



MILL BAY GARDEN CLUB NEWSLETTER

Website: www.millbaygardenclub.com

Email: mbgcnewsletter@gmail.com

Next Meeting (ZOOM):

Date: **Tues, October 26, 2021**

Time: 7pm

Place: Your desk or a comfy armchair
in your home

Activities:

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

October Speaker:

Bryan Emery

On Rhododendrons

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October

**POP-UP
CHRISTMAS
SHOP**
Coming Early December

"Sunshine Mary"

Our esteemed Life Member Mary Gale, has for 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.

President's Report

Bernie Juurlink

Unfortunately, Covid-19 is still a problem throughout the world. Island Health reports 484 active Covid-19 cases with 226 being on Central Island and another 204 cases in the Greater Victoria region. Also, Island Health is receiving some Covid-19 patients from Northern BC. Because of Covid-19 our next meeting will be via Zoom. Your Executive will decide month by month whether to hold an in-person meeting or a meeting via Zoom.

The Executive felt it was safe to hold an in-person outdoor plant sale. Despite the wet weather we have had a very successful plant sale on Saturday October 16. I thank Monika Morgan for organizing the sale and Stephanie Taylor for running the Raffle. Pat Spezowka and Gord Hamilton sat for three hours enduring the cool wet weather collect memberships and sale proceeds respectively. I also thank the many volunteers who helped run the Sale as well as all those people who donated to the sale. I thank James MacDonald for donating all the garden tools and supplies.

We have had a small change in our Executive. Dorothy Kennedy has been overwhelmed with work lately and has asked someone else to take over as Secretary of the Club. Melanie Fiander has kindly agreed to step in and I thank her for taking on this duty.

We have gone from a very dry spring and summer to a wet September and October. Since the first of September I have measured 207 millimetres (8.15 inches) of rain that has fallen in our yard to date. This is about the same amount of rain that fell from the first of February till the end of August with 217 millimetres (8.54 inches) of rain during this time period. This abundance of rain seems to have caused the Coho salmon to be eager to enter Lower Shawnigan Creek a bit earlier than usual - this year's run is promising to be the most successful Coho return yet recorded by the Mill Bay and District Conservation Society.

Despite this incredible amount of rainfall, we still have lots blooming in our yard, several varieties of rain-resistant roses, monkshood, asters, fuchsias, nerines and begonias.

Bernie



October 26, 2021, Mill Bay Garden Club Agenda

- 1) 7:00 p.m. Speaker: **Bryan Emery** - chaired by Cliff Stainsby
- 2) 8:00 p.m.: Club Business
 - a) Approval of the agenda
 - b) Approval of the minutes of September 2021 Club Zoom meeting (attached)
 - c) President's Report – Bernie Juurlink
 - d) Executive Committee reports
 - e) Virtual Brag Table
 - f) Garden-related Questions with our Master Gardeners
 - g) Questions for the Executive?
 - h) Adjournment

October's Speaker (Tuesday, October 26):

Bryan Emery, via Zoom, on Rhododendrons

Bryan has been growing orchids for over 25 years. His main interests are Masdevallias, miniatures, and terrestrials. After 18 years working in veterinary medicine he has recently changed focus and now runs a small specialty plant nursery in Victoria BC. Bryan grows a broad range of plants alongside his orchid collection. Other collections include gesneriads, cacti, succulents, caudex forming plants, alpiners, and anything odd or unusual.



Los Bandidos!

Pat Spezowka and Gord Hamilton, staffing the membership table at MBGC's Fall Plant Sale on a wet and chilly. October 16, 2021

A Letter from Norman Redcliffe

Dear MBGC,

Thank you for news of the forthcoming garden plant sale, however we are in the process of reducing the number of plants in our care rather than seeking new ones.

This is because we sold off our adjacent 20,000 sq. ft. garden as the amount of time and energy it was taking to maintain it was becoming an onerous burden rather than a joy!

I doubt Gwen And I will actually attend the sale as I am still recovering from a knee joint replacement a few weeks ago, however we will send a donation in lieu of purchasing plants. According to the orthopaedic surgeon and the physiotherapist who have attended on my case, my over exertions to propagate , pot and deliver 400 plus plants for the MBGC membership and first responders early this year was a bit over-optimistic, healthwise.

We have converted our quite commodious greenhouse into a "more general hobby shop" and will build a new, smaller greenhouse early next year . This will give us the opportunity to package lots of "Bill Herring" pea seeds, probably quite a few "topsy Tom" cherry tomato seedlings etc, but definitely not on the scale of 2021's performance!

Please thank all concerned with keeping the MBGC flag flying in these trying times. We really appreciate the dedication of our President and Board members, and hope to be back to help in 2022.

Regards and thanks,

Norman and Gwen

Memorial Garden

Plans are underway to make significant changes to the Memorial Garden at the hall. Some plants and trees will be removed and replaced. Thanks to Ally, Elaine and Barb for their input and suggestions. Work parties will be scheduled as needed, likely one later this fall and again in the spring.

*Respectfully,
Katherine Miller*

Committee Reports

Membership

Hello garden club members. This is a reminder that your 2021/22 membership is due now. Thanks to those who braved the elements and renewed their memberships at the plant sale last Saturday.

You can renew your membership by e-transfer to mbgcmembership@gmail.com OR send a cheque to our treasurer Gord Hamilton OR drop the cash off at Pat Spezowka's house.

And a warm welcome from the Mill Bay Garden Club to two new members, **Kathleen Mercer** from Duncan and **Brenda Ottosen** from Mill Bay. We look forward to meeting you in person when that is possible again.

Plant Sales

Despite the drizzly day on Saturday oct. 16, we had a successful plant sale raising \$755. (along with book sales.) It was great to see lots of people coming out to say hi & support the club. Thank you to all the donators, purchasers & volunteers making for a great day.

Looking ahead, we are starting to think about Xmas & another possible Pop up store on Pat & Alex Spezowka' back deck. It was quite a fun & lucrative event last year. With the pandemic lingering, we feel this outside venue feels safe & offers lovely views.

If this is something we want to partake in again this year, we would like members to start thinking about their craft skills. We know we have lots of "crafty" people in the club. Wreaths, centre pieces, swags to name a few. Perhaps we can have a work bee with Pat teaching us how to make some wreaths. We would like to have more inventory this year if possible. We are thinking of end of November or beginning of December. We hope to invite more of the public & feel we can do this safely.

So think about these suggestions. If you are interested, or have questions you may contact Pat or Monika.

We hope to start collections of boughs, bows, ribbons, etc. More of that info to follow.

Happy planting (still)

Monika Morgan & Sharon Martin

Your friendly Plant Sales team ☐



Fun with Cactus and Succulents by Fran Benton

(because we sure are not going anywhere exotic to see them!!!)

Last month I went south to Victoria for the Succulent and Cactus Societies annual show and sale. I do love a group of obsessives be they model trains, fossils, or plant groups. These guys are very obsessed with these tiny and unusual plants. Oh what a great show! I decided to stock up on plants at the sale. I dragged “he who really does know best” along and he picked out 2 cactus that he liked. I picked up a few that I felt rounded out my collection. When I questioned this I thought, “Well, it’s not like we are going anywhere for a winter vacation this year, AGAIN. No hauling myself up to stare in the mouth of a tropical volcano, no scrambling through the cactusy hills of Arizona. Instead we lavish love and care on the cactus and succulents. Or not. Cactus and succulents enjoy a nice dry winter with just the right dab of moisture from time to time. Most of my cactus actually lives in the garage over winter. Not that pleasant a spot but cactus are tough customers! Certain very special plants get to spend the winter inside the house in my cool south-facing window. There is quite a bit of light but big conifers filter it. I really have to discipline myself to stay away from the watering can. I make sure the cactus have super well-drained soil and I empty the trays so they don’t ever sit in water. I water them well once a month to 6 weeks. They should be good and dry before you water them again. If they are happy they will bloom for you in the summer. My best bloomer is my Lifesaver cactus *Heurnia zebrina*. Outside in the summer the *Echinopsis* has big pink blooms. This cactus produces all sorts of babies that are fun to grow to big fellows. I always have these cacti at our garden sales and am happy to get some to you. They originally came from a friend of Marie Cooke’s and are easy to grow and propagate. I was delighted to pick up a new cactus from (of all places) the Mission Thrift Store in Duncan. The cactus is not spiny and actually is more like a succulent. It’s a *Stapelia gigantea*. I’ve included a picture of it in bloom on the big island of Hawaii.



I wonder if any of you do the kind of thing I do when watching a TV show. Maybe the killer is chasing someone down the street in Phoenix Arizona and they stop and look back at the cops. What do I see in the background WOW it’s a Pencil Euphorbia! I demand the movie be paused while I get a better look at that plant. Then the action resumes and what do I remember about that show? Well you know there are millions of cop dramas but not many with a Pencil Euphorbia. The other excellent show for plants is Montelbono, the Italian murder



mystery filmed on Sicily. They have the most gob-smacking monster Prickly Pear cactus you have ever seen!

For my final cactus comment, at one of the local garden club sales I bought a plant called Queen of the Night. It turns out this cactus grows like stink and crawls all over the other plants. I saw what happens when this plant gets ideal conditions at Miloli’I Park on the big island of Hawaii. We think Ivy is bad! Well as our pandemic rages on go and cheer yourself up with a little cactus or succulent. Tell it all your troubles and show it some love! Happy indoor gardening this fall!



GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

7:00 pm, September 28, 2021

Via Zoom: 21 participants

President's Report: Bernie Juurlink

Call to order 7:04 p.m.

Acceptance of the Agenda: no changes to Agenda: Cliff Stainsby, seconded by Dave Byrnes

Acceptance of minutes from: Moved by Cliff seconded by Monika Morgan

Comments: no changes

Bernie Juurlink: He will be monitoring Provincial health guidelines to determine if we can meet in-person in the fall.

New Business:

Monica: She recommends that a plant sale be held at Sylvan United Church on 16 October 2021. She has plants and will accept donations of others to be brought to the sale. A list of plants of hand will be sent to members prior to the date.

A book sale will be held by Bernie Juurlink in the absence of Janice Rose and books will be sold by donation.

Cliff Stainsby notes that one of the speakers lives in Vancouver and his presentation would need to be by Zoom.

Gord Hamilton reminded members of the annual \$10.00 membership fee which can be e-transferred. mbgcmembership@gmail.com

Brag Table:

Members brought to Zoom a good selection of plants which prompted discussions about hydrangea, red peppers (Olympus, California Wonders, Twingo), tomatoes, California fuchsia, Canna Lilies, and dahlia.

Guest Speaker:

Barrie Agar gave an informative talk on heritage apples and provided recommendations for growing apples for cider, cooking, and for storage.

Adjournment 8:40: Cliff Stainsby moved to adjourn.