

# ORCHARD CELEBRATES 30 FRUITFUL YEARS

HOME ORCHARD SOCIETY GROWS APPLES, PAWPAWS, PERSIMMONS, GOUMI BERRIES, QUINCES AND MORE



Tonia Lordy and Clair Oliphant trim off excess fruits to improve the quality of the thriving fruits.



Tonia Lordy helps mason bees to reproduce.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY SHAYLYN STRUNA

Clackamas Community College bares its fruits.

There is an orchard on campus located at the Arboretum, across from the Environmental Learning Center. The college leases the land out to the Home Orchard Society. The Arboretum is celebrating their 30th anniversary this year.

Tonia Lordy, manager of the Arboretum, said, "The HOS is a non-profit organization that started in 1976 by a group of Portland-area residents who were growing their own fruit and wanted to share their knowledge with other people."

In 1986, the HOS came across CCC in search for land, and were given an acre for an annual fee of \$10 in exchange for providing educational opportunities for both students and the community.

Jonie Cooper became president of the HOS in 1988.

"It's to have an opportunity for people to come to the Arboretum and learn about growing food in their own yard or orchard. We want to enhance the availability so that people can come and learn at the orchard," said Cooper.

The Arboretum is open to the community on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., year-round.

Every year, the HOS hosts an open house at the Arboretum. This year it will be in August and will be a potluck. Visit the website [www.homeorchardsociety.org](http://www.homeorchardsociety.org)

to see an update of when the actual date is set.

HOS is a member-based nonprofit and the board consists of all volunteers. Lordy is contracted to manage the grounds, train volunteers and develop educational programming. There are internship opportunities through the Cooperative Work Experience program at CCC.

Throughout the year, classes such as pruning and grafting are hosted at the Arboretum. They also teach soil health, management and harvesting, among other things. All of the classes are listed on the website. Some classes are co-hosted through the college and will be available at registration. The horticulture department has a fruit and berry growing class offered during summer term, which is held at the Arboretum.

Claire Oliphant, an intern at the orchard, said, "My goal for this was to get the experience of actually running an orchard. I really like coming here. It satisfies an itch."

Oliphant interns every Tuesday and does whatever needs to be done. This includes pruning and grafting but it changes every day due to the orchards need to be healthy.

"She's [Lordy] a really great teacher. So every time I'm here, I'm learning something new," said Oliphant.

The orchard raises mason bees and sells them as a fundraiser. The bees have a life expectancy of about eight

weeks. The Arboretum helps to keep them reproducing on the grounds because they are considered a beneficial, which is a bug that helps the plants thrive.

"There's probably about 500 fruiting tree, shrubs and vines in this Arboretum," said Lordy.

There are about 200 different kinds of apples, 60 kinds of European pears, 20 kinds of Asian pears and many other fruits you've probably never heard of.

Lordy said, "We have pawpaw which is a North American native fruit that sort of has the texture of a mango, but tastes like banana."

Fruits and trees are also sold here. Price varies by the fruit, apples run about \$2 a pound and pears run about \$2.50 a pound.

Harvest season depends on the fruit. The honey berries have been harvested, next will be plums, pears, apples, grapes, persimmon, kiwi and quince. Harvest lasts from May until November and all the fruits are grown organically.

The Arboretum is also looking for photographers and marketing students to work with, as well as art students who may be looking to donate sculptures or a paint mural.

If you're looking to volunteer at the orchard, contact Lordy at [arboretum@homeorchardsociety.org](mailto:arboretum@homeorchardsociety.org).

Volunteers are sent home with a basket of fruit.