



## Let's Share

Next month, is the semi-annual Bring to Share event. Enter and you'll have a chance to win great prizes. Bring to share:

- Blooms or foliage from your garden that you're especially fond of
- A photograph or diagram of your backyard for some free design advice
- A spring container to inspire others to plant their own
- An insect that you'd like to identify—is it friend or foe?
- That mystery plant your neighbour gave you—find out the name of it
- A vexing problem in your garden you want suggestions for
- Blooms or foliage damaged by insects or disease so you can get some advice on what to do about it
- A new gardening tip you found in your favourite magazine to share with other members

Come early to display your item or problem and to comment on those of others.

## Plant-a-Row Grow-a-Row Spring Gardeners' Party

Everyone is invited to the annual Spring Party, to kick off another growing season with exciting speakers, door prizes, and goodies. Last year 35,000 pounds of produce for the Food Bank was collected, providing fresh vegetables and fruits to the children whose families rely on the Food Bank. This year's speakers are: **Brian Minter**/ supporter and co-ordinator of the national programme, **Douglas Justice**/ UBC Botanical Garden, **Conway Lumm**/Gardenworks, **Sheree Liversidge**/Lee Valley **Claude LeDoux**/Horticulture Manager of New Westminster, local co-ordinator.

*GardenWise* magazine, one of the supporters, will be donating a subscription, copies of the magazine, and their new publication, *The Healthy Garden Guide*.

Bring a donation to the Food Bank and join us **Thursday, March 27<sup>th</sup> 2008 at St Aidan's Church at the corner of 14<sup>th</sup> St and 7<sup>th</sup> Ave, starting at 6 PM sharp.**

**Not sure who to contact with your questions, concerns or ideas?** Pick up a copy of the Who Does What list. It will be updated periodically as members take on responsibilities. If you're already volunteering and you're not on the list, notify Carole. You'll note that the Sketching Club needs someone to coordinate it. Interested? Call Carole.

## Tonight's Meeting

Tuesday, March 11, 7:30 p.m.

**Brian Minter**

**"Today's Lifestyle Gardening"**

Brian Minter, owner of Minter Gardens, and Country Garden, garden centre, writes a syndicated gardening column for several Lower Mainland newspapers, appears on radio and hosts a Knowledge Network garden series. He is an international speaker. In his "free time", he produced seven gardening videos and wrote a Canadian bestselling gardening book. He will have plants to sell at this meeting.

## Future Meetings

Tuesday, April 8, 7:30 p.m.

**Bud Black**

**"Dahlias and Chrysanthemums"**

Bud, past president of the Vancouver Dahlia Society and the Point Grey Chrysanthemum Club, has been gardening for 75 years. He'll give a propagation demo and have plants to sell.

Tuesday, May 13, 7:30 p.m.

**Brenda Faulk**

**"Drought Tolerant Plants and Xeriscaping"**

Brenda Faulk, owner of Tanglebank Country Gardens, , [www.tanglebank.com](http://www.tanglebank.com), will be have handouts for her talk and bring plants for sale.

## Carole's Compost

By Carole Forsythe

Last month I said copies of the 2008 budget would be available at tonight's meeting. There was a very on time executive meeting to discuss the recommendations of George Nakatsu, the chartered accountant who reviewed our financial records. Essentially, Mr. Nakatsu recommended we spend what we make each year. In addition, the financial assets we've accumulated over the years must be reduced to an amount that covers only estimated annual operational costs. Unfortunately, while the discussion was a lively one, the time allotted to it was insufficient, so we are meeting again this month.

Come hell or high water, the budget will be available at the April meeting. In the meantime, please note that in addition to following Mr. Nakatsu's recommendations, the budget reflects the members' feedback from the special meeting in January. For example, the value of the raffle prizes has increased, and this year's Christmas party will feature after-dinner entertainment to allow more time for socializing.

Funds from our financial assets have been set aside for expenses associated with next year's 75th anniversary. One thing we heard loud and clear was that you wanted member discounts for club sponsored events, outings and workshops. This is reflected in the budget and in the fee for this month's outing.

There are a few caveats to membership discounts. First, you've got to register by the deadline. Second, if you change your mind after the deadline or

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## Mark Your Calendar

### Tues, **March 25**, 7:30 pm **NWHS Regular Executive Meeting**

Debra Halbig's Home  
RSVP at 604-618-8648 or  
halbigs@shaw.ca

### Thurs, **March 27**, 6:00 pm **Plant A Row, Grow A Row Spring Gardeners' Party**

St Aidan's Church,  
corner of 14<sup>th</sup> St and 7<sup>th</sup> Ave  
See Page 1 for details

### Sat, **March 29**, 9:30 am–2:30 pm **BC Council of Garden Clubs AGM**

St. Helen's Catholic Church  
3871 Pandora Street, Burnaby  
See Out and About for details

### Sat & Sun, **March 29 and 30** **Vancouver Orchid Festival** VanDusen Botanical Garden www.vandusengarden.org

### Sun, **March 30**, 10:00 am **NWHS Plant Sale Planning Committee Meeting** Carole Forsythe's Home RSVP at 604-515-1927 or carole.

don't bother to show up, you'll owe the difference between the actual and discounted price of the event, outing or workshop. Third, discounts will not apply to costs associated with transportation or accommodation. And, finally, the membership discount "policy" as outlined here is both subject to review and is dependent on a healthy revenue stream.

Aldina, Monica and I will be responsible for planning many of the outings. That doesn't mean that you can't organize one. Let us know what you'd like to do and we'll help you out.

forsythe@shaw.ca

### Sat & Sun, **April 12 & 13** - **Mushroom Manure Sale** New Westminster Secondary School

For home delivery, pick up an order form tonight and submit it by Wednesday, April 9. Supports the Hyack basketball team.

### Wednesdays, **April 23 & 30** Saturdays, **April 26 & May 3** **Hanging Basket Workshops** See Claude Shares His Secrets for details

### **Out and About**

Our first outing of the year is to the AGM of the BC Council of Garden Clubs on Saturday, March 29th. This umbrella organization that represents over 130 clubs across our province. While the meeting starts at 9:30 a.m., arrive earlier for light refreshments as well as the best selection of plants for sale. Rolf Mathewes, a professor at SFU, is speaking on the plants of the Queen Charlottes. After lunch, Heather Edwards, Manager of Parks Operations will tell us about the eco-sculptures you've seen in Burnaby. Make sure you buy a raffle ticket or two for the draw at the end of the day for some wonderful prizes.

NWHS is offering its members a significant discount on the registration fee. Instead of paying \$20 to registrar, you'll pay only \$5 if you sign up tonight. Here's the caveat, if you don't show, you will owe the club the \$15 it subsidized for your registration.

## Potting Up for the Plant Sale

by Audrey Barnes Yardmaster

Wow! In less than two months the sale will be over! Sale date is May 4<sup>th</sup>; the location, Ecole Glenbrook Middle School gymnasium.

Seduced by great weather, a couple of members actually jump-started the yard work. What a thrill to see plants potted. We're keeping our fingers crossed that it will rain just enough to water the plants but not turn into snow and ice. That would be perfect! Join the yard crew and join the building anticipation towards another great sale.

The uninitiated may wonder why the emphasis on yard work. For our sale, unlike many club sales, all plants are "preprocessed" in the yard.

The plants are potted, groomed, tagged and priced in the yard prior to sale. This means, of course, no plant material just dropped off at the sale site—all must go through the yard first. It also means a lot of manpower needed in the yard.



Club members (left to right) Diane Escalante, Silina Katatsu and Micheline Ippersiel potting up in the yard for the May plant sale. Photo: Audrey Barnes

- **Volunteer for yard work:** Easy, just put your name on the calendar at the meeting or contact Audrey (604-526-8284 before 8pm, [sgbarnes@telus.net](mailto:sgbarnes@telus.net)), stating which daylight hours work best for you. A recommended shift is 2 hours. Audrey confirms volunteers the evening before their scheduled shift. Wear layers of clothes as it is often cool.
- **Keep those plants coming:** We have almost finished with plants dropped off last fall. Soon we will need your plants. When you are in your garden, please keep your eyes open for possible donations and get them to the yard. The deadline for plant drop off is Sunday, April 13<sup>th</sup>.
- **Soil replacement:** Obviously, if you are giving great clumps of plants, you will be creating great holes in your garden. We will gladly fill divots with our purchased bulk soil.
- **We dig, we divide:** Our "will collect in the evening" crew (Carole Forsythe & Ann Paisley) will assist you in donating. Talk to Audrey about your plants and she will forward the information onto the crew. They will set-up an appropriate time.
- **Growing from seed:** If you are donating greenhouse grown plants, please tell Audrey ASAP—definitely before the April 13<sup>th</sup> deadline. Transfer of these plants to the yard will be delayed.
- **Greenhouse space needed:** Would you be able to baby-sit some seedlings for a few weeks?
- **Sign-up Table:** This month, the sign-up sheets relate to plants and yard work. The day-of-sale duty sheets will be available at the April meeting.

**Claude Shares His Secrets** -Take a class with Claude LeDoux, Parks Horticulture Manager, to make your own stunning New Westminster hanging basket. Make a 14" basket for \$61 and/or a 18" one for \$72. Call 604-777-5111 to register for one of following classes:  
Wed, April 23, 12:30–2:30 pm; Sat, April 26, 2:00–4:00 pm;  
Wed, April 30, 6:30–8:30pm. Sat, May 3, 9:00–11:00 am. Courses are taught in the Greenhouse Complex just down the road from our meeting place.

### Sunflower Theme Queensborough Fair - September 21

Plant your patch of these fantastic flowers now. Audrey is creating the fair's competition categories. She'd would love to hear your sunflower ideas.



# In Your Vege Patch

By Roy Pegler

March is when we can start preparing the ground and sow seeds for cool weather vegies like green peas, radishes, beets, carrots, spinach, broccoli, cabbage and Swiss chard. After the middle of the month, if the weather is reasonable, early potatoes such as Norlands, warba or caribe can be planted.

## Starting Vege From Seed

Starting seeds is a very rewarding activity. When your seed packets arrive, skim through all the instructions given. Most vegetable seeds do not require special treatment to achieve good germination, as long as you ensure their basic needs are met. Even some of the more challenging seeds can be germinated, if you read the package to find out which techniques to use. Your seed package will tell you if the variety needs light (press seeds on top of soil) or darkness (generally plant to the depth of the seed size) for optimum germination. Not all plants can be started indoors; some don't like to be transplanted at all and their seeds must be sown directly into the garden. Again check your seed package for instructions.

## When to Sow Seeds

Make sure you check the recommended sowing dates on the packages. Some seeds take a lot longer to germinate than others. If sowing times seem too general, like anytime within a two month period, remember that many factors will affect the growth of the plants and desired planting dates will vary based on

your area. To get a more exact sowing date, first find your local frost-free date, which is the approximate date of your area's last spring frost. Then count back the number of weeks required to grow the transplants to get the sowing date.

## What Containers To Use

You can use about any container to start seeds as long as it is at least 3" deep to allow room for roots to grow. All containers should have holes in the bottom for drainage.

## What Planting Medium To Use

Don't use the soil from your garden. Not only is garden soil too heavy and provides poor drainage, it may also host weeds and disease organisms detrimental to your seedlings. Commercially prepared soil-less mixes are best to use and can be found almost everywhere. These mixes usually contain sterilized peat moss, vermiculite and perlite. They are light in texture and retain large quantities of moisture while still being well-drained.

## What Temperature Seeds Like

The general rule for seed starting is: start seeds warm, grow seedlings cool. Don't try to germinate your seeds on the windowsill. The outdoor temperatures will make this area too cool. Most seeds are genetically programmed to germinate only in warm soil. You can keep the seed trays on top of water heater or refrigerator. Florescent lighting also can keep the soil warm.

## How to Water Seeds

Seeds need to be constantly moist in order to germinate. Do not let the growing mixture dry out or get too wet. Water with a fine spray of warm water or from the bottom.

To be continued next month.

## From the Bookshelf

By Monica Mowart

I have added five new books to the library this month, starting with *Geraniums and Pelargoniums*, which, as we know are among the world's most popular garden plants. I thought we could use a second pruning book, so I bought *The Pruner's Bible*. It's a good guide to pruning most shrubs in your garden. There is a new book on irises: *Irises. Gardening with Light and Colour*—a fabulous book—focuses on the dramatic effect light and colour can have on your garden. Last, but not least, is *The Well Tended Perennial Garden*. This book is at my bedside at all times. It's a must-have for everyone who has questions on maintenance of perennials. The book is for gardeners what *Joy of Cooking* is for cooks.

Please let me know if there are plant books you're interested in, but you haven't seen them on the library table. I am always looking for ideas and suggestions. Thanks and happy reading.