



NW Fruit

September 2023

Western Washington Fruit Research Foundation, aka NW Fruit.org

in cooperation with

Washington State University, Northwest Washington Research and Extension Center

16650 State Route 536, Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Apple & Pear ♦ Sample the Harvest Day

♦ Saturday October 14, 2023 ♦ 10 am to 2:30 pm ♦

This year, we have a bumper crop of delicious fruit in the orchard for our annual harvest day. Come, learn from experts about the many ways to enjoy the harvest and take home some fruit. Fruit experts Gary Moulton, Jacky King, Seth Brawner and others will be there to teach you. Visit tables where NWF volunteers will demonstrate techniques and answer your questions.

Bring your lunch. Rain or shine – Dress for the weather. **Also:** Bring a Sharpie and some masking tape, to write names on the fruit you take home so you can keep track of your taste preferences.

Schedule of Activities

Admission **Free to NWF Members** - Become a member by purchasing a \$25 yearly membership, \$40 for family membership, or \$15 one-day member. Buy at entry or preferably on our website, at nwfruit.org.

9:45 AM **Registration** - More cost detail on page two.

10:00 AM **Introduction and Fruit Picking - Begin Here** so you learn how to pick an apple or pear. You may then go out into the orchard where our volunteers can guide you to the many trees that are loaded. Tom Wake will provide a couple of bags per person to fill with delicious ripe fruit to take home. Guided fruit picking will continue throughout the event.

10:45 AM **Cider Making** - Cider orchardist Gary Moulton will talk about how to make your own cider or perry. In the trade, the fermented drink from pears is known as “perry”.

Much more —>

◆ *October 14 Activities Continue* ◆

- Noon Preserving the Harvest** - Learn best ways to cook, dry, can, and freeze fruits. Our volunteers will bring samples and talk about what they do with the fruit. You can share your best ideas and recipes too.
- 1:00 PM Unusual Fruit** - WSU recently released an updated booklet on lesser known fruits that thrive in the Puget Sound climate. Here is the link to download the 15-page booklet with its beautiful full color photographs. One of the WSU authors, Jacky King, will tell us about these fruits, their flavors and their use.
<https://pubs.extension.wsu.edu/minor-and-uncommon-fruits-for-maritime-climate-gardens>
- 1:45 PM Tour the Fruit Garden** - After Jacky's talk we will go out to the fruit garden to see the unusual fruits as well as apples, pears and other fruit trees.

Visit the NWF Information Tables

- Fruit Preserving** Handouts and printed materials will be available to help you understand various ways to preserve your harvest.
- Variety Tasting** Many varieties of apples and pears will be on display; you can taste slices of each to see what you like best. We will record your preferences and later announce what was most popular. There will also be boxes of already picked fruit so you can take home different varieties. Bring that Sharpie so you can remember what varieties you have.
- Juice Tasting** New this year, jugs of fresh-pressed juice, each made from a different variety of cider apple or perry pear. Try samples of each juice – blend samples together to mix flavors for your own unique blend. Attend **Gary Moulton's cider making class at 10:45 am** to learn more about this craft.

Cost

Information

Please Note: You can pay for membership at the event, but by paying it ahead of time [Registration](#) is simpler.

All purchases at the event require check or cash.

No credit cards. If you don't have checks be sure to bring cash.

- For this event NWF will offer a \$15 One Day Membership at the event. We encourage members to bring a friend, neighbor or relative — Treat them to a One Day pass and introduce them to the NWF garden! *Cash or check, no creditcards.*

How To Find Your Membership Status

If the email by which you received this newsletter begins "Hello NW Fruit **Member**" then your membership is current through September 2023.

If the email begins "Hello NW Fruit **Friend**" then your membership is not current at present, or will expire in the coming weeks. Membership expires on the anniversary of the last payment.

Fruit Garden Volunteers Working With WSU Staff

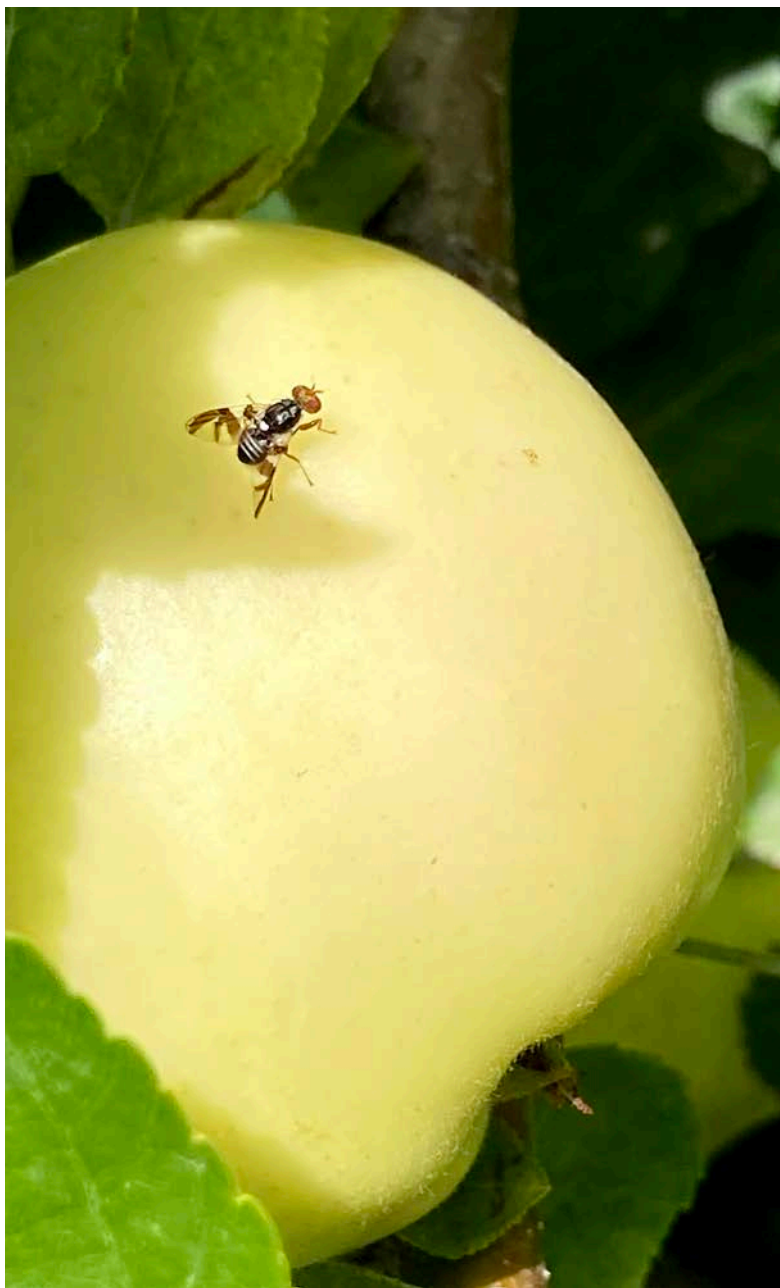
A big thank you goes out to director **Dr. Carol Miles** and the entire staff at the WSU Research & Extension Center (NWREC). Dr. Miles has facilitated many areas of cooperation in recent months.

Plant pathologist **Dr. Chakradhar Mattupalli** is working with Bob Baines, Colleen Sanders and others on our Gravenstein apple collection. Our fruit garden is famous for the 17 different types of Gravensteins brought in by Dr. Robert Norton. Growing on trellis supports, these trees are over 15 years old, and many have chronic anthracnose infections, not uncommon in our region. At our request Dr. Mattupalli inspected several trees, has analyzed samples and spent valuable time recommending improvements to our control methods so this fungal disease does not spread to other trees in the fruit garden. Our Fruit Garden Committee plans to replace the diseased trees over time. We will take scions and graft new trees for this purpose.

Scott Terrell captured this sharp photo of an apple maggot recently in the garden. We do not have an infestation, but here's another hazardous pest to recognize.

Small fruit specialist **Dr. Lisa DeVetter** has looked over our currants and gooseberries to advise us on proper netting and other control measures so we have better success with these fruits. These measures will lead to better control of the saw fly and the currant stem borer. Another project with Dr. DeVetter concerns degradable mulch materials which we have offered to help test in our fruit garden.

Also, Dr. DeVetter has teamed up with Dr. Miles and Jacky King to publish a fine booklet on growing unusual fruits. Most of these plants can be observed growing at the NW fruit garden. Find link on page two of this newsletter.



NWF Volunteers Working With WSU, continued

WSU graduate student **Seth Brawner** works on the NWREC cider block. He has recommended juice cultivars to consider for our demo garden. Seth has been processing many samples of juices from cider apples and perry pears that we will share at our **Apple & Pear Day**.

Dr. Carol Miles has facilitated these and other areas of cooperation. Our volunteers have wanted to participate in useful scientific experiments, and Dr. Miles has suggested an evaluation of Geneva rootstocks in WSU's six year old cider block. Home gardeners have been skeptical to try Geneva in home gardens since these rootstocks were developed and tested for commercial growers, using virus free cultivars which are not usually available to home growers.

Dr. Miles pointed out that a well thought out project could measure the growth of particular varieties on each of the Geneva rootstocks. Dr. Miles is willing to teach how to record these measurements in the standard scientific way. If you are interested to participate, contact Sam or Colleen.

Our fruit garden manager Tom Wake serves on an umbrella committee which meets monthly with Dr. Miles, WSU staff, plus reps from the Master Gardeners and the Native Plant Society, to discuss what needs to be coordinated between WSU and the three demonstration gardens. Recently two new 20-foot transport containers were placed in our work area to use for storage, one for NWF and one for the Master Gardeners. This project was coordinated with WSU assistance.

Also a huge thank you to **Dan Gorton** and his staff for the mowing, spraying, yard waste removal, occasional plant removal and other work that requires big equipment. WWFRF/NWF pays WSU for these services, but their cooperation is indispensable to us for the well-kept fruit garden.

Again we thank you all, including the WSU staff we didn't mention. See you in the Garden.

Sam Benowitz, Fruit Garden Committee Co-Chair

◆ ***Board Activity*** ◆

2023 NWF president, Hal Torrance, has experienced a cluster of on-going health issues recently and has therefore resigned from the NWF Board of Directors. Hal inspired new energy and some smart changes in procedures during his months in term. The entire board has expressed condolences and best wishes for Hal's recovery. The nominating committee will be talking among our active volunteers for replacement of this important position in our organization. All interested, please reach out.



*Late August Jostaberries at the fruit garden.
Read about this dark flavored, sweet-tart berry
in the aforementioned **Unusual Fruit**, page 11.*

Nursery Expansion & Redesign

by Sam Benowitz & Laura W. Wilson

A big renovation has taken place over several months in 2023. Volunteer Ned Garvey has dutifully led the effort. Voles were eating the roots of our young plants, so we had to replace the fence. While planning a deeper fence we decided to expand the space as well. At 25' X 28' it's now twice the size of the former space.

Ned used a powerful trencher to dig a channel around the expanded perimeter. Ned, Richard Fairfield and others installed wire mesh two feet deep. In addition to the buried portion, a 4-foot tall fence is now installed with a tight fitting gate. No voles allowed! Ned and Richard have upgraded the water system to include better sprinklers.

Ned recently roto-tilled the area, another heavy chore, so it is now ready for future plantings around the existing 3' x 25' sawdust rootstock stooling beds. The stooling beds contain many types of apple rootstocks, and room for more. In due time, the tilled space will consist of four or more rows of fruit trees from scions that we will graft onto appropriate rootstocks. These grafted starters can now be planted about one foot apart in the protected, newly tilled ground rather than in pots, allowing room for some 48 fruit trees. Our volunteers will begin that grafting this winter. These grafts could be ready to plant in the orchard after they've grown in the nursery for one to two years.

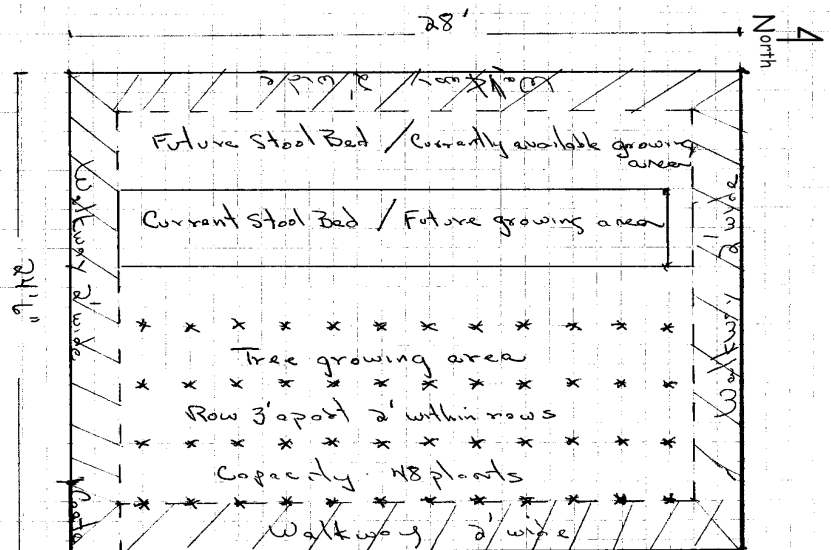
Because of the voles, the old nursery was populated with grafted fruit trees in pots. These ±30 trees are available for transplant into the garden, once the Fruit Garden Committee gets further along with plans for 2024. The nursery is a great resource where our group can save money while learning the skills of making our own trees.

"Get Out and Grow Stuff"

Ned Garvey grew up in southern Maryland, fairly near the Potomac, in La Plata. His parents were both gardeners, his mother on the home front, his dad an agricultural economist. When Ned was 16 the family moved to Morocco for two years. In US embassy circles there, Ned met Angela. Eight years later they married in Mississippi as they both continued their education. Ned's graduate degrees were in horticulture and his professional career included working for both private industry (plant nursery in Mississippi, rose breeder in California) and the US Dept. of Agriculture, Agriculture Research Service (ARS) in Miami, Florida, Washington DC and Beltsville, Maryland. As a part of the US National Plant Germplasm System, Ned's responsibilities included supporting the collection, preservation, and distribution of our crop genetic resources.

LWW: So was your typical day out in the field or looking through a microscope?

NG: Did a lot of pencil pushing. At that time a global change of perspective was in process, regarding genetic resources -- formerly seen as the property of mankind, changing to be recognized as the property of



Ned's sketch shows the nursery is now 686 sq ft, formerly 288 sq ft.

About Ned Garvey, continued

its country. Our exploration and preservation came to require prior informed consent agreements. We often collaborated with the Foreign Agricultural Service; whose funding helped buy equipment and train people in germplasm preservation.

In his 'Aw, shucks' quiet way Ned explains the value of finding and conserving plant genetic resources that inspired and motivated his work, including making these resources available for research and plant development in the US and worldwide. "For the most part our focus was on the wild relatives of our agronomic and horticultural crop, because these plants often possess the genetic resistance to environmental stresses such as drought, high salinity, heat, cold, and to biological stresses such as diseases and insects."

After 28 years with USDA/ARS Ned retired. Angela's twin sister Andrea had been living in Blaine, WA, so Ned and Angela knew and were drawn to the northwest. Once settled in Blaine, Ned wanted to "get out and grow stuff." This was about nine years ago. Ned knew about NWREC by way of Corvallis OR, and was motivated to learn and put to use the principles of fruit growing and the practices that support the maturing plants -- things like growing on a fence line, keeping the trees small, dealing with changes. "We know we have to try new things." Problems with insects and diseases, "how to treat them without nuking;" Ned appreciates that NWF educates the public, with techniques for the home garden. "Most people don't want to use pesticides."

LWW (by now talking with Ned and Richard Fairfield): What would you like me to tell our readers about the nursery? In unison they both replied: **More volunteers!** "Look, from 3 to 4 hours a week, you get to learn so much and watch it prosper. Plus it's truly a beneficial service to the community."

After seven years devoted to the NWF nursery, Ned is ready to move to other areas of the garden to learn and cultivate. He will still make the weekly drive,

down from Blaine an hour each way; he'll still be on the scene but he's ready to step back from the nursery, opening the opportunity for others to step in.

Opportunities for New Varieties

When NW Fruit garden designer Kristan Johnson died three years ago, most new planting in the garden was halted. Without Kristan to guide which new varieties to plant and where to put them, the volunteers decided to focus on maintaining the existing plantings. Covid restrictions contributed to the slow down.

By now, considerable momentum has built up in favor of replacing the dead, damaged or diseased, plus continuing the selection for fruitful, well acclimated plants, especially for home gardens. NWF volunteers agree that we already have more work than we can handle just maintaining what we have, so we are not inclined to add much unless we are replacing or placing important trees.

Grafting replacements, using scions from the damaged but worthy ones in our collection, this is the first priority and the expanded nursery is key. With the collaborative, consensus-building approach that characterizes NWF, the volunteers on the Fruit Garden Committee (including 12 members plus nine special project members) assesses and recommends, working with the Plant Selection Committee (three members with long standing or professional experience in the Puget Sound climate). The recommendations are presented to the NWF Board of Directors for approval if large budget items are involved. NWF also updates a Garden Management Plan, a document created in cooperation with WSU NWREC.

We are currently in the assessment stage which will proceed over the coming months. The expanded nursery offers the pragmatic, cost efficient space for much of this work to be accomplished over time..



Lush mulberry, S. Terrell

Rootstock Effects on Espaliers

by Bill Pierce, 9-18-23

About eight years ago, Kristan Johnson started a trial to demonstrate the effects of different rootstocks on espaliered apples. The trial consists of three co-located espaliers of **Honeycrisp** on M 27, Bud 9, and M 26 rootstocks on our west trellis, in the W3 sector of our garden inventory map. As you can see, the trial is now (literally) bearing fruit and displaying the characteristics of the rootstocks.



Bill Pierce with fruitful espaliers. Photo from Scott Terrell

On my right, in the photo, is the **M 26**. It has grown to the full size of the trellis. *The Fruit Handbook for Western Washington* (see detail below) describes this rootstock as “**Semi-dwarf habit** 10’-14’ tall, common in home orchards, free standing when mature, but early support post is recommended, particularly for early fruiting varieties.”

Immediately on my left is the **Bud 9**. This was Kristan’s favorite rootstock for espalier. *The Handbook* describes this rootstock as “**strongly dwarfing habit**, 8’-10’ tall, used in densely planted commercial orchards, espalier, trellis...needs permanent support of post or wire.” It has also reached the full size of the trellis, but is growing a bit slower than the M 26.

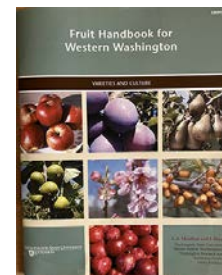
To my far left is the **M 27**. The *Handbook* describes this rootstock as “**Extremely dwarfing habit**, 6’-9’ tall at maturity, use for espalier, trellis, in patio pots, needs support.” As you can see, it is significantly smaller than the other two and will take several more years for its cordons to fill the trellis, if they ever do.

So there you have it. An apples-to-apples comparison of three Honeycrisp espaliers, and the difference the choice of rootstock can make. Use the extremely dwarfing rootstock only if you want a short tree or can wait a while for the tree to grow to the size of the trellis.

This trial is a great example of what the Fruit Garden was designed to do; demonstrate different ways of growing different cultivars in our Western Washington climate. It includes an [interpretive sign](#), which is one of many such signs in the Garden conveying what was planted and what can be learned from each trial. From the designers, to WSU and our suppliers, to the volunteers who maintain the garden, we have a remarkable public resource.

G.A Moulton and J. King, “Fruit Handbook for Western Washington,” Washington State University Mount Vernon Northwestern Research and Extension Center (Mount Vernon, WA.: Washington State University Extension Bulletin EB0937, 2008). p. 17.

pubs.extension.wsu.edu/fruit-handbook-for-western-washington





Faraneh and John pick a peck of perry pears. Photo from Scott Terrell

Perry Harvest at Gary's

by Scott Terrell

A crew of Northwest Fruit volunteers came to the rescue September 8 and 9, when perry pear grower Gary Moulton and his wife, Sue, realized they would need help. The Bow, Washington orchardist's crop of Hendre Huffcap, aka Henry Huffcap, had turned to a golden hue and needed to be harvested. The perry pear picking party volunteers spent Friday and Saturday morning donning fruit picking bags, clambering up orchard ladders and loading 1000-pound-capacity bins with fruit. Out of nearly 12,000 pounds of fruit harvested, the volunteers accounted for around 8,000 of them, or eight bins.

According to the Washington State University cider website, perry is an alcoholic beverage made of fermented pear juice that uses a similar process as that for apple cider. Even when ripe, a bite of a perry pear will cause one's mouth to pucker. The Hendre Huffcap is one of the varieties being evaluated at the cider program at WSU Mount Vernon. The flavor attributes are described as "medium acids and low tannins."

Moulton said the extra help was wonderful. "It took a big load off me," he said. "I'd still be doing it now." The Huffcaps were delivered to Dragon's Head Cider on Vashon Island, a cidery that specializes in traditional English cider and Perry.

The volunteer pickers gained valuable knowledge about Perry pears. On both days, after the picking was finished, several of the volunteers were treated to lunch and a taste of bottled perry.

"I have been a friend of Gary's for almost 50 years and I enjoy spending time with him and am so happy we could provide help he needed for the harvest," Sam Benowitz, a Northwest Fruit board member, said. "He has done so much for fruit growers in our region, it was a pleasure to work with him again. It brought back memories of cooperating at the WSU Mount Vernon station with Gary, Bob Norton and Jacky King over many years."

Perry Harvest, continued

Moulton worked for several decades at the research station as a technician and special assistant to Dr. Robert Norton and helped evaluate fruit varieties from around the world in order to find those that would thrive in the Pacific Northwest's maritime climate. He took over the program after Norton retired. Moulton, now retired, also promoted the cider industry in the region and now grows cider pears and apples in his orchard.



Tarheel Jim Hendrix pickin'. Photo from Scott Terrell

Western Washington Fruit Research Foundation (NW Fruit)

Membership Form

Please check one box ONLY: Renewal New Member

DATE: _____

Name _____ Email address _____

Address _____ Phone # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Please check all applicable lines to designate type of membership and/or extra donation:

_____ \$25 FOR ANNUAL INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP (One person only)

_____ \$40 FOR ANNUAL FAMILY MEMBERSHIP (Parents with their minor children)

_____ \$ FOR GIFT MEMBERSHIP FOR: (Please note For Whom above at Name)

_____ \$60 FOR ANNUAL SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP
(Individual or family membership with higher level of financial support)

_____ \$125 FOR ANNUAL COMMERCIAL (List Only) MEMBERSHIP
(Includes 3 people, and also includes business name on our website)

_____ \$200 FOR ANNUAL COMMERCIAL (Full) MEMBERSHIP
(Includes 3 people, and also includes a link from our website to the commercial members' website)

_____ AN EXTRA DONATION of \$ _____ FOR ___ GENERAL FUND ___ FRUIT GARDEN

I would like to volunteer to help as follows (please check all applicable lines):

_____ FIELD WORK IN THE WWFRF FRUIT DISPLAY GARDEN (Thursdays 9am-12noon; Jan-Nov.)

_____ BY DOING WORK I CAN DO IN MY OWN HOME USING MY COMPUTER OR TELEPHONE

**Please make your check payable to WWFRF
and MAIL your completed membership form
and check as follows:**

NW Fruit (WWFRF)
C/O Kim Siebert
7904 56th DR NE
Marysville, WA 98270



Puget Gold

by Peter Jackson

Last year during Cherry season, Sam Benowitz reflected on significant apples, pears and apricots that came from the San Juan Islands, Anacortes and Mt. Vernon. Sam mentioned specifically the Orcas Pear, Puget Gold Apricot, and Puget Spice Apple. There's been this legend that the Puget Gold Apricot was found near the Anacortes Ferry Terminal to San Juan County. Every nursery with the Puget Gold Apricot variety repeats that it was Jean Copeland who found it near the ferry.

Since Sam's talk I ventured to wander many times around the beach and parking lot at the ferry, in search of Puget Gold, wondering whether the tree was still hiding there or whether it got cleared in an expansion of the terminal, first built in 1960. After looking for

information on Jean Copeland I found that there had been a lady in Anacortes by that name who lived to be 106 years old, and that she had a son who was 89 and still alive (www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/skagit-valleyherald/name/jean-copeland).

Stopping by blacksmith Paul Thorne's house during a recent studio art tour I asked where a neighbor named Copeland might live. I went next door to ask about the tree and was informed by Bill Copeland that it was never found near the ferry but about six miles away, closer to the Swinomish Casino.

His mother had chucked out all the pits from a box of apricots near a hedge, he said. A unique seedling survived and Jean brought it to the attention of Dr. Bob Norton who asked what she wanted from finding it. She wanted it called Puget Gold. There was a drawbridge over Swinomish Channel to Fidalgo Island, still there but not functional since 1972. So presumably over the years the story got telephoned from 'near the hedge' to 'near the bridge' to 'near the ferry'.



Peter and balancing Finn give the apricot better balance.

Driving out that way on Sunday, September 10th, 2023, I found a tree matching the described location. Using online property records confirmation was made that this indeed was an open field near Jean Copeland's former residence, inherited from her parents.

The following Saturday I came back and gave the tree a nice pruning and hope to gather some good genetic material off it in the years to come.



Puget Gold photo from Sam Benowitz >>

Benefits of Membership

Annual membership costs **\$25/year for Individuals and \$40/year per Family** (Parents with their minor children). Other categories of memberships are also available, including Donors, Sustainers, Commercial, etc. Visit nwfruit.org to download the membership form OR use the membership form found in this newsletter.

- **FIELD DAYS/ OPEN HOUSES and WORKSHOPS are free to members.** Membership ensures your inclusion in various emails about events and other news.
- Invitation to special events, such as Volunteer Appreciation Day, Committee Planning, plus all members are welcome to attend Board meetings.
- Opportunities to recognize and learn about disease and pests that are new within the last two years, as weather conditions change in Skagit Valley
- The Apple & Pear Sample-the-Harvest Day
- The Winter Field Day/Open House - lectures, demonstrations and sale of scion wood and rootstocks for apples and other fruit trees
- Several workshop days are offered each year, sometimes with fruit sampling, depending on the season -- also free to members.
- Open invitation to serve on committees in the garden and in administration
- Open participation in NWF Annual Membership Meeting in March — your opportunity to be elected to serve on the Board of Directors, to be involved with communications, strategic planning, and other administrative opportunities.

Notes from the Northwest Fruit Board of Directors meeting July 15, 2023:

Present via Zoom: Hal Torrence (President), Ira Collins (Vice President), Dennis Davenport (Treasurer), Bob Baines, Sam Benowitz, Colleen Sanders and Sue Williams.

Absent: Scott Terrell (Secretary), Faraneh Cooper, Celeste Frisbee and Larry Hedgepeth.

Also participating: Tom Wake (Fruit Garden manager) and Laura Wilson (Newsletter editor).

Budget for the member appreciation (Thursday volunteer picnic) day August 31. Discussion to invite WSU employees who have worked with fruit garden members. Motion approved.

Dennis proposed setting up a review of the finances by three non-board members. He pointed out that that is a practice stated in the organization bylaws. Ira said he would set up Google Drive access for financial review participants. Dennis made a motion to assemble a review group. Motion approved.

Proposal by Tom to revise and update the fruit garden management plan. Tom willing to head up effort. Dennis said the plan is a legal document that describes the relationship between NW Fruit and WSU. Bob, Sam and Dennis offered to help Tom with drafting the updated plan and send it to Carol Miles with a target deadline in September. Bob wants to make sure those who want to manage with organic practices are represented and have input to the draft plan. Sue said she wrote the original plan, which emphasized treatments and controls that were available to the homeowner. Hal's motion to OK the process of drafting the updated plan was approved.

Honorary lifetime memberships to NW Fruit for Hazel Sittner and Tom Wake were proposed and approved. Laura suggested a lifetime membership for Jacky King as well. Hal recommended that as a future agenda item.

Proposal to invite WSU NWREC faculty and staff to winter and fall events as guests was considered and approved. WSU ID badges will serve as their 'ticket' for admission.

Proposal by Colleen concerning the structure of board of directors meetings, to place the committee reports ahead of items requiring board approval. Presentation of reports should be limited to a total of 20 minutes, with indivi-

Notes from July Board of Directors, continued

dual reports limited to 3-5 minutes. We will continue Hal's call for written reports to be submitted prior to the meeting for all board members to study before the meeting. Ira pointed out the submission of written reports in writing is a vast improvement. Proposal was approved.

Discussion about NWF relations with WSU. Tom said he has heard from Carol Miles that budget cuts are inevitable and services will diminish. Colleen said NWFruit should document activities and volunteer efforts to remind WSU of our value. Sam said WSU was looking for some sort of volunteer help in other areas of the station. Also, involving their scientists is what we are trying to do. We want to work with them.

NWFruit volunteer Mike Harding spoke to the board about possibly involving AmeriCorps volunteers at the Thursday workdays. His daughter had served as an AmeriCorps volunteer with the Gleaners of Skagit Valley. AmeriCorps volunteers could be a source of youthful energy. They would benefit by gaining knowledge and could be prepared to take on stewardship of the orchard. Mike will do more background work for his idea and WSU's position on AmeriCorps involvement will be sought (legality, policy, etc.)

Sam mentioned Bob Ness and his work with students at Western Washington University. Sam would be willing to talk to students there. Is there a way to work with WWU horticulture programs with internship and/or a grant?



Davis, The Apple and More

NWF volunteer Bill Davis grew up on a 3/4-acre property that had been in his family for nearly 200 years in the little coastal town of Magnolia which was part of the fishing seaport of Gloucester, Massachusetts. "On about one third of the property there stood about a dozen moderately big apple trees on original rootstock, bearing runty, uneatable apples. There was however, a beautiful, very productive Seckel Pear that we kids loved, but keeping the hornets and yellow jackets away was a challenge!" Bill's dad was in the Navy Seabees in the South Pacific during WWII, so Bill, as the oldest of three children, carried the bulk of chores while his mom operated a hair dressing salon in the house. He recalls shoveling coal for the furnace and lots of snow in the winter.

While in High School he was on the Jr ROTC rifle team which was the top Jr ROTC rifle team in the country for three of the four years he was on the team. He was also on the Thespian Society, Sailing team and Junior ROTC. Bill studied Civil Engineering for three years at Northeastern University, but the home chores, working for his contractor dad part time and commuting to Boston every day was too much to bear. After dropping out of school he got a job as a design draftsman at Metcalf & Eddy, an engineering firm in Boston. During this time, he continued studies at Lincoln Institute, which was NU's evening school. In 1958 the draft was facing him, even though he was assured that he could get a deferment due to the work he was engaged in. Given the options available, Bill chose the Navy just to "get his service over with". Bill eventually rose from Seaman Recruit to Commander over a 30-year career, mostly enjoying the countless challenges along the way.

In 1978, following a tour as a Commanding Officer in the Philippines, Bill was detailed by the Navy to be the Public Works Officer at Sand Point Naval Station on Lake Washington in Seattle. He and his wife Molly found a house in Edmonds. In the backyard was a 45' old Red Delicious apple tree, its runty red apples suffering from scab and coddling moth. Bill went to a Western Cascade Fruit Society event, where he met Walt and Hazel Lyon. Walt had served a career in the Navy band as a trumpet player. Walt retired from the Navy in 1955. He subsequently worked at a nursery in Richmond Beach and also the gardens at the Ballard Locks.

About Bill Davis, continued

Walt had many talents, built his own house in Bothell on five acres, had a substantial orchard with hundreds of apple varieties, grew both table and wine grapes and also grew a very large vegetable garden, from which he bountifully supplied the Bothell Food Bank.

Walt Lyon mentored Bill and Sam Benowitz too. He taught Bill Davis about grafting and in return Bill assisted Walt and Hazel with their yearly table displays of fruit at various local chapter fruit events of the Western Cascade Society. Walt loved gardening.

Now, Bill's final tour in the Navy was at the Bremerton Naval Shipyard as the assistant Public Works Officer. There was "an old orchard" located in an area above the Senior Officers' quarters which had been well kept before and during WWII and beyond. But eventually budget cuts forced the retirement of the career civilians who had maintained the orchard. It had become a "ramshackle mess." Contracts had been awarded to local "landscapers" for maintenance that had no skills to properly maintain orchard trees! To get advice Bill learned of and communicated with Dr. Bob Norton and his staff in Mount Vernon.

After retirement from the Navy in 1988, Bill began teaching grafting at various WCFS Chapter events and formally at University of Washington's Center for Urban Horticulture in 2003, with labs and day classes. Around this time he taught a grafting class for credit every two years at Edmonds Community College which is now called Edmonds College.

DNA Tests Planned

Bill Davis loves the Karmijn de Sonnaville apple. It's high acid and sugar content impart a complex flavor that is good off the tree and delicious as it improves with storage.

There are a dozen Karmijns in the orchard. A few years ago Bill noticed that a certain branch on one tree had apples of high quality that were significantly different from the rest of the tree's apples. Such contrast could be the result of another variety being grafted on the tree, yet Bill could find no evidence of a graft. Neither could Jacky King, nor she did she recall any grafting in its WSU variety trial block, prior to the tree being moved into the demo garden.

Bill understood, maybe this unique branch is a "bud sport" which is a naturally occurring genetic mutation within a bud, which may become visible as the bud grows into a branch. As an example, the Chehalis apple was a bud sport of a Golden Delicious apple tree, as identified by WSU about 85 years ago. While bud mutations on apple trees are not all that rare, it is rare that one turns out to produce a superior apple.

Scionwood from the unusual Karmijn branch has been successfully top-grafted by volunteer Larry Crum; it is thriving on another tree in the fruit garden. The original branch was later pruned off the parent Karmijn tree, in the normal course of seasonal pruning. Larry really likes these unique apples and wants to name the new variety after Bill Davis, and call it Davis Red.



The Karmijn de Sonnaville (pronounced karmine) was introduced in 1971 by Piet de Sonnaville of the Netherlands. A cross between a Jonathan and Cox's Orange Pippin; once picked, its tart flavor mellows.

DNA Tests Planned, continued



“Davis Red” scion graft flourishing & productive. Thanks Larry!



SamB: The “Davis Red” (right) is a large red apple with a excellent tart flavor. It seems very productive and we did not notice any scab or other blemish.

BillD: The so-called Davis Red at this early stage (late September) should be ‘mouth puckering’ astringent, similar to Karmijn (left) at this stage. It often takes several weeks for Karmijn to mellow out before its full flavor develops.

Karmijn de Sonneville & Davis Red photos by Scott Terrell

DNA testing is how we find out the genetics of the “new” apple. We will send in leaf samples taken from this year’s healthy leaves, one sample from its parent Karmijn tree and a second leaf sample from the branch with the new apple.

Dr. Cameron Peace runs the WSU Genotyping fruit DNA testing lab in Pullman. He will compare the samples with about 5000 varieties of apples that have been DNA identified.

Peace explained that genetic tests cannot distinguish between a variety and the slight genetic difference of a bud sport from that variety. If the two samples reveal the same DNA results that will indicate that the branch is indeed a bud mutation of the Karmijn, therefore a unique apple existing only in our demo garden.

If, however, the results show strong differences between the two samples, then it is another variety that was, whether evident or not, grafted onto the Karmijn. When we told Dr. Peace about how different the Davis Red was from the Karmijn in size, shape and color, he said that a bud mutation is unlikely to differ that much from the variety it came from. The DNA will tell us. We will soon send Dr. Peace the samples and it will take several months to get the results. Each test will cost \$50.

Peace is doing DNA apple testing, working with heirloom apple groups around the nation. A goal of his is to correctly identify heirloom varieties which may be mislabeled or lost and to test high quality seedling varieties brought to him.

In the past Dr. Bob Norton at WSU Mount Vernon received and tested high quality fruit varieties and seedlings brought to him by home gardeners and farmers.

We talked with Peace about our volunteers possibly assisting with that work, if even on a small scale. The Orcas and Rescue Pear, Puget Gold Apricot, several curl resistant peaches and many Gravenstein apple strains now in our fruit demo garden were all brought to Dr. Norton by area home gardeners.

Sam Benowitz, Fruit Garden Committee Co-Chair

News, Opportunities & Announcements

Thank You to North Hill Resources

4600 651 N. Hill Blvd, Burlington 98233
360-757-1866 • NorthHillResources.com

**For landscaping materials and
continuing support • Summer 2023**



Facebook Page Coordinator

Post updates and channel inquiries to members who can answer. To offer your help, please email **sambenowitz2@gmail.com**.

NWF Membership Chair

From home you can help NWF with database know-how. Work with our Publicity, Events, and Education Committees -- all good teams ready to cooperate.

An energetic extrovert chair might also correspond with our many related organizations to promote collaborative working relationships.

Please email **kimsiebert@gmail.com** to offer your help.

Note: NFW Membership is required for volunteering in the Fruit Garden.

Weekly Work Parties – Find Schedule at NWfruit.org

Thursdays 9 to 12

Join the volunteers Thursday mornings for friends, learning, and the opportunity to serve your community. Saturday work parties are suspended for 2023, will restart in spring 2024. Meanwhile, dress for the weather, bring a pair of hand pruners, and come learn about seasonal care in the Fruit Garden. Park in the parking area at north end of garden, and walk to the sheds at the south end of the garden to register with Tom and get oriented.

**Please contact Tom Wake or Colleen Sanders for details,
at info@nwfruit.org.**

Western Washington Fruit Research Foundation (NW Fruit)

Donor Form

To make a donation by credit card go to: NWfruit.org and click on Support.

Enclosed is my gift of: \$5000 \$1000 \$500 \$100 \$50 \$25 \$ _____

Please designate Where it is needed most! Fruit Garden
my monetary gift toward: WSU sponsored research Sampling and Field Days

I would like to volunteer! In the Display Garden On sampling and field days
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Name _____ Email address _____

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Thank you!



Find Your Bliss!

NW Fruit volunteers engage in interest groups to manage specific projects. We use the Work Group model to keep track of seasonal projects, and to coordinate with Garden Manager Tom Wake and Garden Committee Co-Chair Colleen Sanders. These work groups offer experience accordingly:

In the Garden

Tree Fruit, Berries, Espalier
Stone Fruit, Unusual Fruit
Pollinator Friendly Plantings
Irrigation, Construction
Organic Growing

Or From Home

Website & Media Updates
Volunteer Coordinating
Membership/Mailing
Database
Event Planning

Below: Ploughed by WSU with planting assisted by Skagit Valley College students last December, the pollinator-attracting native plant hedgerow is doing well, north of the Fruit Garden. A project coordinated among Native Plant Society, NWF and WSU. Look for it, and its winged visitors if they're still active, on Apple & Pear Day!



Help is Near
info@NWfruit.org

NWF Members: Send questions about your newly grafted tree or other curiosities in your garden. Include photos. Our experts will respond to help you diagnose and find treatment for pests and disease.

Upcoming Events

- 9 to Noon Workdays — Fun and educational Thursday Work Days every week. In the spring we will bring back Saturday workdays, for aspiring volunteers who can't come on Thursdays. Learn more about all that's going on, and new ideas being proposed, by joining us. For more information contact Garden Manager Tom Wake or Garden Committee Co-Chair Colleen Sanders, info@NWfruit.org
- Several workshop days are offered each year, sometimes with fruit sampling, depending on the season. We'll be making cider one or two Thursdays this fall. Free to members.
- Apple and Pear Sample the Harvest Day second Saturday in October, with educational classes on related garden techniques and information. Members and paying visitors are allowed to keep a portion of the harvested fruit.
- Winter Field Day -- Second Saturday in March at NWREC, 16650 State Route 536. This event centers around grafting, with scionwood & rootstocks for sale along with expert guidance. Go home with an inexpensive new baby tree and knowledge for its care. Free admission with up-to-date membership. Details in February Newsletter.
- Annual Membership Meeting - March 9, 2024