

THE NEW WESTMINSTER HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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

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CLUB MEETING CALENDAR:

AUGUST MEETING: Tonight, Tues, Aug 8th: DR. ALAN REID, of GardenWorks, on "SOILS". Sit back and enjoy Alan's presentation of what makes dirt "good soil" and how to achieve it.

SEPTEMBER MEETING: Tues, Sept 12th, 7:45pm. Speaker to be announced. The FALL "BRING & SHARE" (see details elsewhere in newsletter).

OCTOBER MEETING: Tues, Oct 10th, 7:45pm. Our ANNUAL SILENT AUCTION! *Members only for this meeting—no drop-in guests. No memberships sold this night.* Many members consider this one of the most fun meetings of the year. This is not a silent auction of big price items—this is an auction of a huge assortment of "stuff". Minimum bids start at 25¢ for many items—really good things obviously have higher starting bids. Do you have items too good to throw out but you don't want to go the garage sale route to get rid of them? Donate them to the Silent Auction. Auction night can be hectic if you have a slew of stuff you would like to donate—each item must have a bidding slip and be located in an area of like items. In the past few years, we have found it advantageous if members drop off their donations at Audrey's for early processing before auction night. Please do so—deadline for dropping off is one week before the auction. This allows her and volunteers (interested?) to make out each slip and pre-organize the items as to areas where they will be put at the auction. It also gives us some idea of the space needed for the different types of items. Added benefit: when you arrive at the meeting, you can immediately start skulking for and bidding on treasures—no worries about getting your items processed. If you are keen to get started, Audrey has some bidding slips with her tonight. Also, at the October meeting, Christmas Dinner tickets will go on sale.

CLUB OUTINGS:

Heritage Perennials (Valleybrooke Farms) Open House: Friday, Sept 1st (the Friday immediately previous to Labour Day weekend), 9:00 to 3:00. Seminars, tours (this place is HUGE!) and fantastic plant deals. Please sign-up at the head table if interested. We intend to arrive at 9:00 to have the best pick at the plants. Map with further details available. It takes about 45 minutes to drive from New Westminister to Abbotsford. Deadline to sign-up is Tues Aug 29th, 5pm thru Carole Forsythe 604-515-1927

Club tour of Bert's Private Garden: Sat, Sept 9th, 1pm. Fantastic semi-tropical garden: palms, bananas, Bird of Paradise, olive trees, grapes, figs, pomegranates, geraniums from all over the world, numerous fuchsias & begonias. Sign-up at head table, map available. Deadline to sign-up is Tues, Sept 5th, 5pm thru Carole Forsythe 604-515-1927. Bert is the one organizing the bus to Minters.

Queensborough Urban Farmers' Fall Fair: Sunday, Sept 24th, 10am to 4pm. Our club has a history of being very involved with this great day of family fun. Pick up the flyer tonight. See additional article regarding the many facets of this great event.

Sketching Group Outings: Potential meeting dates are 1pm on Tues (non-meeting days), Wed & Sat. This month Schedule at head table. Please sign-up if interested. Phone Audrey for details.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER: by Audrey

What a great club we have! It's the members who are willing to share who make it what it is. Our tour was a sequence of being wowed by the gardens. Thanks again to **Diana (& Denis) Flostrand, Bev (& John) Gatto, Linda (& Steve) Turnbull, Dawn Dutrizac-Larose & Paul Larose and Ellen (& Nes) Berg.** (I left my & Steve's names out as we have already been thanked in an inappropriately large amount for our participation.) Your gardens are beautiful and your hospitality amazing. Hopefully, you have not let your gardens slide like I have since the tour. Time again for some power weeding. For the first time in years, the weather on tour day was pleasant. We've had some pretty hot tours. For those of you who did not make the tour & picnic, I hope you can next year. For me, it is one event during the year I will always make. Next month, the photos will be ready. Congratulations to **Lesia Gojda** for winning the Garden Stumps Contest. Her score was 11 correct out of 20. There are copies of the quiz at the head table tonight if you want to try your hand at lateral thinking.

Last weekend, two other members stepped forward to share their expertise. **Carl Whitney** and **Joan Miller** led the walks in the Sapperton Landing and Glenbrooke Ravine parks. It is amazing how much longer a walk takes when you really look at things. Many, many thanks.

SERGE OSANIC: Sadly, Serge passed away on July 30th. For the last while, he has been bravely fighting cancer. Even when ill, Serge had a twinkle in his eye. Recently at the picnic, it looked like he had won, but not so. He was an active NWHS member for a long time. Before he and Nina (also a NWHS member) downsized to one of the uptown highrises, their garden was a thing of beauty. Many of us still remember what a treat it was to visit it on our tour. Many gorgeous plants which they lovingly overwintered. Serge will be greatly missed but will definitely not be forgotten. Our hearts go out to Nina. There will be no formal service. In lieu of flowers, donations to the Royal Columbian Hospital Auxiliary would be appreciated. NWHS will be making a donation in Serge's memory.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT: A review of

last month's presentation: Club member LINDA TURNBULL stepped in when we were unable to confirm our scheduled speaker, Rudi Pinowski. Thank you Linda for being one of the most amazingly organized persons known and having your September presentation ready in July. You are amazing! An extremely informative presentation on "Growing Herbs in the Lower Mainland" based on your extensive personal experiences. Linda has written an addendum to her presentation:

"I unfortunately left out an important 'exception' about harvesting/drying herbs during my talk.

While most herbs are best dried for preserving their flavor, Basil is definitely an exception. You can dry basil, but it will have little flavour.

The best method for preserving Basil is in olive oil, or the oil of your choice. Buy a couple of extra ice cube trays and dedicated them to this purpose as herbs leave a strong flavour in the plastic, no matter how much you wash them. Chop with a lettuce knife or disposable plastic knife or tear the basil in small pieces. Place them in the ice cube tray and cover with oil. Place in the freezer until firm. Remove the cubes from the trays and store them in a Ziploc bag. The basil/oil cubes thaw quite quickly at room temperature, but I have just tossed a cube or two into cooked hot pasta, tossing until well integrated. An average ice cube holds about a tablespoon of basil and oil. If you want to make 'fresh pesto', thaw as many cubes as you need, place them in a blender with some fresh chopped garlic and a few pine nuts. Pulse to incorporate, not too much as you want to see some basil, garlic and nut bits when you are finished, not a green slurry.

I hope I haven't lead too many of you astray by omitting this information. If you have already dried your basil, it could still be used when making tomato sauces, but you will need to use more, not less, in order to have flavor. The opposite of the general rule of cooking with herbs. Normally you use less of the fresh herb than the dried herb when cooking. Personal taste always dominates!

Just an extra little note to the member(s) that was very interested in my Japanese Parsley. The botanical name is *Cryptomeria japonica*. The Japanese Basil is *Prilla frutescens*. The parsley is a perennial and a prolific self seeder and the Basil is an annual which can be overwintered by taking cuttings inside.

I hope that if any of you have any questions about the herbs I talked about that you will either come and ask me at the meeting or give me a call. A 40 minute talk only gives an overview of the subject matter. If I don't know the answer, I don't mind looking it up for you."

THE SEPTEMBER "BRING & SHARE": We've changed the name from "Show & Share" to "Bring & Share" to de-emphasize the erroneous misconception that exhibits brought in will be judged. No judging at this event! The purpose of the event is to promote sharing of knowledge and ideas amongst members.

Some ideas of exhibits to put on display:

1. If you have a fantastic bloom, feel free to bring it in to show to other members.
2. If you tried a new plant that you loved, bring in a sample or a photo to share with other members—perhaps they would like to try it too.
3. If you tried something and it did not perform as expected, bring in a representation (sample, photo) —perhaps another member will have some experience with the same plant and can offer advice.
4. If you have sample of a bug and wonder if it good or bad—bring it in (enclosed of course). Likewise, if you have a bug that you know is either good or bad, bring in a sample to inform other members of its nature.
5. Are you faced with a gardening dilemma? Looking for ideas for a portion of the garden? Bring in a photo of the spot, draw a diagram. Maybe someone else will have dealt with the same problem and have suggestions.
6. Want suggestions as to the hardiness of a certain plant? Need over-wintering advice? Write it up, put it on the table.

How to display your items: A piece of cake: all you need is your item and display slip. Put your name and item details on the slip and put it near the item on the table. If you are bringing in many exhibits, group them all in one area no matter their nature. The tables will be arranged around the perimeter of the fireplace end of the room. Display slips are available tonight and in September at the head table. In September we will have protective sleeves for your photos so they will not be damaged.

Giving feedback on exhibits: With each exhibit, there is a slip which has several lines on the bottom awaiting your feedback. If you know the person who brought in the exhibit, I'm sure they would like your ideas in person—sharing experiences is a great way to make new friends. All in attendance should have on their nametags. Can't find the exhibitor? Write in your advice or your appreciation of the exhibit—add your name if you want. It is anticipated that the refreshment section of the meeting will be extended a bit to accommodate your perusal of the items.

Prizes for participation: Don't forget to register at the head table when you bring in your items for display. Each person who brings in something, gets their name into the bucket for the three participation draws. Your name is entered only once, no matter how many items you bring in. Three draws (\$25, \$15, \$10 cash) will be made after the raffle finishes.

MONEY VOTES: Last month we had two motions put forward for expenditure of NWHS money. Both motions passed.

BC Council of Garden Clubs' Scholarship Trust Fund: NWHS is donating \$2000 from our plant sale proceeds to this fund.

Donations Committee Budget: The committee has a maximum of \$1000 for allocation to worthy and eligible organizations, programs and initiatives in the year 2006. The chronological sequence which would result in such allocation is: nomination by NWHS member, evaluation of the Donations Committee and finally approval by vote by the NWHS executive. If you would like to nominate a cause, see Audrey Barnes or Carole Forsythe. Nominations close Sept 30, 2006

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

This month is one of the most rewarding times for the vege garden, but also one of the busiest times. Everything is growing and there are so many jobs to do, we don’t know which to tackle first. I think perhaps the watering of the tomatoes & beans is a priority and then, if the garlic tops are drying and falling over, it is time to lift them out with a fork. Don’t leave them in the ground too long after they are dry because they will split and store poorly. The early potatoes should be dug out before the sun burns them. Sweet corn is at its peak of ripeness when the silks appear. Once your tomatoes start ripening, check vines almost daily for blight and fruit blossom-end-rot. Keep picking the beans regularly, as the more you pick, the more production will increase.

There are still a few sowings to make for winter and early spring harvesting such as beetroot density lettuce, spring cabbage, carrots, Swiss chards, spinach, corn salda and kale. If you have space, digging a trench would be a very beneficial way to compost all the excess plant tops from your spring and summer crops.

GardenWorks Appreciation Day:
Thurs, Aug 17th.

PHOTO & CONTAINER

CONTESTS: Now is the time to get those cameras out! Check the back page of the club roster for details of the contests. They are also on the bulletin board. Judging by the number of members taking pictures on the tour, there should be some good competition in the garden view category. It is only “colour in the garden” photos that must be taken in your own garden.

Regarding the container contest, don’t think it is too late. Even if your container looked better last week, take those photos now. There is a good chance that everyone else forgot to take “most prime condition” photos of their containers too. If you don’t have a good camera, please ask Audrey to come over and take some pictures. The main idea behind the container contest is for members to show others what they tried.

QUEENSBOROUGH’S URBAN FARMERS FALL

FAIR: In the past, NWHS traditionally has had a big club display with emphasis on the fair’s theme (“chickens” this year) and our members have wowed people with their artistic skills in putting together major fall displays at the entrance and stage areas (and elsewhere if we have enough materials). We would like to continue to contribute in these areas. This year our commitment to the fair has increased with two of our executive members, Lori Jenvey & Audrey Barnes, being on the fair’s organizing committee. To summarize: we are counting on members wanting to be involved in a very special event.

COMPETITIONS: The competition flyer is out! It is available in the foyer. If you belong to a group that would have interest in entering, please see Audrey for additional copies. We would be very interested in getting the list to teachers as it offers some great project ideas for students. *There is a possibility that NWHS will reimburse all members for entry fees encountered i.e. this has yet to be discussed at the executive level but sounds like a reasonable proposition as the Queensborough Fair is the final show in our Parlour Show Replacement.* Much work went into designing a list of categories that could be both fun and challenging. Hopefully, many of you will enter. For non-perishable entries, Audrey is willing to transport them to the fair for you.

NON-COMPETITION INVOLVEMENT:

Creating the NWHS display: We try to have an educational component in our display. Sadly to say, minimal actual work has been done on the chicken topiary idea. It is still a viable idea if we get a move on. Please see Audrey if you would like to spend a bit of time creating the frames. Topiary frame-making material is on hand. Linda Turnbull has created some neat “chickens from facecloths”. We have a selection of potted egg-plants which by fair time should all be into heavy producing. Do you have any ideas we can incorporate?

Display materials are needed: We are looking for harvest, autumny vegetative material such as cornstalks, colorful tree branches or vines, produce such as squash, apples. Do you have a scarecrow we could borrow? Small scale farm equipment? We would love to borrow these items. We will return any produce back to you—or if you wish, we will donate it to the Plant a Row, Grow a Row at the end of Fair. Of course, any “chickeny” props to borrow would be most appreciated!

Transfer of “display stuff” to the site: This will take place on Saturday morn between 9am and noon. Trucks desirable.

Setting up the NWHS display: Probably about 3 bodies needed for set-up and for tear-down. Since Audrey will have other responsibilities on fair day, we would like someone to come forward to head the setting up and tearing down of the NWHS display. Since there is a wedding at the community centre the evening before the fair, setting up of our display will be done early Sunday morning from 7 to 10am. Trucks needed for tear-down

Creating the fair entrance and stage displays: We need 3 or 4 creative types to do magic with the display materials. The actual work will take place on Sunday morning but it would be good if these members were also available on Sat morning to case out the materials on hand—and mentally arrange how things can be put together.

Helping with the competition entries registration: Probably at least 4 clerically minded persons with good printing or writing will be needed to receive the entries. Some entries may come in Saturday but the majority of the help will be needed on Sunday morning from 9 to 11am.

LOTS OF CHANCES TO BE INVOLVED! It is a very memorable family event. There are sign-up sheets at the head table for all non-competition involvement opportunities. Any questions should be directed to Audrey.

NOT ORGANIZED CLUB OUTINGS

BUT GREAT IDEAS:

Thirsty Thursday at VanDusen Gardens, Thur, Aug 10, 5:30 to 8pm. Hot Latin rhythm of Mudfoot to set the mood, a glass of Secura Viudas' Lavit Rosado (a sparkling rose) and hor d'oeuvres from Crown Catering in the beautiful new Bentall Garden. There is also a no-host bar. This is a catered event so tickets (\$20 per person) must be purchased in advance at the Capital Campaign Office or by calling 604-257-8625.

Bus trip to Minter Gardens, Sat Aug 26th:

Bert, who has invited us to view his garden on Sept 9th, is organizing a bus trip to the gardens. Brian will be showing the facilities. \$55 includes transport, buffet lunch and garden admission. Will be leaving at 9am from St Helen's Church near Boundary in North Burnaby. For more info, call Bert at 604-299-6876.

CanWest Hort Show, Wed & Thur, Sept 20 & 21, Vancouver Trade & Convention Centre.

This is the big trade show for the horticulture & landscaping industry. You can't buy things (which is a blessing!) but you can drool over the latest introductions. Register before Aug 31 for \$12, after Aug 31 & at the door is \$15. Pre-registration forms available at head table—your code would be "visitor/guest" or "other" (garden club member).

REQUESTS FROM THE TOUR:

■ **Linda's Cranberry Punch:** Easy—just mix 1 part white cranberry juice with 1 part ginger ale. Add frozen cranberries for garnish.

■ **Linda's Strawberry Marqarita Square:**

Mix 1 1/4 cups crushed pretzels and 1/4 cup melted butter or margarine in 13 x9 inch baking pan, pressing crumb mixture firmly onto bottom of pan. Refrigerate until ready to fill.

Mix 1 can (300 ml) sweetened condensed milk, 1 cup pureed strawberries and 1/2 cup lime juice in large bowl until well blended.

Stir in 1 tub (1 litre) thawed Cool Whip Topping. Pour onto crust.

Freeze 6 hours or overnight. Let stand for 15 minutes at room temperature. Garnish with extra sliced strawberries. If you want to cut off a section while it is still frozen, run the knife under hot water before slicing.

Low fat substitutes: use Cool Whip Light Topping and low-trans margarine.

■ The Latin name for **Audrey's popcorn plant** is *cassia didymobotrya*. It is also commonly known as popcorn cassia. Just in case you are wondering, the plant tag also states: "This plant is intended for decorative purposes, not for consumption". Smells good enough to eat.

THIS 'N' THAT:

■ **Two more new members last month.** A welcome to Shakuntala Nadan and Dave Upham. Hope to see you often.

■ Remember the June show and the fantastic creation with which **Silina Nakatsu** won the popular choice "best in show award". Well, she took advantage of the Free Garden Design Gift Certificate from GardenWorks—but too early! A couple of weeks ago, Silina's garden was completely re-configured when a 100 foot poplar from her neighbours yard fell completely across her back yard and onto her other neighbour's yard. It took out a huge cedar and weeping willow (not to mention a multitude of other plants) in its path of destruction. Obvious changes in garden design are pending. Also, this leaves a probable opening for your garden to be on our tour next year as Silina's was one of the potentials.

■ The **Seed Exchange** has gone into its collection mode. If you are a "normal" gardener, you have not deadheaded all your plants. Why not "dead-seed" them? Write all the plant details (plus your name) on a paper envelope and collect the seeds inside it. And then bring them into the seed exchange. Buff O'Shaughnessy, guardian of the seed exchange, will clean them up and divide them for distribution back to the members. Just put your collected seeds in the designated shoe box on the free table. At non-meeting times, seeds can be given to Audrey to be relayed onto Buff.

■ Once again there is room for **your unwanted pots** in Audrey's carport. She recently did a massive sorting and re-organization. Please do not bother washing the pots. We use only specific size pots when we work with sterile soil, so please do not spend your valuable time washing pots that don't need to be clean. Audrey is racked with guilt when she mixes clean pots with the grubby ones. Of course, the plant sale always needs **1" vinyl Venitian blinds** for the labels as well. Although the pots are slated for the sale, they are also available to members who find they need some pots. Just ask Audrey, if the pots you want are available.

■ **Christmas craft supplies:** If you are a new member you may not be aware that for the 3 weeks prior to our December meeting (also known as the Christmas Party), craft sessions are held in Audrey's basement. If you like doing crafts, these are the club outings for you. We create all sorts of Christmasy items—all one-of-a kind. Mainly wreaths, swags, table centres and such. Our creations are prizes for our "most fantastic Christmas raffle" at the party. The club does purchase some materials but it also asks members to donate Christmas stuff they no longer want. Many of the donated items are completely dismantled and re-used in another form so it doesn't matter if they look tired. We also collect cones and seed heads to be used in the crafts. All these donations are dropped off at Audrey's but just in case there is inclement weather, it is best they are dropped off at her sheltered kitchen door rather than the carport. By the way, all proceeds of the Christmas Raffle are donated to charity.

■ If you are on our **email meeting notification list**, you know that Lesley Wood sends out the most enticing meeting announcements. If you are not on the list and want to receive at least one quality email per month—one that you would want to read—send Lesley an email. To those of you already on the list, help her keep the list up-to-date.

■ This may seem a strange request from gardeners: Please be considerate of fellow club members who have sensitivities to fragrance—some are floored by it. **Think before you use scented personal products.** Leave fragrance to the flowers in your gardens. Many thanks.

