. We also need to acknowledge David Connors for helping with promotion and Chuck Holland for representing the STFS on the Ciscoe Morris' Sat. October 2nd, morning garden show. Our guest speakers Chris Smith, Dr. Margriet Dogterom, Dr. Bob Norton, Hollis Spitler and

Drew Zimmerman drew folks in like they had free money. The Home Orchard Society's apple ID committee really had their brains and taste buds working. Dick and Marilyn Tilbury filled their day explaining fruit pest control methods..

Thank you all Seattle Tree Fruit Society members who helped at this fruit show, we had a great team effort. Time flies when you're busy or having fun, and we were experiencing both. The show was broken into three shifts, and that worked great to avoid fatigue. One nice thing about working in a mall is the abundance of coffee and lunch shops. No need to pack a lunch. Our vendors, Raintree and Hartman's Nursery along with Beediverse were surprised and delighted with the large crowd. Business was good,

There are a few things we would change the next time around but all in all I was surprised by the lack of surprises. The most overlooked aspect of the show was not promoting the Seattle Tree Fruit Society more. I mean really selling ourselves. You can bet that won't be overlooked at our next show.

Speaking of that, the next STFS event will be the Seattle Northwest Flower & Garden Show. Let's think "out the Box" and do some things that are new. Help us brainstorm, throw us some ideas. If two heads are better than one, does that mean two hundred heads are better than one? Let's give it a try. Pass your ideas by calling Greg Giuliani at (425)788-7573 (message) or via email dasgoog@hotmail.com. If you need more information to get your brain percolating let him know. The doctors say you can keep your brain young by using it more. Here's your chance. Thanks again to everyone who helped at the 2004 Fall Fruit Show. This is the start of many good things to come.

Root Bags for Controlling Tree Size

Root bags as an alternative to dwarf rootstocks for the control of tree size - Pruning, training, rootstocks, root pruning, growth regulator sprays, and cropping are the typical methods for controlling fruit tree size, flowering, and fruiting. In 1995, research began on restricting fruit tree root systems in fabric bags that allowed only roots of approximately 1 mm to 3 mm in diameter to penetrate. Restricting the root system reduced tree size, increased fruit color, flowering and cropping. A further benefit may be to provide underground rodent control. In 2001, two additional studies were initiated with larger root bag hole sizes ranging from 1 to 20 mm. The objective has been changed to selection of root bags with larger hole sizes to allow excellent tree growth in early years with progressively increased flowering and shoot suppression after the third year.

source: <http://arecs.vaes.vt.edu/arec.cfm?webname=winchester§ion=projects&subsection=3547>



Review of the NOFC Fall Fruit Show

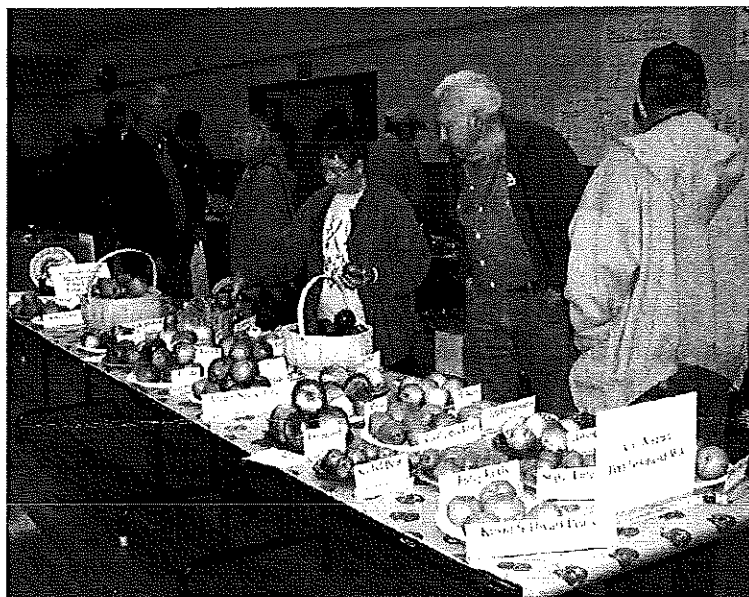
by Judi Stewart, NOFC

The NOFC show was a hit. Many have said that this was our best show ever. Besides the display and tasting tables...

Our apple pie baking contest attracted 19 contestants. It took 2 1/2 hours to judge all the pies. We were grateful that we had a professional pie judge with us from Port Angeles to show us the ropes. After testing the 5th pie we looked at one another, looked at the rest of the pies ahead of us and realized this was going to be work!



Pie Judges at Work

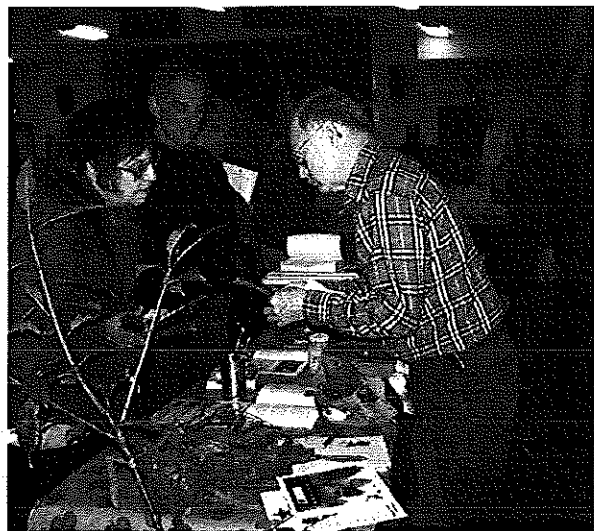


Lois Twelves & Carl Nomura's Table

The old-fashioned apple cider pressing demo was great for kids and adults. You could hear them working that wheel across the entire room. The wine and beer-making supplier brought a keg of homemade root beer for samples. In addition to the best member-baked pies and cakes, we made 100 12-ounce portions of fresh carrot soup garnished with sour cream and all of it sold. We also sold trees we had grafted in the spring for \$12 each. WCFS members from Olympia, Tacoma, Shelton and Clallam visited. WWFRF and several WCFS members other than NOFC had tables. Ten new members signed up. With every show it only gets better.

Let's make sure that in following years, we stagger our dates so we can all see one another's programs.

pictures by David Self



Interested grower and NOFC VP Larry Krotzer, at Dr. Roger Eichman's table



Kitchen Staff - Dan Myhre, Carol Self, Phyllis Becker, Lou Hoffer, Kathy Ackerman, Jim Haley

Dr. Eichman's Petal Spray Improves Fruit Set

by Mark Lee, STFS

WCFS member Roger Eichman, D.D.S. has a technique he has developed that greatly improves fruit set during the wet spring weather. He uses a nitrogen rich foliar spray, a solution of Miracle Grow, on the blossoms of his fruit trees and blueberry bushes. He has been using this fruit set technique for a number of years with good results. "I developed it about 25 years ago in Alaska where we have no bees. Most people think that fruit set needs pollination, but foliar spraying is much easier. Some plants won't be pollinated at all without some help."

Some of the fruit will develop without seed development, technically known as parthenogenetic fruit set. This further indicates that the fruit set occurring has little to do with pollination. Other benefits of the spray are increased fruit set, larger fruit size and improved flavor. The trees are healthier, so there is greater disease and insect control.

Roger follows the standard directions for mixing Miracle Grow that are found on the package. He usually sprays once when most of the flowers are opening, and doubts the actual timing makes much difference, as long as there is enough petal tissue to absorb the nitrates.

Roger says pluot is a good example of a fruit tree that has poor fruit set in our area. He recommends a foliar spray to improve fruit set on pluots. Without his technique, he says "you are reduced to playing a bee by hand." Foliar sprays on blossoms are also a quick way to evaluate old trees, since old trees that no longer produce will often set fruit after a treatment with Miracle Grow at bloom time.

How does this work? Roger says "Why it sets fruit is a mystery, but should have something to do with nutrient availability. Of course, the best thing about it is doing that which others think you can't!" Could the technique work because the physical act of spraying shakes the pollen from the anthers onto the stigma? Roger's response: "Definitely not or a simple rain would do it. Further, the blooms of blueberries are nearly closed and hang down, so the foliar spray does not get close to the pollen. The effect is chemical." It works very well on blueberries and all members of the rose family.

Two experts in the field of foliar sprays at bloom time were consulted to help explain the science behind Roger's innovative technique. Dr Lailiang Cheng of Cornell Univeristy, and John Gardner, Apple Specialist

with the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture responded to the BeeLine's requests for an explanation.

John Gardner said:

"What is not common knowledge about the process of pollination is that most fruiting orchards of high density apples will produce up to 125 pounds per acre of pollen during bloom. This pollen is protein-rich containing 30-40 % protein which is why honeybees prefer apple pollen for their brood if they can get it. Here's the clincher... the amino acid complex of apple pollen is very complete and requires lots of nitrogen in the protein complex to make it what it is. In other words, pollen is a 'nitrogen sink'. Therefore any shortage of nitrogen during the bloom period could conceivably translate into poor fruit set."

Dr. Cheng said:

"It has been reported that postharvest foliar nitrogen application can increase the ovule longevity and fruit set of 'Comice' pear the following season (Khemira, 1991. MS thesis Oregon State University with Dr. Tim L. Righetti). Our work with apple trees also indicates that increasing reserve nitrogen level in apple trees by foliar urea application in the fall can translate into higher fruit set the following spring. So, foliar nitrogen application at bloom should accomplish the same objective if you can provide enough nitrogen to the flowers and foliage."

Why Miracle Grow? Roger explained, "I use Miracle Grow only because it is handy, easy and cheap! I suspect any soluble, good fertilizer will work. I use the foliar spray as a blossom set, but another spray later when the foliage is out could also be a benefit. If I am spraying for any reason, I usually add a fertilizer just for good measure, but that may be just to make me feel better. For the organic grower, nitrogen sources to be tried include dilute blood meal, a manure tea high in nitrogen, worm leachate, high nitrogen lawn fertilizer, or the seaweed-based Spray and Grow.

Judi Stewart has reported that arborist Victor Colacurcio (NOFC) has experimented with Roger's Miracle Grow application. Victor was so impressed, he says he'll now use it every year. Roger should get some more feedback after WCFS members read this article. I plan on using it on my trees this year. I am

(continued on page 13)



News from the Board

Minutes of the Board meeting held at the North East Seattle Library on December 11, 2004.

The meeting was called to order by President Judi at 10:05. Members present were: Eric and Del Simpson, Lyle Knudson, Paul Becker, Roger Eichman, Dave Conners, Larry Krotzer, Mel Armstrong, Steve Witcher, Renae Carnay, Paul and Patti Gotz, Drew Zimmerman, Karen Page, Mark Lee, Judi Stewart and George Moergeli. Members absent: Ralph Rush, Ed Jones, Gary Heaton and Ron Schaeviz. Guests present were Greg Giuliani, John Reardon and Henri Carnay.

Secretary George read the minutes. They were approved with a correction that the hats with chapter names cost \$16.80 not \$16.50. Eric moved and Lyle seconded. Passed. Eric was asked to explain the hat sales and costs. Clallam has sold all their hats. Other chapters have some available.

Patti distributed and explained the financial report. Judi asked that in the future the financial report show outstanding liabilities. Judi distributed a form that chapters might use for their "Cash Flow Statements" which could be used as a guide.

Paul informed the Board that anyone who gives a donation of more than \$25 in value should receive an acknowledgment of the donation to comply with IRS rules.

Judi informed the Board that all donations must go thru WCFS and not sent directly to the recipient. Patti is to draw the check and mail it, with an accompanying letter giving credit to the donating chapter. Some discussion of donations followed.

Eric reported on the 2003 year-end audit. Judi read a portion of the bylaws regarding the printing of the financial statement. If the audit took place in January it would be ready for printing in the next BeeLine. Del, Erik and Paul volunteered for the audit committee. The audit was to be completed by Feb 1 in time for the BeeLine.

OLD BUSINESS: Judi raised the questions about the CRFG Santa Cruz request for our participation in their show, the "Year of the Apple." There was consensus that we thank them for the invitation, but we would have to pass on a booth, etc. Individual members may wish to attend. Judi circulated three of the colorful CRFG magazines for our perusal.

The trip to the Salt Spring Island Apple Festival is set for Oct. 2nd. There was a discussion of who should be allowed to participate and it was decided non-members wanting to go along may, provided they became chapter members, members at large, or contributed \$20, as space is limited.

Vashon Island Fruit Club (VIFC) began May of this year and has 60 members. VIFC will meet on January 18th to vote on joining WCFS. Mel & Eric both reported on their visit with this new club.

Our BeeLine can accept ads if the ads are related to our purpose.

Petal Spray (continued from page 12)

especially interested in seeing what effect it has on my pluot trees.

If any WCFS members do their own trials, please share your results with the BeeLine. Roger advises "I have tried to get others to use it so we would have more than just my research, but I only know of one feedback. I hope to get more. If you try it, you should not spray all of your plants, for it helps to hold something back as a control. That way, you can see clearer the effects."

Judi asked Renae to locate the binder with our educational bulletin.

Break at 11:20 and resumed at 11:35 after coffee and goodies furnished by our host STFS. Good stuff!!

CHAPTER REPORTS:

Clallam - Eric reported that Clallam had Christmas potluck on Dec. 14 and showed the movie "Broken Limb" to an audience of 50. Erik listed his programs for the next several months.

Peninsula - Mel reported they had a good fruit show. Both the chapter and the nursery location profited. Peninsula will have a grafting show in early March, they've ordered rootstock and will demonstrate grafting in their local schools. Mel discussed the chapter having a booth at the Kitsap Fair. Chapter dues will increase to \$20 as of the first of the year. Mike Shannon has been elected the new President.

Tahoma - Renae reported that the chapter is working on the scionwood show, as usual, for March 12th. Officers will be elected at the next meeting. The chapter is doing well through their change of leadership.

Seattle - Greg reported on the Fall Fruit Show at Factoria Mall. There was good attendance, but they didn't earn any money. The mall wants the show back because it drew many people. The logistics were tough. They had to set up early and take down late. Club officers were on the radio with Ciscoe on Oct. 3rd, which helped to advertise the show. Seattle is revising their membership roster and will send the corrected list to Patti. They are also developing an email directory. STFS members are planning a spring show for March 12th at Ballard High. This caused some concern as this is the annual meeting of WCFS and the election of officers. Judi asked that they work to change their date.

North Olympic - Karen purchased the film "Broken Limb." It's available to other chapters for \$15 to help defray the cost of the film. NOFC had taken a trip to Wenatchee to visit the orchards, some organic, and stopped at a winery. Their Fall Fruit Show had good attendance and did well financially. Several programs are scheduled for future meetings.

Mark suggested we look into Midwest Apple and Fruit Improvement as they needed financial support for their project. Mark said the government sent people to Afghanistan to bring back apple stock. If we made a commitment it would have to be for ten years at \$100 per year. This participation would also give us access to their apple wood. Patti moved and Mark seconded the motion to join. It was decided to postpone the vote pending more research by Mark.

There was discussion of our 501(c)3 status. Paul moved and Eric seconded that we list ourselves as a charitable organization with the state. The motion passed.

We discussed the Spring meeting and election of officers and Board members. Judi appointed Nominating Committee members; Renae Carnay, Paul Gotz and Eric Simpson.

Eric displayed a new type of mason bee house developed by Dr. Margriet Dogterom

Del moved and David seconded that the outgoing president serve as a Board member for the following year. The motion passed to put this before the membership at the annual meeting as an amendment to the bylaws. Paul asked about reviewing the bylaws. Roger asked about the Northeast Flower & Garden Show.

Meeting adjourned at 1pm.

George Moergeli, Secretary.

Persimmons in the Northwest

by David Conley, STFS

I have American persimmons (*diospyros virginiana*) and Asian Persimmons (*diospyros kaki*) growing here between Lynnwood and Bothell, Washington. I ordered all of my persimmon trees from Nurseries, some here in Washington, some from Oregon and some from Afton Virginia, (Edible Landscaping). Raintree Nursery was one of the places I ordered trees from, and also Oregon Exotics at Grants Pass, Oregon.

American Persimmons (*Diospyros virginiana*)

I have one grafted variety, Meader. It sets fruit usually every year but they all fall off during the dry late summer period

I have numerous seedling trees of the varieties John Rick and Early Golden. Some of the female trees have set fruit but have not ripened any.

American persimmons are native to the eastern part of America where it is 90 degrees 24 hours a day and there is 45 inches of rain between May and September. The soil here at our place is very gravelly and is dry during the summer months.

Asian Persimmons (*Diospyros kaki*)

I had 11 varieties growing here at one time but some of them have died. Varieties that I planted here; (an asterisk by the ones that died);

*Fuyu, Hachiya, Great Wall, Hira-Tananashi, Ichi-Ki-Kei-Jiro, *Izu, Saijo, Sheng, *Smith's Best, Tanenashi, *Yamagaki.

Other Varieties to grow here; Jiro, Korean.

We had fruit this year on Hachiya, Ichi-Ki-Ki-Jiro, Saijo and Sheng.

Great Wall seems to be the one that ripens best in this area, but the tree has died back to the graft twice, hopefully the new growth this year will be mature enough in the next few years to produce fruit.

Hachiya produced quite a few nice crop of fruit this year, they are one of the best, sweetest ones. Sometimes they must be put in the freezer to remove astringency. Drying will also remove astringency.

Ichi-Ki-Ki-Jiro had a good crop but something got them all before I could pick them.

Saijo had a partial crop this year, it has been slow to bear fruit. They are small, about 2" long and 1.25" diameter. They are one of the very best for flavor and sweetness, like an American persimmon.

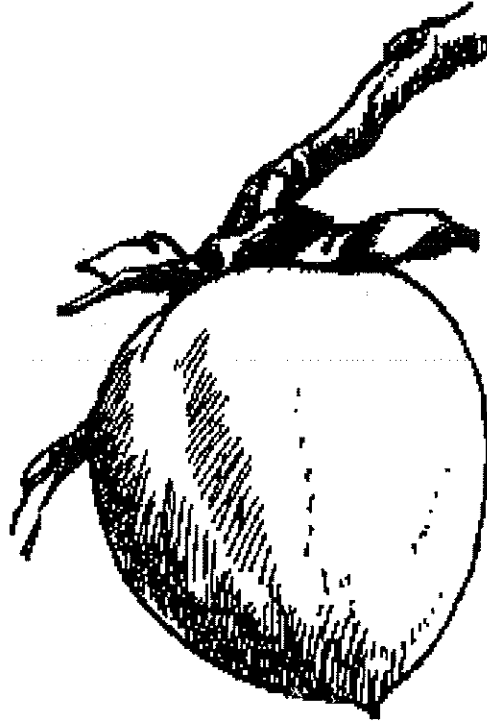
Sheng had a big crop this year and ripened on the tree, but they are not of very good quality.

Persimmons have brittle wood, a lot of branches and sometimes the whole tree breaks off.

Asian persimmons are parthenocarpic, they set fruit without pollination, and the fruit is seedless. Most Asian persimmon varieties are female and do not produce male flowers. All of my living trees are female and the fruit is all seedless.

I think Yamagaki and Smith's Best may produce male flowers. Chocolate is one variety that produces both male and

female flowers. Some varieties change their color and become less astringent when they are pollinated.



NOFC Offers Ammonium Acetate for Apple Maggots Lures

NOFC has offered to assemble ammonium acetate lures that work along with Tanglefoot or other sticky substances for all WCFS chapters. Nancy Jo Cushman's article on the use of ammonium acetate was in the BeeLine. NOFC purchased ammonium acetate and transferred it to small baggies. One baggie will cover one lure for one growing season. NOFC will not distribute these to the general public but only to WCFS members and master gardeners because of liability considerations. You can order the product in bulk yourself or the packets from NOFC. Either way, get in touch with Karen Page at Karenp@waypt.com or 360.732.4008 for more information.



Grafting Asian Persimmons

by David Conley, STFS

I have a Saijo Kaki persimmon tree that I grafted myself. I grafted it on to a root sprout of the American persimmon rootstock that came up from the area under our Saijo tree. I did a rind graft in the spring after the sap was up and the tree was leafed out.

I let it grow there for a season, then dug it up, separating it from the parent tree root system the following spring. It is about 4 feet high now and growing in it's own location in our yard.

Here is how I graft Asian persimmons:

I gathered dormant scions in December or January and put them in the refrigerator in a plastic ziplock bag with a few drops of water. I put a 1/2 cup of water into the ziplock bag, close the top, shake it up and then empty it, enough stays in the bag to keep the scions from drying out. Be sure to label your varieties.

When the rootstock is leafing out and the sap is up, the bark separates from the wood easily (like making a willow whistle).

I cut off the rootstock at the diameter of your finger.

Cut the end off the scion using a straight, slanting cut about 5 times as long as the diameter of the scion.

At the top of the rootstock, cut a vertical slit through the bark to the wood, long enough for the scion's slanting cut.

At the top of the slit, open the bark from the wood and slide the cut surface against the wood down into the slit until the top of the slanting cut is even with the top of the cut off rootstock.

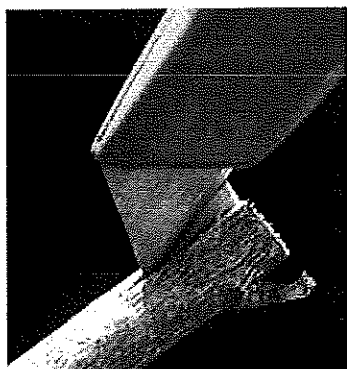
Starting from below the slit, wrap tightly with black electrical tape, stretching it as you wrap.

Coat the top of the cut surface of the rootstock and the cut surface at the top of the scion with petroleum jelly (Vaseline)

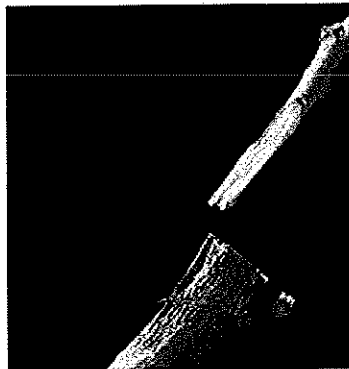
Leave about 3 dormant buds on the scion.

Watch it grow.

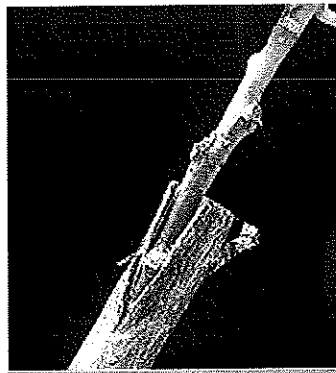
When it grows out and has healed well together, cut through the tape vertically on the rootstock side. Don't try to remove the tape, this might damage the bark. It will fall off by itself.



Lift the flaps. 1



Ready to insert. 1

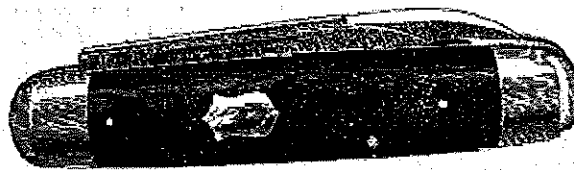


Ready to wrap. 1



Done. 2

Photo credits: 1. <http://www.widebaytrader.com/graft/rind.htm>; 2. David Conley



Training Grapes in the Puget Sound Region

by David Johnson, NOFC

Our unique cloudy and cool growing conditions make for tough going when you try to grow grapes, especially of the *Vitis vinifera* sort. Years ago, the majority of vines planted in our region were of the *Vitis labrusca* sort. I am not one of those who make fun of this particular sort of grape, but good wine it does not make. In more recent decades, a tremendous amount of breeding work has introduced several fine seedless grapes that can be grown here in *almost warm* weather. I even ended up with a seedless grape in my breeding work, almost by accident. Get a sense of what varieties are worth growing. If you want table grapes, that is simply a matter of finding one that will get ripe in our region, and there are plenty now.

Challenges presented by our location

The Puget Sound region presents some challenges to be addressed by the pruning and trellis system. The question is this; should grapes be pruned differently here than elsewhere? I believe the answer is yes. Not only should you prune your vines differently, but your trellis system should be a lot different as well. Major problems for grape production in our region include the following:

- *Low light intensities: This is a problem for flower cluster initiation, especially for the species *Vitis vinifera*, which in many cases will be much less fruitful in our region. Thompson Seedless for one has poor fruit set up here, not that I recommend it to anyone.*
- *Rain comes too early in the fall: We have a pretty good rain pattern for grapes in the spring and summer, but the fall rains do come a bit too soon.*
- *Few people understand pruning and training of vitis. This is a problem in other locations as well, but since I intend to focus on this area, it is well to mention it. The most popular theme I hear raised at programs is "How many grapes will I need to plant on my Arbor?" Already the people are heading down the wrong path and have assumed that this is the way to go for fruit production.*

Pruning and training

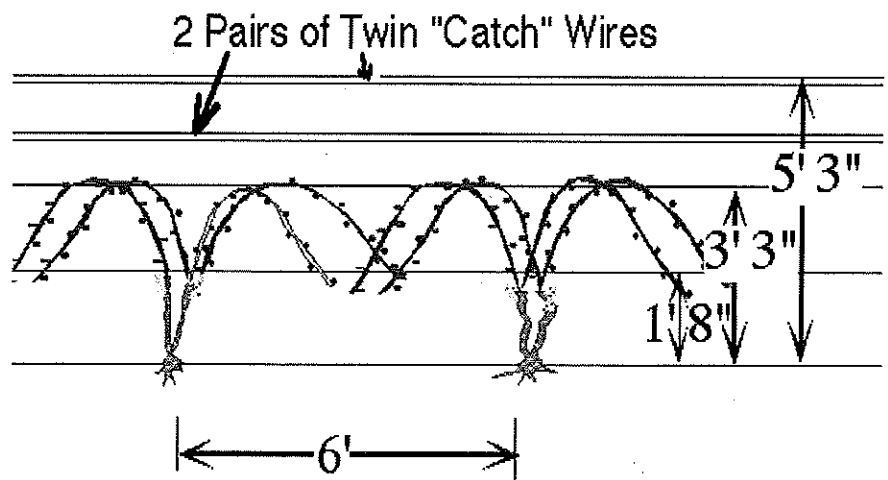
What are some good objectives when pruning and

training a Table/Wine grape? I suggest for most table varieties to set up a vertical trellis of 6 ½ feet height, using 11 gauge berry wire. Above the cordon wire, there should be two pairs of mobile 'catch wires' to draw most of the shoots upward against the trellis wires.

Do not crowd the vines! The very closest row spacing in the row for table grapes should be 6 feet, and in the valley, 8 feet is probably better. With our cloudy and low light intensity summer weather, the vines need all the room that they want. If you are going to have a trellis height of 6 ½ feet, the spacing between rows should also be at least 6 ½ feet or better, 7 feet, to avoid shading between rows.

Vines should be pruned, in most cases, to two long canes of 12-14 buds each. One cane runs one way on the wire, and the other cane goes the opposite direction. (The cane is the one year old wood with buds on it). A couple of 2 bud replacement spurs should be saved near the main trunk (crown) of the vine. There are exceptions to this rule. Concord type grapes, Niagara, Diamond, Van Buren, should be permitted to have 4 canes per vine of about the same length. Also, the canes should be bent so that the far end of the cane is tied down about 6-8 inches lower than its origin. This is easily achieved by having another wire about 8 inches below the cordon wire to tie to. This training system is similar to the pendelbogen shown in the diagram.

PENDEBOKEN TRAINING



graphic from http://www.nysaes.cornell.edu/hort/faculty/pool/pinot_noir_folder/pnclones.html

Thinning

For wine grapes, the above training holds true, but in



Training Grapes (continued from previous page)

In addition to this, you will want to thin the clusters on each vine. Generally this should be done after full bloom. Thinning too early makes the remaining clusters tighter and more prone to botrytis rot. For small clustered wine types like Leon Millot, I suggest thinning to a maximum of 3 clusters per shoot. For medium clustered sorts, like Ortega, I would suggest 2 clusters per shoot, and for big ones like Seyval, thin to one cluster per shoot—again do this after full bloom. For a Table type grape, you can allow more fruit to set than with a wine grape, since you are not trying to reach 22-24 degrees brix.

If you're trying to grow a 'marginal grape' like Black Monukka, thin to one cluster/shoot and do it a couple weeks after full bloom, and good luck. Thinning the fruit will advance maturity a few days to possibly a week.

Things not to do

- Do not spur prune your grapes. The basal buds are less fruitful, especially in a cool cloudy region like ours.
- Do not leave a lot of wood, i.e., don't let the vine get out of hand. With grapes, you end up with a tangled mess, almost as bad as a Kiwi Vine
- Don't crowd your vines! 6 feet on poor soil is about the minimum
- I repeat, don't crowd your vines. If you have them closer than 6 feet, toss a coin and get rid of some.
- Don't try to grow quality fruit on an Arbor. If you really want an Arbor, plant an Ornamental vine there or honeysuckle.

I can be reached at Charchemish2000@yahoo.com or David R. Johnson; PO Box 2793; Walla Walla, WA 99362

WCFS Member "50 words or less" Ads and Announcements

Here are the simple rules for submitting free ads:

You must be a WCFS member.

All words (item description, name, address, etc) must be 50 words or less.

Ads can be for your business, personal items, swapping of scionwood, announcements, etc.

You can repeat ads in future BeeLines, but you must submit them each time to the editor.

That's enough rules for now.

Lazy J Tree Farm between Sequim and Port Angeles accepts yard waste and sells screened fine, medium and course compost. (360) 457-5950.

Erik's Edible Orchard, 162 Creekside Drive
Sequim, WA 98382, 360-683-6684
www.olyphen.com/orchards
Fruit Trees-Berries-Figs-Syrup

My whole inventory of plants for sale in wholesale lot. Make me an offer. Arrange for pick up the third week in March. Reach me at Charchemish2000@yahoo.com or David R. Johnson; PO Box 2793; Walla Walla, WA 99362

6 mature gooseberry plants free to someone who can help me get a successful crop from 5 others that I keep. Purchased around 1988, these plants are thorned and have produced a few successful crops, but not recently. Excellent for pies, jam, wine, and champagne. Canfield Smith, Normandy Park, 206 242 9800 or cfsmisc@comcast.net.

If anyone has or knows of someone who has a computer they no longer use or need, NOFC president Karen Page would like to upgrade from her 14 year-old model. Please get in touch with Karen at karenp@waypt.com or 360.732.4008.

The Guru Gardener. Expert Advice and Services.
Steve Whitcher, Horticultural Consultant
Fruit Tree Pruning and Care, Disease & Insect Control
Plant Problem Diagnosis
ISA Certified Arborist
(253)536-2898, master@gurugardener.com
GuruGardener.com

Mason Bees - Removing Mason Bee pests ensures success with Mason Bees. This is easy with **Beediverse Products** and cleaned Mason Bees. Read "Pollination with Mason Bees" and find out more about these hardworking critters. Call 1-800-794-2144 for the nearest store location or check out our website, Beediverse.com, or see you at the 2005 WCFS events. Dr. Margriet Dogterom

Wanted - Bamboo plants for my edible landscape project. If you have some bamboo you want to get rid of, and you live in the North Seattle area, contact me. I'll come over with my shovel.
Mark Lee (425)776-8048, markl@nytec.com

Yucca, a Little-Known Saponin

by Judi Stewart, NOFC

Saponins are natural detergents found in many plants, especially certain desert plants. Saponins are also present in small amounts in some foods, such as soybeans and peas. A major commercial source of saponins is *Yucca schidigera*, which grows in the arid Mexican desert country of Baja California. Saponins have detergent or surfactant properties because they contain both water-soluble and fat-soluble components. As a consequence of their surface-active properties, saponins are excellent foaming agents, forming very stable foams. Yucca extracts are used in beverages, such as root beer and slurpies, and provide the foamy "head." Contrary to common belief, the yucca plant is not a cactus but a member of the lily family.

The saponin in yucca extract is a phytosterol, a plant steroid. Another term sometimes associated with it is natural cortisone. When added to drenches and sprayed on soils, yucca has the ability to interact with the cells in the roots of plants, increasing water and nutrient absorption. At the same time, the saponins interact with the surrounding micro flora, creating a more favorable rhizosphere for the plant.

Used as a powerful wetting agent, the steroidal saponin-complex sugar structures improve the penetration of water and fertilizers, especially in compact and alkaline soils. Besides improving the microorganisms of the rhizosphere and increasing the break down of organic matter, it also helps to develop stress resistance and modifies soil structure. The addition of yucca also helps plants grow larger root systems. It makes plant cells more permeable to water and nutrient uptake. As a consequence, it improves overall plant development. *Yucca schidigera* products have been used in agriculture for over 25 years, as soil improvers, foliar sprays, wetting agents, stress control agents and plant growth promoters.

Plant stomata are optimally open at about 75° F. When the temperature gets into the 80's and higher or 60's and lower, the stomata are closed. A true foliar feed response might take from 1 to 12 hours and is indicated by the leaves becoming greener. Yucca extract mixed in with nutrient sprays has the effect of greening up leaves fairly fast. Spray fruit trees and grapes before bud break to raise the brix levels in the plants so that when the plants are in full bloom they're protected from late frosts. Grapes won't die back when tender young shoots

are exposed to a frost. The brix is raised in these plants and acts similar to an anti-freeze. Not everyone is aware of raising brix levels in blooming fruit trees. Many growers instead are using fans and heaters.

For any foliar blend, a surfactant is helpful. Surfactants lower the surface tension of the water droplet, making the water lay flatter and spreading it across a greater leaf surface area, allowing greater contact and foliar absorption, versus "beading" up into droplets. Once on the leaf, nutrients in a foliar spray with yucca remain longer, or stick, without quickly washing away. Yucca contains vitamins and minerals, and also aids other products to adhere to plants and penetrate soils.

In order to germinate seeds faster, add ½ tsp. of yucca to a quart of water and use this to water your seeds. It's important to keep your yucca well diluted as a little goes a long way. Periodic applications of yucca on many garden plants will give good yield increases. Yucca will also help control baby slugs. There are certain products on the market for slug control and yucca is listed as their active ingredient. A simple nutrient spray made of soluble humates, soluble kelp, yucca extract and water is a good foliar feed. Here's a recipe: mix ½ tsp. of Humisolve TM7, 5 tsp. of kelp, ½ cup of yucca extract with 5 gallons of water.

It's not just for plants

Because of their surfactant properties, yucca is used extensively in cosmetics, such as lipstick and shampoo. The antifungal and antibacterial properties of saponins are important in cosmetic applications. Native Americans used yucca to make soap. They used it to reduce dandruff and hair loss. Yucca will foam up far more than any soap will. Saponin is not a fancy word for soap. The soap we use today has a totally different chemical structure.

There are many human consumption uses of yucca extract. There are about forty different species but only one out of five has "nutritional value". The vital force (healing properties) lies in the saponin steroids. Yucca saponins have both current and potential applications in animal and human nutrition. These same natural steroids support and enhance the intestinal enzyme system.

Yucca extracts are extensively used for ammonia and odor control in pig and poultry raising facilities and in dog and cat foods. Yucca has ammonia binding activity. When added to the diet, yucca passes through the digestive tract unabsorbed and is excreted. The yucca components bind to ammonia and certain other



odiferous compounds and are excreted. Feeding yucca extract to dogs and cats is shown to reduce fecal odor. Many pet foods and kitty litter products now contain yucca extract.

Saponins form strong insoluble complexes with cholesterol. This has many important implications, including cholesterol-lowering activity in humans. Saponins react with cholesterol in the protozoa cell membrane, causing the cell to rupture and lyse. Ruminant animals have a large population of rumen protozoa. The rumen protozoa reduce the efficiency of fermentation in the rumen, and increases in animal performance often take place when the protozoa are removed. Yucca saponins are effective in suppressing rumen protozoa, again by reacting with cholesterol in the cell membrane, causing it to destruct.

The blood cholesterol-lowering properties of dietary saponins are of particular interest in human nutrition. One of the most prominent research programs on this subject demonstrated the cholesterol-lowering properties of saponins. This desirable effect was achieved by the binding of bile acids and cholesterol by saponins. Cholesterol is continually secreted into the intestine via the bile, with much of it subsequently reabsorbed. Saponins cause a depletion of body cholesterol by preventing its re-absorption, and increasing its excretion, in much the same way as cholesterol-lowering drugs.

Recent research by scientists in Canada and Africa have suggested that the very low serum cholesterol levels of Masai tribes people in East Africa, who consume a diet very high in animal products, cholesterol, and saturated fat, are likely due to the consumption of saponin-rich herbs.

In conclusion

Canadian researchers also found that saponins had an inhibitory effect on growth of human carcinoma cells in culture. Saponins have a direct stimulatory effect on the immune system. For example, pretreatment of mice with saponins enhances their resistance to a disease challenge. Saponins enhance the effectiveness of oral vaccines by improving their absorption as a result of increasing gut mucosal permeability.

We have just scratched the surface in our understanding of the many biological effects of steroidal saponins and their potentials for not only improving human and animal health but also improving the health of our plants. I add yucca as the last ingredient to my foliar sprays and compost teas because

it foams. Yucca liquids are 100% water-soluble and stay in solution without agitation. They will not evaporate into the air after application.

Add yucca to your soil drenches, foliar sprays and compost teas AFTER you've added the other ingredients or your mix will foam. If you're using yucca, remember to keep the unused portion refrigerated. Do not pour any unused yucca back in the original container. Make a note to ask for yucca without preservatives. Some traditional yucca uses: anti-inflammatory, baldness, bone and joint conditions, cellular regeneration, cleansing, dandruff, detoxifying, gastrointestinal disorders, hair wash, headache, high cholesterol, high triglycerides, hygiene, hyperglycemia, shampoo, skin conditions, soap and sprains.

Yucca is also an ingredient in the popular "Burt's Bees" preparations. I buy feed supply yucca powder by Pure Desert from the local Cenex store for my pets. The label states it "is known for its anti-inflammatory effect and its ability to increase metabolism. Yucca powder is used as an aid in relieving joint and muscle pain and stiffness." I buy liquid yucca for my agricultural and personal use from Thomas Giannou at T&J Enterprises, 2328 W. Providence Avenue, Spokane, WA 99205, (509) 327-7670. Thomas has contributed to this article.

"Saponins: Surprising benefits of desert plants" Peter R. Cheeke, Ph.D. Professor of Comparative Nutrition OSU/LPI Affiliate Investigator

Peninsula Fruit Club lost two good friends

I would like to share a few thoughts about two good friends, Mark Steichen and his wife Delores. The Steichens were long-time members of Peninsula Fruit Club. We could always count on Mark to lend a hand at our grafting workshops at the local Kitsap County schools. He was forever trying to come up with new and different ways to graft fruit trees. Mark and Delores rarely missed our meetings. They both enjoyed and took pride in the different kinds of fruit they grew, working side by side. Mark and Dolores brought a good deal of their fruit to our fruit shows. We all looked forward to the goodies Delores would bring to the meetings. They will be missed.

Mike Shannon

Peninsula Fruit Club President

The Ghost of Albert Etter

Submitted by Harry Burton, performed by Vaughn Fulford

My name is Albert Etter and I'm from Humboldt County in Northern California. Anybody from that part of the world here today? No! I just want to say thanks for conjuring me back here today. I guess I can tell you a little about myself and some the things I've done over the years. I guess I must have been dead now oh what, Harry, a little over 50 years or thereabouts.

I spent all my life working in the garden. I think by the time I was 7 years old, I was already breeding dahlias at home. Then I started into strawberries. I had many varieties by the time I was about 12 years old. I grew up in Northern Humboldt County and then when I was about 17 years old, my brother and I went down on a fishing trip down south. It was there that we discovered our ranch lands. I went one day up for a hike on the fishing trip and I discovered these bench flats. They were about 6 miles from the ocean at about an altitude of 1000 feet. Beautiful Country and so I laid a claim on that land. We went into homesteading then and started ranching. My brother joined me and eventually there were 4 of us brothers, the Etter brothers that were in business together. They named the whole area after us and it's now still called Ettersberg. You can go take a look at the ranch and all the stuff that's there as well.

There was a lot of people in my family. I grew up on a dairy farm in Northern Humboldt County. Eventually all 9 brothers moved down to join us in Ettersberg. I think in the end we had just about 9000 acres that we owned down there. Our original ranch was about 500 acres and of that we had about 40 acres in apple trees that we had down there and I of course was the fellow that looked after them.

My first interest was in strawberries. That's what I did for the first part of my life. I cultivated 10 acres of strawberries. I think you'll still find many of these plants I bred back then still in use today all over the world. Then I kind of got into the apple business after that. Apples have always been a big love of mine. I came up with a lot of different varieties, I think over 30 varieties of just red-fleshed apples alone, down there in California. Here are some of them I've got with me right here today. Harry just conjured me out of the orchard. [He cuts into a Grenadine apple, showing the flesh to the crowd]. As you can see, this is a little

beauty that I called Grenadine. Isn't that something? [Crowd murmurs WOW]

We actually came up with a little crab apple back in those days, that was about 25% sugar and we were hoping that we could sort of turn that into a new champagne industry. Of course back in those days, I started getting into the apple farming more in the 1920's. Here's another one of mine called Hidden Rose. [He cuts into a Hidden Rose apple, showing the flesh to the crowd]. I think you can see why. Aren't they pretty? And they are good eating. Here's another of my red ones. . [He cuts into a Pink Pearmain apple, showing the flesh to the crowd] Isn't that pretty?

But you know at the time, it was hard to get people interested in a lot of the different apple varieties. I think in many ways, I was the wrong person at the wrong place at the wrong time. Or something like that. Maybe it was more that now is the right time for these kinds of things. I produced all those different varieties of apples and I never got really a lot of acclaim. But I certainly had a certain amount of notoriety in our region. Many of the farmers in our area used a lot of the apples that we came up with. But you know, what is it that the French say, "Plus que ca change; Plus que c'est.....something like that". Anyway you know what I mean. That's for the Canadians here.

But in those days, they were trying to simplify things. There was a couple of things. They wanted to go into mass production. But you know even back in those days, there were a lot of us saying that the wave of the future had really got to be small farms and the wave of the future has to be intensive horticulture on the small farms. A lot of people were saying that even back in those days. The other thing was diversification that we were big into back in those days. We could never get government people or scientists in those days interested in the idea of naturalization. That was a big thing for me and one thing I promoted quite a bit back in those days. For example, I took from the University of California 600 apple varieties and planted them out and came up with various varieties from them. But the trouble was, in those days, they weren't interested in developing a lot of new varieties. What they wanted to do was to specialize. The other thing they weren't interested and they didn't have much awareness of naturalization or even breeding back to old stock. We were trying to build up trees and plants that would do well out here. So what I did. I found a lot of the old species of apples. You see, all the scientists wanted us



The Ghost of Albert Etter *(continued)*

to just breed with what already existed. Put a Gravenstein with a MacIntosh or something like that and see what you come up with. But anybody who has done much apple breeding, knows that you often come up with a lot of duds. So what we did was I sent off for an old red-fleshed crab apple from the steppes of Siberia. I developed a lot of my varieties from that scion stock from Siberia. But apples weren't the only thing we were interested in. We developed strawberries, nut trees and so on and so forth. We were all about diversification and naturalization and continued to breed the apples.

In those days, they thought that apples were at a dead end. Well I think myself and a few other breeders proved them wrong. We proved to them that apples just started to come into their diversification. All you needed was a fair bit of common sense and lots of hard work. You could come up with some incredible miracles. I think we kind of showed them. Don't forget about the birds and the bees.

What else can I tell them, Harry? How did I make them pink fleshed? I had a number of pink varieties and just kept cross breeding. It was mostly through a lot of trial and error. I would plant out thousands and thousands of varieties. Many of the trees on the farm had upwards of 100 or more varieties on the same tree. I remember one of my nephews was very surprised when he went to a neighbor's farm and discovered they only had one kind of apple on each tree. Anyway, I want to say thanks for having me here today. I hope that in many ways, you'll remember me and the people who came before and after me. Remember some of the things we did and reasons we did it. All through my career, I never received a single penny for all my work.

We had a large operation. We raised apples on the ranch. We also did a fair bit of lumbering and stuff like that. My other brothers were into that. I was the horticulturist. We also built an evaporation plant and we had a cannery and a sawmill. We tried to be as self sufficient as we could be and make our livelihood from what we had. Anyway, I want to thank you for conjuring me and honoring me. I never received a lot of accolades in my life, so it was very nice to be invited here 50 years later.

The Ghost of Albert Etter portrayed by Vaughn Fulford at the 6th Annual Salt Spring Island Apple Festival, Sunday Oct 3, 2004.

Study Your Naked Trees

by Kevin Day

Good Fruit Grower, January 15, 2005

Wintertime, when fruit trees are bare, is a good time for orchardists to take inventory of their tree structure, says a University of California Cooperative Extension advisor.

Kevin Day, UCCE tree fruit advisor for Tulare County, said winter is a good time for tree fruit growers to look at limb placement and number, and the height of their trees because leaves don't clutter the view.

Though emphasis is often placed on summer pruning to develop, maintain and improve uniform light distribution within the tree canopy, he notes that dormant pruning is important as well. Much information can be gained by observing how much shadow a dormant tree casts when its leaves are gone. "You'd be surprised at how much shadow a tree will give in winter when it has no leaves," Day said, encouraging growers to look at tree structure on a sunny winter day.

In some cases, the scaffold structure of the tree will create large shadows on the orchard floor, even when there aren't any leaves. He has observed shadows cast on up to 30 to 40 percent of the orchard floor when visiting dormant soft fruit blocks. "This can translate into severe shading problems in the next season. You want the leaves to absorb the light, not the tree structure."

Scaffold shading problems are most apparent in older plum and apricot orchards, but can also occur in peach and nectarine orchards, he said. When large scaffolds are causing the shading problems, complete removal of several large secondary or tertiary scaffolds will easily fix the problem.

Benefits to removing large scaffolds include immediate improvement of light penetration to the middle and lower parts of the tree, reduction in growing points for interior watersprouts and suckers, and reduction in per tree dormant pruning requirements -- which can be good or bad depending on the season.

"It behooves growers to take some time in the orchard to do a good inventory of their tree structure because there are several benefits from doing so," he concludes. Steps taken now to improve tree structure and light distribution will benefit tree performance next season.

Notes from the Editor

by Mark Lee, BeeLine Editor

Thanks to everyone who helped put this issue together. People are starting to send me timely material to include in the newsletter. The help is greatly appreciated.

The WCFS Forum experienced some growing pains, but I think things are getting back on track. The forum is a great way for members to stay in touch, and ask for help solving fruit-related problems. From forum discussions, I was able to put together a few articles for this BeeLine that probably would not have been written otherwise. If you don't want your in-box cluttered by every post to the forum, sign-up for daily digest delivery. The posts from each day are consolidated to a single e-mail digest. If you want to participate in this way, I can help set you up. Thanks to Judi Stewart for helping out with the list administration. Want to take over my job of head list administrator? Contact me or Judi for the details.

Can't remember when it's time to renew your membership? Look on your address label.

The last issue of the BeeLine contained a Fruit Inventory form. Only 4 people have turned these in so far. If you want to participate in this project, please send in your inventory form.

No recipes in this issue. Sorry, but nothing was submitted. If you have a recipe for the summer issue, please send it in.

One last reminder. Members can advertise in the BeeLine for free. What a deal. Are you planning to sell something, or want to make an announcement? Send me a 50 word message and I will run it in the next newsletter.

I hope to see you at the Annual Spring Meeting.

Mark Lee

Where is the Salt Spring Island Form???

Our excursion to Salt Spring Island has met with an unanticipated bump. Due to new rules and regulations as a result of 9/11, the Office of Homeland Security has issued rules and regulations covering international water travel. We are prohibited from traveling to and from a Canadian port unless the port is designated a 105 facility. Neither Port Townsend nor Salt Spring Island qualifies. Harry Burton and Judi Stewart are trying to find a solution. Stay tuned.

BEELINE EDITOR

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BeeLine dates to remember:

Spring issue

submit by Feb 1, in mail by 3rd week of Feb

Summer issue

submit by May 1, in mail by 3rd week of May

Fall issue

submit by Aug 1, in mail by 3rd week of Aug

Winter issue

submit by Nov 1, in mail by 3rd week of Nov

Write, email, or phone your article, comment, suggestion, question to Mark Lee <markl@nytec.com>. All submissions welcome, some may be edited for length and spelling or grammar. Permission to copy from the BeeLine is granted with attribution.

WCFS Financial Statement

Financial Statement for the Year Ended
December 2004, Unaudited 1

Income

| | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|
| Dues..... | \$3,823.00 |
| Group Purchases 2 | 674.40 |
| Fall Fruit Show | 415.00 |
| Spring Show | 348.09 |
| Interest | 7.36 |
| Total Income | \$5,267.85 |

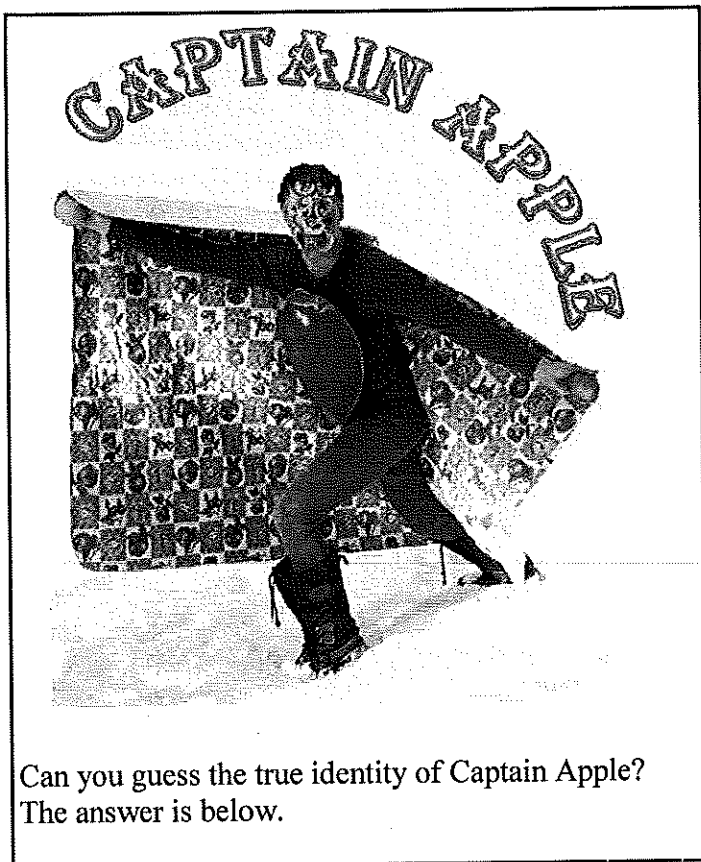
Expenses

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Donations 3 | \$2,118.61 |
| Newsletter | 2,287.20 |
| Insurance..... | 895.30 |
| NW Flower & Garden Show | 484.58 |
| Office | 217.79 |
| Advertising & Promotion..... | 98.25 |
| Spring Meeting | 80.00 |
| Bank Charge | 20.00 |
| Total Expenses | \$6,271.73 |

Net Income/(Loss) **(\$ 933.88)**

Bank Balance..... **\$3,021.73**

- 1 Any material difference between the unaudited and audited statements will be reflected in the Summer BeeLine
- 2 Rootstock/Good Fruit Grower subscriptions
- 3 Includes member donations from 2003 & 2004



Can you guess the true identity of Captain Apple?
The answer is below.

Cherry Blossom Haiku

One week every year

I forget the news and walk

Cherry blossom paths.

.... Jay J.D. Scott

桜



Answer: Harry Burton is Captain Apple

A Fruit Joke

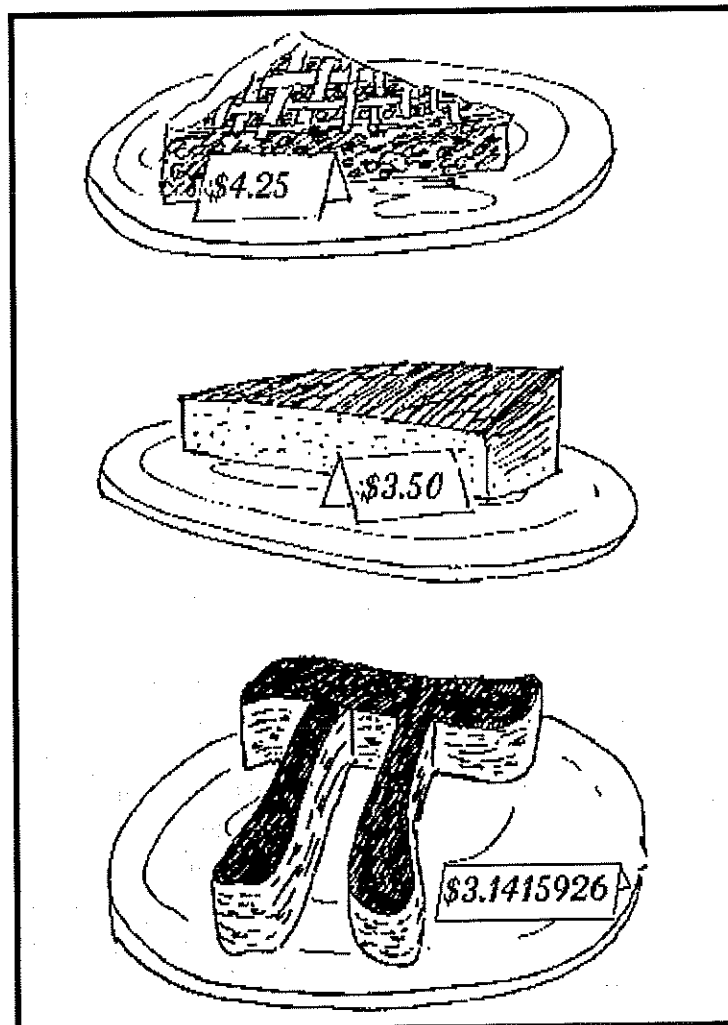
Turning 21, a boy named Ole had heard stories of an amazing family tradition on their small apple orchard near Duluth, Minnesota. It seems that his father, grandfather and great-grandfather had all been able to walk on water on their 21st birthdays to the boat club across the lake for their first legal drink (locally produced hard cider). So when Oles' 21st came around, he and his pal Sven took a boat out to the middle of the lake. Ole stepped out of the boat and nearly drowned. Sven managed to pull him to safety.

Furious and confused, Ole went to see his grandmother.

"Grandma," he asked, "it's my 21st birthday, so why can't I walk across the lake like my father, his father, and his father before him?"

Granny looked into Ole's eyes and said, "Because your father, grandfather and great-grandfather were born in January; you were born in July."

- thanks to Greg Giuliani for the joke!



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WESTERN CASCADE FRUIT SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAME _____ NEW MEMBER
 STREET _____ RENEWAL
 CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
 E-MAIL _____ PHONE () _____

CHAPTERS: (Check or circle which Chapter you're joining, with annual dues per household...)

- North Olympic Clallam Peninsula Member-at-Large..... \$20.00 Annual Dues
- Seattle Tree Fruit (includes monthly Newsletter)..... \$30.00 Annual Dues
- Tahoma \$17.00 Annual Dues
- Piper Orchard \$15.00 Annual Dues
- Donation: Western Washington Fruit Tree Research Foundation/Mt. Vernon Amount \$ _____ Gift

Member Survey  \$ _____ TOTAL

Circle each of the fruits you currently grow, or have an interest in growing:

Apples Pears Peaches Plums Cherries Kiwis Nuts Berries Other

How long have you been gardening/growing? _____

Special interests: _____



Make checks payable to **WESTERN CASCADE FRUIT SOCIETY** and mail to:
 WCFS Treasurer, 1007 NE 71st Street, Seattle WA 98115-5636

