

THE RHODOTELLER



www.nirsrhodos.ca

PO Box 3183, Courtenay BC V9N 5N4

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Newsletter

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APRIL-JUNE 2020

CANCELLED EVENTS

~~April 7 – Executive Meeting~~

~~April 14 – SPECIAL General Meeting~~

~~Lionel de Rothchild speaker~~

~~April 26 - Plant Sale & Truss Show~~

~~K'omox Band Hall~~

~~May 5 – Executive Meeting~~

~~May 10 – Mother's Day Garden Tour~~

~~May 12 – Annual General Meeting~~

~~Adrianne and Rob MacNabb hosting~~

~~June 13 – Year end Picnic –~~

~~Carolyn, Harris and Naomi Chester hosting~~

PRESIDENT'S NOTES, *Maureen Denny*

My calendar tells it all. Almost every day in February and the first half of March was marked with things to do - meeting with friends, lots of Rhodo Club activities, physio appointments (my hip is acting up).

Now these events are crossed off and all the exciting NIRS events are cancelled or postponed. Much work has already been done in preparation for these events. I would like to thank Noni Godfrey and Pauline Thompson for their efforts in organizing the April Plant Sale. Also thank Noni, Carolyn Chester and Summer Joy for their work done for The Mother's Day Garden Tour.

If you are wondering about the AGM, which was to be held in May, legally we have until the end of December to have our elections. Until that time the current executive members will hold their positions. The following positions are coming up for renewal, President, Vice President, and one Director position which can be also paired with Membership Chair. Lots of time to consider volunteering for these vacancies.

When I wrote last month's President's Notes, I never imagined this turn of events, indeed no one did. However, most of us have accepted this new but temporary way of living, with physical distancing and hand washing. I think of the fun we can have when we can all get together again!

For now, it is time to take pleasures in the small and simple joys of life. Most gardeners are good at this already. The happiest day I had recently was when I planted some seeds. I see the planting of seeds to be the ultimate bringer of hope. I planted lettuce, kale, snapdragons, marigolds, calendula, basil, garlic chives, and some REALLY OLD hollyhock seeds. The hollyhocks have sprouted! The health officials and government say we may be living in isolation for some time to come. During this unpredictable time, I sincerely hope everyone in our wonderful club stays well and happy.

Maureen



COMOX VALLEY RHODODENDRON GARDEN

Maureen Denny, Chair

On March 12 about 14 club members gathered at the CVRG for the monthly work party. This was an important get together as we started to implement the first task outlined in Steve Hootman's recommendation for the long-term management plan for the Gardens. The week before the work party a small group of regular workers met to identify all the rhodos that were diseased, ailing or poorly looking.

All these plants were removed on March 12, and the holes filled in with soil provided by the Courtenay Parks Dept. Two rhodos were moved into better locations with the new space created.

A few larger rhodos that were too big for their location were chopped to the ground.

In late February, following our request, the lower limbs of the large Liriodendron tree in the middle of the gardens were thinned out to let in more light to the Rhodos underneath. Also, we put in a request to the Parks Department to widen the gravel path that runs east/west from the garden entrance sign up to the airport walkway. At present the Rhodos have grown out over the existing pathway. This work will be after the sprinkler systems are serviced. All these tasks are part of the management plan instigated after Steve's visit last November.

Of course, there was also the regular maintenance to do. Weeding, trimming out dead branches and making the pathways look spiffy. Noni and Garth spent some time on Rhodo I.D. as tags are lost and removed over time.

Then we all gathered at A&W for coffee and treats (That seems like a luxury now!)

The next work party is cancelled due to the Covid 19 outbreak. However, I encourage any regular attendees to drop by the gardens with a few garden tools to do a little clean up on your own.

Finally, a few days after the work party I received the nicest phone call from Tyler Johns, our liaison with Courtenay Parks. He expressed his praise and thanks for the work we had just accomplished, saying the gardens looked fabulous.

Maureen



Diana & John



LINDA GILKESON OFFERS ACCESS TO HER YEAR-ROUND HARVEST GARDENING COURSE

I am getting emails from first-time gardeners wanting to grow food in this year of the pandemic, yet my gardening classes, workshops and talks in the region have been cancelled or postponed indefinitely. SO, I am making my Year Round Harvest gardening course slides available to everyone. These are pdf files of the PowerPoint slides that I show in my two 10-month gardening courses and are normally only accessible by the people registered in the classes. The two courses are sponsored by the Horticulture Centre of the Pacific [<https://hcp.ca/>] and the Salt Spring Garden Club [<https://ssigardenclub.ca/>] and I appreciate their support for releasing these presentation to anyone who wants to see them.

You will need to use the class password to view these files, which will be available until December. Here's how:

Go to: <http://www.lindagilkeson.ca/coursenotes.html>

Use this password: honeycrisp

Click on SUBMIT (hitting ENTER doesn't work)

Around the middle of each month from January to October I put up a new module on a different topic appropriate to the season. So far, there are 3 files:

- 1.Garden Plans and Seed Starting
- 2.Soil, Nutrients and Amendments
- 3.Spring Garden

If you have questions about the material in these presentation, there is much more detail in my book *Backyard Bounty*. If you have access to a copy, please try to find your answers there first: I am becoming overwhelmed by emails. My priority is to answer questions for people in this year's gardening classes and from Master Gardeners in BC and I will try to answer others as I have time.

Other notes for this week:

I was shocked, I tell you, shocked! at how many big fat cutworms I shook from the sod I was trimming from edges of my garden beds today. [see: http://www.lindagilkeson.ca/leaf_chewers.html#25] I think I will just let the peas I started indoors grow for a little longer before sending them out to face such monsters (plus, it is still pretty cool at night to be planting vegetables, anyway)

And while I am on peas: If you saw tiny notches in the edges of leaves on peas or broadbeans last year, that is pea leaf weevil, which is becoming more widespread, for damage, see: http://www.lindagilkeson.ca/root_feeders.html#74 While the tiny adult weevils chew notches in the leaves, it is the weevil larvae, which feed on the nitrogen nodules in the roots that cause the worst damage because infested plants can't make their own nitrogen. These weevils have one generation a year and only lay their eggs in the spring. There is no [legal or safe] way to kill them in the soil, but using two strategies you can avoid damage. First, start early plantings of peas (March-mid-May) in vermiculite indoors to avoid the main egg-laying period of pea leaf weevils. Peas planted after mid-May, after the egg laying period is over, usually escape damage. My second strategy is to enrich the soil for early peas with nitrogen sources, such as fish compost, blood meal, alfalfa meal, as for a heavy feeding crop. The pea plants use this nitrogen and grow beautifully. Peas planted after mid-May (I sow peas until the end of June) can make their own nitrogen and don't need a nitrogen boost from fertilizers.

A note on these emails: I don't repeat everything that might be relevant for a particular month every year. To see other information that might be useful check my archive of past messages: http://www.lindagilkeson.ca/gardening_tips.html

With the sudden onset of the virus and the subsequent cancellations of public events, I wondered, how can we keep connected, so I asked members to send in pictures of what brings some joy and a smile during this time. With each opening of your emails, you brought me joy, thanks for sharing. *Nadine*

WHAT MAKES ME SMILE



*When the world wearies
And society fails to satisfy,
There is always the garden*

Minnie Aumonier



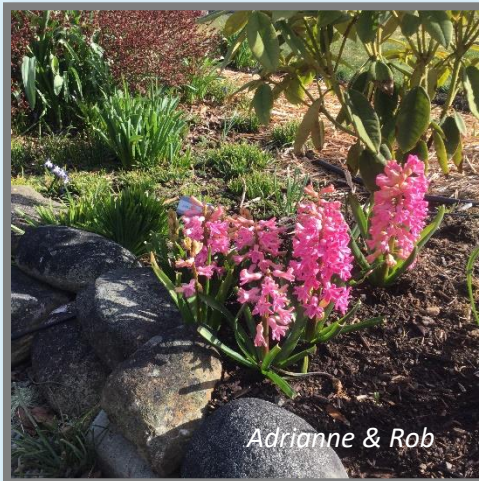
Garth & Sue



Lois & Jim



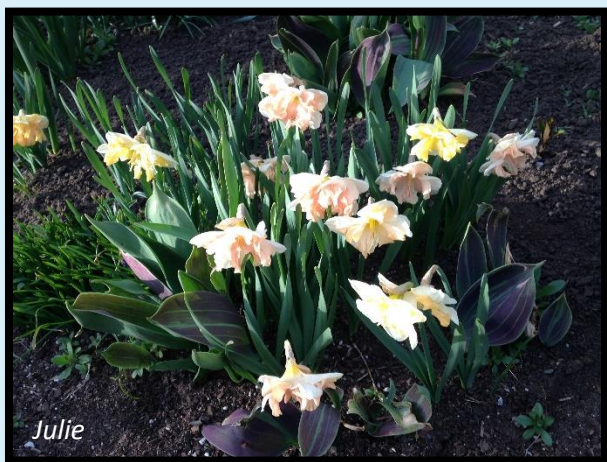
Paul & Lynn



Adrianne & Rob



Judy



*I like gardening
It's a place where
I find myself when
I need to lose myself*
Alice Segold





Paul & Lynn



Summer & Jim



Helena



Paul & Lynn



Lois & Jim



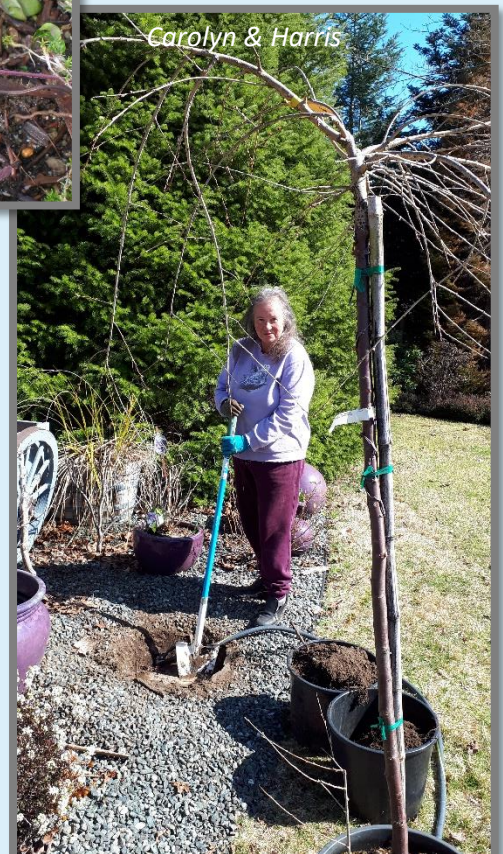
Margaret & Ray

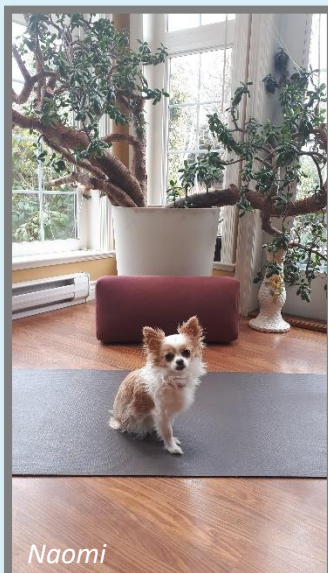


Diana & John

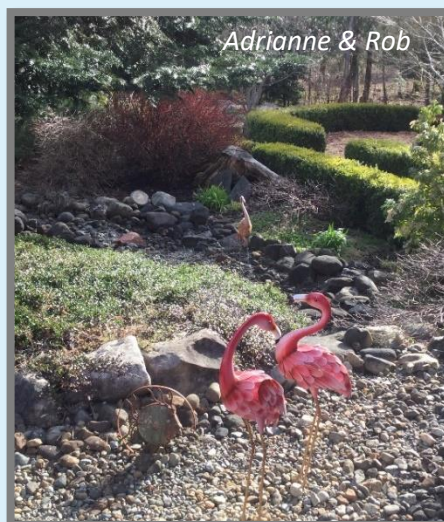
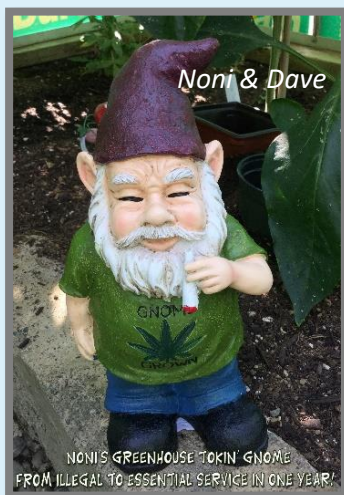
*If you've never experienced
the joy of accomplishing more
than you can imagine,
plant a garden*

Robert Brault





Furry friends and garden delights





Val & Aubrey

Comfy Homes



Cathy & Brian



Louise & Roger



Dorothy & Don



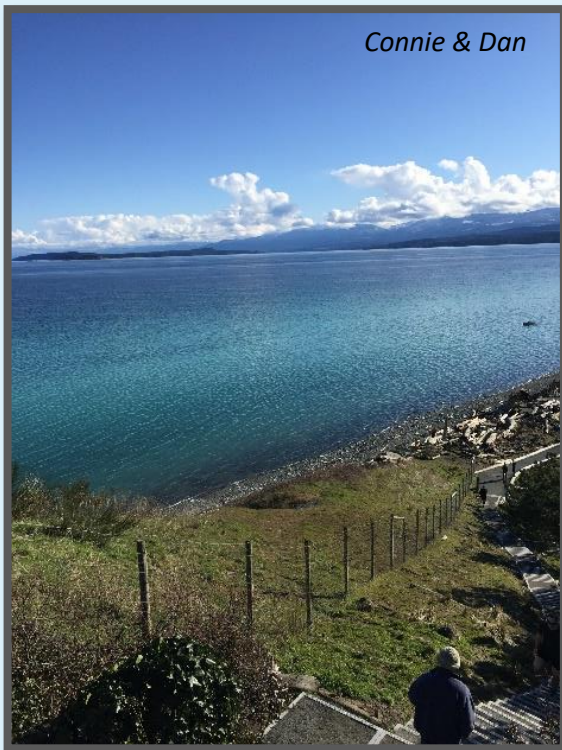
Sheryl



Julie



Barb & Brian



Connie & Dan



Cathy



Brian & Barb

*Together we can face challenges
as deep as the Oceans
and as high as the sky*

By Sonia Gandhi



Jake & Claudia

I was talking to Jake the other day, during the conversation I was telling Jake about the newsletter and the pictures and poems etc. He said that it all sounded good, but he wanted to laugh and suggested I put something funny in. Rose had sent a joke in, I found a couple, so enough of the warm and fuzzy:

JOKES FOR JAKE

What's happening?
Why are all the humans
wearing muzzles?



When someone asks where
you see yourself in 5
years...



Buddy, I'm just trying
to make it to APRIL
30th!! 😞

After Isolation

My joints
are stiff

You're
rolling them
too tight

Rose



Where's your
husband?

In the garden

I didn't see him

You need to
dig a little



NEXT MONTH'S NEWSLETTER WILL HAVE OUR COMMITTEE REPORTS FOR THE YEAR AS WE WOULD HAVE IF WE HAD AN AGM MEETING, AND I'LL GET SOME ARTICLES TOGETHER. GET BACK IN THE GROOVE. SO, FOR NOW, HOPING YOU ALL STAY HEALTHY, AND ENJOY YOUR HOMES AND GARDENS



Pauline & Bob