

## Upcoming Events

### Gig Harbor Chum Festival

October 10, 2009

10 am to 5 pm

Next to Donkey Creek Park  
Gig Harbor

*Booths, Kayak Races, Chum Burgers, "Paint Your Own Salmon" t-shirts, and the giant FIN salmon will be part of this event*

*FPC is looking for booth workers. Please contact me if you can help!*

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**Thank you for your support!**

## Community gardens gaining new ground *by Jane Moore*

In 2007, the Gig Harbor and Key Peninsula communities created a strategic plan for improving a community's health through the promotion of exercise and healthy nutrition. The result was the Healthy Communities of Pierce County Gig Harbor – Key Peninsula organization. The idea of creating a network of community gardens in our community began there and has now taken form as a demonstration garden at Gig Harbor's Wilkinson Farm City Park.

Barb Carr, chair of Community Gardens Project, obtained permission from Gig Harbor to plant for one year. In May, volunteers prepared the garden area and planted a large variety of vegetables. Other community members donated most of the fencing materi-

als. The garden has done well and the workers are now harvesting vegetables to donate to the FISH Food Bank.

This demonstration garden will attract community interest and support, bringing people together to learn the knowledge and rewards of organic gardening. In the future, the group will work with schools and the Boys and Girls Club to teach kids about the natural world, physical activity, and healthy nutrition.

This project will "grow" over time by creating several community gardening sites where families can grow produce. The group will host educational workshops and provide resources to help new gardeners with growing techniques and healthy cooking tips. The

group is applying for funding to expanded efforts in the coming years in other communities.

Visit the demonstration garden at Wilkinson Farms. Volunteers for harvesting and maintaining the garden are welcome. To get involved, contact Barb at [ghcommunitygardens@gmail.com](mailto:ghcommunitygardens@gmail.com) or call 253-228-0538. For organizational information contact Jane Moore at [drjanemoore@comcast.net](mailto:drjanemoore@comcast.net) or 253-307-9873. The website is [www.healthypierce.org](http://www.healthypierce.org)



Wilkinson Farm garden  
Photo: Summer Schoenike

## August fundraiser just plain fun

The gathering on August 15 was a fun event for everyone. Thanks to Carmela Micheli who organized and hosted the event and to special guest, Tom Morfee for making sure the event was well attended. Approximately 50 people showed up to try various wines and munch on gourmet pizza homemade by Jamie Holder.

Friends of Pierce County raised over \$600 for its environmental clubs. With the tough economic climate, funding is scarce and we will have to scale back our efforts at the schools. We will build worm composters and work to improve recycling efforts through a energy audits.

You still have time to help us provide quality clubs for the students. Send in your donation today!



Friends mingle over good food and wine.



## Vision

**Communities will strive to utilize all planning strategies that balance the elements of environment, equity, and economics.**

### Board of Directors

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*Friends of Pierce County is a 501 (c) 3 organization.*

*Membership fees and donations are tax deductible.*

## Tips for a Greener You

### *Uses for Eucalyptus oil around the house*

Aside from medicinal uses, eucalyptus oil can be used around your home to replace many environmentally harsh synthetic chemicals.

- You can also make a general disinfectant for toilets. Mix 50 ml (1.6 oz) of eucalyptus oil with a liter (quart) of water.

- Eucalyptus oil can be used neat in order to remove sticker/decal residue from glass.

- Add 1-2 teaspoonfuls of eucalyptus oil to your load of washing for a fresh scent along with the antimicrobial benefits.

- Use the oil neat to help remove paint, grease and ink from clothes.

- If you have a hanging car air freshener that's almost dead, reinvigorate it by adding a few drops of eucalyptus oil.

- Half a teaspoon mixed with half a liter of water makes for a good bug repellent for plants.

- Use it as a stainless steel cleaner.

- To use as a room air freshener, Mix a quarter of a teaspoon or 15 drops of eucalyptus oil with a half teaspoon of vodka, place in an atomizer/spray bottle and add 2 cups of water.

**Source: [www.greenlivingtips.com](http://www.greenlivingtips.com)**

### **What should the Pierce Transit of tomorrow look like? By Jessyn Farrell, Pierce Transit**

In Pierce County, public transportation faces an uncertain future. Despite efforts to control costs, Pierce Transit was forced to reduce bus service 5% in July, 2009. And while everyone hopes the economy will rebound soon, we must be prepared for whatever the future may bring.

Help us make choices about priorities and efficiencies that will be necessary in these difficult economic times. You don't need to be a public transportation expert to help us design service options.

#### **Join us to discuss:**

- Prioritizing service.
- Where you'd like to see improvements and least like to see reductions.
- Regional connections.

#### **Community Design Workshops**

**LAKEWOOD/UNIVERSITY PLACE** 10/6 7-8:30 pm at Pierce Transit Training Center, 3720 96th St SW, Lakewood 98499

Served by Routes 48, 300

PUYALLUP/SOUTH HILL 10/14

**SOUTH TACOMA** 10/15 7-8:30pm South End Neighborhood Center, 7802 South L St, Tacoma 98408 Served by Routes 45, 48

**GIG HARBOR/KEY PENINSULA** 10/20 6:30-8pm Location TBD. Check [PTtomorrow.org](http://PTtomorrow.org) for update. Served by Routes 100, 102

**DOWNTOWN TACOMA** 10/27 7-8:30 pm at Evergreen State College, 1210 6th Ave, Tacoma 98405 Served by Routes 1, 16, 26, 28, 57

**PARKLAND/SPANAWAY** 10/29 7-8:30 pm Parkland/Spanaway Library, 13718 Pacific Ave S, Tacoma 98444 Served by Route 1

**SUMNER/BONNEY LAKE** 11/10 6-7:30 pm at Sumner City Hall, 1104 Maple St, Sumner 98390 Served by Routes 408, 409

**NORTH & WEST TACOMA** 11/12 7-8:30 pm at University of Puget Sound, 1500 N Warner, Tacoma 98416 Served by Routes 16, 51

Follow our progress, give your suggestions, and sign up to get the latest updates at [PTtomorrow.org](http://PTtomorrow.org). Or link to [piercetransit.org](http://piercetransit.org).

## Backyard Farming - is this really the “new” frontier?

They say that everything old is new again. I have contemplated this statement as I struggle to grow organic produce and compost my family's food waste. I think of this statement in two different ways.

The immediate recycling and reusing of products is one way to think of it. The other thought that comes to mind is of early homesteaders eking out a living on what they grew and making it that last through the winter. On many occasions, I would have not survived the winter on my meager rations. Struggles with small and large pests are enough to make one toss out the pruning shears and reach for the can opener.

Stubborn determination drives me on - that and the consideration of the amount of time and money that has already been invested in all of my gardening implements and other supporting items such as seeds, plants, soil and the extremely rank fish fertilizers.

This year, my family and I took one more step into the “eat what you grow” direction. Only this time it involves animals. I don't mean to imply that we would eat the animals, just the products that they produce. If it were up to me to prepare my own meat from the barnyard, I would assuredly be a vegetarian. Being a animal lover has its drawbacks in that regard.

This Spring, my family entered the new frontier of raising our own chickens. The journey started on Earth Day where, after visiting several feed stores, we found cute peeping chicks in cattle feeding troughs with red lamps to light their way and keep them warm.

**Good resources on how to raise chickens:** 1) [www.backyardchickens.com](http://www.backyardchickens.com)  
2) [www.thefarm.org/charities/i4at/lib2/chickens.htm](http://www.thefarm.org/charities/i4at/lib2/chickens.htm)

Every chicken is cute at the age and unfortunately for those of us who want hens for eggs, it is a gamble as to what you take home. After several weeks, they grow less cute and very big. Personalities start to emerge for better or for worse but always amusing to the spectators.

Roosters, I have found are noisy with all their cock a doo a doodling and have strange habits when it comes to the other chickens. For this reason, we have had to locate new homes for the boys.

The progression of residences for my brood, was from my laundry room to my garage to outside in the coop. It seemed to take forever to get the chickens out of my garage but what a glorious day when they



**Chicken coop enclosed for protection from predators**

got to be outside as real chickens should.

Several types of chickens now inhabit their new home and struggle for peace and harmony. Named by my two children, Achilles (a girl), Athena, Ralph (a girl), Charlotte (a boy), Stormy, Smokie and Louise eat and sleep, such is the life of a chicken.

They do get out of the coop twice a day for supervised run-arounds in my yard. I think this might be considered Free Range.



**Ralph, Achilles and Louise resting.**

When all is said and done, any eggs my family enjoys will probably cost me about \$200, but I am sure it will be worth it. The chickens provide free garden compost and comic amusement.

So, should we all go back to growing our own vegetables and raising our own chickens? Could this be the new frontier? Even after all the work, time and money, I would have to say “Yes”. There is a current trend of community gardens and homeowners ripping out entire lawns to plant gardens.

My hats off to those who can grow their own food with enough to can for the winter. I stand in awe of such feats.

Right now, I will harvest my one tomato a day, look at my eight-inch high sunflowers, wait for my pinky sized zucchini to grow large as a baseball bat and wait, wait, wait for any eggs that might appear in my chicken's coop. I know that will also be a glorious day!



# Join FPC today!

As a member, you will receive newsletters and weekly email updates informing you of county-wide planning, development and environmental issues.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is \$35 for my annual membership dues.

\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is a donation for \$ \_\_\_\_.

I am interested in helping with the following:

\_\_\_\_ Environmental

\_\_\_\_ Education and Outreach

\_\_\_\_ Fundraising

\_\_\_\_ Membership

\_\_\_\_ Communications

\_\_\_\_ Budget/Finance

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