

Sechelt Garden Club Newsletter

www.secheltgardenclub.com

APRIL 2015

Co-President:	Christie Blackman
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Next Meeting: Monday, April 27 at 7:30 pm in the Seaside Centre

Barry Roberts will take us through the extensive family of hydrangeas, the notable species and those 'must-have' cultivars. Barry is an Advanced Master Gardener, Past President Master Gardeners Assoc. of BC, former governor of VanDusen Botanical Gardens, former UBC Friend of the Garden, former council member of Darts Hill Garden Park, current member of the South Surrey Garden Club and Hardy Plant Group and has been a member of the RHS, UK, for 30 years. His 1.5-acre garden is located in South Surrey where he is growing his collection of over 80 hydrangeas. Visit his website at www.heritagehydrangeas.com

Thank you! Karon Kosof for all the time you have been putting into our website: www.secheltgardenclub.com

APRIL Gardening 'TO DO' List

From *The Twelve Month Gardener*. Stevens, Hungerford, Fancourt-Smith, Mitchell and Buffam

(Note: Spring is late this year so adjust your planting accordingly.)

- Divide up primroses and polyanthus after flowering.
- Stake perennials that need it and mulch perennials if not already done.
- Rose pruning should be completed by now. Mulch with manure or well-rotted compost.
- Check your roses and other plants for aphids. It's going to be a bad year. Squish them or apply Safers Insecticidal Soap. Doing this now means relatively aphid free roses later
- Shear winter-flowering heathers after flowering.
- Continue planting trees and shrubs.
- Check vines growing on the house to make sure they are not invading window frames or working their way under gutters and shingles.
- Apply a mulch of compost, mushroom manure or steer manure to your garden beds.
- Plant or repair lawns
- Sow zucchini, cucumbers and tomatoes in a sunny window or cold frame.
- Plant new strawberry plants.
- April 1-15, plant early potatoes, green onion, bulb onion, kohlrabi, cabbage and leeks.
- April 16-30, sow beets, carrots, Swiss chard, broccoli, cauliflower, parsnip, kale and lettuce.
- Sow zucchini, cucumbers and tomatoes in a sunny window or cold frame.
- Plant new strawberry plants.

POTTING-UP .

A Potting-Up was held March 24 and 25 at the home of Ardath Hoole.

Many, many thanks to the following:

- Ali Thompson
- Tricia Smurthwaite
- Carol Corbett
- Bill and Susan Birch
- Edwin and Pianka Leung
- Mary-Anne Tiede
- Kay Ogawa



Kay Ogawa



Lorraine Gallant and Carol Corbett



Edwin and Pianka Leung

- Lorraine Gallant
- Penny Lyle
- Ayuko Inoue
- Ron and Carla Knight
- Cathy Belfry
- Ruth Rodgers
- Mary Rowles
- Ardath Hoole
- Christi Blackman

Thanks!- Lorraine Gallant for photos



Ardath Hoole



Susan and Bill Birch



Christi Blackman and Ali Thompson



Christi Blackman, Carol Corbett, Mary Ann Tiede, Lorraine Gallant, Tricia Smurthwaite, Ali Thompson, Penny Lyle

We still need more plants for the Plant Sale, so please, please continue to pot up your plants at home. Please let Charmaine or Christi know what you have.

Tips from the Garden Shed

Why Gardeners Live Longer



There is a lot of evidence, most anecdotal, some scientific, about how gardeners live up to 14 years longer than non-gardeners. National Geographic author Dan Buettner has studied this in depth by visiting what he called “blue zones” around the world - places where life expectancy is significantly longer. He studied the people and his findings are somewhat surprising. Certainly, there are many factors involved, but there are some key things that gardeners do that could contribute to better health and longer life.

1. Getting Enough Vitamin D

Typically, gardening isn't done at night, so while tending a garden, one is consistently in the sun. The body naturally produces Vitamin D from sun exposure, and since Vitamin D is protective against types of cancer and heart disease, it is logical that those with higher Vitamin D levels could live longer.

2. Play In the Dirt

Getting your hands dirty in the garden can increase your serotonin levels – contact with soil and a specific soil bacteria, *Mycobacterium vaccae*, triggers the release of serotonin in our brain according to research. Serotonin is a happy chemical, a natural anti-depressant and strengthens the immune system. Lack of serotonin in the brain causes depression. There's been a lot of interesting research emerging in recent years regarding how dirt-deficiency in childhood is implicated in contributing to quite a spectrum of illnesses including allergies, asthma and mental disorders.

3. Getting Grounded

Gardeners spend time touching the earth and the soil. According to the book *Earthing: The Most Important Health Discovery Ever*, this alone could have tremendous benefit. The theory is that many of us rarely or never touch the earth with bare skin, and certainly not for extended periods of time. This leads to a build up of positive electrons in the body from electrical energy, electromagnetic frequencies, WI-FI and more. The earth acts as a ground, just as it does for electrical outlets, reducing the extra positive charge. The author speculates that this build-up and lack of contact with the earth can lead to inflammation and disease. Gardeners, by touching the earth are “grounding” themselves and removing this extra charge.

4. Stress Relief

Many gardeners cite relaxation and stress relief as reasons that they garden. Stress negatively affects hormones and increases risk of disease so having a positive outlet for stress is tremendously beneficial for health. Balancing stress hormones has a positive effect on everything from blood pressure, to cortisol levels to inflammation.

5. Eat Vegetables

Logically, gardeners often grow vegetables, which means that logically, they also probably eat them. Consumption of more vegetables and less processed foods means more nutrients, antioxidants and less toxins. Win-win.

6. Exercise

Lifting plants and soil, raking, and digging all requires low-level activity and weight lifting. These activities provide the positive benefits of exercise in a relaxing and sustainable way. Another win-win.