

# THE NEW WESTMINSTER HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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## **CLUB MEETING CALENDAR:**

**NOVEMBER MEETING:** Tonight, 7:45 start. Our speaker is **JENNIFER RYAN on "FLOWERING SHRUBS"**. Jennifer is not only employed by Garden-Works, she is an instructor at several community colleges. Before Jennifer's presentation, we will be conducting our **Annual General Meeting** (sort of like a "mini" meeting within the "normal" meeting). We will be electing or acclaiming the 2008 executive; voting on the annual speaker and plant sale budgets and on a motion to possibly change the start time of the club meetings. Also tonight, you get to vote on your favorite entry in our **container contest**.

**DECEMBER MEETING:** Tues, Dec 11th. This is not a normal meeting but our **SEASONAL CELEBRATIONS aka OUR CHRISTMAS PARTY**. Because the buffet dinner (A&F Caterers, [www.afcateringltd.com](http://www.afcateringltd.com)) is an integral part of the evening, to attend you must purchase a ticket. Because space is restricted, seating is limited to 120. Tickets have been selling fast. Hopefully some will still be available tonight. See Mary at the Treasurer's table. Besides eating and being merry, the evening will include a door prize, an extremely trivial Christmas trivia quiz and, of course, the fantastic raffle. All photo contest entries (with the winners highlighted) will be on display as will the winning container contest entry. There will be brief awards ceremonies for these contests. The emphasis of the evening is to have a good time in the company of your garden club friends. See *the next page for answers to party FAQ*.

## **DONATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT:**

### **"DONATIONS IN LIMBO" by Carole Forsythe**

The Donations Committee received only two applications from which to adjudicate and award up to \$2000 in funding. Both applications were from different people within the same organization, pertaining to the same piece of land. Although the Committee agreed that both applications had merit, it had a number of concerns it wanted addressed before it would consider funding either project. Given the applicants admitted gardening inexperience as well as the difficulty the site presents, the Committee awarded \$250 to Ecole Glenbrook Middle School to hire a professional to assist the applicants in designing an appropriate garden. The applicants have been given an opportunity to submit a joint application that addresses the Committee's concerns by January 14th. At that time, additional funding of the project will be considered. The Executive agreed with the Committee's recommendation to publicize the donations program more widely. In the spring, a request for new proposals will be solicited.

## **PRESIDENT'S CORNER: by Audrey**

Alright, as of tonight's AGM, there will be huge changes in my responsibilities to NWHS. The time for change is long overdue—and I welcome it with open arms! New persons, new ideas! (and more time for me to do some of the things that have been put on the back burner). I'll still be involved but probably just in select areas, plant sale prep being one.

### **"WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?" by Carole**

**Forsythe.** Heads up! For those of you who want to influence the future direction of the club, we'll be meeting in January to discuss it over refreshments. (Wine & cheese? Tea & cookies?). Come to share your ideas! Come to socialize! Come to nibble! We hope to meet on Tuesday, January 22nd at the new meeting time. Details in December and in the January Mailer.

## **NWHS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING:**

Tonight there will be either the acclamation or election of the 2008 NWHS executive plus two money votes and a vote on possibly changing the regular meeting start time. Ballot packs will be distributed to members once all are seated. Ballots will be used for a possible executive position election and for the meeting time changes. Voting by show of hands will be conducted for the two money votes.

**NOMINATED NWHS EXECUTIVE:** We will be asking for additional nominations from the floor.

**President: Carole Forsythe**

**Vice-President: Aldina Isbister**

**Treasurer: Mary Barnard**

**Secretary: Audrey Barnes**

**Show Chairperson: Debra Halbig**

**Member at Large (5 positions)**

Anna Camporese

Karen Low

Monica Mowat

Silina Nakatsu

Sharon Seki

President and Vice-President positions are 2 year terms; all other, 1 year.

### **SPEAKER BUDGET VOTE:**

Motion: **NWHS allocates up to \$2000 for the 2008 speaker budget to be used at the discretion of the Speaker Coordinator to pay for the meeting speakers.**

### **PLANT SALE BUDGET VOTE:**

Motion: **NWHS allocates up to \$3000 for the 2008 plant sale budget to be used by the Plant Sale Committee for plant sale expenses.**

### **GENERAL MEETING STARTING TIME VOTE:**

Motion: **Commencing with the February 2008 meeting, the start time of the NWHS general meetings (also known as regular meetings) will be changed to 7:00, instead of the current 7:45pm.**

## **CHRISTMAS PARTY FAQ:**

**How does one buy a ticket?** Tickets, if still available, can be purchased from Mary, our treasurer, tonight. Prices are members \$15, member's first guest \$20, additional guests \$25 each. At non-meeting times, ticket transactions can be done through Audrey (her contact info is in newsletter header). If tickets sell out, we will have a waiting list. It is possible there will be some cancellations.

**Can I get a refund? I've bought a ticket, now I have a timing conflict.** Up to Dec 1st (the date that we give our final numbers to the caterers), you are guaranteed a full refund by the club for any tickets. After that date, if you cannot use your ticket, please tell Audrey. It is possible that we will have a waiting list for people who want tickets. We will do our best to match you up. We prefer no available seat goes to waste.

**I've noticed last year that many seats have "reserved" notices on them. How does one reserve a seat?** Since a big part of the evening is enjoying the company of your best friends in the club, we will gladly reserve seats for your group. Having reserved seats is especially handy if you know you would be arriving relatively late. To reserve seating just tell Audrey the number and names of the people in your group ASAP.

**What time does the evening start?** As stated on your ticket, the party starts at 6:00pm but feel free to arrive earlier. Not everything may be set-up (you might be put to work!) but you can browse the raffle table or visit the Arts Council Craft Fair that is being kept open until 6:30 for the benefit of our members.

**I lost my ticket, what do I do?** Although it is handy to have the ticket when you check in, it is not mandatory that it be in your possession. When we sold you the ticket, we recorded its number on a club roster. The ticket serves as a handy reminder for time & place.

**What is the dress code?** It is definitely not white tie. The best description is "nice casual". We don't mind if you put on your seasonal best. Don't expect everyone to do so. It is important to remember to *leave fragrance at home*. The evening, as with all club activities, should be fragrance free. (Thank you!)

**OK, we know it is a buffet. What about beverages?** When you check in with the welcoming committee, each of you will be given two drink tickets. These, when submitted to the bartender, are equivalent to one free glass of wine. Besides wine, we will have non-alcoholic punch and bottled water available. No limit on how much of these you consume!

**Can I donate a raffle prize?** In past years, we said sure. But this year we are trying to limit our prizes to approximately 80. Last year, the drawing of the raffle prizes went on much too long. We strive to have the prizes Christmas, or at least seasonally, themed. Obviously, we want high quality prizes. It is best that you talk with Audrey regarding what you are thinking of donating. We prefer not having last minute surprise donations.

**Is there any way I can help with the party before 6pm?** Is this a set-up question or not? The answer is sure—help with the set-up! We have the room starting at noon to set up all the decorations and raffle prizes. But earlier than that, we need people to help with the transfer of all this stuff to the lodge. Just tell Audrey that you would like to help—and thank you, in advance!

**Who will be the recipient of our raffle this year?** The club has selected **The Purpose Society**, a New West based charity, with the "aim to enhance personal well being, strengthen family functioning and increase personal responsibility, confidence and healthy decision making". They do much good work in helping people recover from addictions. At Christmas, their hampers are much appreciated by the struggling families and individuals.

## **CRAFTING SESSIONS:**

If you like crafting this is for you! For the three weeks prior to our Christmas Party, members (friends are welcome too!) will be making our Christmas raffle prizes. Socialize while you craft. Or just socialize if you aren't into crafting.

**When are craft sessions?** Audrey is prepared to have the basement (& all the materials!) available almost any day or evening in the three week period. There are just a couple of blocked out time slots when she has other commitments. Normally people sign-up for 2 hour stints—although often it is hard to leave the work table. Remember that Audrey does need to eat so it is good to leave lunch and dinner breaks. Lights out is 9pm.

**How do I sign-up?** At the head table, there is a calendar covering the 3 week period. On the day(s) that you prefer, please write your *name & phone number & the hours* you think you will come. If you want to sign-up later, phone Audrey (604-526-8284) to tell her when. Don't just arrive because if no one has signed up for a time slot, Audrey may have decided to do something else. Audrey will phone everyone about suppertime, the day before they have signed up, to confirm.

**Where are the craft sessions?** As stated before, they are held in Audrey's basement. The address is 117 Seventh Ave. Follow the side-walk around the house and back deck to the basement door. Warning: the deck itself will probably be slippery.

**What kind of things are made?** Primarily, they are Christmas centerpieces or wall hangings (wreaths, bowers, swags). Everything is one-of-a-kind—whatever the material inspires. There is a huge amount of material (often it takes a whole session just to figure out what to start with—you are invited to drop in for a pre-craft browse).

**What kind of materials?** A huge array of stuff. It is hard to name it all because it is such a huge assortment: cones, seed heads, wreath forms, styro forms, fake greenery, ribbon, baskets, lights, picks, ornaments (all sorts), glue guns & glue, wire. Not all is unpacked yet. When it is spread out, almost the whole basement is covered.

Some has been collected, some purchased but a good portion has been donated by club members. Members drop off old Christmas decorations. Often these are dismantled. Sometimes just refurbished. *Materials with fragrance cannot be used.*

**How do I donate?** Bring any donations to Audrey's kitchen door where it is sheltered and will be seen. Do not leave in the carport or at the basement door. Please leave your name with your donation.

**How about fresh materials?** We would love the donation of fresh materials (especially variegated) but be aware that we will not be using it until the Thursday before the party (Dec 6th). If you have such materials, alert Audrey of their pending arrival. Many thanks.

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

How times flies. We are back to November again and us gardeners are tempted to hang up our tools and hibernate for the winter. Most likely the frost has killed most of the plants. But being dedicated gardeners, we know there are jobs to be done.

I would like to do a summary of an article I wrote a couple of years ago at this time of year because I think it is appropriate for now. Hopefully it will be beneficial for you and not *too* boring.

If we want to plant early crops next spring, we can get a 2 to 4 week head start if we do a few things right now before the ground freezes solid. The soil in the fall is still fairly warm, dry & easy to dig. In the early spring, the soil is very wet, cold and difficult to work. Take advantage of fall preparation—turn the soil over, add humus and fertilizer and leave fallow over the winter. A little known fact is dolomite lime takes 6 months to reach and change the pH of the soil. Having a pH soil test would give an idea of your soil content. If your soil isn’t in the proper pH range of 6 to 7, most vegetables and flowers cannot use the nutrients and any fertilizer you add. Once pH corrections have been made, it’s time to add humus to your garden. You can add the compost and leaf mold that has decomposed from the hot summer. Plan to lay at least 3 inches of some organic material, even up to 6 inches or so—the more, the better. Next add some fertilizer high in phosphorus or potassium such as bonemeal, mushroom or steer manure. Finally, turn soil over and leave fallow for the winter. Dig as deep as you can. Try for 12 inches and let the frost and rain penetrate through it. It should be ready for a spring crop of green peas or other early spring vegetable varieties.

**GardenWorks Appreciation Day:** Thurs, Nov 20th.

**POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE RIVERVIEW LANDS:** Recently the Provincial Government announced plans to massively develop the Riverview Lands in Coquitlam. The plan is build 7000 market housing units! Periodically the government seems to come up with one of these devastating schemes. In response to the threat a few years ago, a City of Coquitlam Task Force investigated the situation. Numerous community groups were involved in the study. Its report recommends the lands be kept in public ownership with services for mental health and wellness; protection of the botanical heritage and ecology of the lands; establishment of centres of research, education and innovation; and opportunities for heritage, arts and culture. ***Please sign the petition in the foyer that states that you are opposed to the Provincial Governments Plans.*** Diane Thorne and Mike Farnworth, Coquitlam MLAs, will be submitting the petition fo the government in the spring. See Bulletin Board for more Riverview Lands information. *If you would like a copy of the petition, Audrey can send it to you electronically.*

**CONTAINER CONTEST VOTE:**

Wow! Look at the number of entries this year! Some fantastic containers—great ideas for you to try yourself. Many thanks to all who entered. Please leave your entries on the wall. They will be returned to you at a later date.

During business, the ballots will be distributed. To vote for your favorite, just write down its number and put it in the bucket. Vote for only one container. After tonights meeting, votes will be counted and the winner will be presented with a 2008 NWHS Gift Certificate at the December festivities. Good luck to all entries.

Judging guidelines:

- Overall effect
- Colour combination
- Plant form/shape
- Suitability of plants for container
- Creativeness

**IN CASE YOU MISSED IT:** Last month was the club’s ANNUAL SILENT AUCTION and a great number of fantastic deals were made by many keen bidders. Some of us just stood back and watched the action which got a little harried for a couple of items near the end. The club’s coffers were fattened by about \$500. Many thanks to all who donated raffle items, helped with the transfer and set-up and who ran the whole show. Audrey would like to specially thank Ellen Berg who stayed behind and helped to cart the left-overs (some pretty awkward shaped and sized) back to the carport. Talk about a friend when you need one. Thanks again, Ellen.

**WHAT DO THE FOLLOWING HAVE IN COMMON?**

- The Food Bank
- Wildlife Rescue
- Royal City Humane Society
- Lord Kelvin School Community Garden
- Monarch House
- Alzheimer’s Society of BC
- Union Gospel Mission Drop-In Centre
- New Westminster Salvation Army
- Royal Columbian Hospital Auxiliary
- Crossroads Inlet Hospice Society

*They have all been recipients of the proceeds from our Christmas Raffle!* This year we add the Purpose Society to the list. Every year a different compassionate charity is informally nominated by a NWHS member. This donation is not under the auspices of the Donation Committee.

**KEEP OUR MEETINGS FRAGRANCE FREE!** So that all members can enjoy our meetings (and good health), we urge that you all leave personal care fragrance at home. Thank you.

## **LIBRARY NEWS:**

The library is back tonight—but obviously won't be here next month! This means that anyone who signs out books tonight, gets to read them until next February. What a great way to spend those months of dark gloom when gardening is limited!

Monica Mowat is continuing on as librarian for 2008. She is constantly evaluating the books for gaps in popular topics. If you have any suggestions please tell her. Know of a fantastic book we should have, don't keep it a secret. Tell Monica so that the rest of the club can enjoy the book as well.

For members who have never used the library, it is easy. The books are on display at most meetings—between the treasurer and raffle tables. Browse through them and then just ask Monica if you can sign it out. You put your name on the index card in the envelope inside the front cover, give that to Monica and enjoy the book for a month. All books signed out are due at the next regular club meeting. If you cannot make that meeting it is appreciated if you could drop the book(s) off at Monica's. Audrey is willing to act as intermediary courier for books. Monica lives at 750 Fifth St. Her phone number: 604-521-3906.

All who enjoy the library, should thank Rita Solkin, one of our past club presidents. It was she who bit the bullet and started the library. Rumor has it that the original stock was gleaned from her own bookshelves.

## **SEED EXCHANGE:**

The seed exchange is absent tonight. Buff O'Shaughnessy is holding back on having the seeds available for pick-up because it is unlikely that anybody would be planting any right now. However, she is busy performing her meticulous task of cleaning, packaging and labeling the donated seed. She thanks everyone who has spent the time and energy on collecting seeds. A few things (not minor!) would ensure that your work collecting is not in vain.

### **Guidelines for collecting viable seed:**

- *Let the seed ripen on the plant.* If not ripe, it will not grow. Seeds do not ripen after picked.
- Let the seed dry out naturally. Store in a paper bag or in a bowl (best out of light). If the seed is not dry, it will turn to mold.
- Store the seed in an envelope or something else that is breathable—just in case not completely dry.

### **Guidelines for making Buff's job easier and the seeds useful to club members:**

- Identify your seeds: plant name (botanical would be absolutely fantastic!); description (height, spread, colour)—the same material that we put on our plant tags. We are all guilty of assuming the plant we have is the only variety of that plant. Details are needed.
- Put your name and phone number on each package—just in case Buff is uncertain what you meant.
- Remove coarse chaff from the seed.

***Thank you very much for donating seeds.***

## **THIS 'N' THAT:**

■ **The NWHS Store:** located at the Treasurer's table. We have a few items that you might just want to purchase as Christmas gifts:

- **Club T-shirts:** short sleeve only. Serene Green (the pale colour) in M or L. Forrest Green in M or L. Stock is limited. \$15 each.

- **Club Gift Certificate for 2008 membership.** \$10 each.

■ **Jade Plant with a Pedigree:** Recently we have been contacted by a senior citizen to hopefully find a new home for her huge jade plant. This plant is 45-50 years old and was grown from a snippet taken from the jade plant that used to reside in the entrance of Essondale Hospital (Riverview). It has a drooping nature. About 1' high and 3' across. Thrives in its current very bright location. If you do not want it, do perhaps know of a public building that could use it? If interested, contact Christine Leary at 604-526-1091 ASAP. Christine hinted that a monetary transaction would be appreciated but is not necessary.

■ **Sumitra Robertson,** who let her club membership lapse with her move east, has recently sent news from Toronto. Here are a few excerpts from her emails. "I miss all of you at the horticultural society very much. Since we are renting I took a very part-time job (once a week) at a retreat centre with a large property an hour outside Toronto. I have had a great time getting to know the gardening cycle of Ontario which is much different from BC by growing two large vegetable gardens (I couldn't help but wish I could ask Roy for advice—he would have loved to witness the decimation caused by the Colorado potatoe beetle), landscaping a new building, pruning fruit bushes and trees, tending flower borders, feeding chickens, and hauling a LOT of manure." "I personally benefitted from being a member of the society (NWHS) in ways that could not be foreseen. Just this summer I met Peter Wharton's daughter. She was amazed that I was familiar with her father and his work through my connection to the club".

■ **Looking for garden helpers:** Sumitra was just one of many people who contacted me looking for competent help with gardening tasks. It would be extremely helpful to know of any persons any of you have employed to do gardening. Most enquiries sound like they are looking for someone capable of lugging away the unwanted plant material. Know some names? Tell Audrey.

■ **Seattle Garden Show Bus Trip:** Next year the show is late, Feb 20 to 24. Recently at the BC Council meeting we chatted with Bert Garbuio (many of you may remember our visit last year to his absolutely amazing garden). Every year he organizes a bus trip to the first day of the show (Wed). If you are interested, his phone is 604-299-6876. Too early for details of his trip but check [www.gardenshow.com](http://www.gardenshow.com) for show details.

■ Did you get your GardenWise calendar? Audrey's VanDusen show container entry has made it as "Miss March". Hmmmmm, that beige pot just has to go....