

February 2013 Eaglesong Evans: Your lifestyle in harmony with nature

EagleSong EvansGardener worked as the Director of Natural Beauty at The Willows Lodge in Woodinville for ten years. She presented the topic, “Your Lifestyle In Harmony with Nature,” with a slide show from gardens around the world illustrating the five principles of gardening. She believes in circular thinking about planning a garden, not linear. The five principles are as follows: 1. Engage the sense of place-Genus Loci. Use concept of infinity and creativity. 2. Derive beauty from function to create beautifully, livable landscapes. 3. Use a number of indigenous materials to create comfort, pleasure, and gratification. 4. Marry the inside to the outside, blurring lines between those areas being built and those that are natural. 5. Involve the visitor; engage the senses.

Her philosophy is to engage the spirit that rests in the place that nourishes the soul. Discover and preserve what is special in your garden and work with what you’ve been given. Consider the site itself, and its design potential. Don’t re-create nature, but interpret it as art. That which gives people and place, gives the blessing of spirit and place. Consider what is there already, the sun’s location, winds, shade, etc. Don’t impose on a site what we think should be there; give into the nature of nature. It is a dialogue with nature, not fighting with it. In deriving beauty from function, support a pattern of living. For instance, pathways are important, as are service areas such as a composting area. Make sure you have the right plant for the right place. Avoid chemicals and recycle. Fences set up boundaries.

It’s all about the landscape. For instance, some Japanese gardens are set up to tell a story of how we get through life. Night lighting accentuates a garden, especially 12V lighting. Look through rock yards, selecting indigenous rock for pathways and accents. Wakisaki, meaning “single elegance”, emphasizes natural meandering which has a flow and is not straight. Match the vertical with the low lying or spreading plants. Have a “veld”, a place between two disparate places like a transition. This does not have to be neat. To involve the visitor to your garden, have chairs or benches with scented flowers around including herb and vegetable gardens. She ended her presentation with a plea to have gardening programs in the schools for all ages. She also had natural products such as moisturizers and salves, plus books on composting and raising your own food. She designs, consults and mentors.