



Spring Northwest Grafting Shows Abound!

Mar. 12, Sat. 9:00-11am Olympic Orchard Society Grafting Workshop at McComb Gardens, 751 McComb Rd, Sequim. Graft apple, pear or plum trees for nominal cost of supplies. After instruction choose from many varieties and graft them yourself, or have grafting done for you. Info: Pat Volk, 582-0807



Mar 12th, Sat – Vashon grafting workshop

Mar 13th Sun, STFS Member meeting & Hosting WCFS March meeting, 11am – Dr. Doo tour, Zoo
Location: Woodland Park Zoo, 750 N. 50th Street; Seattle, WA
Time: 9:30-4pm Education Classroom 2A **Zoo Doo Tour** Time: 1:00 – 2:00pm. See BeeLine page 7.

Mar 19, Sat. Home Orchard Society Spring Propagation Show and Scion Exchange. Take the bus with STFS for all day tour, \$35/seat. Includes Raintree Lecture. See BeeLine page 13.

Mar 26, Sat. Peninsula Fruit Club will hold its annual Spring Grafting Show on from 11 am to 5 pm at the Silverdale Community Center at 9729 Silverdale Way NW in Silverdale. <http://wcfs.org/wp-content/uploads/2011GraftingFlyerRev1.ppt>

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www.wcfs.org



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

Original and New Apple Variety scion available
Olympic Orchard Society Grafting Workshop,
Sat. Mar 12, McComb Gardens, Sequim

Description: All purpose apple, large, yellow with red stripes, with delicious flavor. It keeps well for 5-6 months in cool storage. Scion will be available in limited quantity (one per person).

Erik Simpson 683-6684

Apple Tasting

By Robert Norton

In the Winter 2011 Beeline, there was an interesting article comparing 10 apple varieties (cultivars) on Nov. 11, 2010 at the Olympic Orchard Society meeting in Sequim. The tasting was done by 24 members, 10 of whom turned in their evaluations of many characteristics e.g. appearance, color, texture, flavor, balance and overall taste. The order from best to least desirable in overall taste were Jonagold, Sundow, Fiesta, Ashmeads Kernal, Dr. Mathews, Jazz, Opalescent, Belle de Boskoop, Blue Pearmain and Thompkins King. All fruit came from members except Jazz, which came from the grocery store.

The author (Pat Volk, president) rightly concluded that "the results should not be construed..... as an endorsement of any given variety". I have conducted many apple variety tastings over the years and have concluded that it is extremely difficult to conduct a fair evaluation that might lead to a conclusion that "variety A" is superior to "variety B". All apples go through ripening stages, from immature with high acid, low sweetness to over mature fruit with lower acidity, higher sweetness and major differences in texture, juiciness and volatile flavors.

If one wants to conduct a somewhat "fair" taste test, you first need to select varieties with similar maturity using the starch- iodine test. Best if they are in the mid range, 2-3 on the 6 point scale used in Washington. Alternatively, it is best if they have a refractometer reading of 13-14 brix which is considered optimum ripeness. The ideal is to conduct at least three tastings of early, midseason, and late ripening varieties. It is also a good idea to have all the samples from the same orchard so that they have received the same growing conditions and management. This is not usually possible.

In the Olympic Orchard Society test, Jonagold could have been picked at optimum maturity, whereas King could have been slightly overmature and Belle de Boskoop under mature.

I commend the OOS for conducting their test and encourage other chapters to do so. I would hope that the starch test and soluble solids level could be included so that we could determine the relative ripeness of the samples. Your club might want to buy a refractometer and the starch-iodine kit. Rain-tree sells the refractometer for about \$100. The fruit maturity kit with the iodine solution can be obtained from Wilson Orchard Supply (800-232-1174) for \$63.70.

All for now from the apple knocker. Bob

About WCFS

Western Cascade Fruit Society (WCFS), formerly Western Cascade Tree Fruit Association (WCTFA), was founded in 1980. Its primary objective is to bring together new and experienced fruit growers who will promote the science, cultivation and pleasure of growing fruit bearing trees, vines and berry plants in the home landscape. We provide the public with the knowledge and ability to cultivate their own fruit-bearing trees, and plants. Local chapters in geographical areas of Western Washington, disseminate information through education, fruit shows, orchard tours, meetings, workshops, publications, and give financial and other support to fruit research organizations.

As a 501© (3) Non-Profit organization WCFS is Parent organization to seven affiliated Chapters. WCFS provides 501© (3) Non-Profit status to Chapters via IRS group exemption, provides liability insurance for Chapters, maintains financial records, and makes annual reports to IRS. A Board of Officers and Directors manage WCFS.

WCFS publishes a quarterly BeeLine newsletter to inform members of events, tours, articles, and reports: a Web site—<http://wcfs.org>; and, a digest forum: <http://lists.ibiblio.org/mailman/listinfo/wcfs>. Members receive automatic membership in WCFS after joining an affiliated Chapter. A portion of chapter dues go to WCFS. Please refer to <http://wcfs.org> for chapter membership and dues structure.

Dick Tilbury has suggested that each issue should contain a brief boilerplate section explaining what WCFS is, its founding date, purpose and functions. Editor welcomes your suggestions to improve this section.

Attention WCFS Members

Don't be left out in the rain.

Join your fellow orchardists and subscribe to the Forum.

This is a benefit of membership and is closed to the general public.

Simply send an email to:

<http://lists.ibiblio.org/mailman/listinfo/wcfs>

.and follow the prompts.

Judi Stewart, Forum Administrator



Apple Tasting. Pat Volk's Reply to Dr. Norton

Thank you Dr. Norton, for your constructive comments on the results from the "Formal" Fruit Tasting event that the OOS held this fall, which were forwarded to me.

I agree, more accurate tasting and comparison results between varieties would need to include your recommendations. There are also other factors that would need to be addressed to achieve statistical validity (including a bit of up front training for everyone evaluating the various categories, and larger participation). However, as you note, for a single chapter event in time, each variety will necessarily be at a different point on its consumption "quality curve". It is unrealistic for chapters to set up multiple tasting events to fix this, and picking only similar varieties to focus on in a single event (requiring a leap of faith that they will all produce) might not fit in with the larger educational goal of the event. Certainly the tools you suggest would be useful to extend our knowledge base, but do such results deserve the effort, given they are actually only valid for a given growing year and for the selected source orchards? Certainly bragging rights are fun, within limits, but more important (at least for aficionados such as chapter members) are opportunities to discover their own preferences, and to learn how to grow those preferred varieties in the conditions within his or her own orchard.

From this perspective, the discussion might best shift to the significant differences between a "Formal" tasting event like we held, and the local "traditional" tastings such as are held at Field Days and Fruit Shows. The goals and scope differ in at least the following ways:

Traditional or Informal Tasting:

- Scope: no constraints - maximize the number of varieties available for anyone to taste. No need for any attendee to sample what other attendees do. As a practical matter, this means a limited amount of information is typically provided for each variety on offer: sometimes just the variety name, sometimes additional info but rarely more than fits on a single index card or display page. It is left to each individual to research further information if desired on any given variety.

- Goals: Allow individuals to sample a large selection of varieties, ideally including any variety they might have an interest in. Provide the potential to discover one or more appealing varieties previously unknown to the attendee(s).

Formal Tasting:-Scope: limit the presentation, discussion and sampling to a pre-selected set of varieties (typically just 8 to 10). Every attendee gets to taste the same varieties with everyone else (volunteers cut samples and pass them out for evaluation in parallel with the presentation).

-Goals: In depth, learn about or at least be exposed to each variety included in the presentation. Include for each variety typical size, shape, color, texture, bloom period, pollination needs, ripening period, growing habits, vigor, tip or spur bearing, disease and pest susceptibilities, climate preferences, usages, keeping qualities, and whatever else might apply. Where available include "eye candy" visuals, human interest anecdotes and historical information that help liven up the presentation and make it more appealing.

Clearly the accuracy of the evaluation was not critical to the goals of our Formal Tasting Event, nevertheless the results are still fun and appropriate for the BeeLine, caveated as they were. Ideally, I hoped they would serve as a vehicle to get others to think about the program event described, more than the results themselves.

Other WCFS chapters can look at this type of alternative tasting event as yet another approach, equally valid, to the never ending goal of increasing our knowledge of and appreciation for different varieties. To this end I was happy that Lori had the chance to attend and observe. The approach especially allows communication of the varietal histories as well as in depth horticulture, which is not typically done at informal tastings.

P.S. A pre-selected list for such Formal Tasting obviously requires talking to potential sources in advance, and making an educated guess about what varieties are doing well and will be available at the time of the event. For someone like me, advance time is not just very beneficial, but essential to be able to do the research and create the presentation on each selected variety. Even if someone has more varietal experience, it still takes time to prepare good visuals.

Thanks again for the comments.

Pat

Expensive Errors

By Vern Nelson, *Oregonian* 2-10-2011

If you want to grow fruit, the Home Orchard Society fair can put you on the right path. The first e-mail came with an appeal for espalier information. I could feel the Portland gardener's enthusiasm and concern in every line. There is a lot to consider when designing and maintaining an espalier—that is, training a tree or shrub to grow in a flat plane against a wall or between posts, often in a symmetrical pattern. I sent him basic espalier guidelines.

When we met in my garden to discuss his project, I discovered that he had already made nearly as many mistakes as I had when I first started espaliering decades ago. His spacing was way too generous or too tight. He had mixed tree fruits such as apples, plums, pears, etc. together—the rootstocks, though all labeled “dwarf” can be very different in vigor. And he wasn't clear about bloom times for good pollination. He had purchased semi-dwarf trees, which are way too vigorous for his espalier project—some were already several feet above his trellis. He had paid nearly \$40 per tree for more than a dozen trees. He had gotten some bad information and had come to some inaccurate conclusions.

He would have to dig up and discard or adopt out all of his trees; reinstall his espaliers' supports to fit the new dwarf trees; and select varieties that would pollinate one another and be as free of pests as possible.

Fortunately for him, the Home Orchard Society's annual fruit propagation fair is not far off. Carolyn Blackmore of the HOS says, “This annual event offers cuttings (scions) of hundred of varieties of fruit including apples, pears, plums, peaches, cherries, grapes and figs. Many are heirloom or rare. Cuttings are free with the price of admission. Dwarf rootstock is available at nominal cost. HOS experts will show you how to graft your selections! You can find a scion at the fair, take it to the people selling rootstock and have it grafted there for \$8-\$12 (including the price of the rootstock).”

HOS Annual Fruit Propagation Fair

11am-5pm Sat., March 19

Clackamas County Fairgrounds, Canby, OR

Admission: \$4 per person or \$8 per family for HOS members. Nonmembers \$6 per person or \$10 per family.

A Fungus is Attacking Mason Bees

By Hildegard Hendrickson, STFS

In addition to mites, there is now a fungus attacking mason bee larvae. When you clean your mason bee “condos” you will find some dead mason bee larvae. The larvae were killed by the Chalkbrood Disease which is caused by a fungus: *Ascospharera apis*, which attacks many insect species in the larval stage. Most of the Research has been done with honey bees, to find out how to prevent the disease.

Typically, larvae dead from chalkbrood disease are chalk-like white. Sometimes they can be mottled with brown or black spots. The color variation is from the brown to black color of the fungal fruiting bodies. Infected or dead larvae harden and are referred to as “mummies,” Chalkbrood “mummies” once dry, are loose in the cell.

The transmission proceeds as follows: Fungal spores are attached to the pollen, which the mason bee encloses in the cell in which she lays the egg. The larvae eat the fungal spores with the pollen. Inside the gut of the larva, the fungal spores germinate and kill the larva. The spores form hyphae (the vegetative body of fungi) and develop white Fungal mycelium (white threads which wrap around the larva) and later grow fruiting bodies (the fungus) which produce more (black) spores.

Spores of the *A. apis* can remain viable for 15 years. Chalkbrood appears to be most prevalent in the spring when the weather is cool and wet. To prevent infections in following years, you should clean and disinfect your mason bee “condos.”

There is no treatment for preventing Chalkbrood disease for mason bees. Research is concentrating on curing infections in honey bee hives.

Sources: The role of pollen in chalkbrood disease in *Apis mellifera*: transmission and predisposing conditions

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Orchard Doings~ Winter 2011

By Bob Norton, Feb. Urban Signpost, STFS

Bob Norton is contributing a monthly calendar (column) to the Urban Signpost, STFS, partly to remind himself and others of activities that could make the difference between failure and success in the fruit garden.

WINTER PRUNING: Now's the time to start. Here at home I concentrate on apples, looking at fruit bud set. If there are many plump fruit buds and closely spaced spurs, then prune more heavily, sometimes removing entire spurs that grow straight up or straight down. Cut back into 2-year wood to stiffen branches. Also remove crossing or competing branches to allow better light exposure. Try to make it to some local winter pruning events to sharpen your pruning skills and learn some new ones.

Our Vashon chapter had one at Dan Carlson's last week; it was attended by at least 40 people! We had some experienced orchardists teaching and lots of new students. As to pruning other fruits, except for training cuts (narrow crotches, branches competing with the leader), I tend to wait until after fruit set on peaches, apricots, and plums to make sure I have a crop. Cherries get whacked right after harvest or sooner if there is no crop. Grapes, blackberries, raspberries, any time. A final word, (apples)—watch for anthracnose when pruning. Cut it out, burn it out and decontaminate your tools.

PEST CONTROL: Stone Fruits- peaches and nectarines. It's critical to spray for leaf curl (unless you cover the entire plant to keep the rain off) in early January, repeated every 2 weeks for a total of 3 sprays for best control. This last year even that wasn't enough. Use fixed copper (Microcop) with Sta-Stuk or lime-sulfur with or without oil. On pome fruits such as apples and pears, a dormant spray of lime-sulfur and oil is beneficial in early Feb for anthracnose, mildew and scab. More specifics at the Jan 18 meeting. If you have had pear blister mite (spots or little scales on the leaves) the oil spray can take care of this problem. Cherries-- last year due to the rainy spring and my neglect, I lost almost all my cherry crop from brown rot (*Monilinia fruticola*). This year I am going to be more aggressive with my spray program both for this disease and the critters like cherry fruit fly and the spotted wing *Dryosiphila*. More on this later. Right now I'll concentrate on cleaning up debris.

PLANNING THE NEW ORCHARD: January is the perfect time to plan your new orchard. Do you have our handout, "Fruit Varieties for Vashon Island"? If not, get one at the next meeting. I would avoid those apple varieties that are highly susceptible to apple scab (Mutsu, Braeburn, Fuji, Gravenstein). There are resistant varieties available now that will please the taste buds for fresh eating and others that will make a great pie or sauce. Sources: Cathy's Nursery usually doesn't carry much of a selection of fruit trees but it doesn't hurt to check. Our club will offer some trees this spring and more in the fall. Mary Orsted has a list of what's available. Hartman's in Puyallup can supply 1, 2, and 3 year old trees, freshly dug. Mail-order nurseries, such as Burnt Ridge (Morton), Cloud Mountain (Everson), Raintree (Morton), or One Green World (Oregon) are your next possible sources. Although I am not recommending them, I have seen some nice bagged fruit trees at Costco (they are produced by a very good nursery in eastern WA, Willow Drive). As for small fruits, if you can't find them locally, check out Sakuma Market Stand (360-757-6611) and ask for their catalog. I have about 13 strawberry varieties from Sakuma .

* * * * *

Tip of the Month from M. Couture:

- Get the Weeds:

1. Before they Sprout

Use a pre-emergent or film, fabric, or biodegradable mulch.

2. While they're Small

Use organic herbicides or weed flame torches.

3. Before they Seed

Manual weeding doesn't have to be hard with long reach tools!

Maine Town Passes Landmark Local Food Ordinance

Submitted by Judi Stewart, NOFC

SEDGWICK, MAINE - On Saturday, March 5, residents of a small coastal town in Maine voted unanimously to adopt the Local Food and Self-Governance Ordinance, setting a precedent for other towns looking to preserve small-scale farming and food processing. Sedgwick, located on the Blue Hill Peninsula in Western Hancock County, became the first town in Maine, and perhaps the nation, to exempt direct farm sales from state and federal licensing and inspection. The ordinance also exempts foods made in the home kitchen, similar to the Michigan Cottage Food Law passed last year, but without caps on gross sales or restrictions on types of exempt foods.

Local farmer Bob St.Peter noted the importance of this ordinance for beginning farmers and cottage producers. "This ordinance creates favorable conditions for beginning farmers and cottage-scale food processors to try out new products, and to make the most of each season's bounty," said St.Peter. "My family is already working on some ideas we can do from home to help pay the bills and get our farm going."

St.Peter, who serves on the board of the National Family Farm Coalition based in Washington, DC, sees this as a model ordinance for economic development in rural areas. "It's tough making a go of it in rural America," said St.Peter. "Rural working people have always had to do a little of this and a little of that to make ends meet. But up until the last couple generations, we didn't need a special license or new facility each time we wanted to sell something to our neighbors. Small farmers and producers have been getting squeezed out in the name of food safety, yet it's the industrial food that is causing food borne illness, not us."

Three other towns in Western Hancock County will be voting on the ordinance at or ahead of their town meetings in the coming weeks. Penobscot, Brooksville, and Blue Hill all have the ordinance on their warrants.

Click here to view a copy of the Local Food and Self-Governance Ordinance of 2011.

<http://savingseeds.files.wordpress.com/2011/03/localfoodlocalrules-ordinance-template.pdf>

Legislation would ease restrictions on product sales by small processors

Submitted by Judi Stewart, NOFC

A bill to define "cottage food operations" was changed after a small-business owner offered her input to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Rural Economic Development.

Sen. Phil Rockefeller, D-Bainbridge Island, primary sponsor of Senate Bill 5748, said the Washington measure was modeled after Michigan legislation, which allows residents to sell food prepared in their own homes -- rather than in a commercial kitchen -- directly to consumers.

Felicia Hill, who said she's a stay-at-home mom, operates FH Cakes in Vancouver, Wash. "I'm required to rent a commercial kitchen, which is not easy, and I'm forced to put my children in daycare," she told legislators. If SB5748 is enacted, she said, "I will be able to provide an income for my family and care for my two children." However, the \$5,000 limit on annual sales would make it difficult to be profitable, she said. She urged the senators to amend that number to \$15,000, which is what is stated in the Michigan legislation.

Before the hearing on the bill ended, the senators made that change, approved the bill unanimously and sent it on to the Rules Committee.

David Gifford, of the state's Department of Health, said his agency is concerned the bill could increase foodborne illnesses. Commercial kitchens in schools and churches are inexpensive alternatives available for food preparation.

Under the bill, cottage food operations are exempt from license fees, but are required to pay a \$10 annual registration fee.

The bill limits cottage food products to foods that are not potentially hazardous, as defined in the food code. Examples include jams, jellies, dried fruit, candy, cereal, granola, dry mixes, vinegar, dried herbs and baked goods that do not require temperature control for safety. Cottage foods do not include meat and poultry products, salsa, milk products, bottled water and other beverages and home-produced ice products.

-- [Steve Brown](#)

Capitol Press, Feb. 24, 2011



SIGN UP NOW - REGISTER BY MARCH 15
AND SAVE

March 30, 2011, 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM

Western Washington

Wine Grape Growers Workshop

WorWorkshopWoshop

WSU Mount Vernon NWREC

[Agenda](#) and [Registration Form](#)

Meet the WSU Viticulture & Enology Program Director, **Dr. Thomas Henick-Kling**, and the new WSU State-wide Viticulture Specialist, **Dr. Michelle Moyer**

Review the 2010 Production Season - Discuss pest and management issues that are significant in western Washington, including Powdery Mildew, Botrytis, Yellow Jackets and Proper Spray Technologies,

Taste and Evaluate New Varieties - Get information on new grape varieties that may be suitable for western Washington and evaluate wines made from these grapes in established regions in the world.

Early registration by March 15, 2011 - \$85
(includes catered box lunch and wine tasting)

Late registration March 16–March 25, 2011 -

\$100 (includes wine tasting, NO lunch)

To register, go to: <http://maritimefruit.wsu.edu/calendar/details.asp?event=2280>

WCFS

WCFS Annual Meeting Sunday, March 13, 11:00am.

STFS is pleased to host the annual meeting for WCFS in conjunction with the STFS meeting at the Woodland Park Zoo. WCFS members entry fee is covered by STFS - but not other people accompanying you. Please tell the gate attendant that you are attending the STFS Zoo Doo Event and you will be admitted for no charge.

Location: Woodland Park Zoo, 750 N. 50th Street, Seattle, WA 98103-6062

Time: 9:30-4pm Education Classroom 2A

9:30am – 10:30 am **STFS Meeting Time**

10:30-11:00 **Refreshments**

11:00am to 12:45pm **WCFS Spring Quarterly Meeting Time**

1:00 – 2:00pm **Zoo Doo Tour Time.** Meet at Education Class room at 12:45. Dr Doo will give us a tour of the compost facility.

2:00-3:45pm **FOPO Meeting Time:** Out of Classroom at 4:00pm

Parking: \$5.25/day use in lot, near bus lines

Enter: Zoo Entrance: STFS members, WCFS meeting attendees, and FOPO meeting attendees free.

Driving Directions: Take I-5 to N.E. 50th Street (Exit #169). Go west 1.3 miles to the South Entrance at N. 50th Street and Fremont Ave. North.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call me on my cell (206)715-4149. Lori

The Spring 2011 BeeLine was produced by Editor Marilyn Couture, with input from membership.

Please contribute
your articles for our next Spring issue!

Issue Deadlines:

Winter December 15; Spring February 15; Summer May 15; Fall August 15

Email your articles to:

Marilyn Couture: couture222@msn.com

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He Keeps Ancient Apples Fresh and Crisp Ann Raver, NY Times 3-2-11

ON a recent cold sunny morning, Creighton Lee Calhoun Jr. stood in his orchard, surrounded by 300 heirloom apple trees, and took some cuttings, or scions, to graft onto rootstock for new trees. “You have to have new growth, something that grew last summer,” said Mr. Calhoun, a retired Army lieutenant colonel, pointing out the smooth reddish bark of a young shoot on an old West Virginia variety named Jugg. He snipped it off with his sharp Felco pruners, cut the supple branch into 10-inch lengths (each with a few buds) and wrapped them with masking tape in a bundle marked “Jugg.”

“Old-timers would bury them under the leaves on the north side of the house,” said Mr. Calhoun, 77. “But I put mine in a plastic bag in the refrigerator.” When the danger of a hard freeze is past, these scions can be grafted onto young rootstock. The practice is lost to most Americans, who think an apple is a Red Delicious, which tastes like white sugar, or a Granny Smith, often picked too green and stored so long it tastes like the bottom of the refrigerator drawer.

Mr. Calhoun is the author of a recently revised compendium of 1,800 antique apple varieties, called “Old Southern Apples.” He is also one of a cadre of collectors across the country who are passing on their own rare apples, through scions and grafted trees, to younger men and women starting nurseries or preservation orchards in the backyard.

He has given his collection to young growers like David C. Vernon, who now sells more than 400 heirloom apple varieties at [Century Farm Orchards](#), in Reidsville, N.C., a farm that has been in his family since 1872. Mr. Calhoun has also planted 800 trees — two of each in his collection — at [Horne Creek Living Historical Farm](#) in Pinnacle, N.C., north of Winston-Salem. Visitors can now see the difference between a semi-dwarf, free-standing tree and a dwarf tree of the same variety, espaliered or trained against wires.

Mr. Calhoun’s orchard once held all 456 of the varieties he has wrested from near-extinction over the last 30 years. But recently, he has scaled it back to 300, replacing most trees with dwarfs, planted in rows and espaliered against wires. He prunes each one to a main branch, or oblique cordon, bent at a 45-degree angle. Bending branches increases carbohydrates in the buds, which causes them to flower and fruit more productively. These dwarfs, planted two feet apart, grow to about eight feet, a good height for Mr. Calhoun, who doesn’t want to deal with ladders in his 80s.

After World War II, salesmen from nurseries like [Stark Brothers](#) began calling on farmers, who took a good look at their color catalogs and decided it would be easier to order trees than graft them from their own old-time varieties.

Nurseries also realized they could make more money “selling six varieties, rather than 60,” said Tom Burford, 75, an apple historian in Virginia. Mr. Burford, who grew up with more than 100 varieties on his family’s former plantation near Lynchburg, once sold more than 500 kinds of apples through his family nursery, Burford Brothers, in Monroe. When he closed it in 1994, he essentially gave his collection of more than 200 heirloom apple varieties to Charlotte Shelton, whose family runs [Vintage Virginia Apples](#) in North Garden, Va.

“The whole culture of the apple disappeared with Madison Avenue advertising,” Mr. Burford said, “when we started eating with our eyes instead of our mouths.”

Now, according to [Renewing America’s Food Traditions](#), or RAFT, a national alliance of [local food](#) advocates, farmers and preservationists, the American apple has plummeted from a rich diversity of 16,000 varieties in the late 1800s to about 3,000. And the few nurseries that offer those rare apples are fast disappearing.



Ancient Apples cont.



Mr. Calhoun plants the trees quite close together and keeps them pruned at a 45-degree angle, which triggers more flower and fruit production.

The consumer sees only about a dozen apples in the supermarket, and Red Delicious constitutes 41 percent of all apples sold. The disappearance of these apples represents not only a loss of delightfully different flavors and textures, but genetic diversity, and is something Mr. Calhoun has spent a good part of his life trying to prevent.

“I went around in my car and when I’d spot an apple tree in a yard or out in a pasture or behind the barn, I’d stop and ask them about it. His first find, in 1982, was Magnum Bonum, a juicy, crisp dark red apple that ripens in September. Most of the apples, in fact, came with a story: Aunt Rachel, a great sauce apple, hails from Chatham County. “I’ve never found any written record about that apple,” Mr. Calhoun said. “It was found in this county and passed around, almost certainly by digging up root sprouts and giving them to relatives and friends.” And every apple had a particular use. Some, like Blacktwig and Magnum Bonum, are good eating apples, fresh off the tree. Blacktwig was grown from a Winesap seed, in Arkansas or Tennessee, so it’s got that Winesap twang to it,” Mr. Calhoun said. “But it’s a little bit sweeter, a little crisper, a little bit bigger, a little redder.” It’s also a good keeper. Others, like Early Strawberry, which ripens in late June, make a fabulous tart applesauce. Smokehouse, which ripens in August, has enough acid in it to make a quality pie.

Still others, like Arkansas Black, aren’t worth eating until they’ve been stored for a few months. “Nobody a hundred years ago would have attempted to eat an Arkansas Black off the tree — they knew better,” Mr. Calhoun said. “It’s hard as a rock. They put them in a sack in the cellar and pulled them out after Christmas.”

Once Mr. Calhoun got into collecting, the hunt itself drove him on, and he started writing letters to local newspapers and articles for rural magazines. Carter’s Blue, a juicy aromatic apple from Alabama with a bluish-gray tinge to the fruit and the leaves, was thought to be extinct until an apple lover in Oregon read an article Mr. Calhoun had written, listing his 10 most-wanted apples. The man sent him a letter, saying he had seen Carter’s Blue growing at the [National Fruit Collection](#) in Kent, England. Mr. Calhoun got permission to have scions shipped to this country, to graft trees for his growing collection.

The Cullasaga, originating from a seedling tree the Cherokee grew in their orchards, surfaced in a letter from a man in Macon County, Ga., who said his neighbors had an old, decayed tree with only a few live limbs left. Collecting twigs enabled 30 to 40 new Cullasaga trees. The old tree they came from is dead.

And as climate change brings warmer springs to Northern apple trees, reducing the number of cold days that apples need to set bud and flower and fruit, Mr. Calhoun pointed out, nurseries may need to replace them with Southern varieties that can take more heat and set fruit with fewer chill hours. “I do think that heat-tolerant apples would be useful to plant breeders, if for nothing else,” he said. One example is Shell, an old variety named after Green Shell, the man who grew it in southern Alabama. It is a good eating apple, with the sweet-tart balance that most people prefer. This heat-tolerant heirloom might do well in Pennsylvania or New York.

Ancient apples cont.

The Calhouns in their search for old catalogs and books about apples, discovered the [National Agricultural Library](#), in Beltsville, Md., which has a little-known collection of 3,500 watercolors of apples and about 100,000 old nursery catalogs, arranged by year, in dusty cardboard boxes. Within this collection, they found hundreds of catalogs that listed old apples and when and where they were sold, and sometimes their origins. All this knowledge called out for a book, so Mr. Calhoun began to write one, longhand, with Edith typing the pages.

“Old Southern Apples,” published by McDonald & Woodward in 1995, listed 1,800 varieties, only 500 of which were known to still exist. Illustrated with hundreds of color prints from the federal Department of Agriculture [Pomological Watercolor Collection](#), it was filled with the stories of these old apples, as well as clear descriptions, histories and uses. The book was out of print for years until January, when Chelsea Green published a [revised edition](#) that includes 200 additional varieties, discovered after the first edition was published.



Cherry Trial participants, please spray your trees now with basic horticultural oil. Follow the label directions. Do not use lime sulfur. And apply an organic mulch approximately 4” deep to beyond the drip line. Remember to keep the mulch away from the trunk. Judi Stewart NOFC

Salt Spring Island Festival

Sunday Oct 2

STFS Tour with Lori Brakken

Date: Over-night in Pt Townsend area Oct 1st, then all day Oct 2nd

Time: pre-dawn boat ride, festival and island activities all day, sunset boat trip back

Location: Boat leaves Port Townsend to Salt Spring Island and back

Reservations: Must be confirmed by mid-May, for now we are taking a count of who is interested

Number of seats available: **25 only**

Cost: **\$175** for Festival ticket, lunch, transportation on island, boat trip, & customs charges

Over-night accommodations recommended in the Pt Townsend area.

You must have a valid up-to-date US passport.

If you are interested contact Lori right away (206)715-4149 lorineb@mindspring.com

Harry and Debbie Burton play host to the island’s most celebrated festivity. Take the trip that others in WCFS rave about. Or revisit this island paradise once more because it’s definitely worth repeating. This is an all day adventure and a wonderful opportunity. It’s not only fun, it’s also magic. Salt Spring Island can only be reached by boat or plane.

We’ll be met at the Salt Spring dock by Harry Burton’s posse of capable chauffeurs. You’ll be given a Festival ticket with a list of orchards and tour stops and a map of the island showing the locations of host farms, a description of what each host has to offer and off-the-beaten-path island sights. Let your driver escort know which organic orchard you’d like to visit and off you go by private car. Make sure to stop at Fulford Hall for a slice of apple pie and to examine the apple table pictured to the right. The island creamery is also a must see. A stop for lunch and then it’s off to more orchards and perhaps a vineyard visit and a sip of island wine.

The price **\$175** per person includes the round trip boat excursion, morning coffee and cake, admission to the Festival, snacks, escorted island transportation and a full delicious lunch. As you can see, the increased price of fuel is reflected in the price.

**COOKING WITH CARLYN**

By Carlyn Syvanen, OOS

Combining Meat with Fruit

I have been interested in using fruit in savory dishes. The first fresh fruit of the season will be rhubarb. I have made the Iranian rhubarb and beef sauce many times. We also buy half a pig from Nash, the big organic farmer on the Olympic Peninsula, so I am always trying to work out recipes for pork dishes. In the Spring 2007 issue of the BeeLine, I published a Curried Ham and Apple pie recipe submitted by Lisa Whitley of the Seattle Tree Fruit Society. I have used this many times changing it to meet my family's taste.

Try cooking meat with fruit and share your recipes with us.

Rhubarb Sauce

4 T butter
1 lb stew beef (cut in 1" cubes)
1 large onion (finely chopped)
1 t salt
½ t pepper
½ t cinnamon
¼ t nutmeg
1 c parsley (chopped)
2 c water
1 lb rhubarb

Melt butter in a 2 quart pot. Add meat, onions, and seasoning and sauté until meat is browned. Add chopped parsley and sauté a little bit more. Add water to the meat and simmer on low for about an hour. Cut the rhubarb in 3" slices and add it to the meat sauce. Let simmer for about 5 more minutes. Serve over rice.

Pork Steak with Apple and Onion

1 large onion
2 medium apples
4 pork steaks

Place a layer of thinly sliced onion on the bottom of a baking dish. Add a layer of apple slices. Lightly salt and pepper the pork and place on the apple slices. Top with another layer of onions and apples. Cover and bake at 350 degrees for an hour and a half. The meat will be falling off the bones. The sauce is good over potatoes or rice.

Curried Ham and Apple Pie

3 T butter
1 large onion, chopped
4 shallots, minced
¼ c flour
¼ c butter
½ c apple juice
1 c. hard apple cider
2 T curry powder
1 t ground ginger
Pinch ground nutmeg
¼ t ground cloves
½ lb ham, cubed
4 large tart apples, peeled, cored, and thinly sliced
Single pie crust

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees

Melt the 3 T butter in a heavy skillet and sauté the onions and shallots until soft. Remove to a large mixing bowl.

Add the ¼ c. butter to the warm pan, melt and add flour and brown for about 4 minutes, slowly whisk in the cider and apple juice to deglaze the pan. Stir in the spices. Spoon over the onion/shallot mixture. Toss in the apples and the ham and mix well, Spoon the mix into a 7 by 11 baking dish and top with the pie crust.

Bake at 425 for 15 minutes, then reduce heat to 350 and bake about 45-50 minutes more.

**Cider-Brined Pork Tenderloin with
Rhubarb Deglazing Sauce**

Seattle Tree Fruit Society

President's Message, Lori Brakken

I love grafting season! I like the smell of dirt and wood. The future production of new fruit varieties in the garden tingles my taste buds. I become unable to toss those last little pieces of scion wood because they could make a tree if I saved them. Kind of like avocado pits, I have convinced myself that I don't have to save every one and grow them. Side tracking here - my grandfather converted old chicken houses into greenhouses, sprouting avocado pits and grafting them to plant the ranch my uncle owned above Santa Barbara. I have images of chicken houses full of avocado pits sprouting in my brain from those days and it's still hard to let go of one to the compost bucket. So, back to grafting, where do I plant all these new starts? I have about 30 from last year and I'll have more this year. I am planning more espalier around my slope and that is how I will handle it. When I reach the edge of my small garden, I will need more land – so that I may graft each season. It's almost an addiction and quite satisfying.

Speaking of satisfying – our Grafting Workshop on Feb 12th was very rewarding. Thank you everyone who helped gather scion wood and rootstock, set up, teach, video tape the proceedings, brought food for the potluck (yum!), and cleaned up. The room was a-buzz at the Cedar Valley Grange, with ~ 40 people grafting and happy learning new skills. I was so proud that all the scion wood has gone on to both the WWFRF and STFS grafting events. The diversity and quantity that was brought in was impressive also because we have had a challenge in figuring out who has what varieties of trees.

I want all WCFS members to know that you are invited to join the STFS events and trips. I look forward to meeting anyone that can make it to the events. The more, the merrier.

We still need more people for the HOS Bus trip on March 19th to Canby, OR. This is the largest collection of scion wood at an event that I have seen. You must see it but beware, like myself, you might get hooked on grafting. We will be making a stop along the Interstate 5 in Tacoma to accommodate the peninsula dwellers. I hope you can come. Call me (206)715-4149 to reserve a seat at \$35.

STFS is hosting WCFS's Annual meeting at our Sunday, March 13th meeting at Woodland Park. A reminder here - it is the first day of Daylight Savings Time. We've arranged for a tour of the zoo doo composting facility too. It should be great fun.

April 2nd we are touring 3 Bremerton area gardens with the VIFC & SSFS. We'll see the espaliered fruit trees of John Meyers, Mike Shannon, and Jean Williams.

Our April 11th meeting will be 6pm-9pm at the Center for Urban Horticulture in the Issacson classroom, with the topic 'Anthracnose'. It is during the Master Gardner clinic and we will tour the UW Botanic Garden Library there.

On April 12th, Tuesday, I am working out a trip to the homestead orchard at San Juan Island National Historical Park (Sandwith Orchard). We hope to have a tour of the orchard and a lecture presentation that evening. It will be an all day event by ferry. Details are being finalized. Let me know if you want to go.

May 14th, STFS will be an all day Spring Lectures event at Magnusson Orchard/Sandpoint.

Summer Garden tours; Fall meeting Sept. 24 in Piper Orchard; Oct. 2 Salt Spring Island Apple Festival; Fall Fruit Show Oct. 23 at the Cedar Valley Grange—All WCFS members are invited and encouraged to join these events and trips. We'll learn and do more if we share in these things.

Call me anytime, Lori (206) 715-4149 Email: seattletreefruitsociety@hotmail.com
Website: <http://www.seattletreefruitsociety.com/calendar>



STFS Bus to HOS Fruit Prop. Fair -

Mar 19 Biggest Western Scion Exchange!

Clackamas County Fairgrounds, Canby.

March 19, Sat. all Day \$35 bus seat. Reserve now.

Call Lori (206)715-4149.

Stop at Raintree Lecture in Onalaska and hear Sam Benowitz's lecture on "Choose the Best Cultivars:."

Tentative Schedule:

6am Aurora Village Transit Center bus stop, 1524 N. 200th St., Shoreline.

6:45am Tukwila P&R 13445 Interurban Ave. S.

Tacoma pickup

8:45am-10am Onalaska 711 Quincy St. Raintree event

12-3 HOS Fruit Propagation Fair (Scion Exchange)

6:30 Tukwila P&R

7:00 Aurora Village Transit Center bus stop.

Reserve your seat now. We need to know if we have enough interested to rent the bus. \$35/bus seat.

HOS event entry fees

Entrance: Members: Adults \$4, Family \$8, Non-members: Adults \$6, Family \$10 or—Become a member at the show, and get in free! Students, senior and family rates.

WSU Workshops

WSU Snohomish County Extension presents a grafting workshop on Westside fruit tree care.

April 16—Grafting

Workshop includes box lunch, Ed's Apples, 13420 339th Ave SE in Sultan just off SR 2.

C-360.794.6081

W-425.357.6024

khalstead@wsu.edu

WCFS OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President	Mark Youngs markyoungs@comcast.net
Vice President	Ron Weston ronweston09@comcast.net
Secretary	Jeb Thurow cjthurow@hotmail.com
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2011	Bill Horn hornbill66@msn.com Del Simpson orchards@olypen.com Jerry Gehrke bercogehrke@comcast.net
2012	Jean Williams fhe@hurricane.net Loretta Murphy lojodc@yahoo.com
2013	Erik Simpson orchards@olypen.com Steve Vause svause@teleport.com Judi Stewart js@olympus.net

Chapter Presidents

Olympic Orchard	Pat Volk patvolk@hotmail.com
North Olympic	Judi Stewart js@olympus.net
Peninsula	Sally Loree SAL@wavecable.com
Seattle Tree Fruit	Lorine Brakken seattletreefruitsociety@hotmail.com
South Sound	Phil Vogel, dcd Dec. 26, 2010
Tahoma	Henri Carnay hcarnay@comcast.net
Vashon Island	Elizabeth Vogt eavogt@comcast.net

Tahoma Chapter News

Just who is this craft beverage manufacturer from Enumclaw?!?

The Tahoma Chapter just HAD to find out!!!!

On February 3, 2011 they invited Wade Bennett of the Rockridge Orchards & Cidery to share information about his 20-year business. Stationed at the foot of Mt. Rainier, and located on 90% volcanic ash soil, Rockridge offers a unique blend of exotic fruits and craft hard and soft ciders. Chapter members were eager to learn more about this operation and we weren't disappointed.

We learned that basically, the best hard ciders are mixes:
25% aromatics (e.g. Melrose and Haralson),
25% astringents (e.g. English or French cider apples),
and
50%...everything else!!
As Wade puts it " just blend them until you're happy."

We were delighted to see 3 one-half gallon jugs of cider being lugged in: Honey Crisp, Country, and Spiced for us to taste. Berry cider (6.5% alcohol) was also available.
What a treat!

Our guest speaker has invited all WCFS members and their guests to visit Rockridge and taste hard ciders and wine. Private or group tours of his 12,000 tree orchard, cidery and distillery are by appointment. We all thanked Wade for sharing his expertise; that's what the WCFS is all about!

-Chuck Polance,
Tahoma Chapter



Chapter News

Olympic Orchard Chapter News

OOS activities included a comprehensive rootstock review by Erik Simpson in January. A very well attended Pruning Workshop was held in early February. Chris Austin first presented pruning principles and guidelines in a classroom, then about half the attendees braved the chill and rain as he demonstrated real world pruning in an orchard volunteered by OOS members Lora and Tom Truitt.

Feb 25 to 27 the OOS set up and manned a booth at the KONP Home Show in Port Angeles. As a non-profit we were unexpectedly offered the normally costly booth for no charge. In this venue many from the general public were introduced to OOS and WCFS activities and charter for the first time. A big thanks to OOS members who volunteered to make this impromptu event a success: Jackie Baker, LeRoy Beers (pictured demonstrating a graft), Jerry and Sue Carpenter, Marilyn Couture, Jim Mraz, Erik Simpson, Carlyn Syvanen, Steve Vause, and Pat and Jan Volk.

In March we have just started grafting trees for our Fall sale, and will soon hold our regular Grafting Workshop / Scion Exchange and High School Grafting Programs. In April we plan to hold a plant and seed exchange.

Pat Volk, President OOS Chapter