

JUNE 2021 EXTRA

# the GAZETTE

BIRCHWOOD GARDEN CLUB [www.birchwoodgardenclub.org](http://www.birchwoodgardenclub.org) CHARTERED 1931

## Virtual Plant Sale a Success

By Cheryl Haak

A few months ago Lisa Friend and I both wanted to try and get some plants moving from our yards into the hands of people who might be looking for them. Normally this would be done with our usual BGC plant sale. But with the pandemic restrictions still firmly in place, we came up with the idea of making the sale “virtual” and simply selling to friends, family and neighbors. This felt a bit crazy in the middle of a pandemic, but the result was positive and the Birchwood Garden Club now has more spending money.

This year’s pared back BGC plant sale, which took place from April 24 through May 8, turned out to be a success, especially in light of the fact that we had so few members who were able to participate in the selling process. In total we had 8 – Ann Holland, Celie Thomas, Ira Penn, Lisa Friend, Mary Young, Sandy Gurosko, Sheri Lambert and myself. But, we were still able to raise a decent amount of money despite the odds presented by this horrible pandemic. We netted \$623.00, and sellers reported that they were able to have nice visits with the purchasers who got lovely

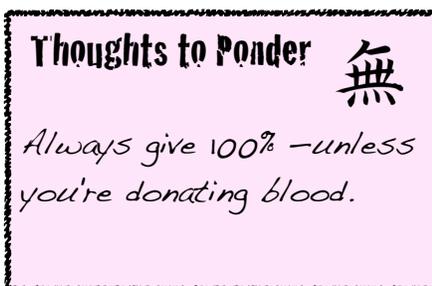
plants to take home to their gardens.

Actually, \$623.00 isn’t bad, all things considered. Going back 10 years, we have netted:

2010	\$1,703.00
2011	\$1,120.58
2012	\$1,410.44
2013	\$1,464.12
2014	\$1,421.63
2015	\$1,960.98
2016	\$2,624.08
2017	\$1,952.63
2018	\$1,633.97
2019	\$3,115.00
2020 (Canceled)	\$ 0.00
2021	\$ 623.00

So, even though we couldn’t have a big, open-to-the-public sale at the downtown library, and could not advertise the sale in our usual ways, we did accomplish something for the Club. Thank you so much for supporting the BGC by preparing plants for sale and thanks, too, to your friends, family and neighbors for patronizing our Club.

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## Library and Museum Garden Report!

By Ann Holland

We had an excellent turnout for our spring library clean up considering the very short notice about the event. Eleven members came to play on May 15, and Nature cooperated by providing beautiful weather.

The library staff alerted us to a safety concern regarding the gas meter shut-off valve being hidden by a large hydrangea. At their request, we removed the shrub.

There was much pruning and raking producing ten bags of trimmings, leaves and weeds. The Parks Department took the bags for composting. A big “thank you” to all who could come out for a great day of work and socializing without masks.

Things were not quite as rosy at the Museum garden. It was in very bad shape. Five members reviewed the problems and started to do some weeding, but it was completely overgrown with grass and the effort was somewhat futile so we decided to not continue. We removed most of the shrubs and I took them to my home for rehabilitation. The plan now is for a total xeriscape remake of the garden using drought tolerant plants.

Thanks so much to all who participated at both events.

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An **EXTRA**, you ask? For a garden club newsletter? Surely you jest, Ira! After all, publishing an extra is usually reserved for things like the start of a war or an assassination of a political figure.

Nope! I'm perfectly serious. You see, with meetings being held on Zoom due to Covid, and the resulting attendance being down in the single digits, I thought that it might be appropriate to publish a special edition of *the Gazette* just to let everyone know that **the BGC is not dead!** The Boss (Sheri) agreed, so here we are!

And do we ever have NEWS! If you started reading on the first page (as opposed to jumping right to this fascinating column as you usually do), you saw that we had a very successful Virtual Plant Sale from April 24 through May 8. You also saw that on May 12 there was a Museum Garden Work Party, and on May 15 we had a Library Garden Work Party. (With all the "partying" going on I'm about ready for another year off!)

But now I'm going to ask you to skip to page 3, column 3 to see what BGC's future looks like! Right now... do it! I'll wait. But don't forget to come back.

Waiting...

As you can see, BGC's future looks very promising! We are going to have a garden tour and a social gathering! Details will follow for both events so be sure to check your emails regularly so you don't miss out.

*(Aside: You should be checking your email at least daily anyway. Having email*

*and not checking it is like having a phone and not answering it. People wonder what's wrong with you!)*

But perhaps the best news of all is that, come September, we are going to be back in the old museum holding regular meetings! Of course anything could happen, but Broadway is planning to open its theaters in September at full capacity; we should surely be able to put 40 people in the Rotunda Room. I certainly hope so, because I could eat some cookies.

Now might be a good time to think about what YOU want to do to contribute to the Club. The small, but intrepid, group of folks who have been holding things together this past year could use a break. Some of our Officer and Committee Chair positions take a minimal amount of time and you don't have to have years of Club experience to do them. A few hours (or even less in some cases) a month is all it takes. I've said it before and I'll say it again... with a membership the size that we have, nobody should have to hold two jobs!

Switching topics, I recently read an article questioning whether growing vegetables in a home garden saves money, and if it was really worth the trouble. There were many different opinions of course, but what ran through my mind was the idea that if you are gardening to save money you are doing it for the wrong reason, and if you think it's "trouble," you've got the wrong attitude. Gardening should be fun—period! If you're not having fun, find another hobby.

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## the Gazette

The Birchwood Garden Club Gazette is published monthly, September thru May, by the Birchwood Garden Club, P.O. Box 362, Bellingham, WA 98227. Articles, inquiries, letters to the editor, or other comments should be directed to the Editor, Ira Penn, via e-mail at:

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The Birchwood Garden Club is open to everyone in Whatcom and Skagit Counties who supports the objectives of the organization. Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month from September thru May. Annual membership dues are \$10 for an individual, \$15 for a family, due in September. Membership applications are available at:

[www.birchwoodgardenclub.org](http://www.birchwoodgardenclub.org).

### 2020-2021 Officers and Standing Committee Chairpersons

President—Sheri Lambert  
President Elect—Vacant  
Treasurer—Nancy McMaster  
Secretary—Ann Holland

Garden Tours—Sheri Lambert & Carol McBride

Historian—Violet Hayes  
Hospitality—Carol McBride  
Library/Museum Gardens—Ann Holland  
Membership—Judy Lewis  
Newsletter—Ira Penn  
Plant Sale—Cheryl Haak  
Programs—Tamara Hall  
Publicity—Susan Metcalfe  
Silent Auction—Sandy Gurosko  
Sunshine—Cheryl Haak  
Webmaster—Tom Sparks

# Meeting Minutes

Submitted by Ann Holland



President Sheri Lambert welcomed all via our Zoom meeting on May 5. There were nine members in attendance.

The April 7 minutes published in *the Gazette* were approved.

**New Business:** After a close look at our bylaws, we learned that both the Secretary and Treasurer positions are limited to two-year terms. Our members present at the meeting proposed and voted to approve Lisa Friend as our new Secretary and Ann Holland as our new Treasurer. We are still looking for a Vice President.

Cheryl Haak and Lisa Friend reported that the Virtual Plant Sale has been a great success. As of the meeting time the proceeds are in excess of \$515.00.

**Library and Museum Garden Report:** The library staff have identified several safety issues that we will address when we do the spring clean up. We are waiting for the Parks Dept. to prune the Crape Myrtles down to the wall height. They are blocking the security camera view of the back door. Also we have been asked to remove one big hydrangea that is covering the gas meter. In addition, the Parks Dept. will remove the totally dead California Lilac. It would be best to do our clean up after the Parks Dept. does the tough jobs. Our Library work party is scheduled for Saturday, May 15 at 10:00 AM. Ann Holland has the bags and the hoses.

The museum garden needs attention. The plot is covered in grass. We will remove the weeds, add more soil and put down a mulch and/or ground cover. I want to extend a big thanks to Cheryl Haak and her husband Dick for removing the grass in the beds on both sides of the steps. They could not join us for the upcoming Museum work party that has been scheduled for Wednesday May 12 at 10:00 AM. We hope to see you there.

Zapote Gregory gave us a Cornwall Rose Garden report. The Parks Dept. has alerted her that they will make some changes this year, however, she is not sure of what they have in mind.

Our program tonight was Low Maintenance Kitchen Gardens, presented by Anza Muenchow. We learned many helpful tips.

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## Trash or Treasure?

by Sandy Gurosko

They say that one man's trash is another man's treasure. If that's true, then the BGC's Silent Auction table might be just the place to dispose of your trash or find your treasure. Yes, I'm

thinking ahead to September, of course, when we shall once again have such a table.

Do you have a garden tool or an unusual pot you no longer use, or a nice gardening book that you haven't looked at in 10 years? Why not donate it to the Club? Bring your stuff to the BGC meeting in September. You'll get

## BGC's Future Looks Bright!

by Sheri Lambert

Normality is right around the corner! We are going to have a garden tour the evening of Wednesday, July 7, and what a perfect time to do it! Gardeners have been keeping their sanity by digging in the soil and their gardens look lovely. We'll send out the garden locations and directions to members via email closer to the July 7 date.

We are also planning some kind of a brown bag social dinner in August so keep your eyes peeled for that information as well.

And.... the Whatcom Museum is planning to open in September so we will be able to begin our 2021-22 Season by meeting in person! We have enjoyed excellent speakers over Zoom, including Club members Judy Boxx and Tamara Hall giving presentations on container planting and Koi ponds respectively, but are all looking forward to getting together.

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rid of it, someone else will find joy in it, and the BGC will make some money. No plants in pots please, because the Museum rules preclude them. But seeds are okay, and if you have excess, freshly harvested fruit from your trees, that would be welcome.

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IF YOU LOSE A SOCK IN THE DRYER, IT COMES BACK AS A TUPPERWARE LID THAT DOESN'T FIT ANY OF YOUR CONTAINERS.

# Now You Can Grow Magnolia Grandiflora

By Ira Penn

One sniff of a flower is all it takes and you immediately want to grow a Magnolia Grandiflora. Unfortunately, the tree, while absolutely beautiful and producing those fabulous scented flowers, also happens to grow 60-80 ft tall. That often makes it a non-starter for folks.

But now there's a solution: Magnolia Grandiflora 'Southern Charm' (also known in the trade as 'Teddy Bear') is a variety that only gets 16-20 ft tall and 12 ft wide. It's got the same fabulous flowers and the same large shiny leaves; it's just smaller.



Magnolia Grandiflora 'Southern Charm'

Plant in full sun or part shade in an evenly moist soil with good drainage. Full sun promotes the densest growth. When planting any southern magnolia be sure to set the top of the rootball slightly above the soil line as it does not like deep planting. Water well during its first season if rainfall is scarce and in high heat; in later years it can withstand some drought. Our Zone 8b is perfect.

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# These Can Go In Your Compost Pile

By Ira Penn

Compost is wonderful stuff and everyone knows about using vegetable scraps to make it. Although you might not have thought about adding the following items to your compost pile, they actually work very well. In no particular order:

- Paper Napkins
- Uncoated (not shiny) paper
- Pet Fur
- Dried Spices
- Human Hair
- Popcorn (popped or un-popped)
- Dust and Dirt
- Freezer Burned Fruit/Vegetables

- Paper Towels
- Paper Towel and Toilet Paper Tubes
- Stale Bread
- Wood Ashes (not charcoal ash)
- Tea Bags
- Coffee Grounds and Filters
- Egg Shells
- Citrus Peels
- Sewing Waste (Natural fibers)
- Melon Rinds
- Onion Skins
- Caged Pet Droppings (Rabbit, Guinea Pig, Bird, etc.)
- Woolen Socks
- Leather
- Rice (cooked or uncooked)

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Thanks to Rhonda Rinn for Passing This One Along