



The Rhodomentum

Nanaimo Rhododendron Society Newsletter

December 2020



President's Message

Dear NRS Gardeners,

What an unusual year this 2020 turned out to be: scary politically and health-wise too. Thankfully, our wonderful gardens kept our sanity in check. There is a light at the end of the tunnel, though. Our friendly southern neighbours voted in a "quiet-waters" administration and best of all, the vaccination for this Covid-19 menace is around the corner. Hurrah, 2021 can't come soon enough!

But hold on, there is our *Christmas Silent Online Auction* in the works, starting on the 1st of December and ending at 8 p.m. on the 10th. Don't miss it; it's our main fundraiser of the year!

Did you have a look at those one-of-a-kind special items on our www.nanaimorhodos.ca website? You will find there the information on minimum bids and where to send your bid. On behalf of the NRS, our warmest thanks to all who so generously donated items or worked on the preparation for the *Silent Auction*!

This December, in lieu of our regular meeting, there are two ZOOM meetings ahead (See details on p.2) However, we will have to wait until next year for the usual finger-food delights!

I am hoping to see you all on the ZOOM screen in the coming days, and am sending Season's Greetings to you and your family at this special time of the year. May you have a happy and healthy holiday and safe and prosperous New Year.

Rosina

OUR EXECUTIVE

President	Rosina Schmidt	751-3386
Vice President	Chris Southwick	390-3415
Past President	Allen McRae	758-7589
Secretary	Deborah Francis	
Treasurer	Ron Sutton	416 951-1373
Directors	Bryan Jubinville	668-2965
	Art Lightburn	468-7516
	Susan Lightburn	468-7516
	Gayle McRae	758-7589

COMMITTEES:

Advertising	Allen McRae
Library	Ann Beamish / Sandra Dorman
Newsletter	June Bouchard / John Deniseger
Membership	Jan Moles
Program	by Committee
Raffle	Ann Davey & Val Harvey
Social	vacant
Bargain Table	Reinhold Gorgosolich
Website	Deborah Francis/Rosina Schmidt
Bus Tour	David & Joyce Mitchell
Sunshine	Ann Beamish
Propagation	Rosina Schmidt
Hailey Grove	Bryan Jubinville
Show and Sale	Jan Moles and Brenda Lewis
Nanaimo Rhododendron Society	
Box 241, #101-5170 Dunster Road	
Nanaimo, BC V9T 6M4	
Website: nanaimorhodos.ca	

Next meeting: Saturday, Dec. 5th, and Monday, Dec. 7th at 2:00pm ~



Location: Zoom online

Christmas Online Auction – see details on page 2



Christmas Auction

While COVID 19 has cancelled our regular Christmas Auction and Potluck, our executive has organized a creative alternative. **We'll be having a Zoom Christmas Auction on December 7th AND an online silent auction from December 1st to 10th.** As you would expect, it will all include an impressive collection of rhododendrons! But that's not all, there will be many other great items!

The Christmas auction will be hosted on Zoom by Santa on Monday, December 7th at 2pm. To ensure that everyone knows how to use Zoom and participate in the auction, new NRS member Mike O'Neil will be hosting a **Zoom instructional session on Saturday, December 5th at 2 pm.** Thank you, Mike, for being our Zoom instructor and "Zoom Santa". Details on how to join Zoom will be sent out to everyone in the days ahead of the event.

Don't miss it - mark Monday, December 7th at 2 pm on your calendar for our on-line Christmas auction! Plan ahead - include some festive cheer and good food as you participate in this unique event! It should be great fun!

The Silent Auction will run for 10 days, from Tuesday, December 1st to 8pm on Thursday, December 10th. For full descriptions and photos of each item and details on how to place your bids, go to our website and follow the links at <http://nanaimorhodos.ca/>



There will be minimum bids on items as follows:

1 gallon	\$15
2 gallon	\$20
3 gallon	\$30
5 gallon	\$35
Clay pots	\$5
Jar of honey	\$7
Christmas wreath	\$25
Silver Bell tree	\$35
Chocolates	\$30 per box

Send your bids to nrsXmasEvent@gmail.com including item # and name, your name and your bid. The bids will be posted daily on the silent auction page under the individual item number.

Here is a *small* sample of items that are being auctioned off:



R. 'Willbrit' - 3 gallon - Dark pink flowers with lighter edges. 3', ML, Rating: 3-4/4/3-4 - Rosina Schmidt donation



Christmas wreath artistically made by Gaylle McRae



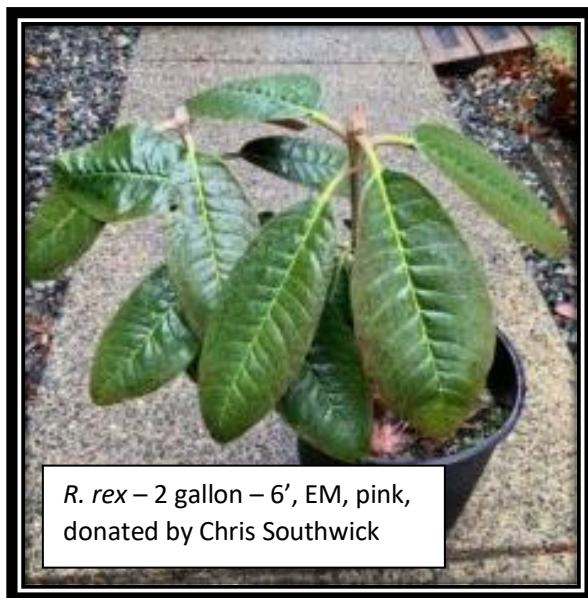
R. yakushmanum- A Print on Watercolour Paper-Unframed



18" Ceramic Planter – Art & Susan Lightburn donation



Fancy Garden Tools – Deborah Francis donation



*"Every gardener knows that under the cloak of winter lies
a miracle ... a seed waiting to sprout, a bulb opening to
the light, a bud straining to unfurl. And the
anticipation nurtures our dream."
- Barbara Winkler*

What's on the Calendar

Despite Covid19, there are things to do, places to go, events, and work bees... As part of the new normal, all of the usual protocols apply e.g. social distancing, hand sanitizers etc. There will also be some on-line events coming this winter – stay tuned!

- Greig Rhododendron Species Garden at Milner –work bees on hold until January
- Hailey Grove at Bowen Park – work bees on hold until January
- Milner Gardens and Woodland – Check their website for current details:
<https://www2.viu.ca/milnergardens/>
- NRS Zoom-based education classes and seminars – watch future newsletters for details
- NRS members-only spring garden open houses – details to follow.

- **Christmas NRS Online Events – see details on p. 2**



Stay connected - check our web page - new things added regularly! <http://nanaimorhodos.ca/>

What is a “Real Garden”????

(The following is an excerpt from Bradbury, E. & Maddocks J. *The Real Garden Road Trip*, 1997)

This book is about two friends, one who lives in New Brunswick and the other in Vancouver, who drive from west to east across Canada in search of “real gardens”. They set up a number of criteria for clues that would point to such gardens as they drove by. The following takes place early on as they visit the Sunshine Coast.

“... we decided to make a trial run to see if we could spot a likely-looking garden simply by driving around. (...) we were watching for significant signs:

A general air of work in progress.

A wheelbarrow, spade or hose left out.

Some kind of greenhouse, shed or cold frame.

Compost.

Piles of rocks, gravel, sand, bark mulch, topsoil, grass clippings...

Ornaments – anything from works of art to pink flamingoes.

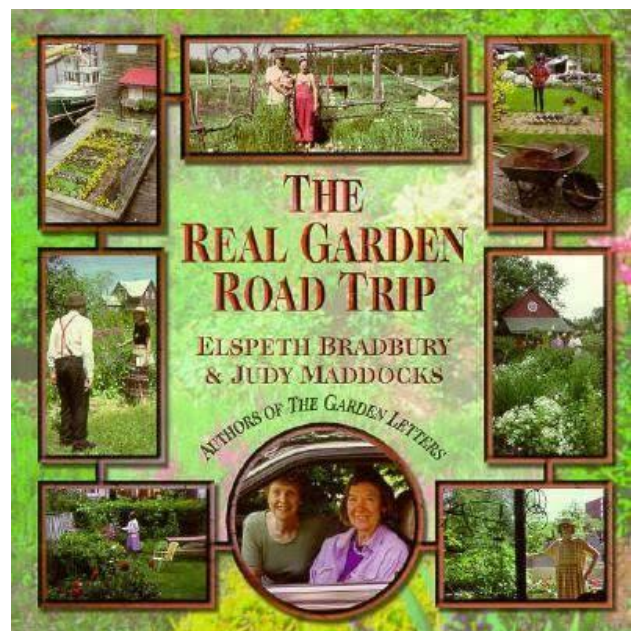
Window boxes, hanging baskets or plants in pots.

Climbing plants.

Ingenious methods of protecting vegetables.

Bird feeders or bird houses.

Any one of these, we felt, might indicate the presence of a real gardener, and several would mean we were definitely on to something. We didn’t expect to find them all in one place, but no sooner had we turned off the main road than we stumbled on it – a perfect ten.” (p.15)



How many out of ten do you have??? 😊

Presentations via Zoom - what's ahead!

While we can't have our regular club meetings and events, the pandemic has made us more creative, exploring other options as we seek to find ways to connect with one another. We've had outdoor meetings, work bees, tours and have turned to technology to expand our options. Executive meetings have gone virtual with the use of Zoom and we've had interesting presentations that we can watch from the comfort of our homes. We've only just begun....

On November 18th, Steve Hootman gave an excellent presentation on his 2017 expedition to North Vietnam. The presentation was well attended with nearly 100 people tuning in. Attendees included many members from each of the 5 Vancouver Island ARS chapters, as well as others from California, and as far away as New Zealand and Australia!



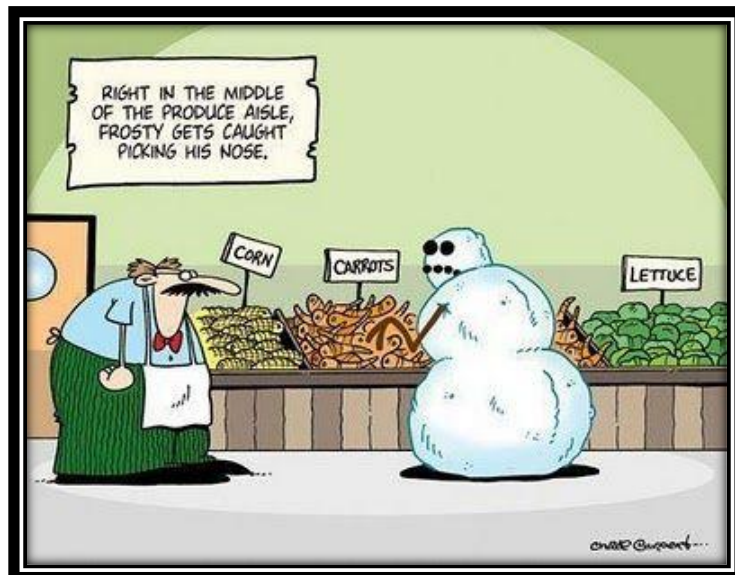
If you missed the presentation, the recorded version (approx. 50 minutes long) is available at

<https://youtu.be/p3vPPQmA1cM>

Further options are being explored not only throughout District 1, but across the ARS. Plans are underway to have Zoom presentations from throughout the ARS shared amongst chapters. While it can't replace in person meetings, it has the potential to allow us to access an amazing range of speakers and topics, while strengthening the ARS community.

Seen in Passing....

- Lee's Scarlet in bloom
- A few rose flowers and buds
- Early Helleborus niger "Jacob" flowers beginning to appear
- Rain gear hung up to dry
- Christmas lights being put up



What has the NRS Executive been up to?

While we may have a global pandemic limiting our ability to have regular meetings, our club's executive (working with our membership) has been busy as they continue to keep our club moving forward. It's truly been a team effort! Here's an overview of what they've been up to this fall:

- The NRS executive continues to meet monthly using Zoom.
- Membership renewal – we're up to 67 renewals, including 5 associates!
- Sunshine/social reaching out to club members.
- The N.R.S. website has had a significant "facelift" including lots of new information and photos. A "counter" has recently been added – 530 visits in the first 3 weeks! Check it out <http://nanaimorhodos.ca/>
- We've had open gardens as well as a guided tour of Milner earlier this fall. We even had a plant sale!
- The club's library has been organized and sorted.
- We've participated in work bees both at Hailey Grove in Bowen Park and at Milner.
- NRS business cards have been ordered and will be used to promote the club.
- The NRS has been working with the other Island chapters to pool resources to use Zoom for club activities, including guest speakers, executive meetings and our upcoming Christmas auction.
- Despite the challenges posed by COVID 19, the propagation group has not only continued to look after last year's cuttings but they've also taken more cuttings this fall!
- While we aren't able to have our annual Christmas auction and potluck, the executive has organized an online silent auction and a Christmas auction using Zoom.
- Looking ahead, there's a need for a club "grow-out" facility for growing-on our rooted cutting. Discussions for a potential partnership with MARS are ongoing.



Our club's executive always does a great job, but given the challenges they've had to deal with in 2020, they've truly done an outstanding job! **THANK YOU!**



Plant of the month by Ron Sutton



Rhododendron liliiflorum

This *maddenii* rhododendron is considered one of the hardiest of the *maddenii*. It is estimated to be hardy to 5°F / -15°C. It is hardy here on the east coast of Vancouver Island. My plant has endured the last two winters without damage. It grows wild in Yunnan China to approximately 3 metres. Flowers are large creamy white trumpets and fragrant, although I detected no fragrance from mine. It is a relatively late bloomer, with my photo here taken on June 20.

The Greig Rhododendron Species Garden - an update



While we have a large stockpile of arborist's mulch ready to be spread, work bees have been postponed until January, due to the pandemic. Stay tuned – we hope to have another work bee early in the new year. By then, the days will be starting to get longer.....not necessarily warmer, but we can hope!



From the Winter Garden... by June Bouchard

If you're lucky, your garden is now full of kale! Not only is it super nutritious, it is easy to grow and keeps going through the whole winter. "Repeatedly singled out as a top superfood by nutrition experts, kale is anti-oxidant rich and bursting with phytonutrients, quite simply, it's a dream food. ... Not only is it vigorous, it's resilient, easily



winning the prize in my garden as the most problem-free organic green ever grown." (From *The Book of Kale: the easy-to-grow superfood* by Sharon Hanna, p.9)

We have two cookbooks (see titles below) with kale as the main star and we keep finding new ways to get this amazing vegetable on our dinner plate. I recently tried the following salad recipe, a takeoff on Waldorf salad, and it was delicious – I'm thinking of making it part of our Christmas dinner table, in which case I might add a few segments of mandarin orange. Since raw kale can be rather crunchy, the secret when using it in a salad is to chop it quite fine and to "massage" the kale with a little olive oil and/or lemon juice to soften it before adding your dressing – it's amazing how well it works.

Kale-Dorf Salad (From *The Book of Kale: the easy-to-grow superfood* by Sharon Hanna, p.105)

Toss the following ingredients in a salad bowl:

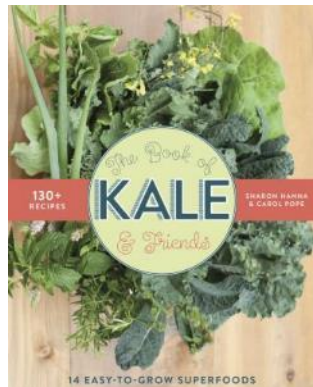
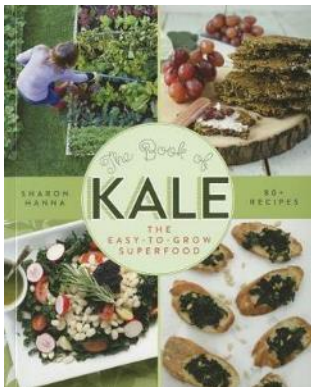
- 4 cups kale leaves, chopped fine
- 1 cup tart apple, unpeeled and chopped
- 2 tbsp. (or more) dried cranberries
- 1 cup celery, sliced thin
- ¼ cup walnuts, lightly toasted and chopped
- ¼ cup chopped dates

DRESSING:

Whisk dressing ingredients well and pour over the salad:

- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1 tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tbsp. white wine vinegar
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 2 tbsp. mayonnaise
- Salt and pepper to taste

Allow the salad to sit for a few minutes before serving to allow the kale to "relax". Enjoy!!!



*You might be lucky enough to
find one of these under your
Christmas tree!!! ☺*



*A very Merry
Christmas to you
all!*

Stay Safe Everyone!

*"Someone painted pictures on my
Windowpane last night --
Willow trees with trailing boughs
And flowers, frosty white,*

*And lovely crystal butterflies;
But when the morning sun
Touched them with its golden beams,
They vanished one by one."*

- Helen Bayley Davis, Jack Frost