

THE NEW WESTMINSTER HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Club address: Suite 392, 104—1015 Columbia St., New Westminister, V3M 6V3

www.newwesthortsociety.org

Editor: Audrey Barnes, 604-526-8284 before 8pm;

December 2005

CLUB MEETING CALENDAR:

CHRISTMAS PARTY & AWARDS NIGHT:

Tonight, of course! Should be a great evening. The feast prepared by A & F Catering (604-594-3384) runs from 6:30 to 7:30. The normal obscure Trivia Quiz. A raffle prize collection that is probably our best ever—tickets a steal at 2 for \$1!. (All proceeds of this year's raffle will be donated to the **Salvation Army**). And, of course, the Annual Awards Night—our salute to members who excelled in the Parlour Show, Photo Contest and Container Contest. A good time for all is guaranteed!

EXECUTIVE MEETING: 7:30pm, Tues, Jan 10th, at Audrey's. The new executive takes over. The date is earlier than normal to allow time to write the annual club mailer.

PARLOUR SHOW EVALUATION MEETING: 7pm, Tues, Jan 17th, at Audrey's. If you have concerns or opinions on the evolution or dissolution of our Parlour Show, talk to Audrey about attending this meeting. If the meeting time does not work for you, please submit your views in writing. At the meeting, we will decide the proposal to put forward for a membership vote.

FEBRUARY 2006 MEETING: 7:45pm, Tues, Feb 14th. Speaker to be confirmed. Annual memberships are due at this meeting. Keep your eyes peeled for the mailer we will be sending to all members in January.

THE 2006 NWHS EXECUTIVE:

President: Audrey Barnes

Vice president: Carole Forsythe

Secretary: Sharon Seki

Treasurer: Mary Barnard

Parlour Show Secretary: Lori Graham

Member at Large:

Lori Jenvey

Monica Mowat

Ann Paisley

Roy Pegler

Lesley Wood

A keen group! It will seem strange not having Ellen or Joan on the executive. Thankfully, both have vowed to stay active. Very valuable members. Ellen (with her cast of supporting family members) has been one of the most involved executive for many years. Joan is in a unique position to carry on her role as liaison with New West Parks.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER: by Audrey

Once again we're at that cusp—simultaneously looking back at the great year we had and looking forward to how we can make 2006 even better.

It may be old hat but I really would like to thank those members who have readily come forward and volunteered their time and skills to make our club special. It is impossible to list them all. A club like ours is only as strong as the members who become involved. We are very fortunate to have such generous people amongst us. In the world, there are givers and takers. So nice to be surrounded by the former.

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

LOOKING TOWARD 2006:

In our January mailer we plan to once again present ideas of speakers and outings for your feedback. We will list them and for each ask you to indicate your level of interest: great idea/topic; so-so idea; or couldn't care less about it. We would like your personal choices for the list. If the response is positive, we'll do our best to line up a speaker or organize the outing or workshop. Audrey's contact information is part of this newsletter's letterhead.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT: Last month we held the clubs AGM and another very successful Silent Auction. To summarize the AGM: Everyone was in agreement: The 2006 Speaker Budget of \$2000 and the motion to enlarge the executive to up to 5 members at large were unanimously approved. The proposed slate for the 2006 executive was acclaimed. Nice and simple! The Silent Auction was the normal, frenzied evening of fun and hunting for bargains. Many thanks to everyone who donated items. Thanks also to the great crew who helped with the set-up. The smoothest set-up ever! It was nice that we could get into the room early. The take: \$776 and counting (there are still a few "bought but not collected" items in Audrey's possession). Not a record total, but pretty impressive.

THIS 'N' THAT:

■Were you the high bidder on a pyrex teapot (the one without a lid) last month? Lesia Gojda has found the lid and has passed it onto Audrey for distribution to the rightful owner. See her tonight.

■Mary Barnard cannot believe it. Somehow she has misplaced her October 2005 copy of Sunset Magazine. Does anyone by chance have one they no longer want? Her number: 604-525-5928.

■Lesley Wood is still searching for members who would like to get involved in the committee that will draw up some guidelines for evaluating projects that NWHS could choose to support financially. Please contact her if interested: 604-520-1959 before 8:30pm

■Audrey & Steve Barnes have their Christmas light display up! Enhanced again this year. Some day, they will further enhance it by getting that house painted! You are invited to drive by: 117 Seventh Ave—midblock between 1st & 2nd Streets. It's the Santa Claus.

■Speaking of Christmas lights. The VanDusen Botanical Garden display is fantastic. You are immersed right in a fairyland of lights. Extremely high recommendation. You won't want to leave. If you are in Seattle over the holidays, visit the Bellevue Botanical Garden. Another great light display but of an entirely different type. Absolutely fascinating. A must see.

PARLOUR SHOW NEWS: by Ellen

Yearend is here again! The following covers a few statistics from this year's showbench. Winners are not included tonight—they will be listed in February's newsletter.

Total # exhibitors: 10

Total # showbench exhibits over the 6 months: 361

Total # Perfect 5's earned: 11

Total cash paid out for Perfect 5's: \$55.00

Total cash paid out for exhibitor points: \$118.70

Total cash paid out for Showbench Awards: \$210.00

Total # pictures submitted in Photo Contest: 51

Total cash paid out in photo contest prizes: \$54.00

Find out who are the lucky recipients of all this moolah tonight during the awards presentations.

I believe this will be my final report as Parlour Show Secretary. I leave you in good hands. Good luck, Lori, in 2006.

Wishing everyone a fun and safe "Holiday" Season and a very Merry Christmas.

(Remember the Parlour Show evaluation meeting is Tues, Jan 17th, at Audrey's. If you have concerns or opinions on the evolution or dissolution of our Parlour Show, talk to Audrey about attending this meeting. If the meeting time does not work for you, please submit your views in writing.)

PHOTO CONTEST: In addition to the comments on the winning pictures, our judge, Steven Grover, submitted the following summary.

Regarding "Creatures enjoying the Garden": Many images submitted in this category had the main subject out of focus or too soft due to camera shake. Learning how the focus lock works on your camera will solve this common problem. In the case of camera shake you need to stabilize your camera with a tripod, a table or the back of a chair to get a sharp image. Camera shake usually happens in low light situations when flash is not being used.

Some of the creatures in this category were not prominent and the viewer might have a bit of trouble deciding what the main subject is. The best advice here is to move in closer on your creature. Usually a composition works better if the main subject is not in the exact center of the frame. Compositional techniques such as the "rule of thirds" and "diagonal lines" can give your images greater impact.

Hints for next year: Sharp focus of the important parts of your image is essential. It's OK to move distracting objects such as flower pots, dead leaves or partial flowers out of your frame. The garden magazine professionals all do this to improve their compositions.

Several submitted photos appeared to be from digital cameras and printed on home printers. While this is not necessarily a bad thing, some photos did have washed out or unnatural colours and print lines that can be caused by either the printer used or the camera's image sensor. When submitting photos for a competition, it is usually better to have these digital files printed at a reliable commercial photo lab since they have higher quality equipment, color calibrate their equipment daily and usually print on a high quality paper. Also these labs use equipment that exposes the image onto the photo paper like the traditional method of photo printing. Ink jet printers generally produce lower quality images unless you are willing to spend a fair bit of money on a high end printer and time calibrating your computer monitor to get accurate colours.

Virtually every photo submitted for this contest had something going for it which says to me that the NWHs members are "Seeing" interesting things in their gardens. Not everyone has the ability to "See" potentially good photo compositions which is the first important step to taking good photos. The second step is to practice taking pictures so that your compositional skill and techniques can improve.

Thanks for asking me to judge your photo contest and keep up the good work.

IN YOUR VEGE PATCH: by the Urban Gardener, also known as Roy Pegler (604-520-6467) who would love to talk "grow'n veges" with you.

December has arrived once again and hopefully the seed catalogues will be in circulation. If you want quality seeds, order early to get the best. When spring comes you'll be able to sow without delay.

Other jobs: harvest the Brussel sprouts, winter cabbage, rutabaga, carrots & parsnips. Garlic bulbs & broad beans should be planted by now. Prune raspberry vines and clean-up around the strawberry patch and lay straw or leaves to protect strawberry plants over the winter months. Add lime to vacant beds.

Referring back to the arrival of the seed catalogues in your home this month, one of the first questions you should ask is: Should I buy seeds or transplants? Starting your own seeds naturally involves much more time-consuming work and trouble, but it is much more economical and is satisfying fun. If you have the time, the choice of varieties of each vegetable in the catalogues is much wider than the varieties available as plants in the nursery. Seeds are cheaper to buy than plants. You will have to plan to spend some money on basic seed starting equipment but you can cut some corners in seeding costs. If you want only six lettuce plants you can store the balance of the seed packet until later in the season. Each packet will last for several years without further expense (Store them in the fridge or freezer). Aside from the fun of ordering and having something garden related to do in the middle of winter, the main reason that I select mail-order, is that the condition of storage is critical to the viability of seeds. The seed companies keep the seeds under excellent storage conditions, while the retail store might get very hot and humid before the seeds are sold, thus affecting the germination rate of those seeds. More on seed sowing next time.

I would like to take the opportunity of wishing all gardeners a Happy Xmas and a Prosperous New Year.

GardenWorks Appreciation Day: Dec 15th. Full Moon!!

ROSTER/EMAIL UPDATES:

In January we send a mailer out to each club member. It is a delight when they are delivered on the first try. If you have had an address change this last year, please contact Mary (604-525-5928) or Audrey to assure that we have it. Email change? Tell Lesley

