

Hoquiam Farmer's Market News - Memorial Day Edition

Local News

Posted by:

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It may be raining right now, but the forecast for Memorial Day weekend is excellent! The rain just makes it easier to concentrate on getting your work finished before rummaging around to find last year's bottle of sunscreen lotion. We have the perfect cut flower for your Memorial Weekend bouquets- glorious deep red Peonies! Our grower, Frank, was featured on the front page of The Daily World yesterday. He tells me that the fields are rather soggy today, but since the blossoms are cut while in tight bud, the rain doesn't affect the quality of the flowers at all. Three stems of Red Charm Peonies are enough to make a lavish bouquet, but for only \$2.00 per stem, you can splurge on as many as you want. The perfume fragrance will scent your home. You will feel like a princess, pampered with lavish flowers. It's okay, you deserve it! WE also have the exotic and highly esteemed Garlic Scapes available right now. These come from Judy's Elephant garlic plants. She trims the green growth and bud so that the strength will return to growing the garlic bulb under the soil. These are a gourmet's delight- delicate enough to chop and toss into a green salad, lovely to saute with vegetables. The flavor is delicate, rather than the robust assertive flavor of the garlic clove. Only .25 each!

We have Ruth's hanging tomato baskets, direct from her East Hoquiam Road greenhouse. Baskets are the perfect way to grow tomatoes- slugs can't reach them, the soil moisture is up to you, not the weather, and they can be placed in the sunniest spot you have. You'll be plucking tomatoes from them all summer long! Our bedding plants are thriving, ready to go into your garden. My experience last year with planting leeks from seed means that this year I'm beginning with nice starts. I didn't harvest mine until October, these will be hitting the dinner plate in August at the latest. We have a multitude of choices, from beans, lettuce, kale, kohlrabi, squash, pumpkins, herbs- oh, and seed potatoes! We have 7 varieties of seed potatoes, and now is the perfect time to get them in the ground. You need some depth for growing good potatoes. If you've been creating a compost pile that needs some attention, just smooth it over and plant your potatoes there. You'll have an abundant crop that will see you through next winter. One of my best friends is going to France this summer. Not only that, she and her husband are riding their bicycles through France! Now this is a trip I would love to make, but I haven't yet convinced my Joe that he wants to go biking through France. Not that I don't have some powerful forces of persuasion at my disposal, but he can be remarkably stubborn at times. I may be an old (older!) lady before he caves in, so for now I am quite content with make believe. When I announce to Joe that I'd like to go biking in France on Saturday, he smiles and nods, secure in the knowledge that I'm only asking that we go to the Preacher's Slough Trail outside of Montesano. Why, you may ask, does this compare to riding the rolling hills of Alsace or pulling up to a chateau in Bourgogne? The very first time that we rode this trail I was overwhelmed by the beauty and mystery of a forest that was set apart from all time or place. In this small three mile trail, the outside world is blocked as completely as though by an invisible shield. The trees lean protectively, as if embracing and welcoming those who venture in. There are informational signs that speak of communities which once inhabited the backwater sloughs of the Chehalis River. No trace remains. The last abandoned house crumbled back into the earth several years ago, leaving only wisps of memory and imagination

to tell its story. We usually chatter on bike rides, or at least I do- Joe being more the strong silent type. But the Preacher's Slough trail subdues my instincts to talk. The great cathedrals of the world always reduce me to respectful and awestruck silence. The sunlight filtering down through the mossy branches is as achingly beautiful as any stained glass cathedral window, the chirping birds more sweet to the ear than an angelic cathedral choir. It is when we reach the Alder tree allee that I know we have arrived in the French countryside. I have imbedded in my memory the picture of a rustic unpaved lane leading through symmetrical trees, a bicycle with a wicker basket holding the classic long loaf of French bread. There it is, the essence of France. Someday I will buy myself a beret so that the picture is complete. I already have the wicker bike basket and frequently have the bread close at hand. As we ride along I congratulate myself that our little fantasy of France is unspoiled by crowds, the air is fresh and clear, we know the language, and home is only minutes away. No passport required for our trips to France, and the exhilaration of discovery never fades. We have been to Preacher's Slough Trail during every season of the year, each leaving us with precious memories. One winter the trees were heavy laden with snow, the snow too deep to ride our bikes. We walked along with our faces lifted upwards, marveling at the lacelike tracery of the leafless snow-covered branches silhouetted against the brilliant blue sky. The cathedral was glorious that day, outfitted in swathes of white, ready for a celestial wedding. Every day of my life I give thanks for living in such an abundantly stunning corner of this planet. Even though I watch travel shows and know all of Rick Steves episodes by heart, there is no place else that I wish to live. Life is always a choice; you can waste rare moments wishing to be someplace else, wanting to be someone else. Or you can embrace who you are and where you live. You can choose to seek out the beauty around you and preserve it for the future. Thanks to the hard work of volunteers, especially Jay Sterling, I can go to France every day if I wish. Just head south out of Montesano toward Raymond about 4 miles and watch for the trail-head sign on the right. There is good parking, and no crowds. We hardly ever encounter another soul on our pilgrimages. Bliss! Word to the wise- you can find your crusty loaf of French bread at the Hoquiam Farmers Market (Nancy bakes it on Fridays), along with local cheeses and sausages. I'll try to get one of our seamstresses to make some berets. Adieu! Barbara Bennett Parsons, manage of the Grays Harbor Farmers Market and Deidra's Deli in Hoquiam, ph. 538-9747 Open; Tue. Wed. Thu. 9-5:30 Fri. 9-6:00 Sat. 9-5:30 Sun. 10-4 Deidra's Deli is open 7 days a week! Week-nights until 7pm- call 538-5880-- Grays Harbor Public Market info@ghpublicmarket.com