



# THE BUGLE



## BLACK HILLS DISTRICT OF WASHINGTON STATE FEDERATION OF GARDEN CLUBS

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**Volume XXVIII, Issue 2**

**Summer, 2026**

### ***DIRECTORS' MESSAGE – Debbie Spiller***

**Happy Summer my fellow gardeners!** I've just returned from our WSFGC Annual Summer Meeting/Convention in Leavenworth, WA. It was wonderful to see so many familiar faces from around our state. It is great to converse with other WSFGC members and hear what they are doing in their clubs and districts.

I was very happy to report on our district funded "Plant Red, White and Blue Flowers". Our Spring Black Hills Board meeting had us voting to gift each club \$100 of District funds to put in action the NGC's request that we all plant Red, White and Blue flowers at our Blue and Gold Star Markers in honor of the USA's 250th Birthday. We defined the gift as: plant at Blue and Gold Stars, Community and Civic Gardens, and beautifying your neighborhood and garden. The checks were given to the clubs at our April General Meeting.



I can happily report:

- **The Black Hills Flower Designers Club** planted R W & B at the entrance garden to the Thurston County Fairgrounds where we hold our District meetings and the fair that includes our Flower Show.
- **The Friendly Flowers Club** planted at the Lacey Civic Plaza, which contains a Gold Star Marker, Blue Star Memorial Bi Way and Flag Pavilion.
- **The Friendly Neighbors Club** are planting at the Floral Building at the Lewis County Fairgrounds, which is the Southwest Washington Fair.
- **The Illahee Garden Club** has planted at Illahee Roadside Park, at the Blue Star Marker they maintain.
- **Kelso Garden Club** has planted at their Gold and Blue Star Markers in their wonderful Tam O'Shanter Park.
- **The Olympia Club** has used their funds to plant R W B at the new Gold Star Marker that they are installing at Squaxin Park.

I hope one and all plan to participate in the upcoming Thurston County Fair Flower Show "Wings of Glory" a patriotic flower show. Entries for the Fair are to be brought to the fair Expo Building Tuesday July 28 between 3:00pm and 7:00pm and Judged Wednesday July 29th. The Fair is open Thursday July 30th

through Sunday Aug 2nd. Chairmen are seeking hostesses & volunteers and Consultants await advanced entries. What are you doing for the fair? Please say “yes” when you are asked to help. Last spring, JoAnne Sandell and I learned that no reservations had been made for our District Meetings and ongoing use of the Heritage Hall at the Thurston County Fairgrounds. Our April meeting was held a week behind our normal date, and our Fall District General Meeting and Flower Show will be held September 18th, the only date available.

**PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR SEPTEMBER 18TH, 2026 FOR THE FALL BLACK HILLS DISTRICT GENERAL MEETING AND FLOWER SHOW!**

Our meeting date being changed to almost a month earlier presents its own problems and some pluses. Negatively, some clubs may not even have held a regular meeting prior to the District Meeting. We must plan and organize this meeting and flower show now to ensure that all tasks are completed.

*I believe the September 18th Flower Show Schedule for “Purple Mountain Majesties” will be included in this edition of the “Black Hills Bugle” as well at the Thurston County Fair Flower Show “Wings of Glory”. Yikes! Let’s all be careful and record the jobs we agree to do and the entries we plan to enter.*

On the plus side, holding our Black Hills Fall Flower Show a month earlier should ensure us a bountiful display of horticulture! Many times, I know my Dahlias have frozen by our usual mid-October date. The September 18th date may even have some annuals alive to enter.

I want to thank all of you, our members, for adapting to this unforeseen schedule change. What’s that phrase about Lemons and Lemonade? But alas we are gardeners and used to making adaptations.

## *DATES TO REMEMBER!*

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**Monday, August 31st – 10:00AM BH District Board Meeting – Tumwater Library, 7023 New Market Street Tumwater.**

**Officers, Club Presidents and committee chairman are encouraged to attend.  
*We’ll probably have lunch at a local restaurant afterwards.***

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## **September 18th – Black Hills District Meeting**

Our District General Meeting (Heritage Hall) starts at 10:00am and ends at approximately 2:00pm. Flower show entries are from 8:00 am to 9:30 am with pick up no sooner than 2:00pm.

Breakfast, snacks and drinks will be provided by the Friendly Flowers club as well as the luncheon at noon. Cost for lunch and 2 presentations is \$20.00.

**Lunch tickets are \$20.00 and the money will be collected by each club. [Please make checks payable to Black Hills District.]**

Names of attendees need to be submitted to Karen Smith ([kjossmith@mindspring.com](mailto:kjossmith@mindspring.com)) **by Sept. 11**. *Since Clubs may not have a meeting prior to the district meeting, please pay JoAnne Sandell \$20 at one of the garden tours or mail it to her at 5516 – 65th AVE SE, Olympia, WA 98513-5011.* There will be raffle prizes to win, a 50/50 drawing and a Country Store.

Following our morning District meeting, our horticulture speaker will be **WSFGC President, Dorrie Carr**, speaking about her favorite subject, "The Dandelion". If there's time, Dorrie will also speak on the theme, "The Healing Power of Nature".

The afternoon Design program will feature **Brynn Tavasci, WSFGC Recycling & Stewardship Chairman** who will be creating design structures from recycled materials. Brynn has worn many hats: past State President 2013 - 2015, NGC 5 Star Member, NGC Recycling, Up-cycling, and Stewardship Chairman, State Flower Show Awards Chairman in addition to other positions. "I have found garden club activities to be a perfect blend of gardening topics, creative artistic opportunities, and environmental education, all in one organization. My other favorite volunteer activity is animal rescue and rehabilitation."

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## Enter the Thurston County Fair Flower Show!

**Ellen Daly, [ellendaly@hotmail.com](mailto:ellendaly@hotmail.com), 360-485-5253**

The Black Hills District of Garden Clubs manages the floral barn at the Thurston County fairgrounds, 3054 Carpenter Road SE, Lacey WA 98503, in the Expo Building. This year's flower show is titled "Wings of Glory" as the 2026 fair mascot is Colonel Beaks, the Eagle.



Black Hills members are welcome to enter horticulture items and Youth Exhibits at the fair. The flower show schedule is available on the Black Hills District website at Home | [blackhillsdistrict](http://blackhillsdistrict)

***We need people to enter designs, crafts and horticulture! Don't wait until closer to the fair – look at the attached Flower Show Schedule, contact a section consultant before July 10 to get your name on the list to bring a design! Horticulture entries don't need to pre-register. We also need people to volunteer for hostess shifts – please be willing to sign up for a shift or two when you can – you get a ticket to enter the fair for free, and before or after your hostess shift, you can enjoy the rest of the fair!***

### ***Important dates:***

**Tuesday, July 28, 3:00 -7:00 p.m.** Bring your horticulture, designs and Youth Exhibits to the Expo Center of the fairgrounds. Since the fair won't be open yet, you can park close to the building. Volunteers in the lobby will assist you with your entries.

**Thursday, July 30** is the first day of the fair. Come at 10:00 a.m. and enjoy!

**Sunday, August 2**, the fair closes at 8:00 p.m. You can pick up your entries that evening between 8 - 9:00 p.m. or Monday morning from 9-11 a.m.

## **See you at the Fair!**

**Abbreviated Flower Show schedule is included later in this issue. Please go to the Black Hills District website at <https://www.blackhillsdistrict.com/> for the complete schedule**



## **Congratulations to Michael Spurzem, Our New Logo Contest Winner!**

We are proud to announce that Michael Spurzem of the Olympia Garden Club has won the Black Hills District Logo Contest! His creative design captured our vision perfectly and earned him the \$50 contest prize. We look forward to featuring this colorful logo in our future marketing and outreach efforts.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who entered the contest. Your talent and imagination truly reflect the spirit of our district's garden clubs.



## **“Red, White & Bloom, America”** An NGC Standard Flower Show Presented by **WSFGC**



**August 22 - 23, 026**

*Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of the USA!*

### **Bellevue Botanical Gardens**

12001 Main St., Bellevue, Washington 98005

<https://bellevuebotanical.org/>

### **Free and Open to the Public**

**Plan to attend with your friends and family!!**

8-22-26 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm

8-23-26 9:30 am - 2:30 pm

Flower Show Schedule:

[https://www.wagardenclubs.com/\\_files/ugd/249f52\\_e2876656251a41eeb15376cc36cdd24c.pdf](https://www.wagardenclubs.com/_files/ugd/249f52_e2876656251a41eeb15376cc36cdd24c.pdf)



## **CLUB NEWS**

### **BLACK HILLS FLOWER DESIGN: Debbie Spiller, President**

The BHFDS have been busy. On April 17th, 2026, at the Black Hills District Meeting, the District gifted each of our member clubs \$100 to hopefully plant “Red, White and Blue” flowers at either one of our local Blue Star Markers, a Community Garden or planting in our own gardens to enhance our neighborhoods. The BHFDS member, JoAnne Sandell, had a great idea and approached the managers of the Thurston County Fairgrounds for permission to replant the two flower beds at the main entrance with our R, W & B flowers. They said “yes” and we did just that.



On May 25th, Memorial Day, several members of the BHFDS meet and labored away, removing overgrown existing day lilies, pulling weeds, adding soil and mulch and planting red geraniums, blue lobelia and red and white petunias. There is no longer functioning irrigation in the two beds, but there is a hose bib near by and the facility handyman, Hans, has promised to water it. A big “Thank You” to JoAnne for watering it herself during our recent heat wave!

The BHFDS hosted the District Flower Show on April 17th. Our show, “[Under the Sea](#)” was beautiful and a joy to enter. I was truly delighted at the level of participation of all our members. We have held our last regular meeting and have a Potluck lunch planned for this month. Our next regular meeting will be in September. Of course, our members are participating in the Thurston County Fair in July.

Our club is full, but if you are interested in Creative Floral Design, please feel free to contact me about participating in the Budding Designers Design Guild, our District’s new design affiliate: Debbie Spiller 206-755-3616 [dunespill@gmail.com](mailto:dunespill@gmail.com)

### **THE BUDDING DESIGN GUILD - “The Buds”**

The Black Hills Judges Council, with funds from the WSFGC Endowment Committee, hosted a set of three Beginning Design Classes in March. I am happy to report that a new district affiliate club, The Budding Design Guild, has been formed from those who participated in the classes and other district members. “The Buds” have had two regular monthly meetings. Our April meeting had us

reviewing mechanics and composing petite designs, May, we used clear glass containers and June low dishes. It's all fun, even if we struggle.

District members are welcome to attend our future meetings listed below. IF you do plan to attend, please contact me, Debbie Spiller, to find out what materials to bring along if you plan to participate.

Upcoming Meetings:

September 1st    Fall Foliage  
October 6th      Exhibition Table Settings/Halloween  
November 2nd    Table Centerpieces

December 1st     Not sure yet!

### **FRIENDLY FLOWERS GARDEN CLUB – Judy Swortz, President**

Friendly Flower Garden Club finally gets a respite from a variety of club activities that included working with the City of Lacey educating the public about native plants and helping hand out a variety of native plants compatible with urban landscapes.

Our Arbor Day was to install another variety of Camellia (our club flower) Sasanqua “Yuletide” at the Lacey Civic Plaza at the north end of Sleater Kinney Road business center. This is where our Blue Star memorial by-way marker is placed. Our club and the “landscape crew” work there on a continuous basis. We work with the city of Lacey to maintain the entire garden. We have planted red, white and blue flowers for the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our nation.

The Lacey Civic Plaza Blue Star Memorial Marker and bench with freshly planted red, white and blue flowers.



On April 4 at Huntamer Park 10 determined club members braved the chill and took shifts from 9:30 to 1:30 to share our joy of growing, our knowledge of gardening, conversing with the public as we handed out free plantings. These included native vine maple trees along with a variety of native roses and many varieties of wild berries that work in your landscape. We shared about our club with a few handouts, and we believe about 5,000 plants were given away. We set up and cleaned up, helping the city staff.

May 8 and 9 we worked at Prairie Appreciation Days near Mima Mounds. Along with a canopy of club information, we shared many tips, interacting with over 1500 interested people who drove to the prairie, walked the beautiful grounds (which are closed to the public most of the time), protecting the native plants. Panoramic views of growing/blooming camas, other native plants made for a fabulous experience for all who took part. A great turnout of members came to help and appreciate the beauty of the prairie. Wide open spaces where scotch broom used to possess.



Set up crew L-R  
Cherry and Jim  
Pedrick, Judy  
Swortz and Rose  
Quinby

Our annual club plant sale was on May 4. We sell to each other and enjoy seeing what people bring. This means that all member gardens are friendship gardens since we share our plants with each other while earning funds for our activities.

Each Thursday from April 16 till June 18, members of the club volunteered with a gardening project for kindergarten to 3<sup>rd</sup> graders. Step by step, children learned a few basics for gardening. Many generous members pitched in each Thursday from about 2:45 till almost 4:00 helping children.

We had a celebratory “Salabration” potluck on June 1 at Wildwood Park. A clear fine day in the park is a great way to end the year.



Our club has done well this year, accomplishing a lot, pitching in to help the district function by managing the district Country Store and participating in flower shows. Every attempt is made to help out as much as possible.

About half our membership who attended the April District Meeting/Flower show.

We are privileged to have grown with new members this year. We anticipate celebrating the nation’s 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary with our float at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade in Tumwater. Come see us at the parade!

### **FRIENDLY NEIGHBORS GARDEN CLUB - Anne Stedham, President**

Spring made an early appearance in our area, less rain and more sunshine. We had the first field trip of the year at the beginning of April, carpooling to Portland OR to visit and compare and contrast the Japanese and Chinese gardens.

Trees were just coming into leaf and the early ones to bloom. The Japanese Garden winds uphill taking advantage of the topography for lovely water features cascading down hill filling pools and ponds in different gardens on its way to the base and the entry. It is situated on a wooded hillside with traditional Japanese buildings sited at the top to take advantage of lovely views of Mount Hood in the distance. We felt it would be a lovely garden to visit in all seasons.

The Chinese Garden is in the middle of downtown Portland and takes up a whole city block. It is enclosed by a traditional Chinese pierced wall of carefully placed 'windows' for viewing out or viewing in. Internally you travel from room to room, cross the lake from building to building. With different vantage points for viewing, different surfaces underfoot, stepping stones, wooden bridge, sand, gravel, and mossy walk ways. You pass internal windows or doors into gardens carefully arranged with specimen trees or plants or specimen rock formations.



It was informative to compare the two styles of gardens. So much in common and yet so different. A few minutes from the Japanese Garden we had a lovely lunch at Cornell Farms Nursery. We didn't mind waiting for 30 minutes for a table in the main house as the nursery/garden center was full to bursting with all you could want for your garden. We went shopping!!

In May, Jan Stevens and Ginny Eddy will present on "Conditioning Flowers and preparing for the Fair."  
In June, we tour Kay Crawford's "Pollinator Garden" in Onalaska.

In July, we hold our Summer potluck at the Master Gardeners Garden near the Borst House in Borst Park, Centralia.

In August is our **South West Washington Fair** - August 10th - 16th. **This year's theme is "Ride into History, America's 250". Red, White, Blue are the Fair colors. Entry Day is Monday August. 10<sup>th</sup>.** You can also make your entries on line up until Sun. Aug 9th till 6:00pm. Horticultural Entries and Designs are always welcome. The Schedule has not been published yet. As soon as it does, we'll let you know!

### **ILLAHEE GARDEN CLUB - Sandra Zacker, President**

#### **APRIL, MAY AND JUNE - 2026**

Our April started out with our regular meeting on April 1st. At our meeting final plans were jelled for our plant sale that happened on May 2nd. The public came out for our sale in droves and the club profited quite nicely.



Pricing sticks  
for plant sale!

Our program that day was given by Black Hills Designers who are members of our Illahee Club. Those demonstrating were Diane Harper, Peggy Starr, LeAnna McMahan, and Sandra Zacher, each sharing a different aspect of design. The purpose was to help our members feel more at ease at designing.



Diane Harper teaching about  
containers for designing

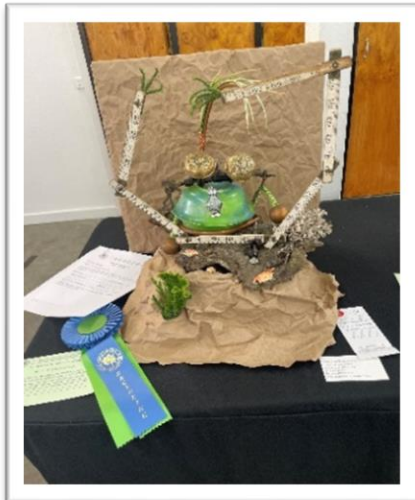


Peggy Starr explaining "tools of the  
trade" of design



LeAnna explaining the art of using  
plant material in your design.

Several Illahee members entered the Flower Show at the Black Hills district Meeting on April 17th. Some came home with nice ribbons! See photos below!



Peggy Starr's entry at  
the Black Hills Flower  
Show in April. She  
won the Recycling



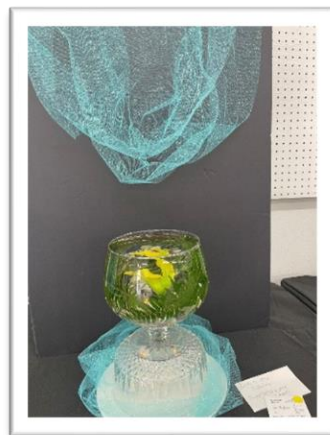
Vicki Westerberg's  
Broach that was a  
top winner at the  
show.



LeAnna McMahan's Exhibition Table was a top winner!



Dorothy Bertram's Petit Design



Sandra Zacker's underwater design

After our Illahee meeting on May 6th, Vicki and LeAnna led us in helping upper elementary students from White Pass Elementary be introduced to the elements of design, make a Mother's Day card, and fashion a bouquet to take home. They had a great time as did we all! (see photos)



Vicki teaching 5<sup>th</sup> graders about native plants in our area before they made bouquets for their mothers ahead of Mother's Day.



At our June 3rd Illahee Meeting we discussed improvements that will be made to our Roadside Park. A friend of Illahee has volunteered to help us out financially with this project, so there will probably be additional improvements made. The immediate need is to have water available not only at the middle of the park, but at both ends as well, alleviating the need to drag hoses quite as far as at present. Electricity will be made available as well which will help accommodate the Christmas lights that adorn not only the Blue Star Marker in the park, but the whole park area which is located parallel to Highway 12. It is one of the things that Illahee does for our community.

The program for June 3rd was given by Jill Prukop, a local master gardener. She enlightened us on how we may be more successful at saving our own seeds, and how we can network with others to trade seeds as well. She brought many seeds and even small plants to share with us. The plants were started in her Milk Jug way of propagating seeds, which has been very successful for her and many of our members as well. It is always wonderful to have Jill with us!

July will be our last meeting of the “year”. We have welcomed five new members this year, and have had great attendance at our meetings. Our club will soon have its own website – thanks to a new member who has brought her talents with her! We are already looking forward to a “fruitful” year starting in September, 2027!

### **KELSO GARDEN CLUB – Sarah Koss, Co-President**

On May 18, a group attended Eleanor's Peonies in Battleground, WA.



Please join us for two upcoming KGC events!

### **Kelso Garden Club Plant Sale Part 2**

Friday & Saturday, June 26 & 27, 2026

9 am - 3 pm

4309 Pine Street, Longview, WA

Houseplants, Annuals, Perennials, Herbs, Hanging Baskets,  
Trees and Shrubs

Proceeds support Lower Columbia School Gardens, Kelso High School Horticulture program, Arbor Day tree planting, Cowlitz County Fair exhibits and special gardening projects in the community, including Blue and Gold Star Markers at Tam O'Shanter Park in Kelso.

***ALL SALES CASH ONLY***

### **Cowlitz County Fair**

July 22-25, 2026 at the Cowlitz County Fairgrounds Floral Building.

The Kelso Garden club will create two booths: a fair theme booth and an education booth. This year's Fair theme is "American Made // County Raised" in commemoration of the 250th birthday of our country. The education booth theme is Native Plants. We will also be displaying designs in several niches. We would love to have you visit the Floral Building and enjoy the displays.

### **Kelso Highlander Festival Flower Show**

September 12, 2026 at

Tam O'Shanter Park, Kelso

The Kelso Garden Club will host a flower show in conjunction with the Kelso Highlander Festival. Public entries are welcome.

### **OLYMPIA GARDEN CLUB - Tara Keen, President**

The Olympia Garden Club has had a busy spring filled with excellent programs and garden tours!

At our March meeting we spoke with a representative from LOTT Clean Water Alliance. We learned how wastewater is being managed right here in our area of Lacey, Olympia, and Tumwater in Thurston County. Fascinating stuff! In April we got to see a very creative demonstration of Ikebana by the president and 1<sup>st</sup> president of Ikebana International Tacoma. It was amazing to learn how different Ikebana is from our NGC guided flower show rules.

We also had our members, Dee Murdaugh and Wendy Rushing, work with an artist, the grandchild and son of our members, to design Olympia Garden Club some adorable short aprons. These aprons were crafted, printed and then sold to our club members to wear in their gardens. They allow us to tuck away our phones, gloves and garden snippers while displaying pride in our club. The more than \$600 Proceeds from that sale of these charming aprons are being donated to “Wreaths Across America” in honor of our Veterans. In 2025, over 3.1 million sponsored veterans' wreaths were placed on headstones of our nation's service members at 5,598 participating locations.



In May club members visited two amazing gardens. We visited the gorgeous gardens of Steve Smith & his lovely partner Larry in their beautiful home in Edgewood. This amazing couple presented us with the most amazing show of peonies I think anyone in our garden club has ever seen with over 175 varieties. Steve recently gave a presentation on Peonies as the president of the Pacific Northway Peony Society. Their meticulously groomed and constructed garden

was a site to behold. Their property is built on the side of a hill and they most the most of every steep inch.



Our group then moved on to visit Camille Paulson’s stunning garden. For those of you who follow Camille on Instagram (@tahomaflora) you might think you’re familiar with her beautiful grounds but seeing them in person it really shows you what an art form companion planting can be.



Her mature and artfully designed garden space was stunning! Her dense planting were like perfect wine pairings. The risks she took in plant choice and placement completely paid off and has inspired me personally and many of our garden friends at the Olympia Garden Club.

If you ever get a chance to visit her gardens don’t miss it. You’ll be blown away by the sheer beauty of it all.



Our club is looking forward to sharing our own gardens this summer as we tour each other’s gardens as part of our summer garden tour program. From the OGC we wish you all a happy summer of gardening.

## Introducing....

### THE SOUTH SOUND DAHLIA SOCIETY!!

*Dear Black Hills Members,*

*Please enjoy the notes below from our newest affiliate club, the South Sound Dahlia Society - Debbie Spiller*

The May meeting of the South Sound Dahlia Society was very eventful, featuring a presentation on topping and disbudding dahlias. Patti provided a live demonstration using a potted dahlia, showing us how to root a "topped piece" to create a new plant from a cutting.

Key takeaways included:

- Topping: This process encourages lateral branching, resulting in more flowers per plant. It is generally done in June. Depending on the variety, you should leave a specific number of leaf pairs: Giants (2), B size (3), BB size (4), Miniature (5), Balls (4–5), and all others (5).
- Disbudding: This channels the plant's energy into one bloom per stem instead of three, creating larger, show-quality flowers. This is done at your discretion, typically for plants intended for competition. Timing is key and heavily influenced by the weather.

We also discussed seed collection. Since plants produce seeds more effectively in warm weather, it is best to select parent plants and let them go to seed early. Gathering seeds while they are dry prevents the rot often caused by unpredictable fall weather.

Finally, we had a lively discussion regarding the use of coco-fiber as a pH-neutral, renewable alternative to peat moss. While some growers discuss "buffering" the fiber, the consensus was that this is largely unnecessary for dahlias. Local growers like Patti White have used coco-fiber as a storage medium for tubers for years without extensive preparation. Note that coco-fiber must be soaked before use.

Best regards,

Betty Moynahan  
President, South Sound Dahlia Society





## Reduce Reuse Recycle

### Surprising Find at Costco

by Jackie McCoy



Last month, I was bebopping around Costco when I happened upon this odd-looking cube. “Mulch” caught my eye, so I hoisted the cube into my cart and headed to the cashier. Once home, I began reading the label and realized I had stumbled onto a real find.

For those of us unfamiliar with this item (like myself), I’ve pulled some facts from an article titled, “How to Use Coconut Coir in Your Garden, An Ideal Seed Starter Plus Other Indoor and Outdoor Uses with Plants” by Marie Iannotti, 09/18/24.

#### Uses of Coconut Coir

- As an ingredient of potting mixes for starting seeds.
- It is also used for garden beds and container plants, as well as a soilless mix for hydroponics and climbing plants.
- Soil amendment for any type of soil.
- Because Coconut coir absorbs 30 percent more water than peat, it helps loosen the texture of clay soil and improve drainage. It also allows sandy soil to hold onto water longer.

#### Advantages of Using Coir Over Peat

Coconuts grow throughout the year and can be harvested every two months, which makes them sustainable. Here are the advantages of using coir instead of peat:

- Coir is slower to decompose than peat, so it lasts longer in the soil.
- It is a compostable material, which makes it a good choice for sustainable gardens.
- It is sterile and free of weed seeds.
- It has a less acidic soil pH, generally in the 5.8 to 6.8 range. (Peat is in the 3.5 to 4.5 range.)
- Coir improves air porosity in soils, even when wet, as well as improving moisture retention.
- It is easier to re-wet after it dries out, which helps plants recover from dry conditions quicker. As a result, water is saved because there are less irrigation requirements.

#### Disadvantages of Using Coir

Coconut coir does have some downsides as a gardening material. Here are the disadvantages:

- Coir is compacted and requires proper processing to loosen it for use in the garden.
- Because it retains water, there is a chance of salt buildup in the soil.
- Coir doesn't have much in the way of other major nutrients. (However, it is fairly rich in potassium and a handful of other micronutrients.)

- Coir is more expensive and sometimes harder to find than peat.

### Different Coconut Coir Forms

- *Bricks or Blocks* - There were 2 blocks in the cube I bought. To rehydrate the coir, I added approximately 5 gallons of water to one block in my wheel barrow. With waterproof garden gloves, I flipped the block around, easily breaking off pieces. Within about 30 – 40 minutes, the material was ready for spreading.



This versatile material also comes in chips, potting soil, baskets, pot liners and actual pots. I added this to my front yard bed to reduce pesky weeds and help retain moisture around more water dependent plants.

### General Recycling Links:

**Cowlitz County:** <https://www.wastecontrolrecycling.com/disposal-recycle-guide>

**Lewis County – Educational Programs:** <https://lewiscountywa.gov/departments/solid-waste/educational-programs/>

### **Thurston County – Community Outreach events:**

<https://www.thurstoncountywa.gov/departments/public-works/garbage-recycling/education-resources/community-programs-events/community-outreach-events>



# "UNDER the SEA"



An NGC Standard Flower Show presented by Black Hills Flower Designers and Friendly Neighbors Garden Club on April 17, 2026 in conjunction with our Black Hills District General Membership Meeting.

The show was judged by Brynn Tavasci and Tory Bennett, Chinook District, Judy Strickland, Sherry Matthews and Kathy Johnson, Hill & Dale District, Terry Critchlow and Robin Kabrich, Central District, Jean Pass, East Lake WA District and Joyce Fell, Olympic Peninsula District.

**Exhibits: Horticulture – 160, Design – 36, Education – 2, Botanical Arts - 34**

## **Top Exhibitors:**

**NGC Award of Horticulture  
Excellence and Betty Belcher  
Horticulture Award – Michael Spurzen**



**NGC Petite ward/Judith Juno Award –  
Dorothy Bertram**





**Table Artistry  
Award/Phyllis  
Danielson Award –  
LeAnna McMahan**

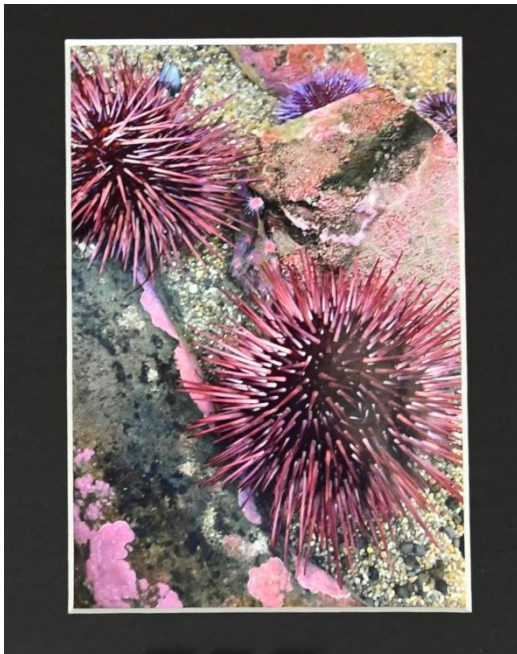


**NGC Design Excellence Award/Ellen  
Swenson – Dorothy Bertram**



**NGC Education Award –  
Linda Maida**

**NGC Artistic Craft  
Award/JoAnn Goldman –  
Vicki Westerberg**



**Terry Critchlow  
Photography Award –  
Kathy Olson**



**Recycling Award – Peggy Starr**

