



MILL BAY GARDEN CLUB NEWSLETTER

Website: www.millbaygardenclub.com

Email: mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com

Next Meeting:

Date: **Tues, April 24th 2018**

Time: **7pm (Doors open 6:30pm)**

Place: **Mill Bay Community League Hall (1001 Shawnigan Mill Bay Rd)**

Activities:

Business Meeting; Members' Forum; Gardening Q&A; Library; Raffle; Plant Sales; Guest Speaker; Socializing!



March Brag Table Theme:

April Aspirations

With plant and flower identification and commentary provided by Barb Kohlman, the Brag Table is a great part of our monthly meetings. It's a fun and interactive way to share what's going on in your garden. The bonus is a prize awarded randomly to one of the monthly participants. If you've never participated, give it a fling, be it flower, vegetable or fungus!

April Speaker:

Linda Mimeault

**Growing Your Own
Cut Flower Garden**

See page 2 for details



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***DON'T FORGET!
bring your mug
for coffee/tea!***

President's Report

Ajay Oppelaar

After last month's heavy and somewhat ominous tone due to some serious issues facing the club, this report shall remain light and fluffy, like a good, lightly toasted marshmallow on a stick. There isn't much to report, and what there is to report is all good!

We have a nominee for MBGC president. See, it's good! Donna Kaiser has put her name forward for president! We also have a Kitchen Coordinator nominee in Pat Spezowka. Thank you to you both for your involvement in the club.

We are still looking for a vp, and we may have a few names in the mix but there is no nominee for this important role as yet.

We discussed the bursary fund and Janice has had some applicants! More from Janice Rose on that at the meeting.

And that was really all there was to discuss. Oh, and next year's executive will look at upgrading our sound system. If the proposed upgrade is greater than \$500, a vote from the membership will be required to move that item forward. It will be a huge benefit to all.

Hope to see you all on April 24th!



April's Speaker:

Linda Mimeault on Growing Your Own Cut Flower Garden

Bio: I came to be a flower farmer in a very circuitous way. I am originally from Montreal.

When I visited Tofino I was so awed by the raw wildness of Clayoquot Sound that I quit my teaching career to move to the west coast. I eventually turned my Math background into bookkeeping employment.

One day, a friend in Tofino asked if I could coach her with her husband's company's books; in return, she offered to teach me to plant some seeds. I had never grown anything and had no clue about gardening. She brought over a tray of pots and showed me how to add soil and sow seeds of a few different vegetables. I was hooked, and soon, my carport was filled with garden beds!

In 2004, I moved to the Cowichan Valley to a farm in Glenora (many of you may know it - Alderlea Farm) and I finally had the chance to grow a large vegetable garden in the yard of our farmhouse.

Four years later, a property went up for sale up the road and I bought it, and three years after that, I left my teaching position. I knew I wanted to earn my living from farming but did not want to compete with my friends at Alderlea. I asked myself what to grow and thought - maybe flowers?

I had no experience with flowers at all but it seemed like a good idea. After two not so successful years at the market and many requests for wedding flowers, I learned everything about the wedding floral industry and am now, almost exclusively, a wedding and event florist, though I do still have a small subscription service and also take one-off orders.

My operation is small - both my daughters and a fantastic employee work with me on the farm and in the studio and, together, we provide flower arrangements for approximately 100 weddings per season.



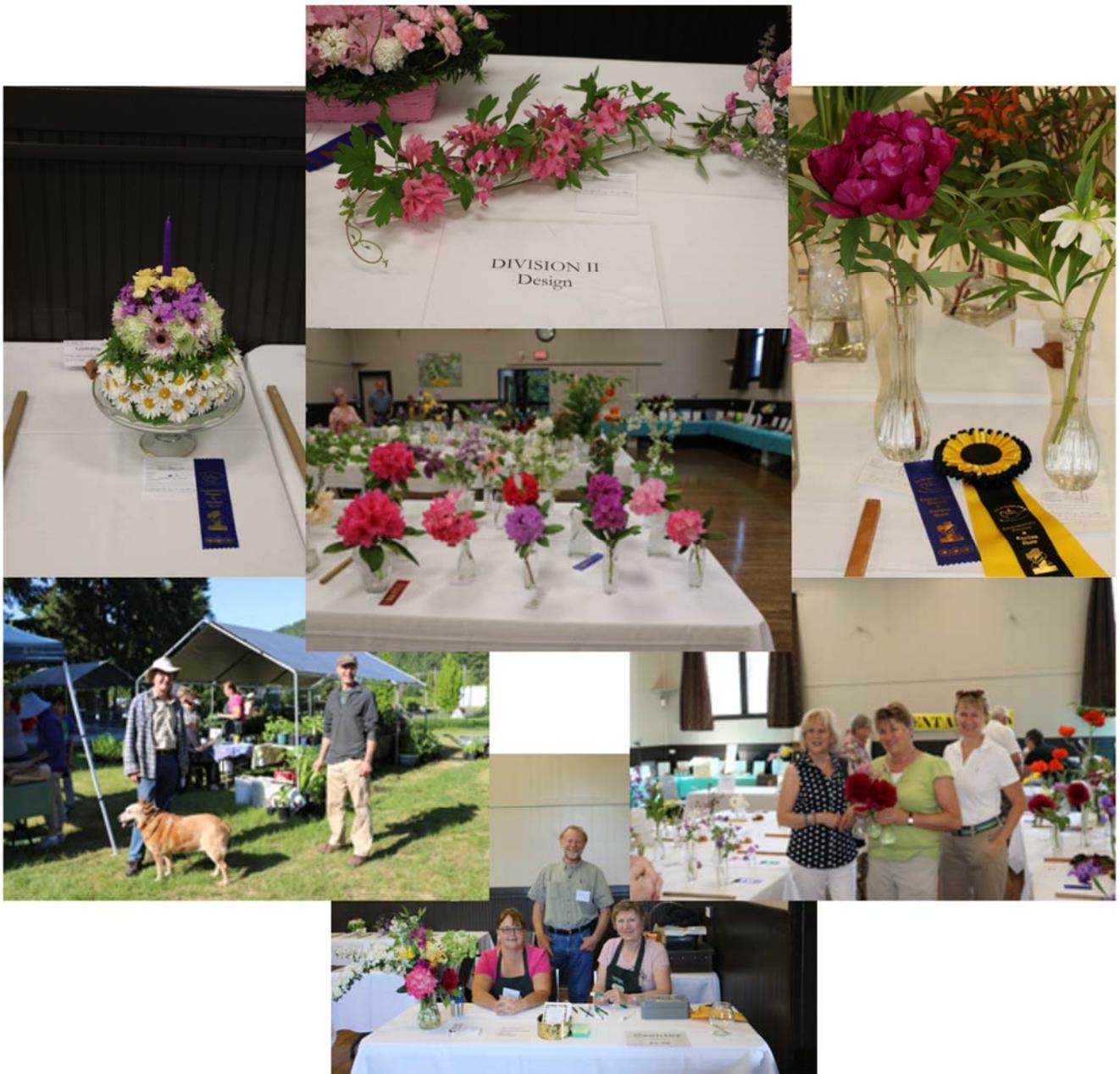
**The Mill Bay Garden Club's
Community Flower & Garden Show
"Garden Party"**

Saturday, May 26th 2018, 9am til 2pm

at

Cobble Hill Hall, 3550 Watson Ave, Cobble Hill

Be sure to check out the poster and brochure at the end of the newsletter! In the meantime, here are some photos from last year's event!



Rhododendrons: Beauty, Diversity & Culture

Notes from Chris Southwick, guest speaker at the March 2018 general meeting

Chris Southwick's favourite websites:

www.rhodygarden.com This is the Rhododendron Species Foundation (Botanical Garden) which has some excellent advice on rhododendron culture and links to other websites.

www.rhododendron.org The website for the American Rhododendron Society. This website has links to all past ARS Journals (JARS) and has many good articles on many topics such as mulching, pruning and fertilizing, including articles written by local experts such as Terry Richmond from Port Alberni.

hirsutum.info This website is an on-line database and 'virtual' arboretum – lists rhododendron species, hybrids, azaleas, vireyas, etc. – both photos and information listed alphabetically

www.azaleas.org The website of the Azalea Society of America – has azalea data base alphabetically and by colour, etc.

Recommended Books on Rhododendrons:

There are many, many books on rhododendrons around. These are my three favourites that I pour through time and time again.

The Pocket Guide to Rhododendron Species, J.F.J. McQuire and M.L.A. Robinson, 2009. This is a fantastic resource – small size, full of photographs of both plants and leaves. It is helpfully organized into elepidotes and lepidotes and into sections and subsections. Best resource I know of for species (not vireyas). Pricey (\$100+) – published by Kew Gardens. I purchased mine at the UBC Botanical Garden gift shop.

Greer's Guidebook to Available Rhododendrons, Third Edition: Harold E. Greer, 1996. In my opinion, still the best all-round guide to hybrid rhododendrons that we have. This paperback book is inexpensive and easy to purchase, including in second hand bookshops. The Nanaimo Rhodo Society will have a few for sale at our annual show and sale which is Saturday, May 12, 2018.

The Encyclopedia of Rhododendron Species, Second Edition: Peter and Kenneth Cox. 1997. This is another outstanding resource with colour photographs of both flowers and leaves with botanical description. This is another pricey volume and available through the Rhododendron Species Foundation – large in size and not so handy to take out into the garden or on your travels. I think it is well worth the price – was on sale at the RSF for \$75 US back in 2015.

Specialty Growers:

Vancouver Island: Paul and Lyn Wurz – Hidden Acres Rhododendrons, Campbell River. <http://www.hiddenacresrhodos.com> - species, hybrids and azaleas – fabulous garden, too!

Lower Mainland: Fearings' Farm. www.fearing.ca — species rhodos and azaleas

Committee Reports and News



"Sunshine Mary"

Our esteemed Lifetime Member, Mary Gale, has for a very many years, been sending cards and kind words to those members who are experiencing illness or loss.

She does this on behalf of the Mill Bay Garden Club, bringing a spot of sunshine into what is often a stressful time for a club member.

If you know of someone in the club who is sick, in hospital, or has lost a loved one, please let Mary know and she will send a card on our behalf.



Plant Table

Short and sweet... We plan to have more alpaca gold on hand. Remember to return your empty buckets so we can refill again

Other items to share? Surprise us.

*Your friendly plant sales team,
Monika Morgan & Sharon Martin*

MILL BAY PLANTAHOLICS PLANT SALE

The Mill Bay Plantaholics (Barb Kohlman, Ali Morris, Sharon Martin, Noreen Carver, Jill Jones (our newest member) and Elaine Scott) would like to thank the many members of the Garden Club for supporting their charity plant sale on April 14. Also we would like to thank David Byrnes for putting information about the sale in the newsletter, Gord Hamilton for putting information on the web site and Pauline Dueck for doing the same on the Club's Facebook page. The sale was a wonderful success and we made \$3,482 which will be divided between Malawi Girls on the Move and Somenos House in Duncan. Thank you one and all for your wonderful support.

Social Media

If you use Facebook, don't forget to check us out and "LIKE" us at:

[www.facebook.com/
millbaygardenclub](http://www.facebook.com/millbaygardenclub)

*Pauline Dueck
Facebook Coordinator*



Flower and Garden Show 2018

The 2018 edition of the Mill Bay Flower and Garden Show will be held on Saturday, May 26th. **For anyone donating anything to the Silent Auction, Dorothy Kennedy, Silent Auction Chair, requests you to send her a description of the donation.**

Gardening Tips for April by Barb Kohlman

Using coat hangers as garden “stakes”

From wire hangers, cut the bottom in half, cut the top off =staples to secure soaker hoses, row covers, and plastic cloches.



Hardy Ferns made Easy

If you have some shady sites perhaps some ferns would add texture to your garden — a few favourites — native western sword fern (*Polystichum munitum*) is good for dry shade, so under cedars and firs. There are many cultivars with finer foliage that add interest to the garden.

How about maidenhair ferns — (*Adiantum* spp.) — there are many variations, all beautiful.

Employ colour to attract birds and pollinators

Red and orange for hummingbirds; blue, purple, violet, white and yellow for bees; and dark pink, purple, red, orange and yellow for butterflies.

Birds don't require much to be attracted to a home in your garden

A wooden box in partial sun with a hole near the top and an overhang to keep out the rain is usually enough. Rough interior walls help the young to climb out.

Your tender bulbs are happy to be planted out soon — dahlias, cannas and gladioli.

Indoor tropicals can be moved outside to enjoy warm sunshine, (when we get some) but let them acclimatize gradually to avoid scorched leaves.

Use an edger to set your beds and keep grass at bay.

In perennial beds, keep weeds under control by weeding often and using mulch to cover bare patches, or plant thickly to crowd out those invaders.

Stake those tall growing perennials NOW.

You are likely already using your lawn mower

Keep it in good condition with sharp blades for the best results, mow to a height of 2-½ inches and when the heat comes let it go dormant — less work and so much easier on the water bill and environment.

Cheers — barb k

Two Good Deer-Proof Friends by Fran Benton



I know what you are saying -there is no such thing as a deer proof plant! Well deer will eat almost anything if they are desperate but there are some plants that deer just do not like. Here are two that really work! Plant number one is a plant you already know – Yucca. This is a tough old buzzard of a plant that is easy to grow and tolerates drought and neglect. Yet, if you take care of it there will be glorious flowers and healthy growth that you will be proud of! Yucca is an architectural plant that looks fantastic in a rock garden or border. It originally comes from the Caribbean, Gulf of Mexico, and south Atlantic states. It has many of varieties including the famed Joshua Tree. The petals of Yucca can be eaten and are featured in several Mexican dishes. I always enjoy how plants are categorized and believe it or not the Yucca is in the Asparagus family! Yucca grows in my front yard and even tolerates damp heavy soil and a north facing location.

My second deer proof hero is New Zealand Daisy Bush (*Brachyglottis greyi*). This lovely plant does in fact come from New Zealand. It is also tough. Its leaves have a fuzzy white underside. Deer are not fond of fuzzy plants. It has big clusters of cheerful yellow daisy flowers and blooms energetically in the summer. It grows in a scruffy disheveled manner, so I think of it as a Rambler. It spreads about six or seven feet and grows about 4 feet high. This plant tolerates pruning quite well so you can shape it. It is not hard to propagate from cuttings.

Oh and just for good measure here is another deer proof (and rabbit proof) plant that looks good beside your yucca and NZ daisy bush - Jupiter's Beard (*Centranthus ruber*). It's a perennial that will come up year after year, tolerates drought and can be shaped and trimmed to look good!

So you see there is no point to sit in your house giving the deer "stink eye" when you can plant these guys and be smug!

Happy gardening!

First 'Gardens As They Are' Tour of the Season

Cliff Stainsby and Mary-Ellen Dueling will open their vegetable garden for visits by Mill Bay Garden Club members on Sunday **April 22** from 10:00am until 2:00pm. Cliff reports:

"The garden will be just as it would be if there were nobody coming to visit. So, it will be our vegetable garden in whatever stage it happens to be on April 22. Some beds will still be in winter mode, some ready for planting, and some planted. That said, it is a chance to see and discuss vegetable gardening as both the outside and greenhouse beds are being moved from winter through spring and on to summer. It is a good time to talk about seeding and potting on and transplanting out; soils and watering and mulching and composting and using manure; how we include a greenhouse in the process; winter cropping in the greenhouse; summer cropping in the greenhouse; crop rotations... and so on.

"While I will be showing you my vegetable garden and answering questions, the quid pro quo, of course, is that I will be asking you how you go about growing your vegetables. So, to you vegetable gardeners (and would be vegetable gardeners), we hope to see you Sunday, April 22."

Mill Bay Garden Club Plant Sale

MAY 26, 2018. 9:00 to 2:00 AT THE COMMUNITY FLOWER AND GARDEN SHOW

Your plant sale committee (Barb Kohlman, Margo Johnston, Ali Morris, Heather and Nick Jenkins, Fran Benton, Pat Stevens, Mary Vandenberg, Sharon Martin, Ruby Armour, Mary Gale, Noreen Carver, Monica Morgan and Elaine Scott) is hoping that you are having a great time potting up plants for the May, Mill Bay Garden Club plant sale. We kindly ask you to refrain from donating invasive plants. Sometimes you may not realize that your plants are invasive. The Committee will help you out and remove any plants from the sale that it considers invasive.

The plants should be delivered to Elaine Scott's home on May 23 or 24.

Just pop by with them and if she is not home at the time you are there just put them in the vegetable garden area behind the wire fence.

Also, please, please, please label your plants. It is very difficult to sell plants if we do not know exactly what they are. We try hard to identify them but sometimes we are just unable to.

Your Plant Sale Committee thanks you.

Upcoming Events

- The Cowichan Valley Garden Club is holding it's annual plant sale on **April 21** at St John's Church Hall 486 Jubilee Street in Duncan. The sale will run from 10:00 am until 1:00 pm or until the plants sell out. Admission is free.
- Cairnsmore Place Volunteer Gardeners 10th anniversary plant sale takes place from 9am til noon on Saturday, **April 21** at 250 Cairnsmore Street in Duncan. There will be hundreds of plants ready for planting. And this year there is a special focus on hostas, more than 100 will be for sale. All proceeds are used for the maintenance of the gardens.
- The View Royal Garden Club will hold its general meeting on Wednesday **April 25** at 7:30 pm at Wheeley Hall, 500 Admirals Rd in Esquimalt. The speaker will be Bruce Carter, a Certified Irrigation Technician and owner of Wes-Tech Irrigation Systems, who will provide tips and techniques for keeping watering systems working effectively and efficiently.
A judged mini show will feature exhibits from members' gardens and a sale of plants and garden items. Visitors and new members are welcome. Drop in fee \$5.00 includes refreshments.
- The Cowichan Valley Garden Fair takes place on Saturday, **April 28**, from 10am til 2pm. For more info visit www.CowichanValleyGardenFair.com.

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More Upcoming Events

- The 3rd Annual Vancouver Island Homesteading Fair will take place on Saturday and Sunday, **May 5 and 6** at Cobble Hill Community Hall, from 9am til 5pm both days. We have a full schedule of fantastic presentations related to 'Earth conscious, sustainable living'. Backyard veggies, seed saving, soil health and compost are topics you can expect to learn about. There will be vendors and musicians also onsite. Entrance is FREE, donations appreciated! Keep in touch with us on facebook.com/homesteadingfair.
- Garry Oak Ecosystem Restoration Workshop, **May 19–20, 26–27** (4-day course) 9 am–3 pm ROYAL ROADS UNIVERSITY. Join James Miskelly, Kristen Miskelly, and Leigh Joseph/Styawat. Study southern Vancouver Island ecology, including plant identification, wildlife restoration, and human history. Combining classroom & fieldwork, this course offers a professional foundation for both land managers & landowners caring for QUERCUS garryana habitats. \$449 plus tax Information & registration at <https://secure.royalroads.ca/cscourses/ecology-and-restoration-of-garry-oak-ecosystems>.
- The Cowichan Valley Garden Club is celebrating its 65th year with our 2018 Annual Spring Flower Show and Tea on Saturday **May 26**, 1 pm to 4 pm, St Peter's Church Hall, 5800 Church Road Duncan. We invite and welcome entries from the public to all classes of the show. There is no charge to enter exhibits. Admission is \$4. View the club's website at <http://www.cowichanvalleygardenclub.com/spring-flower-show/> to learn how to prepare and stage exhibits for entry.
- The Point Roberts (WA) Garden Club holds its acclaimed garden tour every other year. This year is number XV! We would love to invite you and your members to visit the eight unique properties on this year's tour. **July 15**, 10am to 4pm, C\$20 per person. This self-guided tour of eight wonderful gardens includes a map and a stop for afternoon tea with music. **Note: enhanced driver's license or passport required to cross the border.**
More info: info@pointrobertsgardenclub.org.
- Bookmark the Date! The Victoria Master Gardener Association presents "Mixing It Up in the Urban Garden 2019: Beauty and the Beast" on **February 2, 2019** at the Mary Winspear Centre in Sidney. For early details visit mixingitup.org; registration will probably open in the summer. For more info see the poster at the end of the newsletter.

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Still More Upcoming Events

- And some workshops and events happening at the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific that may be of interest to MBGC members (visit hcp.ca/events for more details):
 - Spring Plant Sale, Saturday & Sunday **April 21 & 22**, 9:00am—4:00pm. Many unique plants are propagated from the gardens. Admissions into the Gardens is free on plant sale day and Master Gardeners will be available to answer your questions. All proceeds raised from the plant sale support the development of our not-for-profit teaching gardens.
 - Meadowscaping for Biodiversity Workshop, Saturday **April 28**, 9:00am—12:00pm. Are you a homeowner or land manager interested in creating a native wildflower meadow in place of lawn or field? Join Kristen Miskelly of Saanich Native Plants to learn what you need to know to create a successful meadow, including which native species to use, how to prepare and plant your area, and how to keep it thriving for years to come. Members \$45 / Non-Members \$60. To register, call 250 479 6162.
- Visit the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific at hcp.ca and click Events for information on these and other HCP events.

Garden Tours... this year featuring Gardens As They Are

Each year several members of the Mill Bay Garden Club open their gardens for other members of the Club to view. In the past, members have been interested in both ornamental and food gardens. Typically people who opened their gardens put in considerable effort making them showpieces.

This year, however, we are inviting members to open for viewing their '**Gardens As They Are**'. This means no need to obsess about weeding and deadheading and pruning and mulching and hiding tools and other gardening paraphernalia. Simply identify a day and time and location and a little information about your garden (e.g. it focusses on ornamentals, perennials, roses, rhodos, veggies, heathers, weeds, obnoxious smells etc) and send an email with the information to the Newsletter for publication (mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com). This is a chance for Garden Club members to see what others are doing in their gardens and for those showing their gardens to receive advice/input from those coming to view.

In the past, these viewings have been very popular with our members. We hope that by emphasizing '**Gardens As They Are**' that more members will show their gardens, more members will view the gardens, and more gardening information will be exchanged.

Cliff Stainsby

Mill Bay Garden Club

General Meeting Minutes Tuesday, March 27 2018

Call to Order: 7:08 pm

Acceptance of February 2018 Minutes

- Moved: Norman Redcliffe
- Seconded: Pip Woodcock
- All in favour, Carried

President's report: Ajay Oppelaar

- Thank you to the setup crew and kitchen.
- Member Forum requests (3 of them).
- Questions about the President's Report
- Janice on Bill: Thursdays and Fridays, 10am til noon, two people per session, gloves needed, sense of humour needed.
- Discussion of nominations.

Vice President's report: Cliff Stainsby

- Speakers update.
- Garden Tour update—4 spaces left, meet there at 10am
- "Gardens as They Are" tours (gardens that have not been fancied up) starts with Sunday April 15th at 10am—2pm. (*Note that the date was subsequently changed to April 22nd—Ed.*)
- Ajay passed out sign-up sheets.

Treasurer's report: Marie Cooke

- We have \$552.45 in our account. Name tags are available.

Membership: Jo-Ann Mulhern

- Does anyone know of David Cassaday? Some members thought he had moved to the mainland.

Sunshine: Mary Gale

- Two cards sent for health reasons.

Raffle: Tracy Morris and Cori-Lee Fisher

- Lots of stuff!

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Plant Sales: Monika Morgan

- Plants, seed, alpaca poo etc.

Library: Janice Rose

- Lots of books—especially pruning.

Flower and Garden Show: Gillian Keir

- Do you know of any vendors? Contact Gillian. Silent auction donations, please let her know if you are going to do this.
- Please check the garden class schedules.

Past President: Pip Woodcock

- Pip notes that she was not on the executive before she became president.

Members Forum

- Elaine Scott:
 - Thanks to everyone who came to the heather sale. 1800 plants were sold.
 - Mill Bay Plantaholics sale is going to charity. April 14th at Elaine's.
 - Cairnsmore sale April 21st.
 - Mill Bay Garden Club plant sale at the Flower and Garden Show. Please pot plants up and get them ready for the sale.
- Norman Redcliffe
 - Millennium Garden cleanup needs date to get the project done. Please see Norm at coffee break.

Brag Table: Barb Kohlman

- Barb challenged us with a mystery plant that turns out to be "Winged Elm" Here is what the Wikipedia says about it: "Ulmus alata, the winged elm or wahoo, is a small- to medium-sized deciduous tree endemic to the woodlands of the southeastern and south-central United States. The species is tolerant of a wide range of soils, and of ponding, but is the least shade-tolerant of the North American elms. Its growth rate is often very slow, the trunk increasing in diameter by less than 5 mm (3/16 in) per year. The tree is occasionally considered a nuisance as it readily invades old fields, forest clearings, and rangelands, proving particularly difficult to eradicate with herbicides."



Q and A with Bill Herring

- **Q:** Bill's rhubarb is flowering – all of it! Why?
- **A:** *Cut the flower stalks out immediately!*
- **Q:** What is a good variety of blueberry?
- **A:** *Brigitte Blue is a recommended variety.*
- **Q:** In the absence of bees how do you pollinate plums manually?
- **A:** *Fine paintbrush. This is a very fiddly and painstaking job. Big queen bumblebees are out. More bees come out as days warm up. Need 3 days of 13 degree weather for bees to emerge.*
- **Q:** How do you get rid of moss in the vegetable garden?
- **A:** *Stir it up and lime the soil.*
- **Q:** Bartlett pears need cross fertilizer?
- **A:** *Find someone who has a pear tree and take a branch off. Put it into a bucket of water. Pollen will move between the pears.*

Coffee Break

Raffle

Speaker: Chris Southwick "The Genus Rhododendron: Beauty, Diversity and Culture"

Adjourn.