

# Newsletter



www.newwesthortsociety.org

April 2010

## **Membership Renewals**

May is the final month for membership renewals. Members need to pay for their membership by the May meeting to be considered a renewal and maintain their continuous membership record. Remember after 25 years, you become a Life Member and your membership is free from then on.

## **Smart Gardening Workshop**

*If you missed this informative and free workshop last month, you've got one more chance—April 25*

New Westminster's Pesticide Use Bylaw came into effect this year on March 1, 2010. It restricts the use of pesticides for cosmetic (non-essential) purposes in maintaining outdoor plants.

Learn how to maintain your garden and lawn organically at this new city workshop.

Sunday, April 25, 2010  
1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.  
New Westminster Public  
Library auditorium

There is no charge to attend; however, register in advance if you wish to participate. Registration can be made from the City's website [www.newwestcity.ca](http://www.newwestcity.ca) or by calling 604-527-4592.

## **Better Late Than Never—Beneficial Insect Website**

Last year after our August speaker's talk on beneficial insects, club member Candace McGuire suggested the following link as a good website on beneficial insects:

<http://www.grinningplanet.com/2005/04-26/beneficial-insect-natural-pest-control-article.htm>.

Don't be put off by the length of the address; the tables and information are worth the effort.

## **Contacts**

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## **Tonight's Meeting**

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

Membership Renewals

**Speaker:**

**Catherine Dale**

on Right Plant, Right Place

## **Mark Your Calendar**

Saturday, May 1

**Plant Sale Set-Up**

**4:00 p.m. until done**

and

Sunday, May 2

**Plant Sale**

**10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

Location: the Armoury,  
Queens Avenue & 6th Street  
Parking: City Hall parking lot

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

**General Meeting**

**Speaker: Pam Erickson** on  
Daylilies

Saturday, July 17

**Annual NWHS Tour & Picnic**

Consider having your garden on  
the tour this year.

Sunday, September 19

**Queensborough Urban Farmers  
Fall Fair**

This year's theme is *root  
vegetables*.

## NEWS FROM THE YARD

by Audrey Barnes, Yard-master

**M**any, many thanks to all of you who have donated your plants and your time in the yard. Our plants look great! What fantastic weather! No need to worry about watering! We have a really good variety this year. Many interesting plants that we have never offered before. Excellent! Onward....

Still to come:

### *Dahlia tubers wanted*

If you have unwanted dahlia tubers (identified, of course), we would love to offer them at the sale. Please talk with Audrey about drop off sometime this week.

### *Growers from Seed*

If you are on the “growing from seed” team, Audrey will talk with you about supplies you may need and the delivery dates for your plants.

### *Grooming and Pricing Plants*

With the potting in the yard now completed, we will soon be moving onto the final stages of plant preparation. We anticipate that we'll need about a week to recoup and rearrange the yard and to complete all the plant tags. Then on Monday, April 19th, we will start with the grooming and pricing. The final two weeks will be intensive. Lots of volunteers (this means you!) are needed to work in teams to clean and evaluate each plant

and assign the pricing. It's really very easy, just time consuming. Don't worry about deciding on the prices—we have guidelines and the amounts are group decisions. As an incentive to helping, members who volunteer can purchase any plant (with the volunteer 10% discount) after it has been priced—obviously, you cannot price the plant you want to purchase. The calendar is available for you to put your name and phone number and hours on the date which you would like to help. While hours are extended from 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. is preferred by the yard boss. After tonight, contact Audrey if you would like to help.

### *Deadline for Plant Labels*

Please return your completed labels as soon as possible to the yard as we would like to have all labels done by April 19th. There is a chance that some labels will have to be done while pricing and grooming. The computer generated labels for annuals and edibles will have to be finished. It is an easy task but one that will need manpower. This will probably be done early in the final week.

### *Shipping out Plants*

At least 12 fit people will be required on Saturday, May 1st to move each plant from its location in the yard to the lane and lifted onto the trucks. This is a very

intensive work-out. The shift will start at 5:00 p.m. and last until about 7:30 p.m. or until all the plants have gone.

### *Transporting to the Sale Site*

With the longer travel time required this year, it is anticipated that we will need at least five (5) vehicles and drivers.

### *Boxes, Boxes, Boxes*

With all the excitement of preparing the plants and setting up the sale, it is easy to forget that every one of those plants that goes to the sale venue in our black trays must leave the sale in a cardboard box with the plant purchaser. Please start collecting cardboard flats. Do not bring them to the yard. Take them directly to the Armoury, either on Saturday evening or early on sale day.

### *Thank you*

Thanks to everyone of you who has helped make our sale a celebration of plants.

### **Sale PR—New This Year**

We have purchased 25 spiffy (16" x 24") two-sided lawn signs. If you live on a major route and would like to decorate your lawn ... talk to Sharon Seki at the raffle table.

# Volunteer - It's Good for You

*We need your help to ensure the success of the NWHHS Plant Sale, the club's signature fundraiser. Sign up tonight!*

## **Saturday, May 1 - Sale Set-up**

*Transforming the Armoury into a garden centre is a big job that requires many hands.* Tables are set up and moved into place. Plants are unloaded off trucks onto dollies, delivered and lifted onto tables. Plants are shifted from table to table into their final position. Ann Paisley is the go-to person.

Pizza, pop, water and granola bars will be available. Oh, and bring your money to purchase plants after the transformation is complete. More on that later.

*At the "Yard".* Lots of lifting plants here, there and onto trucks. Got a truck to load plants into? Let us know. Audrey Barnes is the one responsible for this operation.

Water and granola bars are on-site. Join us at the Armoury for pizza later on. To cover fuel costs, drivers receive a \$10 voucher.

## **Sunday, May 2 - Sale Day**

Sign up for one or two of the following positions. We'll do our best to place you in your preferred position. Refreshments are on-site. Those choosing the all day shift will also receive lunch.

**Talliers** - Volunteering with a friend? Working with a partner, you will tally the number and prices of the plants being purchased. No need to calculate the total amount owed. No need to handle cash.

**Cashiers** - Good at arithmetic? Experience with cash handling? This is the job for you.

**Plant Sellers** - Do you know your plants? Do you want to learn? We need both experienced gardeners and enthusiastic novices. It's a fantastic way to learn and share knowledge with both members and our customers.

Lifting is required! As stock is sold, tables and plants are compressed into smaller areas.

**Break Down Crew** - After closing, tables are folded and stacked, leftover plants are loaded into trucks and sent back to the yard. Floor is swept.

**Crowd Control** - Good with crowds? Keep our customers happy in the line-ups. Tact and a sense of humour will serve you well.

**Floater** - Willing to go where you're needed when you're needed? We need you.

**Truck Drivers** - Got a truck? There'll be supplies and unsold plants to take back to Audrey's after the doors close.

## **Volunteers Only**

One benefit of volunteering is that you get the first crack at purchasing the plants on sale. A second benefit is a ten per cent discount on your purchase. These benefits are available to member volunteers only.

After the Armoury is set up, shopping commences that night. Bring cash as plants must be purchased then and there.

On the day of the sale, member volunteers may shop before or after their shift. Take advantage of our members only hold area. When you're ready to make your purchase, take advantage of another volunteer benefit and bypass the line-up.

To volunteer, contact Carole Forsythe at [carole.forsythe@shaw.ca](mailto:carole.forsythe@shaw.ca).

## In Your Vege Patch — *Feed Your Soil*

By Roy Pegler



**W**ith spring being a bit earlier, you can plant a row of early potatoes now since there will be little harm, if any, from a late frost. Now's the time to plant broccoli, cabbage, lettuce, spinach, Swiss chard, leeks and onions. Your green peas should have been in the ground by the end of March, but now is better than never.

Depending on what you want to grow, it's essential to amend your soil with as much organic matter— well rotted horse manure, garden compost,

spent mushroom compost or soil conditioner— as you can lay your hands on. Add organic matter to the bottom of trenches when single or double digging. The more you improve soil, the easier it becomes to work and less deep cultivation you need to do. Use it as a mulch on the surface of raised beds.

The benefits of organic matter are many. It acts like a sponge, soaking up water and fertilizer to make them readily available for plant roots. An added bonus is the organic matter itself is full

of nutrients. When mixed with soil, the fibres in organic matter create spaces for aeration and drainage so roots can breathe and waterlogging is prevented. When used as mulch, its dark colour absorbs the heat of the sun that warms the soil. This capturing of heat allows an earlier start with spring sowing and speeds up the germination process.

The message is simple— feed your soil with the right ingredients and it will feed you.