

Newsletter



www.newwesthortsociety.org

March 2018

NEXT MONTHS MEETING:

THE PRESENTATION:

Dr. Carole Christopher has a doctorate in nutrition & taught university over 40 years promoting local, sustainable food sources. She is the past chair of the Vancouver Food Policy Council & a master gardener for over 35 years. We will hear a brief overview of the Society Promoting Environmental Conservatism whose mandate is to determine practical solutions for sustainable cities. She will talk about how our North American diets affect our health care system, about our fundamental food security and changes in BC agriculture and about the growth of the local/organic food movement and the trend of growing food in urban gardens.

SPRING BRING TO SHARE:

Alright! It is almost upon us: your chance to share what is happening in your garden, what you hope to have happening in your garden, or what you happened to come across that is gardening related—or to ask a question about gardening. At the April meeting (and again in September), NWHS holds “Bring to Share”—which is exactly that. You bring in stuff to share with other members. This is not a competition. There is no judging involved.

Unique for April 2018:

Enjoying the Garden: Tonight, we urge everyone to pick up a “cat enjoying a garden” coloring sheet at the fireplace table. Color it (perfect activity for that rainy day that we are sure to have before April 13) and bring it in for the display next month. Thank you, Merril, for creating the drawing. We’re looking forward to a colorful display. Your chance to be creative! Feel free to take more than one copy of the drawing.

Suggestions of exhibits:

Enjoying the Garden: Your coloring of the “cat enjoying a garden” drawing
Garden Glory: Beautiful or unusual plants, blooms or foliage from the garden

Photos: Usually are garden related

Great Tips: Did you come across something in a book or magazine, or perhaps had a serendipitous discovery?

Garden Design: Info or questions, or even plans of your future intentions
Plant Identification: Bring in the plant, or leaf, or a photo

Insects: Please keep specimens contained

Weeds & Disease: Please keep infected materials enclosed in plastic

Other: Anything that doesn’t fit the other categories

Guide to exhibiting: When you arrive, check in at the central table at the fireplace end of the room. You will be given a slip for each of your exhibits. There is no limit on the number of entries—we hope you will bring LOTS! Then place your exhibit(s) in the appropriate location(s) on the tables.

Participation prizes: As a thank-you for exhibiting, each person who brings something in will have his/her name entered in the draw for one of three \$5 participation prizes. Just a small token of thanks.

Giving feedback: Bringing exhibits to share is only half of the activity. The other half is people sharing their response to the exhibits. There is room on each slip for your feedback. Please use it. Thanks.

PRESIDENT’S CORNER:

by Lorna Cloutier

Have you ever noticed how resilient plants and, especially, bulbs are? Our late snow temporarily flattened all the crocus, snowdrops and other spring flowers that were gracing our gardens. As soon as the snow is gone, they pop right back up showing us their glory. Once again, the snowdrops and hellebore are bobbing their heads in the breeze—sadly, not so much with some of my crocus.

Another interesting example that I’d like to share is my nephew’s in-laws’ home in Santa Rosa that was leveled by the California wildfires last fall (a month before his wedding!). They went by the property last week and the daffodils and grape hyacinths are all blooming. This regrowth gives them a sign of hope just like our spring flowering bulbs give us hope for a glorious spring with no more snow!

Tonight’s Meeting

Tuesday, Mar 13, 2018

Speaker: Gary Lewis on “Hellebores”
Membership renewals: \$15

Mark Your Calendar

Annual Loose Asiatic & Oriental Lily Bulb Sale:

Sat, Mar 14, 10am-4pm
Erikson’s Daylily Gardens & Perennials
24642 - 51 Ave, Langley
(note: Mar 14 is also the 2018 opening date for Select Roses, 22771 - 38 Ave, Langley)

Vancouver Orchid Society Annual Show & Sale

Sat, Mar 24, 9am-5pm; Sun, Mar 25, 10am-5pm
VanDusen Garden Floral Hall
Admission: adults \$7, seniors \$6
\$1 off admission coupon at www.vancouverorchidsociety.ca

Plant a Row Grow a Row Spring Gardeners’ Party

Wed, Mar 28, 6pm-9pm
St Thomas More Collegiate
7450 12th Ave, Burnaby
(see article)

Alpine Garden Club of BC Spring Show & Sale

Sat, Apr 7, noon - 4pm
VanDusen Gardens Floral Hall
www.agc.bc.ca

NWHS April General Meeting:

Tues, Apr 10, 7:30pm
Speaker: Dr. Carole Christopher on “Eating Defensively by Growing Your Own”
Spring Bring to Share
(see articles)

90th Annual Bradner Flower Show:

Fri-Sun, Apr 13-15, 10am-5pm
Bradner Community Hall
5303 Bradner Rd, Abbotsford
Admission \$2

NWHS Boulevard Plant Sale:

Sat, May 5, 10am-3pm
Blvd in front of 720 5th St, New West
Now’s the time to plan to your plant donations.

NWHS Garden Tour & Pot-Luck Picnic:

Sat, July 14. Tour in afternoon, picnic in evening.
Can we visit your garden this year?
Talk with Audrey about the possibility.

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MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL:

If you look carefully at your membership card, it says, "Membership valid thru February 201X". If that final digit is an "8" and you don't pay your annual dues (a mere \$15) by the April meeting, not will you have lost your discount at many garden centres (already done, at the end of Feb), your name will be removed from the emailer list and any years of continuous membership will be terminated. So...see Ellen at the treasurer's table to renew.

MEMBER DISCOUNTS:

The list of nurseries that offer discounts ebbs and flows at their whim. Currently these places give NWHS members discount (usually, 10%):

- Amsterdam Garden Centre
- GardenWorks
- NorthWest Landscaping Supply
- Hawaiian Botanicals

Always ask at the cashier "Do you give garden club a discount?" before they ring in your items. If they say "yes", thank them. If they say "no", be gracious (say, something like "too bad"). It is entirely the choice of the business. For club members, it is a bonus, not a right. Many nurseries have their own loyalty programs instead of giving club discounts. If you find a nursery that does give a discount, tell Terry Koziel (see contact list).

WEBSITE LIAISON:

Terry Koziel is the liaison between the NWHS membership and our webmaster, Gillian Escalante. (Many, many thanks, Gillian, for creating a website about which we brag.) If you have suggestions for updates or new features you would like to see on the website, Terry is the person to tell. He will then work with Gillian to turn ideas into reality.

Call for Blogs: As by evidence of a excerpts on pg 4 of this newsletter, there are some excellent gardening blogs in cyberspace. Do you have a favorite (or two, three...)? Tell Terry. He will compile a listing which hopefully will be on the website.

SEED EXCHANGE:

We're trying something a bit different with the seed exchange. Seed donations can still be left at the fireplace table or given to Richard Harrison but the seeds packaged for pick-up will now be at the In-Club Plant Sale. A sale price of 25¢ (or 50¢ for the more rare) per package is a fantastic deal. This better reflects the value of the time spent collecting, cleaning, re-searching and packaging the seeds.

SAD NEWS

This month, two NWHS members passed away within days.

Jane De Marchi was one of our long term life members. 92 years old—wow! Sadly, most members did not get to meet her since she was forced to curtail active participation in club events due to loss of most of her sight several years ago. But she didn't forget NWHS. She even ordered from Florissa on behalf of the club last year. She was a delightful person—warm, generous, great sense of humor. If you knew her, consider yourself lucky. She was a gem.

Larry Tamkin was known both as "Susan's Husband" and "Santa Claus at the mall". Not as active in NWHS as his wife (one of the stalwart Garden Gals) but his presence was always appreciated. Passing at 65, far too young, he left special memories behind with a multitude of people. He was a talented, funny guy. We will miss you, Larry. Our special thoughts go out to Susan.



TREASURER'S REPORT - Feb 2018

Total Revenue: \$1602.25
Total Expenses: \$1325.66
(includes \$400 donation to BC Council of Garden Clubs Scholarship Trust Fund) See bulletin board for full report.

NEW WEST PARKS HANGING BASKETS:

It seems weird to be shoveling snow one week and thinking of creating hanging baskets the next.

If you have made hanging baskets with New West Parks in the past, you should have received notification of your possible dates for basket classes via snail mail. If you haven't, contact the Queens Park Arena. The following dates and prices are for first-time basket creators.

Class Schedule for New Creators:

- Wed, Apr 25, noon-2pm
- Sat, May 5, 2-4pm
- Thurs, May 10, 6:30-8:30pm
- Sat, May 19, 9-11am

Course Location: Greenhouse Complex, Queens Park

Cost: 14" basket (19 plants), \$66; 18" basket (23 plants), \$76. Besides the super healthy plants, the cost includes the basket with chain hangers, wick, watering pan, custom blended soil mix, slow release fertilizer and how to care instructions—and, of course, 2 hours of hands-on basket making guidance by Claude LeDoux.

Pre-registration is required: Everyone attending the class must be registered! Contact the Queen's Park Arena, 604-777-5111, Mon-Fri 9am-4pm. Register in person or by phone. Payment by Debit, Visa or MasterCard.

THE GARDEN BROOM:

Last month a proud parent of a Kwantlen Park School grad attended our meeting and sold brooms to a swarm of keen NWHS members. The broom sale is a fundraiser for the school's dry grad celebrations. Well, she won't be here tonight but that doesn't mean you can't purchase a broom. Check out Audrey's broom, on display tonight. If you would like a broom, Audrey will gladly take your order (and the \$20/broom). The brooms will be delivered to Audrey's home for you to pick-up. Super-fast delivery! Broom sales end at the end of April. www.TheOriginalGardenBroom.com

WISH LIST: If there's a particular plant that you are interested in ask Joan Stevenson or the folks at the in-club sale table. We'll see if we can facilitate you acquiring one. This, of course, isn't the club buying one for you but inquiring among members to see if there is one available and then helping arrange an exchange. In most cases a small fee would be involved which would then come to NWHS.

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PLANT SALE UPDATE: by Janet Butts

In Lorna's email it was announced that the club would subsidize your seed starting for the Plant Sale. Since then, we've expanded it a bit:

- Terri Clark-Kveton has bought bags of seed-starting mix (if you are not familiar with this term, it's a lightweight soil-less medium that drains well and has just a hint of nutrients to get the seeds past their first-leaf stage) and is inviting people to come to her home with whatever containers they are using and fill them up there. This saves you from buying it yourself and ending up with excess.
- Terri has also acquired seed-starting flats. These are available at the in-club sale table.
- Also, Terri is generously offering to do a seed-starting tutorial. Details will be determined during tonight's meeting.
- NWHS is offering (again through Terri) to supply potting mixture for the next stage of your seedlings. Again, this saves you from having to get a separate bag of potting medium and having an excess amount. You will get only what you need, when you need it. If you are potting small (4") pots of perennials, we're happy to supply you with potting medium for those as well.
- *Please contact Terri to arrange timing of your growing medium pick up (see contacts list)*
- **Plant tags:** We have a new supply of plant tags. We'd like you to label your plants with as much info as you can fit on one side of the tag: Name of plant, sun/shade preference, size in height and spread, color of flower if applicable and any other tidbits you think would entice someone to buy. (eg. "The smell of this flower is intoxicating!" or "The bright green leaves lighten up a dark spot!" or "Fuzzy leaves hold water droplets!". You get the picture.)
- **Pots:** If you have spare pots, please bring them to the April meeting, (leave them in the foyer) or arrange among yourselves to share. If you need pots, inquire at the in-club sale table. Audrey has a stash of small basket-stuffer size pots.
- **Small Sale notices:** Now is the time to start getting the word out to friends that the sale is on. Pick up a stash of small 'fridge' size posters to distribute.



NWHS SKETCH GROUP: TEA AND TOPIC: by Merril Hall

While it may be too cool to sketch outside, the sketching group members maintain a monthly schedule of "Tea and Topic" sessions. We meet on the 3rd Wed of each month, 7-9pm, in the basement of Centennial Lodge (aka Arts Council of New Westminster Gallery) in Queens Park. There are about 10 members who regularly participate. We rotate duties of bringing tea and snacks and a still life topic to sketch each meeting. We share our skills in sketching, art related knowledge and friendship. All NWHS members are welcome to drop in and try it out. As drop-in artists, just bring a sketch book and pencils and please remember to bring \$2 for the donation box which goes to the Arts Council. The sketch group is a sub-group of NWHS and therefore the topics are always garden related.

So....come by and sketch with us on a casual basis or take it to the next level and join our very active art group called Garden Gals. Don't let the gender of the name dissuade you. "Garden Gals Plus" has a nice ring. Garden Gals get involved with community arts projects, share their art in local galleries, commit to a standard of presentation and produce paintings for theme topics. We are excited to be coordinating with the GoGos at the Unifor Building on 12th Street for this summer's Cultural Crawl. You can view our art at the Senior Services Society office on Carnarvan St. where we will be hanging a new show at the end of March. Also, check out the New West Public Library where the Century House Artists are showing in the reference department. A majority of the CH Artists are Garden Gals.

PLANT A ROW, GROW A ROW SPRING GARDENERS' PARTY:

PAR GAR is a national program that encourages gardeners to plant an extra row of produce with the purpose of donating that crop to help feed the less fortunate (thus the name). If you don't have room to plant an extra row, not to worry, just donate your extra produce. In past years the New Westminster PAR GAR donations were given to the local Food Bank. However, with the reorganization of the Food Bank, the New Westminster branch no longer has the facilities to store perishable food. Instead, donations from our PAR GAR program are forwarded to the New Westminster Union Gospel Mission. Nothing goes to waste! Donation season is from June to October. We will highlight drop off details in a later newsletter.

The Gardener's Party on Wed, Mar 28th, is the annual kick-off for the program. It runs from 6 to 9pm but it is best that you arrive early or you will find the many handouts picked over. Admission is by donation of non-perishable food or cash (why not donate both!). The donation of cash is stressed--when such donations are consolidated, many small amounts can result in big purchases. The evening is fast paced. Claude le Doux (co-coordinator for PAR GAR New Westminster) is MC. The speakers you will enjoy: Brian Minter (national spokesperson for PAR GAR), Egan Davis (UBC), Conway Lum (GardenWorks), June Hewko (Lee Valley) and Mike Miller (Union Gospel Mission). Lots of great vegetable growing information will be shared. A multitude of door prizes will be distributed. Mark your calendar and come prepared to be inspired.

FLORISSA:

We are in the midst of receiving your orders for the Spring 2018 Florissa program. If you have yet to see the flyer, pick one up in the foyer or at the fireplace table. (or you can download it from www.florissa.com/fundraising.) This is a win-win for NWHS members: beautify your garden while contributing to the NWHS coffers. The club retains half of the money collected from your orders. Check out your flyer, make your decision and place your order through Audrey. Taxes are included in the prices. Cash or cheque payable to NWHS acceptable. Deadline to order: Wed, Apr 4, 5pm. Your order will be available for the Apr 13 meeting. Thank you for participating.

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BUCKERFIELD'S ABBOTSFORD

GARDEN CLUB: If you would like to sign-up for this free membership card that gives you 20% off plant material and 10% off other gardening materials at Buckerfield's Abbotsford, talk with Audrey. You must have a valid email address to register as they want to be able to send you notices of upcoming events such as seminars. Audrey will send your name & email to Marilyn Holt who will mail your card back to Audrey for distribution to you.

CONTACTS:

Lorna Cloutier: President
604-524-1942 or
lorna@newwesthortsociety.org

Diane Perry: Vice-President, speakers, refreshments
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Ellen Berg: Treasurer, membership renewals 604-525-7827 or
ellen@newwesthortsociety.org

Anna Camporese: Speakers
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Lea McDonald: Contests
604-942-9416

Trudy Findlay: Outings, workshops
604-522-2665 or
trudy@newwesthortsociety.org

Terri Clark-Kveton: Plant sale soil
604-525-1954 or
terri@newwesthortsociety.org

Terry Koziel: Website liaison
778-789-3441 or
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Audrey Barnes: Florissa, Contests,
604-526-8284 (before 8pm) or
audrey@newwesthortsociety.org

Janet Butts: Fundraising, Blvd Plant Sale, 604-435-3008 or
janet@newwesthortsociety.org

Annemarie Mobach: Fundraising
604-524-5780 or
annemarie@newwesthortsociety.org

Joan Stevenson: Wish-List
604-522-8249 or
joan@newwesthortsociety.org

Richard Harrison: Seed Exchange
604-544-2468 or
richard@newwesthortsociety.org

Merril Hall: Sketch Club
604-790-1321 or
merril@newwesthortsociety.org

LINDA GILKESON: TIPS ON SEEDING (Blog excerpts by permission)

Linda Gilkeson started her professional career as an entomologist but has developed into one of the best local educators on organic gardening. She has written several books. Her speaking schedule is filled a year in advance. She writes a fantastic vegetable gardening blog. Go to www.lindagilkeson.ca to learn more about her and to sign-up to receive her blog in your in-box.

January 23, 2017: Germination tests:

"If you are not sure whether seeds you have will be any good this year, you can do a quick germination test to find out if you need fresh seed. Fold a few of the seeds you want to test into a moist paper towel, put it in a plastic bag or container and hold it in a very warm place. Check daily to make sure the paper stays moist and to look for tiny white root tips poking out of the seeds. Many seeds germinate enough to see the root tips in 2-4 days; a few such as onions, take a little longer. If you have lots of seeds shake out 20 or so to test germinate, but if you don't have many left, you can test 5 seeds. Count the number of seeds that germinate compared to the total to find out the proportion of seeds that are still viable. If less than half the seeds germinate, plan on getting new seeds.... Parsnips are only good for 1, possibly 2 years; sweet corn, onions, leeks, shallots are good for 2, sometimes 3 years, but after that things go downhill fast. Beans, peas, cabbage family, squash seeds should be good for at least 5 years. Seeds that are stored in cool, very dry conditions, keep the longest."

Feb 19, 2016: Growing your own:

"All vegetable seeds germinate best over 21°C (over 70°F). The optimum germination for most plants is even a few degrees higher (e.g. the optimum for peas is 24°C), which is why bottom heat mats are so useful. Seeds germinate fine at average house temperatures, but put them in your warmest location, such as on top of the fridge or water heater or in a warm bathroom. As soon as the first tiny green tips shows, seedlings must be moved to a very bright light. That means under grow lights or in a sun room or greenhouse; you can get by with a single row of plants lined up a south facing window if it gets unobstructed light. Plants will also be sturdier if

grown a bit cooler (18°C/64°F) too. The cause of long, leggy seedlings is insufficient light and conditions that are too warm. A heat mat will be too warm once the shoots poke through the soil. If you have a seedling heat mat kit with a clear plastic cover, don't use the cover for seedlings: it keeps in too much heat, reduces the light levels and allows condensation to drip down, keeping the soil surface soggy (an excellent way to cause damping off diseases). If you can't provide bright, cool, well ventilated conditions right now, wait another month so your seedlings can be set out in a cold frame during the day. You can grow excellent quality seedlings in a coldframe, but it takes some effort. Remember to open the frame when it is sunny (without fail) so the plants don't cook and bring them indoors at night until night temperatures stay above 15°C (60°F). Oh, and avoid overwatering—that seems to be the most common mistake people make with their tiny plants."

Mar 4, 2018: Starting other seeds indoors:

"Sow tomatoes, peppers and eggplant now, if you haven't already done so. Celery and celeriac seeds should be started now, because the seeds are minute and seedlings take a long time to grow to a good size. If you want an early crop of cabbage and cauliflower, start a few plants now and plan to start more next month for later harvests. If you don't have leafy greens overwintering in the garden and are in a hurry for something green, sow some of those indoors. For such early plantings, stick to annuals, such as lettuce, spinach, Chinese cabbage, leaf radish, leaf mustard and other annuals. You can try biennials, such as Swiss chard, collards, endives and they might be just fine, but it depends on the spring weather. If there is a late cold spell in April it can cause them to flower this summer instead of next year as they should."

Mar 4, 2018: Early Zucchini:

"Fans of the earliest possible zucchini should start seeds by mid March for really early plants. This only works if you have a sunroom or greenhouse where you can keep the large, rapidly growing plants until you set them out around May 1st. For such early plantings I grow the parthenocarpic variety 'Partenon' from William Dam Seeds because the flowers don't have to be pollinated for the fruit to develop."