

From the President . . .

Lots of people consider the new growth of bulbs peaking through the soil the first sign of spring. Others mark spring from the time change or note, sometimes with a sigh, that the grass is growing again. For me it's the blooming Indian Plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*). The leaves follow the blossoms so rapidly, and suddenly the sides of the road aren't bare anymore – everything looks green and full again. Winter is definitely over.

Another unmistakable sign of spring is the rush to the local garden centre for plants and tools. Last weekend's spring event at Gardenworks was held in cold wet weather but many people came out to get their plant fix. A few BRAGS stalwarts were out to promote the club and our upcoming events, and although the crowds weren't as full as we might have liked there were lots of interesting people to talk to and we've had some responses already. It was easy to spot the plant-addicted among the browsers by their armloads of assorted pots and the crazed gleam in their eye, and we made sure they got the plant sale flyer. People continue to be wild about plant sales and ours is one of the first this year. Get 'em while they're hungry! Hopefully the rain will hold off for a few hours.

Despite the desire to get out in their own gardens, BRAGS members have been busy with club activities. Crews have been working at Fairhaven and New Vista, putting in benches and plantings (check the website for pictures). Yet more people have been out working on the plant sale digs and prep work, the Rhodo Festival team is busily planning and phoning and printing, (promo flyers were ready for last weekend) and of course the normal club activities keep ticking along. It really amazes me how many active members we have. Some clubs have about 5 people who do all the work, but we have a huge group we can draw on and it shows in the number of projects we take on. So, some time in the next few weeks, when you're taking a break from all the activity, take a moment to give yourselves a satisfied pat on the back. And buy yourself one more plant as a reward. You deserve it.

Susan Brandl

To the right – Indian Plum (*Oemleria cerasiformis*)



Every Plant Counts~!

For anyone able to donate plants for this year's sale; know that each and every plant counts.

Without your contributions our sale would not be possible. So, as the weather allows us to venture out into our yards and flower beds, take a look for any plants in your garden that would benefit by dividing and share them with us at the Plant Sale!

Plant Drop-off is on Sunday, April 22nd
between 7:30 and 8:40 am

Help get the word out!

Flyers and posters will be available at the April meeting... Give them to your friends, drop them in letter boxes of homes near you, post them at your local grocery store, School or Library~~

Make sure to tell everyone you know!

Plant Sale Volunteers

A reminder for all volunteers to stay after April's meeting to pick up their copies of the site plan and talk about our sale day.

**Let the sun be shining~~
Rain or Shine~~Come and Enjoy !**



My Favorite Plant, today

On these dull, rainy days (and today is definitely one!) I find myself going to check out the brighter looking plants. Right now my favorite plant is definitely *Osmanthus heterophyllus* 'Goshiki'. It sits outside my kitchen window in the shadow of a larger rhododendron and always draws my eye to the garden. This is an evergreen shrub whose sharply pointed leaves might lead you to think that it is English holly. But holly shrubs belong to the genus *Ilex* and have leaves that alternate along the stem, while *Osmanthus* leaves look similar but are opposite. Goshiki means 'five colours' in Japanese and the foliage of this cultivar does indeed have five different colours. The new growth is pink with some orange in it, while the mature leaf has cream and yellow overlaid on green. It is stunning.

Goshiki is a tough shrub – it grows in full sun to full shade but I suspect that, as with most plants, in too much shade it might not maintain its nice compact habit. I would also make sure that it was well watered in the summer if sited in full sun, as a lot of variegated plants can burn and look a little crispy by the end of the season. Part shade in a well-drained location seems to suit mine nicely. I find this cultivar of *Osmanthus* to be a slow grower, but I only fertilize it with compost once a year. It will reach between 4 and 6 feet in height in 10 years. It can be pruned, but I would be cautious so as not to ruin its lovely, naturally rounded shape. One thing to note is that mine did not sustain any damage from the snow we had last winter – something we need to consider when selecting broadleaf evergreens. Goshiki (I love the name too) is hardy down to zone 6, so will grow well in all our gardens. It is also disease and pest free.

The flowers on *Osmanthus heterophyllus* are typically insignificant, but this cultivar is not known for its flowering ability and mine has conformed. Apparently as the shrub matures – think 10 plus years – it may begin to bloom sporadically in the autumn, and if I am ever so lucky I will know it as it is apparently very fragrant. I'm looking forward to this and will consider it a bonus to a plant that definitely earns its spot in my garden.

Diane Allison



Osmanthus heterophyllus 'Goshiki'

Fairhaven Planting

The benches are in and look gorgeous! Many thanks to Veiko Tutti and Eric Fiddis for helping Peter Barnsdale with this and of course to the photographer Cheryl Fiddis for recording the event. It is now time to turn our attention to enhancing the gardens. The plants have been ordered and we are looking for volunteers to help us with the installation of these plants on Sunday April 29 at 10:00am. If you can help, please let Peter know at the next meeting, or phone 604-421-8987. Many hands make for light work, so please join in – and besides, we have lots of fun! Diane



Spring is Just Around the Corner in this 2004 photo taken by David Forsyth of Coni and Brian O'Neill's garden. This shot and hundreds more can be found on our BRAGS website, created and maintained by David. It is a wonderful resource, not only for BRAGS members but for anyone who knows where to look. Visit it often and tell your friends - information and inspiration abound at www.brag.ca

"A garden can be many lovely things. It can enhance the house it surrounds, and the lives of the people who live in the house. It can visually stimulate the community. It can add a new dimension of beauty to the total landscape. It can also be a place where the magic and mystery of growth refresh and replenish the spirit, and that refreshing and replenishing can make of the gardener a person who sees the world – and comes to know it well – as an exciting place where, by his own hand, miracles can and do happen."

From Chatelaine's [1970] Gardening Book, written by Lois Wilson

BRAGS' Year at a Glance

April 4, 2007
Dave Hutch

Native plants for the Home Garden

April 22, 2007

BRAGS Plant Sale

May 2, 2007

Ayuko Inoue – *Gardens by Design*

May 6, 2007

Rhododendron Festival

June 6, 2007

Cliff Thorbes – *Art in the Garden*

July, 2007

Garden Tour

August, 2007

Picnic

Meetings: 7:00 pm

Burnaby Village Museum
(Discovery Room)
6501 Deer Lake Avenue

Our April Speaker Dave Hutch

Dave has worked for a variety of federal, provincial and municipal agencies responsible for land management, environmental conservation and enhancement, parks planning and design.

He has spent the past thirteen years as a landscape architect in municipal parks and environment departments on Vancouver's North Shore. Dave's commitment to sustainable design practices has led him to employers who have a strong environmental ethic. Projects include: resource efficient landscapes, development of green infrastructure, parks and greenway development, urban natural area rehabilitation and management.



Trillium ovatum (BC native plant)

Use Them or Lose Them – Botanical Plant Names That Is

This is the time of year when most gardeners have the most trouble remembering plant names. After all, it's been months since we encountered our horticultural friends on a daily basis. Even if we can easily recall their common names, we often have to stop and think of their Latin ones. Besides impressing our friends with our mastery of a dead language, there are many good reasons for knowing, if not always using, correct names.

The main reason is that botanical names accurately describe specific plants. Every plant has a botanical name but only common plants have common names. When you are looking for a certain plant, you have to know precisely what its name is to make sure you get what you want. Conversely, when buying an unfamiliar new plant, you have to know the correct name to learn where and how to plant it.

If you don't already know, plants' botanical names are generally made up of two words; the first being the genus (similar to our surnames) and the second, the species (akin to our first names). You will find more information on the system of naming plants in future newsletters.

One trick I use to recall my plant friends' names, especially at this time of year, is to write them in a list and read it over every day. Then when I walk around the garden, seeing who is back from their winter vacation, I can say, "Ah ha, I know who you are!"

Margot Moser

BRAGS 2007 EXECUTIVE

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Susan Brandl
522-6190

Vice-President

Faye Kilpatrick
434-5921

Treasurer

Heather MacKay
438-1342

Secretary

Beverlee Birce
525-0201

Past President

Cheryl Fiddis
435-2801

STANDING COMMITTEES

Fund Raising

Peter Barnsdale
421-8987

& Cheryl Fiddis
435-2801

Membership

David Forsyth
298-6350

Nominations

Cheryl Fiddis
435-2801

Marti Tutti
436-1942

& Val Wuensche
298-2836

Publicity

Jackie Walker
420-0275

Rhododendron Festival

Judy Wellington
434-8287

OTHER COMMITTEES

Garden Contest

Judy Wellington
434-8287

Garden Tour

Wendy Snyder
937-0556

& Faye Kilpatrick
434-5921

Newsletter

Margot Moser
250-468-9167

Anne & David Forsyth
298-6350

Plant Sale

Susan McDougall
432-9641

Raffle & Greeting

Val Wuensche
298-2836

Judy Wellington
434-8287

Refreshments

Wendy Snyder
937-0556

Speakers

Peter Barnsdale
421-8987

Website

David Forsyth
298-6350

