



PHOTOS BY MARILYN GILBAUGH

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The gardens

To protect the privacy of hosts, owners' names and garden locations are revealed on a site map available the day of the tour.

- In Chinook, an owner's home was literally picked up and moved forward.

The result: a closer view of the Columbia River and an expanded front and back garden. It's complete with a bevy of bountiful blooms, raised vegetable beds, a large garden shed and chickens, too.

"I love talking about my garden, anytime, anywhere," the host said.

- In Seaview, a residence belonging to a busy working couple has a fully remodeled home and yard.

She is a container gardener, changing pots out with plants that suit the seasons (and her whims); he, a professional landscaper, is in charge of the home's exterior stone walls and sod.

"I hope we will be ready for the tour," he said. She responded: "We will be."

- Heading north to Long Beach, there's a one-acre site that looks much larger. A small farm with several hoop houses, also known as domed polytunnels, encourages flowers and vegetables.

The owners constantly test new things. "This year, it's immature ginger, wasabi and turmeric," the man of the house said. Don't miss the unique exterior sprinkling system — innovation at work.

- At Tide's West in Long Beach, a DIY-enthusiast is an avid gardener, landscaper and builder.

She goes way beyond working with your basic screwdrivers. She built her out-buildings as well as her wide, welcoming porch. An extensive garden, colorful shed and porch all complement each other.

"I'm constantly adding things. I don't know when



to quit. All of this is my passion, and that's good," she said.

- Also in the Long Beach area, a cozy cottage scarcely hints at the extensive backyard landscaping that borders a towering forest.

"Gardens are a lot of work. You've got to stay with them. And we're trying to get it back in shape after our miserable winter," the host said.

- Heading north on the Peninsula toward Oyster-

ville, on Sandridge Road there's an edible oasis, a forest of gardening that includes fruit trees.

"If you get it right, your food forest will feel like it belongs ... needing little human input while producing things like fruits, mushrooms or whatever," the host said.

- In historic Oysterville, a compound with several out-buildings also includes a large grass croquet field, which is like a putting green and as smooth, requires mowing twice. Vegetable and fruit gardens dominate the backyard. Flowers bloom throughout the property.

Artists, music, craftspeople

In the seven gardens, there is more activity than just what grows.

Plein air artists — Noel Thomas, a prominent Astoria watercolorist, is returning — will be busy with easels and brushes.

Craftspeople will display their wares. And musicians will offer everything from indie-rock, blues and bluegrass, to classical. Light refreshments and a raffle are also on tap.

New this year is the colorful touring trolley. Seats will be sold on a first-come basis; tickets are available online. The trolley offers 30 people an opportunity to sit back and be chauffeured from garden to garden.

Stop and smell the roses — or the myriad of other flora and fauna that, with love a great deal of tending, grow into things of beauty. Look, listen, taste and learn.

Music in the Gardens is one of several fundraisers for the Water Music Society, whose mission is to bring classical, jazz and rock-classics to the Peninsula. Each year, the Society continues to make generous donations to the Peninsula area schools' music programs. 