

in the garden

Q&A

with Cathy Peterson

Q: This seems to be a different sort of winter, with moderate temperatures. Does that present opportunities for coastal gardeners?

A: Coastal gardeners can take advantage of those moderate temperatures, particularly home gardeners using greenhouses, hoop houses or window boxes, but I would still pay close attention to frost this early in the year. Also, it has been my experience that these mild winters prevent a garden pest die-off so I plan to be more vigilant in spring when we start our vegetable garden, and to keep an eye out for chewing insects and slugs.

Q: What's the most recent gardening book you've read that you would recommend?

A: While I wouldn't call it so much a "gardening book," my go-to guide at the park is Jim Pojar and Andy MacKinnon's "Plants of the Pacific Northwest Coast," Lone Pine Publishing, 1994. Just last week I had a discussion with a visitor about the different lichens and moss found at Lewis and Clark National Historical Park. My Pojar and MacKinnon definitely informs me and helps me sound informed!

I also am a great fan of plant collector and author Dan Hinkley and keep a couple of old Heronswood Garden catalogs around for inspiration and quick reading.

Q: What is your favorite plant?

A: That's hard because we can grow so much here. I would have to say that I am a big fan these days of hardy and disease-resistant plants. I've been growing a big herb bed for a couple of summers now, and have enjoyed having a mix of flowering herbs that attract pollinators, and savory herbs that taste good in our food. I've also made a concerted effort to have different varieties of catmint for their beautiful flowers, as well as a reward for our two hardworking mousers.

Q: What is your most significant coastal gardening failure?

A: About 10 years ago, my friends and I swapped plant starts that have since grown out of control. One is



JOSHUA BESSEX — The Daily Astorian

Education Program Coordinator at the Lewis and Clark National Historical Park Cathy Peterson stands along the Fort to Sea Trail. Peterson is a Master Gardener.



Photo courtesy Cathy Peterson

A photo of Cathy Peterson's son and daughter, Ben and Jenna, in the family garden, about 10 or so years ago.

curly germander, a tough little herb that deer hate, but also appears to be impossible to curb. The other vora-

cious grower in my ornamental beds is Crane's Bill geranium. With its pale pink flowers and ability to fill in blank spaces, Crane's Bill seemed like such a good idea. What was I thinking?!!!

Q: What part of your personality is reflected in your garden?

A: My practice to "collect" stories and memories informs how I have gardened. For instance, there's a Japanese maple that a family friend gave us when our son Ben was born. Now 19 years later the tree has withstood a move, and anchors our front yard with interesting color, intricate branching and the capacity to survive our clumsy pruning attempts with patience and grace. We have another tree in our front yard, a Cercidiphyllum or Katsura, with heart shaped leaves that smell like brown sugar in fall. Friends gave us the tree when our daughter Jenna came into the world. After 15 years, it's tall, dramatic and spectacular year-round.

Cathy Peterson is a Master Gardener and the education program coordinator at Lewis and Clark National Historical Park. She formerly wrote a gardening for The Daily Astorian.

Emergency beacons can be lifesavers

By JESSI LOERCH
The Daily Herald



A Spot locator is helpful to hikers and others who may become lost.

quickly determined that Frech needed advanced medical care. She and her companion were airlifted to an ambulance and transferred to a hospital. Without the SPOT, they would likely have been stuck in the backcountry for days. She is recovering but doctors are still trying to determine exactly what made her ill.

Call for help

The SPOT is just one type of device that, through a satellite connection, can call for a rescue in the backcountry.

Miles McDonough, a member of the Snohomish County Helicopter Rescue Team, is a huge advocate for devices. His reasons are personal as well as professional. In 2011, McDonough fell while climbing on Mount Stuart in Chelan County. He suffered a concussion, broken shoulder, fractured ribs and punctured lung. His climbing partner had to leave him on the mountain while he climbed and hiked out to call for a rescue. McDonough spent the night on

EVERETT, Wash. — Lisa Jo Frech was five days into a 10-day, 170-mile hike on the Pacific Crest Trail near Glacier Peak when she passed out. She's an experienced hiker, had trained hard for the trail and was feeling strong up to that point.

Oh, well, she figured, sometimes people faint.

She walked on with her hiking partner for another 8 1/2 miles. Then she fainted again. Soon after, when her friend handed her a water bottle, she couldn't even grasp it. The bottle slipped right through her hands.

Her hiking companion set up camp, and they spent a rough night wondering what to do. They had a SPOT, a device that can use a satellite signal to request a rescue in the wilderness. Was it time to push the button?

The next morning, it was clear Frech wasn't up to more hiking — she was repeatedly passing out. They carefully made their way to an open area at Kennedy Creek and decided to call for help.

"I'll just never forget feeling of those words coming up like bile, saying, 'Do it, hit the 911 button,'" Frech said. "It was a difficult decision, but no question, we made the right decision."

Two and a half hours after they pushed the button, the Snohomish County Helicopter Rescue Team arrived. The crew

TODAY'S Technology

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AP Photo/The Herald, Joe Dyer

In this Aug. 2, 2012 photo, a search and rescue volunteer glides down to the ground on a line from a Huey helicopter as part of a training exercise at Taylor's Landing Search and Rescue Facility in Snohomish, Wash.

the mountain. It was 22 hours before he was in a hospital. With a beacon, he said, he could have been there in three hours.

As a professional, McDonough says that beacons can help keep rescuers, as well as the rescued, safe.

Some devices offer two-way communication that can provide vital information to rescuers. Billy "Shepherd"

Hanson, who was rescued on Oct. 5 near the White Chuck River, had such a device. Hanson was hiking the PCT and needed to resupply. He followed a trail that he didn't know was washed out. When he realized he was lost and didn't have enough food and water to get back safely, he made the decision to press the SOS button on his DeLorme inReach, a device that links

with a smartphone and is capable of two-way communication.

He told the command center he was lost and low on food and water. That information was relayed to the local search and rescue. The helicopter rescue team picked him up the next morning after deciding not to make a dangerous flight at night for an uninjured hiker.

"That saved search and rescue a lot of risk," said McDonough, who was one of the rescuers on the mission with the Helicopter Rescue Team.

Just a few days after Hanson's rescue, a woman became lost while hiking the Mount Defiance Trail near Snoqualmie Pass. She did not have a beacon with her. In contrast with Hanson's case, it took rescuers three days to find her. Ultimately, McDonough and his team managed to spot her just as they were heading back because the helicopter was getting low on fuel. During the days spent looking for the hiker, many rescuers were on the ground and in the air, searching. While rescuers are happy to do that work, the risk of something happening to a rescuer or the lost hiker grows as more people are involved and the search lengthens.

A locator beacon can also benefit the companions of an injured person. Being able to call for a rescue allows the companions to stay and care for the victim, rather than having to hike or climb out, possibly in the dark, while worried and rushed.

McDonough does emphasize that beacons are only for true emergencies. To that end, it's important to be well-equipped with the 10 essentials, and to have taken a wilderness first-aid course. That will give people the skills to assess whether or not you truly need a rescue.

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