



## Holiday Message to Members

Hello fellow MGABC members,

As a new MGABC Executive team, we are looking forward to serving you over the next two years. We will be participating in a strategic planning session in January 2011 that will include building on the Café Round Table ideas put forth at our recent AGM. Thank you for sharing your thoughts.

We want to forge new partnerships; we want to streamline our communications; and we want to augment and strengthen educational opportunities for our members. We want to build on all the good work that has been done by former Executives and colleagues before us.

I know that I have a list of ideas and inspiration for when we start the new year of governing. I know my

colleagues at the table from around the province will have just as many. In the meantime, I hope that this holiday season will allow you to spend lots of quality time with your loving families and good friends, and that you enjoy a much-deserved rest.

On behalf of your new Executive team, I would like to say that we are looking forward to the 2011 gardening year and all that it will bring.

Happy holidays to you and yours,

Jan Hemming, President  
Master Gardeners Association of BC



### *In this issue ...*

William Morris and His Garden .....	2
Provincial AGM .....	3
An Edible Food Forest .....	5
Community Projects .....	8

# We can learn from William Morris

William Morris was born in England on March 24, 1834, and died at age 62 in 1896. Considered the founding father of the Arts and Crafts movement, Morris is famous for his furniture, wallpaper, and fabric designs based on his love for and observations of nature. Possibly his most famous fabric and wallpaper designs are the willow bough print and the blackthorn pattern with blackthorn blossoms, fritillaries, and violets.

Passionate about preserving the ancient landscape, Morris crusaded for gardeners to plant native flora, including oak, beech, and hornbeam trees. The English oak (*Quercus robur*) is not only the national tree of his home country but host to many lichens, fungi, small mammals, and a variety of insects.

In the garden, Morris avoided showy hybrids that provide no nectar and instead opted for single flowers and simple colours. The delicate flowers of the white campion (*Silene latifolia*) produce nectar for moths in the night. Wood anemone (*Anemone nemorosa*), columbine (*Aquilegia vulgaris*), and greater knapweed (*Centaurea scabiosa*) all were favoured for their pollen and nectar, as were hazel and hawthorn trees.



*Willow bough by William Morris*



Source: Wikipedia

*William Morris (1834 to 1896)*

Particularly fond of roses, Morris loved the sweet briar rose (*Rosa rubiginosa*), burnet rose (*Rosa pimpinellifolia*), and field rose (*Rosa arvensis*). He was particularly fond of the dog rose (*Rosa canina*), which is an excellent source of pollen in summer for bees and wasps and whose hips are a welcome feed source for birds in winter.

So why not take a gardening lesson from William Morris and plant some wild strawberries (*Fragaria vesca*)? Their flower buds are relished by weevils, their nectar nourishes many insects, and their ripe fruits attract birds and small mammals. For the bees, consider planting spring nectar plants frequented by pollinators such as spring cinquefoil (*Potentilla neumanniana*).

For more information about William Morris and his gardens, read *The Gardens of William Morris* by Jill Douglas-Hamilton, Penny Hart, and John Simmons (Stewart Tabori & Chang, 1999). For more information about William Morris, visit the website of the William Morris Society of Canada.

—Natasha Etherington  
Master Gardener in Training 2010

# President's Message

As I approach the end of my two-year term as President and the end of five years on Council, I am still feeling very positive and supportive of what we are doing as Master Gardeners. Just imagine, five years on Council has not diminished my enthusiasm for the concept of Master Gardening!

The commitment and enthusiasm of our members is staggering. Many members put in hundreds of hours that do not even count as volunteer hours. It is this enthusiasm that I see at the grassroots level that has inspired me to continue to play a part in the evolution of our association.

Around the province our chapters have had a successful year of clinics, community projects, training programs, and workshops. We very much appreciate the efforts of all our members who supported these activities and, particularly, those who served on committees which enabled it all to happen.

In addition, many of our members were involved in the authoring, photography, editing, and checking of the first 16 fact sheets and for the next eight titles now under way. I would like to thank all members who supported this project, and all those who continue the work of distributing them to the public. This project is a major accomplishment and a credit to our association. I hope that, in one

form or another, we will continue to create and distribute more educational materials in support of our mission statement and to raise our profile with the general gardening public.

Our education standards manual, commenced in 2007, was published in its final form in September 2010. Full credit goes to Linda Derkach for compiling this monumental work, which will be of great benefit to all involved in offering the Basic Training Program.

As our association continues to grow and evolve, and with more than 800 members around the province, much work has been done this year to consolidate our working practices and update the Policies and Procedures documentation. If we are to inspire confidence in our members good governance is essential and we shall strive to maintain it.

Thank you all, and I hope that we will continue to serve the gardening public and inspire our fellow members in 2011 and beyond.

**—Barry Roberts  
MGABC President**



## 2011 MGABC Council

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VP-Finance  
Director-Secretary  
VP-Governance and Planning  
Director-Communications  
Director-Education  
Director-Special Events  
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Ginny Dournovo  
Rebecca Black

Victoria Chapter  
Vancouver Chapter  
Vancouver Chapter  
Victoria Chapter  
Prince George Chapter Rep  
Vancouver Chapter  
Vancouver Island Rep  
Vancouver Chapter  
Thompson-Shuswap Chapter Rep  
Okanagan Chapter Rep  
Vancouver Chapter Rep

# Note from the Provincial AGM

Ninety-seven Master Gardeners from around British Columbia braved blustery November weather to attend the second annual MGABC AGM, held at UBC Botanical Garden on Tuesday, November 9.

It was a full-day event with lots of time to meet with old friends and make some new at the large, round 'please sit where you like' tables. The AGM business meeting ran for one hour, followed by a delicious lunch of scrumptious sandwiches (Wescadia Catering would get my bid again). After lunch, Brian Minter, keynote speaker, gave a highly entertaining talk on Taking Gardens to the Next Level in 2011. We then toured the garden with friends of the UBC garden.

Thanks to Special Events Committee members Susan Lazar, Rebecca Black, Wendy Macintyre, and Leslie Welch for their hard work in putting together a wonderful day for members from the six Chapters of the MGABC.

These photos were taken by Rebecca Black on her iPhone. We were all so busy with other details that we forgot to ask someone to take photos, but Rebecca was kind enough to stage a few.

**—Heather Nielsen  
MGABC Secretary**



*AGM Keynote Brian Minter*



*Barry Roberts, outgoing MGABC President, presents gavel to new president Jan Hemming*

## Thanks to Past Executive

Three of the five Council Members leaving the executive at the 2010 AGM did extraordinary work that may be of interest to MGABC members.

For three years Heather Nielsen wielded her secretarial pen for both Vancouver Chapter and MGABC Council at a very important time in terms of clarity for both organizations. Without her wonderful skills at communication many meetings and events would have foundered.

Linda Sears single-handedly created the Okanagan Chapter and Education Program, as well as mentored both the Thompson-Shuswap Chapter and the Prince George Chapter. Her direct contributions to MGABC Council included annual reports, policy, and governance, as well as impressive wordsmith talents.

Linda Derkach engineered much-needed Education Standards and Evaluation after forming a provincial committee – no easy feat.

Thanks also for three years of contributions from Barry Roberts as MGABC Council President and Vancouver Chapter Chair.

**—Susan Lazar**

# An Edible Food Forest



Imagine a forest where the top canopy consists of fruit and nut trees. An under-planting of shrubs (raspberries, blueberries, and currants) is surrounded with edible perennial vegetables and herbs (garlic chives, lovage, parsley, and mints), mulch plants (comfrey and artichoke), insectary plants (dill, fennel, bee balm, and borage), nitrogen fixers (red and white clover, lupine, and Siberian pea shrub), and nutrient accumulators (yarrow, chicory, and sunflower). This is permaculture, or permanent-agriculture, a self-sustaining, pleasingly aesthetic green space that encompasses complementary plants, insects, and animals.

The term “permaculture” was coined in 1911 in *Farmers of Forty Centuries; or, Permanent Agriculture in China, Korea, and Japan* by Franklin King. The current meaning of permaculture is more closely associated with two Australians, Bill Mollison and David Holmgren, who in the 1970s used the term to promote the natural systems they observed around them. They wanted to mimic what a forest does (sustainably existing on its own, in layers from the top of the canopy down to the microbes and fungi in the soil) and they wanted to do this using food-producing plants; namely, they wanted to produce an “edible forest garden.” What results is a non-traditional garden that, when done properly, takes very little time to manage and provides you with a wide variety of food, in abundance.

Forest gardening is not new. It is ancient in many ways, but it is relatively new to modern Western culture, especially in North America. Forest gardens are much easier to develop in the subtropics than in our temperate regions, as the abundance of literature for subtropical regions show. With increasing knowledge through experimentation, though that is starting to change. Dave Jacke with Eric Toensmeier shared a great wealth of knowledge about permaculture in their two-volume work, *Edible Forest Garden: Ecological Vision and Theory for Temperate Climate Permaculture*. The authors believe the concept of forest gardening can work better than

anyone has yet achieved and there is still much to learn. Forest gardens are viable, from small urban yards to large parcels of land; however, for smaller areas the principles of design are the same. “The ultimate goal of gardening is not only the growing of crops, but also the cultivation and perfection of new ways of seeing, of thinking, and of acting in the world.”

My personal vision is to create a sustainable and productive ecosystem for my family. I will continue with my ornamental garden (I do love trying to achieve that elusive perfect design), and I will continue with my plantings of annual vegetables. But I would like to try my hand at creating a food forest where we can achieve some form of our food security with as little effort as possible.

—**Susanne Lawrence**  
**Master Gardener in Training**

## Find out more

Courses on permaculture are offered at the Kootenay Permaculture Institute (<http://www3.telus.net/permaculture>), in Vancouver (<http://www.meetup.com/The-Vancouver-Permaculture-Meetup-Group>), and in Kelowna by the Kelowna Permaculture Society (<http://www.meetup.com/Kelowna-Permaculture>).

Subjects covered include the following:

- Land and Nature Stewardship
- Building
- Tools and Technology
- Education and Culture
- Health and Spiritual Well Being
- Finance and Economics
- Land Tenure and Community Governance

A great video to search for and watch on YouTube is *The Future Farm*.

# Letter from the Vancouver Chair

A new chapter would normally start up with very few members – maybe just one or two founding members and lots of enthusiasm. But in January 2009 the Vancouver Chapter was inaugurated with 470 members and no money. So this has been a challenging time for the Executive Committee, but we end 2010 in a good position thanks to your efforts.

Thanks to all who supported and participated in our events throughout 2010, enabling us to run the usual busy schedule of clinics, community projects, and workshops. A number of Advanced Training electives were also offered – I loved the one on Trees – and due to the efforts of Lynne Christmas and Kathy Gibbler, director of Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Gardens, an eight-week course on Classical Chinese Gardens was also offered. We managed all this despite a number of vacancies on the Executive Committee and many gaps in our committees.

During the last five months we have been trying to fill all the vacancies, and with some success. This, together with all the ideas and suggestions espoused at the Strategic Planning Meeting in October, gives us a confident start to 2011.



The Vancouver Chapter has been given the opportunity to host the Spring Seminar again in 2011 (previously a provincial responsibility), the income from which will help pay for a much-improved website. If our plans to have a secure website are fulfilled, we will be able to save considerable dollars by reducing our photocopying and postal charges. A good website is an important cog in the machinery of communications – and communications with our members, and with the general public, are still a top priority for the Executive Committee.

Another priority for 2011 – an issue which has been discussed on and off for the past four years – is that of consolidating the accounts of the Basic Training Program and the volunteer activities of our Chapter. This is long overdue and must happen in 2011.

There is everything to play for in 2011. It should be another exciting year. Now, if only we could fill that position of Chair...

**—Barry Roberts**  
**Outgoing Chair, Vancouver Chapter**

## Vancouver Chapter Executive Committee

Joint 1st Vice Chair	Joan Bentley
Joint 1st Vice Chair	David Toole
Past Chair	Barry Roberts
Secretary	Heather Nielsen
Treasurer	John Bruce
Continuing Education Chair	Frank O'Neill
Special Events Chair	Robin Rance
Member at Large	Joyce Fitz-Gibbon
Member at Large	Cheri Trewin
Member at Large	Elizabeth Taylor
Member at Large	Jill Wright

# Vancouver Chapter Report

We made it. The Vancouver Chapter is one year old. We have had a rocky first year but, like a brand-new garden, there are promising signs of beauty and growth. We have some steadfast members that form the backbone of the garden and some new ones that continue to add colour, flavour, and excitement throughout the seasons.

Plans are being made for the next year and it promises to be lively. We all will need to work together so our chapter will grow and thrive. We still need some help with the actual running of the association and there are a lot of little and big jobs that need members to take on. I'm happy to report that people are slowly offering to help or share responsibility but just like a garden there is always more to do.

Congratulations go out to the following Master Gardeners who completed the Advanced Training Program in 2010 and were presented with their pins at the October meeting. The graduates in alphabetical order are Linda Beer, Diane Eyre, Susan Gardner, Bruce Hardy, Leslie Ann Ingram, Nancy Johnston, Liz MacPhail, Jo McDaniel, Brenda McGibbon, Frank O'Neill, Nancy Oike, Selina Pope, Shirley Skagen, Nancy Thorneloe, Cheri Trewin, and Jill Wright.

Congratulations go to Frank O'Neill for putting together the workshops and some of the speakers for the general meetings during 2010. The last workshop was on Diseases on November 27, adding to the total of approximately 150 members who took advantage of the workshops during 2010. This response has led to six workshops being scheduled in 2011, with the first one in March on Vegetables. Frank now has a Continuing Education Committee who will help with all the workshops and the speakers for the monthly meetings. Thank you to the following members who have stepped up to help: Nancy Oike, Laura Ralph, Shirley Skagen, Monica Mowat, Diane Eyre, Louise Henwood, Ken McDonald, and Leslie Ingram. If you would like to join them or have some ideas, please contact Frank.

Be sure to watch for program details as they are confirmed.

Other accomplishments this year was the setting up on online registration through Karelo for workshops and special events. The Vancouver Chapter is now on Facebook (search "Vancouver Master Gardeners") with lots of photos of our outreach programs. A Classical Chinese Garden course was held on site at the Dr. Sun Yat Sen Gardens. The class taught the history, symbolism, culture, and practical aspects of a Chinese Garden. Participants even made their own *penjing* or bonsai display to take home.

The last item I would like to mention is the addition of Bloedel Conservatory to the VanDusen Botanical Garden family. This gives us a new opportunity for setting up workshops, classes, clinics, and tours. Some of you heard about a national fundraising contest through [www.aviva.com](http://www.aviva.com), where you were asked to vote for your favourite community idea via email. We can help win this contest, which could mean \$25,000 for our education programs. I realize that some feel VanDusen has nothing to do with us, but remember that without them we would not exist at all. They have been helpful to us over the years and we still can help each other educate the public, which is the part of both of our mission statements. We can look forward to the new building and new opportunities and programs at the Garden, a favourite spot for a Master Gardener.

—Lynne Christmas  
Vancouver Chapter



# Community Projects

Master Gardener Community Projects have had another successful year. Overall, 150 Master Gardeners contributed an amazing 2,600 hours to the success of more than 20 community projects throughout the Lower Mainland. Master Gardeners also supervised 200 community volunteers, who contributed over 1,900 hours to the community projects. At each site, Master Gardeners offered service to the community while educating participants about the satisfaction of gardening and protecting the environment. The benefits, of course, went both ways, as participants came to understand more about the natural world, and Master Gardeners honed their skills while enjoying worthwhile community endeavours.

## Range of Projects

In 2011 a variety of programs and locations will be available to Master Gardeners, as follows.

### KidSafe Project

Coordinator: Alison Kelly, MG

The KidSafe Project helps create safe havens at times when the school is closed. The project serves at-risk students who are enrolled at Nightingale, a Vancouver inner-city elementary school. The KidSafe program introduces children to food gardening and promotes food security within the community. Currently, volunteers work with groups of students and volunteers to plan, plant, and tend the garden.

### Terra Nova Schoolyard Project

Coordinator: Maureen Thackray, MG

The Terra Nova Schoolyard Project in Richmond works with K-12 students to create an environment that promotes fresh food, healthy eating habits, and personal and social responsibility. Activities are aligned with current school curriculum and provide exciting opportunities to discover and reconnect with the earth. Master Gardeners lead groups of six to eight children in gardening activities and provide expertise on all aspects of gardening.

### Intergenerational Project at UBC Farm

Coordinator: Hannah Buschhaus

This project is designed to connect school children with elders in the community who have gardening or farming experience in order to promote environmental stewardship and intergenerational learning. Master Gardeners who participated in this project provided gardening advice and expertise to the community volunteers and the children. Activities included preparing the soil, transplanting, composting, weeding, watering, and harvesting. A total of 225 children and 50 elder volunteers were actively involved in growing their own food.

### Marguerite Dixon Transition House and Second Stage Units

Coordinator: Helen Tsepnopoulos, MG

This horticultural therapy program assists staff and residents of facilities for abused women. The Coordinator organizes gardening activities for the project volunteers throughout the season. Master Gardeners work with residents and staff, providing advice and gardening instruction. In 2011, Helen would like to grow more food and expand the program to include composting and fruit tree planting.

### Banfield Extended Care Pavilion

Coordinator: Shelagh Smith HTM

Banfield Pavilion is the Extended Care Unit at Vancouver General Hospital. Under the direction of a Horticultural Therapist, Master Gardeners meet every fifth Saturday to provide residents with an educational, storytelling, and sensory experience in the Banfield gardens: a large rooftop garden, greenhouse, entrance garden with hanging baskets, and three north balcony gardens. Master Gardeners teach residents about plant care and assist them to garden as independently as possible. "Master Gardeners bring energy, knowledge, and willing hands to the garden program at Banfield. They contribute in a very positive way to residents' quality of life." Volunteers who are fluent in Mandarin or Cantonese would be an asset to the program.



# Community Projects

## Pearson Long Term Care Facility

Coordinator: Judith Howard, MG

George Pearson Hospital is a long-term care facility in South Vancouver, located between Cambie and Oak Streets. Master Gardeners work to enhance the gardens around the facility and outside the rooms to improve quality of life for residents. Master Gardeners, who meet for two to three hours every Thursday from March to June, work in teams to maintain, upgrade, and create new gardens.

## Yaletown House Intermediate Care Facility

Coordinators: Shelagh Smith, HTM, & Coral Ayerst

Yaletown House is located in the heart of Vancouver's Yaletown district. It is a three-storey building in the shape of a "U" with a protected courtyard garden, a greenhouse, and a rooftop garden. Master Gardeners provide gardening assistance and instruction to residents. This project may expand the project to George Derby Centre in Burnaby.

## Many Small Hands Garden Project

Coordinator: Kristen Crouch

This is a hands-on gardening project for Grade One students from Ladner Elementary School, although the project itself is located at Kirkland House, 4140 Arthur Drive, Delta. Master Gardeners work with groups of children, teaching them how to plant, mulch, and harvest. The program may expand to include three kindergarten classes.

## Inglewood Lodge Friendship Garden

Coordinators: MGs Aileen Taylor & Mary Johnson

Inglewood Lodge, located in West Vancouver on Taylor Way, is a Care Facility offering different levels of care. The Friendship Garden was funded and created by caring relatives and other community members in 2005. It is a respite for visiting friends, family members, residents, and staff. Master Gardeners meet monthly from April to October to assist with planning, planting, and maintaining the garden. They also created a reference binder and comprehensive plant list for the Lodge.



*Many Small Hands Garden Project (photo above and below)*



## St. James' Cottage Hospice

Coordinator: David Stemler, MG

The Cottage is a beautiful 10-bed facility for terminally ill adults that is situated in Harbour Park, overlooking Burrard Inlet and the North Shore Mountains. The grounds are filled with planters and flower beds for the enjoyment of residents, their families, visitors, and staff, who say, "the garden gives them peace and comfort when dealing with end-of life issues." Master Gardeners create garden beds, troubleshoot pests and diseases, and advise on plant selection, location, and maintenance. Master Gardeners will get the gardens off to an early start in February and March in 2011.

*...continued on page 10*

# Community Projects

*continued from page 9*

## **Burnaby Lake Nature House**

Coordinator: Judy Wellington, MG

Burnaby Butterfly Garden is located next to the Nature House on Burnaby Lake. The garden is planted to attract birds and butterflies and is an attractive venue to inform visitors about butterflies, their habitats, and food sources. Master Gardener volunteers assist with garden maintenance and also give advice and information to park visitors, including school children who attend educational programs in the Nature House.

## **Mahon Park Stewardship Project**

Contact: Stephanie Levy

The Mahon Park Stewardship Group restores and enhances a 26 hectare forest in North Vancouver. Master Gardener volunteers provide information on the plants and coordinate community work parties that occur once each month over a period of six months. Master Gardeners contribute to the improvement of the demonstration garden and to the ongoing education of work-party volunteers. As Stephanie points out, "Master Gardeners provide invaluable information and they are a key part of our project. We always appreciate their participation."

## **Richmond Nature Park**

Coordinator: Rich Kenny

The Richmond Nature Park, located on Westminster Highway, consists of 200 acres of the raised peat bog – a remnant of the unique temperate wetlands that once covered large portions of Lulu Island. The majority of the Nature Park is maintained in a natural state, where visitors may explore the bog via a series of meandering trails. The park is currently developing wildlife gardens to demonstrate sustainable gardening practices that enhance wildlife habitat in urban areas. Master Gardeners advise year-round on plant selection and placement, assist with some of the planting, and become an integral part of the garden program by speaking to the public about the importance of gardening for wildlife.

## **Sir Charles Tupper Greenway**

Coordinator: Judy Zipursky

Tupper Greenway, which runs the length of one city block, is located in Vancouver between Fraser and Main Streets on East 23rd Avenue. The Greenway was completed in 2008 with input from students, teachers, and community members. Since then, Master Gardeners have created maintenance manuals and continue to assist the community with ongoing plant care. The group gathers once each month from March to October for a community gardening day, which includes relocating plants, educating the community on pruning techniques, and harvesting herbs, as well as identifying weeds and pest problems along with environmentally friendly ways to achieve control.

## **YMCA Rooftop Food Garden**

Coordinator: Juliana Pasko, MG

YWCA Vancouver's Rooftop Food Garden supplies healthy, nutritious food to women and children in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. The garden provides an example of what can be done to solve nutritional poverty and food security issues. This innovative project began in 2006 with the goal of producing 1000 kg of food per year. Food production from this garden relies completely on volunteers who plant, care for, harvest, and deliver the produce.

## **Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden**

Coordinator: Odessa Bromley, MG

The Sunshine Coast Botanical Garden was established in April 2009 and has had two very successful years. Master Gardeners work with volunteers in identifying, labelling, and providing information about plants being sold at the Gardens; provide online horticultural information; plan and hold special events and garden tours; and assist in the organic vegetable demonstration garden that produced nearly 500 kg of food for the Sechelt food bank. As Odessa points out, "There are never enough volunteers to spread the jobs around."

# Community Projects

## The Healing Garden Committee

Coordinator: Judy Zipursky

This dynamic group provides their expertise as needed to a wide-variety of endeavours. The committee continued work on five projects – Union Gospel Mission Healing Garden, St. Andrew’s Church Biblical Plant Garden, Cityview Church Community Garden, City Hall Healing Garden, and Mount St. Joseph’s Hospital Garden. Committee members also began five new projects – the Moberly Cultural Herb Garden, John Street Greenway, Capilano Care Centre, Fir Square Patio Garden at Women’s Hospital (which received a \$10,000 grant from Central City Foundation), and the award-winning Pitt Meadows Therapeutic and Enabling Garden, designed by Natasha Etherington, MG. The committee, which originally focused on researching, cataloguing, and developing materials related to healing gardens, now offers its expertise on the establishment and maintenance of healing gardens in the community. The members also attend committee meetings and visit established healing gardens to further their self-development.

## How the Projects Work

Each community project has a designated coordinator who sets up the schedule of activities and keeps track of volunteer hours. The coordinator contacts potential volunteers to discuss the specific details of the project and provides an orientation to the goals and needs of the program. The schedules, tasks, and activities vary from project to project. Some require work every week while others have less frequent time commitments. Once a commitment has been made to a project and its coordinator, it is important that this commitment be honoured in the same way as you would a plant clinic. These programs depend on Master Gardeners and their expertise.

## Starting a Project

If you know of or work at a site that combines community service with gardening educational opportunities and you think that it might become a



*City Hall Healing Garden*

community project, please contact the Community Project Coordinators Cheri Trewin or Joyce Fitz-Gibbon for more information. They will discuss the potential project with you. A project will be considered only if an on-site coordinator (preferably a Master Gardener) is willing to take responsibility for coordinating the volunteers, recording the hours, and administering the project. If there is a coordinator and the project includes both education and service, then the coordinator in consultation with the Cheri or Joyce will design a description of the project for inclusion in the roster of projects that is presented to Master Gardeners-in-Training in the spring. Qualified Master Gardeners will find these new, exciting opportunities in the Clinic and Project signup book, which is available at VanDusen Botanical Garden in February or at the Spring Seminar in March.

## A Final Word

Community projects count toward a Master Gardener’s or student’s required volunteers hours, but more than that, they are a satisfying and enjoyable way to share knowledge, build skills, and give back to the community.

**—Cheri Trewin and Joyce Fitz-Gibbon  
Community Project Coordinators**

# Spring Seminar...

## Sunday, March 13, 2011



Michael J Fox Theatre, 7373 Macpherson Avenue, Burnaby, 9:30 to 3:30

All are welcome. This is a fundraiser for the Vancouver Chapter, so bring a friend and spread the word. As arrangements are finalized, information will be sent by email. Questions can be posted to *mg-opinions*.

Come cultivate your excitement about, and knowledge of, plants and gardening by attending our Spring Seminar 2011, On the Cutting Edge. Lynne Christmas has organized four exceptional speakers.

### Our Speakers

**Christine George**, leading soil micro-ecologist dedicated to the preservation and enhancement of soil quality, will discuss recent research discoveries in soil biology that could significantly improve gardening results.

Unaware of the damage we were doing, in the past we have added chemical fertilizers to our soil when we saw our plants' vigour decline, and sprayed with harsh chemicals to "fix" insect "problems." Plants often declined because we had upset the delicate balance among plants, insects, and soil bacteria, protozoa, and fungi.

With time we learned to foster healthy soil with ecologically sensitive gardening practices like adding compost to increase aeration and to feed soil micro-organisms; letting lawns go dormant in the summer; lightly turning in cover crops like clover without rototilling; leaving fallen leaves for habitat for beneficial insects and soil protection; and leaving non-invasive weeds to conserve soil moisture, loosen soil, and provide pollen and nectar to attract beneficial insects.

Christine George has many years of experience as a soil microbiologist for Soil Foodweb Canada, where she conducts tests to determine microbial levels in soil. For our seminar, Christine will share gardening practices that can improve soil and increase the vigour and beauty of our plants.

**Rosalind Creasy**, inspiring garden designer, photographer, and award-winning author with a passion for planting edibles in innovative ways, will have us all rushing out to interplant with lacy parsleys and ribbons of rainbow chards.

While we often relegate a vegetable garden to the back of our yards, not Rosalind Creasy. In the 1980s she had torn up her front lawn and planted corn, purple cabbage, zucchini – yes – and it was magnificent. Creasy was speaking about ecologically sensitive, sustainable landscaping long before most gardeners had even conceived of the idea, and she popularized edible landscapes with a vast new palette of vegetables, including heirloom tomatoes and melons, mesclun salad greens, blue potatoes, corn, and beans.

Drawing on her decades of research and expertise, Creasy has written more than a dozen books on beautifully incorporating edibles into our gardens. Her first, the 1982 ground-breaking classic, *Edible Landscaping: Now You Can Have Your Gorgeous Garden and Eat It Too*, was re-released in November 2010. This new edition, with its 300 luscious colour photographs, is a visual feast and its encyclopedic, in-depth horticultural information on recommended varieties, sources, culinary uses, and environmentally friendly planting and maintenance make it an excellent reference book as well. We will have the opportunity to get signed copies at the Spring Seminar.

Creasy's passion and flair make her a popular and inspiring speaker. We are sure to come away brimming with exciting ideas like planting a blueberry hedge, interplanting vegetables in our ornamental garden beds, or allowing them to play a starring role.



**Christine Allen**, Master Gardener, author, consultant, and a goldmine of creative ideas, will share design ideas for her new garden.

There will be few BC gardeners who don't know of Christine Allen and watch for anything bearing her name, from magazine articles and books to speaker series, presentations, and garden boards. From her large body of work we have seen she has a beautiful eye for garden design. Her garden at Killara Farm in Langley, full of ilvers, deep blues, whites, and pinks, was elegant and almost achingly lovely.

Allen is now beginning a new garden around a new house. On Killara Farm she grew more than 200 roses; how she will whittle down this number for a city lot will be an exciting challenge. We can be sure to see new, fresh design ideas in this project. It is with eager anticipation we wait to hear her speak.

**Linda Chalker-Scott**, university researcher and educator, award-winning writer, and editor of *Fine Gardening*, is best known for educating and entertaining her audiences while exposing commonly held gardening myths, including our spring "rights."

In *Horticultural Myths – Compost Tea: Examining the Science Behind the Claims*, Dr. Chalker-Scott reminds Master Gardeners that we are "volunteer educators who rely on science-based information (who) cannot recommend a practice or product that lacks a legitimate scientific basis. Furthermore, it is illegal to sell unregistered substances for use as pesticides." This reminder is valuable for us, but we all know how difficult it can be to determine if something that sounds well reasoned and factual is scientific and credible. This is doubly difficult when the product or practice promises a beautiful, bountiful garden and conjures up stunning images to muddle our heads.

With 20 years in the field, Chalker-Scott rates at the top of the scale on credibility and is a much in-demand speaker. We know we can trust her with a Ph.D. in Horticulture, ISA Arborist certification, and as Washington State University's Extension Urban Horticulturist and Associate Professor of Horticulture and Landscape Architecture.

Chalker-Scott's talks are fabulously entertaining and informative and cause many a chuckle, head shake, and realignment in thinking. Yes, she often points out weaknesses in our commonly held beliefs about gardening, but she has us laughing the whole time. Her topic for the seminar will be *The "Rights" of Spring: Avoid Seven Deadly Sins When Planting Trees and Shrubs*.

### **Plant Sale and Other Activities**

In addition to these four outstanding speakers, the Vancouver Chapter will host compost and plant sales as usual. The Michael J. Fox driveway allows us to easily drive up to have bags of compost or flats of plants loaded into our cars.

For the plant sale, as always, when Joan Bentley and Lindsay Macpherson choose plants for the sale, there are many hard-to-find gems available. This year there are a number of fabulous, smaller shrubs, including some choice fragrant daphnes and collectors rhododendrons. More complete information on some of the plants available for sale is available online at the MG website (or in "Whet Your Appetite" on the next page).

Each year I eagerly await the Spring Seminar. The 2011 seminar promises to be an invigorating day: a perfect way to head into a new clinic and gardening season. We can be sure to finish the day with the newest information on ecologically sound gardening practices to pass along to the public and make our own gardens more beautiful.

—Jane Sherrott

## Spring Seminar Plant Sale

### Whet Your Appetite

*Corylopsis spicata* 'Aurea' has stunning yellow foliage with red highlights on new growth. Fragrant, primrose-yellow flowers appear in early spring before the leaves emerge. Beautiful planted with deep purple hellebores which bloom concurrently.

*Cyclamen coum* is a choice silver-form with pale pink to magenta flowers, which bloom from January to April.

*Daphne odora* 'Aureomarginata,' has intensely fragrant, reddish-purple flowers in spring. The evergreen foliage is glossy, dark green, and rimmed with creamy yellow. A Royal Horticultural Society Award for Garden Merit winner.

*Daphne susanna* 'Lawrence Crocker' is a diminutive hybrid that thrives in part sun and blooms May to June.

*Daphne x transatlantica* 'Eternal Fragrance' is a wonderful introduction from noted plantsman Robin White. After an initial spring bloom, its white flowers appear irregularly through summer and fall living up to its name.

*Daphne x transatlantica* 'Summer Ice' is a choice evergreen with variegated foliage and long-blooming, sweetly scented flowers. Blooms late summer until early January.

*Grevillea victoriae* 'Marshall Olbricht' is evergreen with silvery leaves, arching habit, and red-orange flowers in fall.

*Hydrangea quercifolia* 'Pee Wee' is dwarf, of course, with a name like that. It has smaller leaves and flowers, so everything is in scale, making it ideal for a smaller garden.

*Kalmia latifolia* 'Minuet' is a compact, banded "little leaf" selection. A Great Plant Picks award winner.

*Kalmia latifolia* 'Olympic Fire' has won a Royal Horticultural Society Award for Garden Merit for its compact, deep green, evergreen foliage and highly attractive red buds, which open to large pink blooms and give the plant a multicoloured floral show.

*Leucothoe fontanesiana* 'Rainbow,' with its beautiful tri-colour new growth, is an outstanding choice for a shady corner.

*Libertia* 'Goldfinger' has a vibrant, golden colour which combines well with burgundy heucheras for eye-catching planter combos.

*Paxistima myrsinites* is a low evergreen native that provides year-round greenery with little to no watering or care.

*Rhododendron sinogrande* has the largest leaves of any rhodo known; *R. strigillosum* has long, narrow leaves and blood-red, bell-shaped flowers; *R.* 'Kodiak' has incredible foliage of deep green with a light tan indumentum; and *R.* 'Peppermint Twist' buds are red, opening to pink, with a white throat.

*Syringa x tribrida* 'Josee' is a dwarf lilac variety with lavender-pink blooms.

Seed potatoes, including French Fingerling and Cecile, plus others, and different varieties of garlic will also be available.

We also have *Rubus* 'Darrow,' an early-ripening, everbearing blackberry.





**The tree which moves some to tears of joy is in the eyes of others only a green thing which stands in their way — William Blake**

It is that time of year again, so soon! Time to put away gardening tools and bring out the winter woolies. It is also time for me to think about next year's clinic scheduling.

We are trying to put as much of our clinic sign-up online as possible. At least 90 percent of our membership has online access and an email address. In 2011, the Master Clinic List will be online and available for sign-up starting on January 23 and continuing until February 6. The pages will then be withdrawn from online sign-up and printed out into book form. This will be available at VanDusen Botanical Garden for sign-up from February 15 until March 1.

When you sign up for clinics, please be sure you have your personal calendar with you and that you write down the dates you have committed to clinics. If you must make changes after signing up you will be able to go back to the book (either online or physically, depending on the date), withdraw your name and choose another clinic anytime up to March 1. Please ensure that your name is printed legibly on the line, if I can't read your name it will not appear correctly on the Master Clinic list. Also, please be sure that you enter your Master Gardener status (for example, 1st year, 2nd year, or Qualified Master Gardener [QMG]) and phone number. After March 1, you will have to find another Master Gardener to replace you at the clinic and notify the Area Coordinator and the Clinic Coordinator of the change.

If you have any suggestions or want to request a clinic at your garden club or plant sale, please send them to me by email or phone me before the end of December 2010.

I can't stress enough the advantages of belonging to the [mgclinics@yahoogroups.ca](mailto:mgclinics@yahoogroups.ca). This is a forum for advertising to your fellow members if you are looking for a replacement at a clinic; if you are looking to make up hours through working a clinic; or where we often advertise new clinic opportunities that come in during the season. Happy gardening in 2011!

—Elizabeth Taylor

### **Vancouver Master Gardeners General Meetings for 2011**

All meetings take place in the Floral Hall at Vandusen Botanical Garden

Monday, January 10, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, February 10, 9:30 a.m. Joint meeting with Guides

Wednesday, March 2, 7:30 p.m.

Wednesday, April 6, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 10, 9:30 a.m.

Monday, June 13, 7:30 p.m.

Summer break

Tuesday, September 13, 9:30 a.m. Joint meeting with Guides

Monday, October 17, 7:30 p.m.

Tuesday, November 8, 9:30 a.m.

—Heather Nielsen  
**Secretary, Vancouver Chapter**

# Vancouver Chapter Committees and Key Positions for 2011

Basic Training Program Chair	Doreen Godwin, Nigel Bunning plus mentors
Advanced Training Program Chair	June Pierson, Liz Cook plus mentors
Audio-Visual	Ken McDonald
Awards Committee Co-ordinator	Jill Wright
Bylaws, Handbook, & P & P Co-ordinator	Heather Nielsen, David Toole
Coffee Committee Co-ordinator	Sue Damm
Community Projects-	Joyce Fitz-Gibbon
Community Projects-	Cheri Trewin
Healing Gardens Committee Chair	Judy Zipursky
Membership Committee Chair	Pat Taylor
Membership Liaison	Elizabeth Taylor
Newcomers' Committee Co-ordinator	Doreen Godwin
Newsletter Editor	Ann-Marie Metten
Newsletter Layout	Wendy Jones
Newsletter Liaison	Lynne Christmas
Nominating Committee Chair	(to be decided in early 2011)
Overall Clinic Co-ordinator	Elizabeth Taylor
Plant Information Line Co-ordinator	Sheila Watkins
Plant Sales at monthly meetings	Joan Bentley, Loretta Barr
Seedy Saturday Co-ordinator	Lynne Christmas
Speakers' Group Chair	Barbara Bowers
Spring Seminar Co-ordinator	Lynne Christmas
Telephone Committee Co-ordinator	Colleen Martin, Linda Wright
Welcoming Table Committee Co-ordinator	Lois Leslie
Chapter Rep on MGABC Council	Rebecca Black
VanDusen Volunteer Chairs' Meeting Rep	Joyce Fitz-Gibbon / Joan Bentley
VanDusen Board of Governors Rep	Joint 1st Vice-Chairs
Rep on VBGA Ed. Council	Frank O'Neill



## Seedy Saturdays Around the Province

- February 5** – Qualicum Beach Civic Centre, Qualicum
- February 12** – Lillooet Friendship Centre, Lillooet
- February 19** – Victoria Conference Centre, Victoria
- February 19** – Hupacasath House of Gathering, Port Alberni
- February 26** – Floral Hall and Cedar Room, VanDusen Botanical Garden, Vancouver
- February 26** – Tiell Fire Hall, Graham Island, Haida Gwaii
- March 5** – Filberg Centre, Courtenay
- March 12** – Arbutus Room, Recreation Complex, Powell River

Newsletter of the  
Master Gardeners Association  
of British Columbia  
in association with  
VanDusen Botanical Garden



### Mission Statement

The Mission of the Master Gardeners Association of British Columbia is to provide information about gardening to the community and to educate people about environmentally responsible gardening practices.

Please send all contact information changes to Pat Taylor, membership chair.

All other newsletter correspondence can be sent to the editor, Ann-Marie Metten, at [ametten@telus.net](mailto:ametten@telus.net). Newsletter layout by Wendy Jones.

The MG Newsletter is published in March, June, September, and December. **Deadline for submissions** to the next newsletter is January 31, 2011.

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