

the GAZETTE

BIRCHWOOD GARDEN CLUB

www.birchwoodgardenclub.org

CHARTERED 1931

October Topic: Roses

Submitted by Tamara Hall

The Birchwood Garden Club will hold its October 2017 meeting on Wednesday, October 4, at **6:15** in the Whatcom Museum of History and Art. **NOTE: This is a different time from our usual meeting start time!**



Nita-Jo Rountree is coming back to give us a spectacular presentation about roses. Last year she published a new book, *Roses in the Pacific Northwest: 90 Best Varieties for Successful Rose Gardening*. She will be bringing some copies of her book for sale as well.

Come and hear a great speaker and learn rose-growing basics including how to incorporate

roses into your landscape and how to provide the necessary care to get the most from your roses. She will also define rose types (attributes and negatives) and how to choose the best varieties of rose per rose type. And she will provide strategies for troubleshooting rose issues.

After this presentation, you will have roses on your mind. Your past rose troubles will



fade away and you will fall in love with roses again. A rose(s) will call your name and it will be settling into your garden in the fall or spring.

Fall Leeks Winter Harvest

Fall leeks are generally defined as those types that will "hold" well through the winter in the ground, since they need about 90 days or more to mature. Some of the best leeks for winter harvest or over-wintering in the Pacific Northwest are 'American Flag' and "Giant Musselburgh."

While they may be hard to find, planting "sets" (like onions) will yield the best results in our wet climate. A perfect soil mixture for leeks is half sand, half compost. Since excessive moisture can be a problem during the winter months, sand allows for better drainage. It also makes for a nice loose soil that is conducive to good root crop growth and easy harvesting.

Dig a trench 6 inches deep and place your leek transplants fairly deeply so that only a small portion of the top green part is showing. This will result in a sturdier overall shank. As your leeks grow in height and width, continue to hill mulch up around the base. This serves to both blanch the shank and protect the plant from extreme winter temperatures.

By the time February or March rolls around, you may have a bad case of cabin fever, but you'll also have a wonderful crop of sweet, tender leeks to add to a hearty soup or stew.

Deer-Resistant Plants

As deer have become one of the major problems in many gardens, gardeners have tried to determine what plants their neighborhood deer prefer or don't like. So what makes some plants so attractive to deer?

According to Leonard Perry, Horticulture Professor, at the University of Vermont, deer seek plants rich in protein. Well-fertilized garden plants provide energy from carbohydrates, and minerals and salts. Since deer can only store protein nitrogen in small amounts, they need a steady supply.

As noted by Dr. Perry, deer also get about one third of their water from moisture in plants, hence the reason they prefer moist and tender plant parts. This is why they often go for new growth, usually on the outer parts of plants, such as new leaves and buds, or immature stems.

And, certain smells of plants also attract deer, just as humans have certain generally attractive smells, be it popcorn or apple pie. Other

times deer just may want to sample the newest additions to your landscape.

Lists of deer-resistant plants are a good way to start thinking about your landscape, and to help to varying degrees, just don't rely on



such plants as foolproof all the time and in all places. That is why there are almost no plants that are "deer-proof," but merely resistant.

In her book, *Deerproofing Your Yard and Garden*, Rhonda Massingham Hart provides a list of plants that are generally deer-resistant. There are some roses less palatable (generally with

more thorns), such as the rugosa hybrids, some shrub roses such as Harison's Yellow, and some Moss roses.

Some shrubs that are generally deer resistant include barberries, forsythia, junipers, lilacs, evergreen hollies, many spireas, and many viburnum.

Some herbaceous plants to consider as resistant include astilbe, bee balm, blanket flower, hellebore, peony, primrose, purple coneflower, Russian sage, sunflower, and yarrow. Most ornamental grasses are considered deer resistant.

Many bulbs generally are deer resistant, and include daffodils, fritillaries, Dutch iris, grape hyacinths, hyacinths, and alliums. But, remember, deer love to eat tulip flowers.

Despite these guidelines and as every gardener knows, hungry and curious deer will often sample every plant in the garden before deciding on a favorite!

Welcome New Members

We are pleased to introduce three new members who joined Birchwood Garden Club this past month.

Donna Halwe and Mike & Pam Malone

Snacks

This month's meeting snacks will be provided by Judy Boxx, Mary Foster and Carol McLean

Thank You

Plant of the Month: *Hydrangea quercifolia*

If you are looking for a plant that produces spectacular fall color, try Oakleaf hydrangea (*Hydrangea quercifolia*). These plants add variety, dimension, and style to any landscape. An added bonus is that they are almost entirely disease free.



There are varieties of Oakleaf hydrangea that will grow 15-feet and spread to fill large spaces. There are also dwarf varieties like 'PeeWee' and 'Sikes Dwarf' which will reach 3-4 feet in height and width.

Native to the United States, oakleaf hydrangea gets its name



from its large oak shaped leaves. The leaves provide a brilliant color of red, orange, burgundy or yellow in the fall.

Oak leaf hydrangeas have white flowers and, unlike the common shrub hydrangeas, the color cannot be changed by regulating the pH. The flower blossoms are large conical clusters. They have either single or multi-florets. The white flowers fade to a dull pink and finally to a tan while still holding shape on the plants. These can be left on the plant or harvested for indoor arrangements.

Flowers are produced on the previous year's growth. The plant should be cut half-way back as flowers fade. Prune to shape the plant and to remove any damaged or dead wood. Pruning is not required, but should be done to limit size or direct the shape of the plant.



Oakleaf hydrangea serves as a wonderful large focal plant or a small space filler with year-round interest. The plant will tolerate dry soil and semi-shady locations. However, oak leaf hydrangeas do not like wet feet.



BGC DUES ARE NOW DUE!

If your name, address, phone number, or e-mail address has changed, please supply the correct information below. Otherwise, simply return this form with your dues payment (\$10 single or \$15 family) to: Birchwood Garden Club, P.O. Box 362, Bellingham, WA 98227-0362 or bring the form and payment to the next meeting.

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Please ensure that we have your "current" E-mail address!



President Ann Holland welcomed 61 members and one guest to the meeting.

Ann introduced new officers for the 2017/2018 year: Ann Holland, President; Jerry McLean, Treasurer; and Rhonda Rinn, Secretary. The position of vice-president is vacant. This is a position that learns the details of the club and then becomes the next president. Ann will begin the search for this person to take her place in 2 years.

Minutes of the May 2017 were approved. Jerry McLean handed out the proposed budget for 2017-18.

Announcement: Our next meeting on October 4th will begin at 6:15 pm rather than 7:00 pm. This is to accommodate our speaker.

Old Business: Ann gave a big thank you to all committee chairpersons who made last year a huge success: We have more members, a wonderful plant sale which produced good revenue, more dollars returned to the community via donations, enjoyable speakers and beautiful garden tours. A special thank you to Nancy McMaster who has been watering the Library Gardens all summer; never an easy job especially in the very dry summer we had this year. There also were roofers who closed off the only water spigot during the day and no volunteer parking spot available.

New Business: Ann asked that we approve an expenditure for more club brochures. Mark Turner will donate his time and effort if we would like changes. The cost for printing and shipping 1000 brochures will be \$148.00 + shipping. We last ordered 1000 brochures in 2011. Ann feels this is a good price and worth it for the card-stock paper and bi-fold design. Expenditure was approved.

Our annual membership fee is due this month. It is \$10.00 per person and \$15.00 per family. Jerry was available to take money. If you have not paid, please do so at the next meeting.

Our speaker tonight was Gretchen Kulpa from the Whatcom Dahlia Society.

Thank you to Carol McBride and Sheri Lambert for our snacks this evening. As always, thank you to Sheri and Russ Lambert for their generous donation of coffee for our enjoyment.

The Birchwood Garden Club (BGC) is open to everyone in Whatcom and Skagit Counties who supports the objectives of the organization. BGC meets the first Wednesday of each month from September thru May. Annual membership is \$10 for an individual, \$15 for a family, due in September. Membership applications are available from the website: www.birchwoodgardenclub.org.

The Birchwood Garden Club Gazette is published monthly, September thru May, by the BGC. Articles, inquiries, letters to the editor, or other comments should be directed to the Editors, Ken and Stephanie Salzman, at the above address or via e-mail to: sasalzman@comcast.net

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President - Ann Holland
President Elect - Vacant
Treasurer - Jerry McLean
Secretary - Rhonda Rinn
Garden Tours – Sheri Lambert & Carol McBride
Historian – Violet Hayes
Hospitality – Carol McBride
Library/Museum Gardens – Ann Holland
Membership – Judy Lewis
Newsletter – Ken & Stephanie Salzman
Plant Sale – Cheryl Haak
Programs – Tamara Hall
Publicity – Susan Metcalfe
Silent Auction – Sandy Gurosko
Sunshine – Cheryl Haak
Webmaster – Tom Sparks