

WHERE DO YOU *NOT* WANT TO GO TODAY?

THE GARDEN CURMUDGEON

AS YOU CAN IMAGINE, the Garden Curmudgeon prefers to keep a low profile. She is not a joiner. She is, however, tuned in to all things garden, for that is both her vocation and her curse. Every year, just after the flower and garden show winds down, the lists of garden-related classes, events, teas, parties, functions, exhibits, lectures, symposiums and seminars start filling her mailbox. Simply keeping track of the events isn't enough: She must wade through them all, like a bag of Jelly Bellies half full of her least favorite flavor, in order to find the events that really float her boat.

How to choose? Starting with March 6, you had your choice of "Rose Pruning and Care" at the Magnolia Garden Center, "Tips for New Gardeners" at Emery's Garden, and "Edible Ornamentals" at Sky (to name but a few events that day). If, on the off chance, none of these appealed, you could get on a plane and head south to the San Diego Spring Home/Garden Show held in Del Mar. Sure, it'd be crowded, but at least it'd be sunny and crowded.

The following Saturday, March 13, presented the best argument for human cloning yet to grace these pages (and the first?). Starting at 9:30 in the morning, Clone A had to be at the Molbaks seminar while Clone B learned to prune pines at the Graham Visitor's Center with fabulous pruning artist Barb Engram. At 10 a.m., Clone A attended "Early Season Pruning Tips" at Emery's, but Clone B had to hop a ferry to

make her 11 a.m. date at Bainbridge Gardens. Meanwhile, at 11 a.m., Clone A attended "Spring Bulbs for Summer Beauty" at Sky Nursery. The clones had lunch and a quick reconnoiter before heading back to Sky Nursery for their Cedar Grove Compost primer.

Other scary calendar dates for Northwest gardeners are the dreaded Heronswood opens. The Kingston and Bainbridge ferries weigh down like my tomcat in the kitchen at Thanksgiving. Wealthy older women scrutinize their Heronswood catalogs and trash talk lesser gardens, all the while hoping to connect with Dan Hinkley and invite him to supper. Because you know that guy is starving for company. Why do you think he collects plants in Nepal and Tibet?

Parking at Heronswood on open days is strictly controlled; otherwise cars would pile on top of each other

(politely, of course, in a passive aggressive Norwegian kind of way). What nobody seems to realize is that Heronswood Nursery, while world-class, is not inaccessible on other days of the year! The Heronswood catalog reads: "The nursery is open by appointment only... We are only open for on-site shopping by appointment through mid-

February, and then a limited number of days beginning in early March through mid-May. At other times of the year we can schedule your visit to begin between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Monday through Friday, with few exceptions."

The scariest month of all is April. Now, we know that it's going to be cold and wet well into the end of May (June, even!), but still we have plant sales in April, and all of them must occur at exactly the same time! April 17 and 18 mark the Master Gardener Plant Sale and Garden Fair at CUH, which just happens to coincide with the NPA plant sale at Sandpoint. The following weekend, April 24 and 25, FlorAbundance—a fancy marketing term for pricey pretties we'll probably kill before the 4th of July—takes place, also at Sandpoint, and fortunately the only plant sale that weekend.

As she writes this in March, the Garden Curmudgeon is positively exhausted and she hasn't even gardened yet. The garden show ended last month and here we are fussing about our calendars well into summer. Yes, I know we're fortunate to live in such a garden-friendly place. And yes, I know we're fortunate to have such world-class educators living amongst us. But I'm curious: When does anyone have time to garden? I presented this question to the Original Garden Curmudgeon, and as always, he had the perfect one-liner. "We go to these events, my dear, so that we don't HAVE to garden. 📺"

The Garden Curmudgeon is an NHS member that wishes to remain anonymous.

