



Natural Matters

Exploring Naturally Beautiful Backyards

September 2008

Welcome!

It is with great enthusiasm and excitement that I greet you as the new coordinator of The Naturally Beautiful Backyards program at Columbia Springs! The leadership baton has been handed to me and I'm off to a swift start as I schedule and meet with volunteers, organize workshops, plan for events, and represent this great program to the citizens of Clark County. With nearly four weeks of experience, I have already enjoyed meeting some of you at the August volunteer meeting (many thanks to Monique and Jo Anne for co-facilitating a valuable Garden Tour debrief!). I have also had the opportunity to represent Naturally Beautiful Backyards at the recent Parade of Homes, which showcased state-of-the-art green building practices including landscaping with a variety of native plants. What a great beginning!

As I familiarize myself with the roots and branches of the NBB program, I would like to ask that you please call me or email me anytime if you think of something to share that might make your experience of volunteering with Naturally Beautiful Backyards better. I want to learn about and continue with everything that has worked in the past, while improving and expanding the program wherever possible. Your input and feedback in this process are vital, and will ensure that we're making your experience the best it can be. Already, Laura Sauermilch has presented a great idea that is very helpful: She suggested that I provide volunteers with the names and phone numbers of the other people that will be stationed at the table or booth with them, before them, and after them. That way, any coordinating, questions, or other needs that arise can be directly and efficiently addressed. Thanks Laura! We've adopted that practice, and it's already been beneficial to several people. Please keep the suggestions coming.

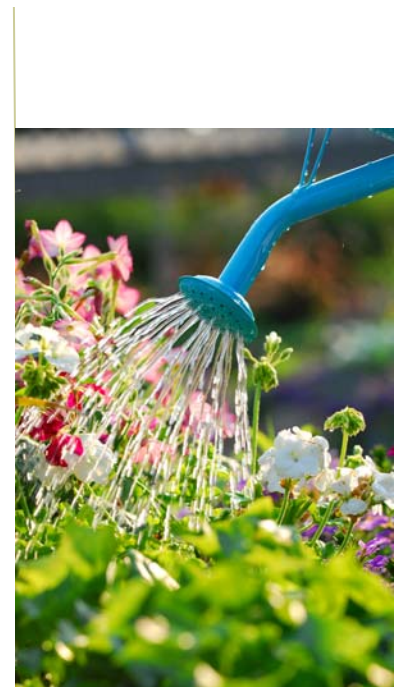
I look forward to meeting more of you at our next volunteer meeting, on September 18th from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. Until then, keep it green!



~ Kenneth

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Upcoming Meetings, Workshops, and Opportunities

Volunteer Meeting

Thursday, 9/18

6:00 PM to 8:00 PM



Garden Harvest Potluck!

Location: Columbia Springs

Join us for an informal garden-side harvest potluck in the yard behind the Columbia Springs "Heron House." We'll have a chance to get to know each other and hear about the latest developments in each others' gardens.

Our kitchen will be available for cooking/warming and washing dishes. Please let us know if you can bring extra plates, utensils, and/or cups so we can avoid using disposables!

Earth-friendly Gardening Workshop

Monday, September 22

6:30 to 8:00 PM

A free workshop on Earth-friendly techniques to plan and manage landscapes and gardens will be offered at the Water Resources Education Center, 4600 SE Columbia Way, Vancouver. The workshop will be presented by Kenneth O'Brien and Jo Anne Dolan of the Naturally Beautiful Backyards program at Columbia Springs, in partnership with the Clark County Solid Waste Program.

Benefits of taking a sustainable approach to gardens and landscapes will be presented and discussed. Topics covered in the workshop will include, starting a natural garden or landscape area, choosing plant species that support native wildlife, alternatives to chemicals, and strategies for the efficient management of resources such as water and nutrients.

The workshop will take place in the theater located on the ground floor of the Water Resources Education Center. Pre-registration is requested

New Opportunity!

2008 Columbia River

Watershed Festival

Friday September 19

Cottonwood Beach (Clark Park) - Washougal

We have opportunities for 5-10 volunteers to help out with this event, guiding groups of elementary students through learning stations between 9:30 AM and 1:30 PM.

America Recycles Day

Clark County Fix-it Fair

November 15

1 Volunteer needed to give a half-hour presentation on Naturally Beautiful Backyards.

This is a great opportunity to gain experience with public speaking in a relaxed and casual setting.

"I think the true gardener is a lover of his flowers, not a critic of them. I think the true gardener is the reverent servant of Nature, not her truculent, wife-beating master. I think the true gardener, the older he grows, should more and more develop a humble, grateful and uncertain spirit." Reginald Farrer, *In a Yorkshire Garden*, 1909



Naturally Beautiful Backyards is a program of Columbia Springs. It is offered in partnership with Clark County Solid Waste Program and is a cooperative effort of Battle Ground, Camas, Clark County, Columbia Springs, La Center, Ridgefield, Vancouver, Washougal, and Yacolt.

Comments, questions, or suggestions:

Kenneth O'Brien
Columbia Springs
12602 SE Evergreen HWY,
Vancouver, WA 98683
(360) 891-1992
nbb@columbiasprings.org

