

New Westminster Horticultural Society Newsletter

www.newwesthortsociety.org

December 2008



And, the Winners Are ...



Sharon Seki's first place container.

Photo: Frank Seki

She did it again! Sharon Seki repeated her 2007 win. At November's meeting, members chose her gorgeous creation as their favourite. Second place goes to Linda Turnbull and

third to myself. Thank you to all those who entered and shared their container ideas.

—by Audrey Barnes

See page 3 for details of the photo contest.

Tonight's Meeting

Tuesday, **December 9**, 6:00 p.m.
NWS Christmas Party

Tonight's Agenda

Welcome 6:20
Dinner
Dessert
Contest Winners Recognized
Raffle Tickets Drawn
Quiz Answers and Prize
More Raffle Tickets Drawn
Door Prizes Drawn
Closing 9:00

Next Meeting

Tuesday, **February 10**, 7:30 p.m.
Dress in your finery for our first meeting of the year! Ivan Sayers, a knowledgeable and humorous fashion historian, will show us how fashion has interpreted the garden.

Big Shoes Need Filling

We are looking to replace Anna Camporese as the newsletter's editor. If you wish to edit the newsletter, attendance at Executive meetings is required. However, if you're happy just laying out the content, isn't. Contact Carole.

Christmas Raffle Helps Women and Children

The YWCA Vancouver Rooftop Food Garden is this year's recipient of the Christmas party raffle. It is an urban treasure that provides healthy, nutritious food to women and children at the YWCA Crabtree Corner, a family resource centre in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. The garden is managed in a sustainable manner and is an example of what can be done to solve nutritional poverty and food security issues.

This innovative project began in 2006 when YWCA, community and corporate volunteers experimented with growing produce on the fifth floor rooftop of the downtown fitness facility. The existing ornamental garden was gradually transformed into a fruitful community garden. Garden production relies completely on volunteers who plant, care for, harvest and deliver the food.

A wide variety of seasonal produce from arugula to zucchini is grown. Earlier this year, berries were planted and plans are

underway to plant fruit trees and perennials this winter. In its first year, the garden yielded over 150 kilos of produce. More than 450 kilos was harvested in each of 2007 and 2008, the entirety of which was donated. The goal is to produce one tonne of food per year in the next three to five years.

Produce is delivered to Crabtree Corner's community kitchen by bike cart. Food waste is then be returned to compost



Photo: Courtesy of Michael Levenston

and fertilize the soil, thereby completing the cycle. These are just a few examples of how the YWCA is reducing its ecological footprint. For more information on the YWCA Vancouver Rooftop Food Garden, contact Ted Cathcart at 604-895-5792 or tcathcart@ywcavan.org.

Next year, the YWCA Vancouver will give us a tour of the garden. In the meantime, if you would like to offer your experience in vegetable and fruit production as a resource person or workshop leader, call Fleur Palliardi at 604-895-5762 or fpalliardi@ywcavan.org.

Got an idea for the upcoming year?

Contact your member of the 2009 Executive.

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Get Your Money's Worth

Is there an event or program you'd like to see happen in 2009? Is there an area you'd like us to spend more or less on than we have in the past? We're meeting in January to prepare the budget. Send your proposals, ideas or comments to Carole or Rita by Monday, January 12.

Logo and Slogan Contest

A new logo and slogan to promote our 75th anniversary will appear on our T-shirts, newsletter, website and more. Create one or both and win \$75.

The new logo must include our name and a Pacific dogwood or *Cornus nuttallii*. The current slogan that appears under the logo is Growing since 1934. reflects our 75 anniversary? E-mail your entry to Carole or drop it off at her home by Sunday, December 21. All entries are

And, the Winners Are ... continued

Colour in the Garden:

- 1st - Linda Turnbull
- 2nd - Audrey Barnes
- 3rd - Ann Paisley

Creatures Enjoying the Garden

- 1st - Trudy Findlay
- 2nd - Audrey Barnes
- 3rd - Diane Escalante

Overall or Partial Garden View

- 1st - Audrey Barnes
- 2nd - Linda Turnbull
- 3rd - Louise Meville



Creatures Enjoying the Garden: First Place

Photo: Trudy Findlay



Colour in the Garden: First Place
Photo: Linda Turnbull



Overall or Partial Garden View: First Place

Photo: Audrey Barnes

Photographs submitted for the photography contest were judged by Steve Grover, a professional photographer. He writes:

In summery, I would like to encourage photographers in the NWHS to photograph their garden often and in all seasons. The garden can look so different when the angle of the sun changes throughout the year. Remember to remove garden hoses, dead leaves or anything

else distracting. Good photos are made; they don't just happen. The fewer entries this year made it slightly easier to choose the winners, but there were many good images that didn't quite make the top three in each category. When judging photos, the technical aspects (exposure, focus, depth of field, etc.) are important, but usually strong compositions and interesting

subjects make people take notice. Thank you for asking me to be judge. I always enjoy looking over the gardens, plants and interesting ideas presented in your photographs.

The winning containers and photographs will be posted on our website as will Steve's comments on the winning photos.

—by Audrey Barnes

In Your Vege Patch: *Garden Tools: Your Good Partner*

By Roy Pegler

This time of the year to take inventory of your tools of the trade. A garden tool is your partner in the garden. A good garden tool allows you to do exactly what you want to do, and do it comfortably.

Your tools should be of sufficient quality to help you in the garden, not frustrate you. Cheap tools are often poorly designed. At the very least, such tools make gardening more work. At worst they don't do the job right and end up hurting you—making your back ache, your muscles sore and your hands blister.

This isn't to say that you can't enjoy your garden unless you have lots of expensive tools. While it's true that some tools are expensive, it's also true that many are not. Learning to recognize quality, scrutinizing garage sales and buying tools out of season can stock your garden shed with excellent tools at little expense. Check to see if the fit is comfortable. Is there room for your hands within the enclosed handles? Is the surface smooth and welcoming to your skin? Does the handle fill, but not overfill your hand? Next observe how the tool balances. It should be easiest to hold in just the way you'll hold it when at work. At the same time, notice its weight. You obviously don't want a tool that's too heavy, but it can be also too light. For digging tools in particular, you may want a slightly heavier tool to provide some of its weight to get the job done.

You only need to acquire the tools required for the tasks in your garden. For instance, if your garden is small—a single bed or just a few beds—you may choose to dig it by hand. In this case, you will best be served by a **spade and stout garden fork**.



The **spade** with its flat rectangular blade allows you to cut a straight edge around a bed or to cut out neat squares of sod and peel them off evenly at the root line.



The **garden fork** is useful for tilling the soil. A well-made fork has thick tines that are strong and won't bend when working in the soil or when they encounter a large rock. A **crowbar** can also be handy in a rock encounter.

The pointed blade of a **shovel** makes it a good tool for moving soil.



A **steel rake** is useful for drawing soil from walkways into beds and for moving soil within beds. If you flip it over and use the flat side, it's an excellent tool for smoothing the bed surface.



A good sturdy stainless steel **head trowel** is worth the money. I like the ones with a wooden handle because it doesn't feel freezing-cold in spring weather nor burning-hot when it's been left in the summer sun.

To summarize the tool buyer's criteria is as follows: forged steel, comfortable grip, smooth surfaces, good balance, and appropriate weight.

Happy Christmas and good New Year.