

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;

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CLUB MEETING CALENDAR:

MAY MEETING: Tonight, Tues, May 9: CHRIS JENNINGS, President of the Vancouver Shade Garden Society, will inspire you to tackle it. He will present "AN INTRODUCTION TO SOME SHADY CHARACTERS FOR YOUR GARDEN".

JUNE MEETING: Tues, June 13, 7:45: It is the night of our INAUGURAL IN-CLUB SHOW (schedule is on pg 3,4). With your participation in exhibiting, we can make a gala of the evening. *Check the schedule, check your garden, bring in an exhibit! If you have questions between now and the show, give Lori Graham (604-469-9316) or Audrey (604-526-8284) a call. Both would appreciate no calls after 8pm.* In line with the flower show theme, we have invited ARCHIE MILLER, well known New West historian, to give a presentation on the Queen's Park Agricultural Exhibition which was the precursor to the PNE. That itself would be worth the price of your admission!

CLUB OUTINGS:

Carole Forsythe is the organizer of our club outings. She has jumped into the project with great enthusiasm and is doing a better than fantastic job. Her phone number is 604-515-1927. Thanks Carole

Denman Island Country Home and Garden Tour: June 17/18. If you earlier indicated interest in the tour, you have been contacted by Carole regarding the details and the fact that your non-refundable registration fee is due. Carole would prefer to have your cash or cheque tonight. The absolute deadline to get your money to her is 5pm, Sun May 14th. She will be purchasing the tour tickets on Mon May 15th. *Please, if you have changed your mind about going on the tour, tell Carole so she does not waste valuable time trying to contact you.* As previously stated, your deposit is non-refundable. However, there is no problem in transferring your place on the trip to another person. If you have not earlier indicated interest, but are now interested, talk to Carole, you have until the May 14th deadline to register. If you are later, the waiting list is also a possibility. She will be handing out your detailed information sheets tonight.

Annual NWHS Garden Tour & Pot Luck Picnic:

Sat., July 15th. This is one of our major social events of the year. The tour is conducted with a set itinerary i.e. the gardens are visited a time sequence. Everyone visits one garden at one time and then we move onto the next one. This enables those members who have volunteered their gardens to join the tour and see the other gardens. The day culminates with the pot-luck picnic at Ellen & Nes Berg's (thanks again!!!). It is a great day. We are still looking for 2 or 3 gardens to visit. "Perfection" is not a pre-requisite—in fact, "gardens in progress" are often more interesting as most of us can identify with them. Talk to Audrey if you would like us to visit. Sign-up sheet for picnic offerings will be available next month.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER: by Audrey

Alright! The sale is over! And another success! Congratulations to all the members who worked on the sale. It has been a packed 2 months. Due to the extremely weird weather this spring, sale preparation didn't go quite as we expected when this time last year we had our brainstorming meeting to reorganize how the sale is done. It was then that the committee organization was set-up—luckily! But without that backbone of a committee, I don't think we could have pulled it off. I think we have just experienced a new worst-case scenario.

We will be evaluating this sale again in a couple of weeks. The meeting date is not set as yet. If you would like to be involved, tell me. If you would like to give me written suggestions, email is best as I can't misplace it (hopefully!).

It was a good sale. I'm very proud of it! It really is probably the best garden club sale around. Great plants, great labels, great prices—happy customers. What I think of the biggest success of the sale is the way members get to know each other! It is great when one of you comes up to me and says how much fun she/he had and how much more they identify with the club after working the sale. That does it for me!

Time to thank all the "outside" groups who helped us out. Of course top of the list is "Royal Square Mall". The mall has been our host for many years and we hope that the relationship continues. Special thanks to Robin and Fran at the mall. The raffle donators came through great again. Club members, Bonnie & Peter, of the Frame Shop supplied 3 great prizes: the beautiful lily of the valley lamp, the framed limited edition photo print and the laminated Great Plant Picks poster!! Another member, Jean List, gave the "basket of gardener's delights". GardenWorks, a \$30 gift card. Leong's a beautiful patio planter. And Hong's once again produced the cream of the prizes with the huge moss hanging basket! What a generous group! Please visit these establishments and tell them, when you are paying for your purchases, that their donations for the raffle at the sale was most appreciated—even if you didn't win. If you don't know where they are located, just ask me.

Speaking of winners: This year only one club member won a prize. Lorna Cloutier won the GardenWorks Gift Card. Amazingly of the remaining 6 prizes, we had two people who won two prizes each! Cyndy Miller won both the Leong's planter and the basket of delights. Ann Coffin (who was a double winner a couple of years ago as well!) won the lamp and Great Plant Picks poster. That leaves Laurie Mellins with the framed print and Anne Smith (a potential member) the huge basket from Hongs. Congratulations. **See "Raffle", next page**

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT: A review of last month's presentation: Many thanks to **JOHN COWIE** of Valleybrook Farms (aka Heritage Perennials) for his great presentation on "Exciting New Perennials". He had us all drooling. Sorry, Heritage Perennials is wholesale—you cannot go to his store to buy. However, they do supply almost every garden centre around. Ask at your favorite nursery if it is possible for them to get in that perennial you have been coveting since you saw it last month. Most will try to get it in. Take along your slide sheet so they have the correct name. Once a year you can shop at Valleybrook Farms. That is at their open house on the Friday which is just previous to Labour Day weekend (Sept 8th this year). We will be arranging a club trip to take it in. Meanwhile check out www.perennials.com. All sorts of info on it. Excellent e-newsletter. Sign-up for it.

THIS 'N' THAT:

■Getting onto "Life after the Plant Sale", we are looking at having the inaugural meeting of the **NWHS Garden Sketching Group** in June. Hopefully we will have a sketching instructor to kick-off the group. Several members on the survey indicated they were interested. There is a sign-up sheet at the head table. If interested, please add your name, phone number and what day works best for you.

■**Colony Farm Regional Park Open House:** Sat May 13, 1-4pm. "Discover what's sprouting in the community gardens, take a guided nature walk through meadow trails and tour current habitat enhancement projects. Birders can check out the results of the ongoing heron count. Visit the site's remaining historical buildings and be inspired by the restoration plans. Support the Colony Farm Park Association's fundraising effort for the buildings and buy some organic seedlings." To get there turn south off Lougheed Hwy in Coquitlam near the United Blvd overpass and look for tents at the end of Colony Farm Road.

■Bring goodies to the meeting last month and left a nice glass tray behind? See Audrey, it's the latest addition to the clubs Lost & Found.

■The **Riverview Horticultural Centre Society** (RHCS) asked if they could have any unsold trees or large shrubs from the sale. They are holding a tree sale as part of the Treefest 2006 on Sept 17. Alas, we could only had over one small physocarpus. We will continue to collect donations of trees on their behalf until the sale so keep your ears peeled for good unwanted specimens. The Riverview Hospital site is the home of some of the most impressive mature trees around (world renowned!). It is a botanical garden dedicated to trees. In recent years it has been eyed as a possible site for development (ouch!). The tree sale is a fundraiser for the RHCS to produce a new and improved self-guided tour brochure of the site. You can visit the site (absolutely magnificent!) at anytime. It is located across Lougheed from Colony Farms. Visit both on Sat.

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.

Now is the month to sow and plant all the summer veges. **INDOORS:** Sow the corn in peat pots and transplant outdoors in late May. Corn does not like to be transplanted and the peat pots makes this unnecessary. Just put the whole peat pot in the ground. If you like, make the hole in the bottom of the peat pot larger so the roots will grow quicker. Hold off until the near the end of May.

OUTDOORS: If the soil is warm enough, sow the brassicas, runner beans, dwarf beans, carrots, Swiss chard, spinach, beets, radishes, lettuce, parsnips, onions & turnips. Leeks should be in the ground as early as possible this month. A hint for speedy bean germination: Don't soak your bean seeds in water before planting to improve germination—instead, wrap them in moist wrung-out paper towels. In a day or two the seeds will have softened up a bit. The seeds should be soft but not mushy. If they are still not soft enough, nick the seed coats with a knife before planting. Delay transplanting tomato plants outside until late May, preferably after the long weekend.

Continuing the discussion from last month on rotation: Leaves love nitrogen. Plants such as lettuce, spinach, herbs, cabbage & broccoli need plenty of nitrogen to build strong stems & leaves. Nitrogen is the most readily soluble of all nutrients and therefore the hardest for the soil to hold onto. So it's important to grow leaf crops in soil that's had a fresh infusion of nitrogen such as 20-20-20 and side-dressing with fish or blood meal. Tomatoes, squash cucumbers, peppers (everything that develops as a result of a flower being pollinated) are fruits. These crops need generous amounts of phosphorus to set blossom and develop fruit. Bonemeal and rock phosphate are the best sources of phosphorus. Root crops rely mainly on potassium. Onions, garlic, turnips, carrots, radishes and other root crops are heavy potassium users. A good potassium source is greensands or 0-0-50. Legumes such as beans & peas pull nitrogen from the air and store it in their roots. When those plants are spent, it is of benefit to turn them into the garden as a good "high nitrogen" source of organic compost.

GardenWorks Appreciation Day: May 18th

RAFFLE: You may have you noticed that we had a new recipient for the proceeds of our sale raffle this year. We decided to go legit and actually get a license for the raffle (or as the beauocrats call it, "gaming event"). Would you believe the Scholarship Trust Fund is not eligible (no trust fund is)! Luckily we knew of a keen eligible local group working on an extremely worthy fundraising campaign. This year **all proceeds of the raffle (a record high of \$426) will be donated to the Richard McBride Elementary School fundraising campaign for the schools playground renovations.** We hope to do additional work with this group.

E-MAIL NOTIFICATION OF MEETINGS:

Lesley sends out a great email every month. Help her out by keeping her email address list up-to-date. Just send her an email