

WEST COAST NURSERY

Beauty evolves from tragedy

By HEATHER SMITH THOMAS
For the Capital Press

MONROE, Wash. — For more than 40 years, this 22-acre nursery in Monroe, Wash., has been growing conifers, flowering and shade trees, privacy hedges plus a wide range of container perennials for garden projects.

Specialties include Japanese maples, red maples, katsura, stewartia, dogwoods, excelsa cedar, hinoki cypress, laurels, emerald green arbovitae and many other trees.

Becky Crisp purchased the nursery in November, 2021.

“There were two owners before me and it was mainly wholesale. Now we sell wholesale and retail but offer



West Coast Nursery
Becky Crisp with her daughter, Stevie.

wholesale prices to everyone. This is easier than trying to mark it up and then discount it, plus gives us an edge on our competition,” she said.

She also owns a large dump-truck business, Fischer Trucking, which she took



Jaylen Crisp and Natalie Holcolm at a farmers market. The nursery has seven full-time employees.

over 3 years ago, after her husband died.

“It was depression/suicide. Losing him was part of the reason I bought this nursery.

I have a 7-year-old daughter and I felt this would be a good place for her to grow up — along with incorporating the trucking business with the nursery,” Becky said.

“We plan on doing family events with memorial tree days, addressing mental health/suicide awareness. This was one of the reasons I bought the nursery, as well as the fact I felt it was a good investment and a place to raise a daughter,” she said.

Many people like to plant a tree in memory of a loved one — so she’s been setting up special dates for these events.

Becky has also been attending farmers markets at Monroe, Duvall and Snohomish.

“We sell perennial plants



West Coast Nursery
Chris Bruner does tractor work at West Coast Nursery.

at those markets and also have kids’ crafts and coloring sheets related to the nursery, and some fun potting projects for the kids,” she said. “At the Monroe farmers market in early July they had a kids’ day, and I brought small annuals and little pots and the kids sat at picnic tables to pot their own flowers for free.”

“When I bought this place I had no idea what we grew. It was like when my husband passed away and I didn’t know how many dump trucks we had. I just had to learn, and kept that business running,” Becky said.

“It’s amazing how much a person can learn in a short time. My daughter knows every tree we grow at the nursery, and she’s only seven. We grow a variety of trees and shrubs and bring in others,” she said. “We do some plant brokering and

lately have been sending orders to Alaska, supplying nurseries there.

“People also call when they need native plants for restoration projects or mitigation programs,” Becky said.

The nursery has 7 full-time employees and is open every day. Dinicio Karman has been with the nursery 17 years as field manager. He is responsible for planting the trees, digging them up to sell and maintaining their health.

April Samuelson does the greenhouses and takes care of all the plants that are brought in, shifting them to larger pots and taking care of them.

Chris Bruner has an extensive background in trees and plants. Natalie Holcolm is office assistant and helps with sales and coordinating the farmers markets. Everyone plays an important role in the team effort, she said.

“In the fall we do all our digging, and spring and summer tend to be our busier months with selling. We have many regular landscaping customers and currently doing a big order for a restoration/mitigation program near Chelan and delivering plants for a new housing development,” she said.

The nursery also sells bulk materials, soils, compost and gravel and has several large greenhouses that house a variety of shrubs and perennial plants. One greenhouse is strictly for plants native to Washington.

“We also take in feral cats. They help keep down rodents, which are hard on young trees,” she said. “People are welcome to visit the nursery, and we have little riding tractors for the kids so they can ride around while their parents shop.”



SERVING LOCAL BUSINESS SINCE 1910

ERNST
Irrigation • Electrical • Tractor

ERNST IS YOUR *FULL SERVICE* AGRICULTURAL DEALERSHIP.

WE WILL FULFILL ALL YOUR IRRIGATION, CUSTOM IRRIGATION DESIGN, AG EQUIPMENT PARTS, HARDWARE, ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT, SYSTEMS DESIGN & SERVICES, TRACTOR REPAIR, IMPLEMENT REPAIR, ATV & LAWNMOWER NEEDS.

OUR OUTSTANDING STAFF OFFERS YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE TO SUPPORT YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS, LARGE OR SMALL.

WE ARE HERE TO SERVE YOU!

20179 MAIN ST. NE, SAINT PAUL, OR 97137
WWW.ERNSTIRRIGATION.COM, 503-633-1111

5272949-1

FRESH SAWDUST

- Fresh Sawdust or Shavings
- HogFuel also available
- Consistently Fair Pricing



CALL TODAY FOR PRICING!
503-849-0216 • FOREST GROVE, OR