



SEPTEMBER 1995

# The Yak

A CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

FRASER SOUTH RHODODENDRON SOCIETY  
NEWSLETTER EDITOR  
16877 - 30A Avenue  
South Surrey, British Columbia  
V4B 5E7, Canada  
Telephone: 604 • 535-0763

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20, 1995 MEETING**

**8:00 P.M.**

St. Andrews Anglican Hall  
20955 Old Yale Road, Langley

**GUEST SPEAKER: HAROLD E. GREER**

Most people starting out with rhododendrons buy Greer's Guidebook to Available Rhododendrons as their first rhodo book. Harold Greer owns a nursery in Eugene, Oregon and is a Past President of the ARS. He is also an expert plant photographer and we are very pleased to have him as our first speaker for the 1995/96 season.

## **Library**

Please remember to return all books borrowed over the summer at the September meeting.

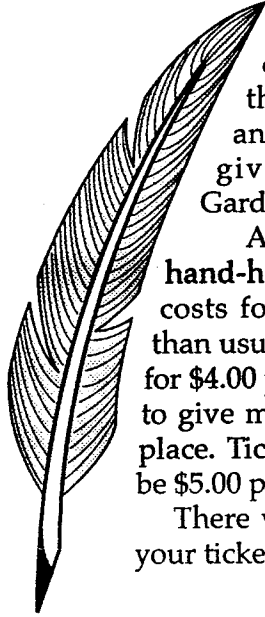
## **Seeds Available**

We still have some seeds available from Peter Wharton's expedition to China. Anyone interested in purchasing these seeds (at very reasonable prices) should contact Norma Senn at 856-0075.

## **Congratulations to Mike Trembath**

Mike was recently awarded United Way's W.J. VanDusen Community Service Award for her significant contributions to Pacific Riding for the Disabled. PRDA provides therapeutic riding lessons to mentally and physically disabled children and adults. Mike has been active in PRDA for 20 years, in early years making available her barn and ring to teachers and therapists and lending her horse, Sophie. She is a Past President and is currently a member of the Advisory Board.

## October Meeting Preview



Our October meeting will be a little different as we have Des Kennedy, the well-known author, broadcaster and television personality coming to give us one of his 'Crazy about Gardening' lectures.

As we will be bringing Des from his hand-hewn house on Denman Island our costs for this special event will be higher than usual. We will be selling advance tickets for \$4.00 per person at the September meeting to give members an opportunity to reserve a place. Tickets at the door on October 18 will be \$5.00 per person.

There will be a special door prize so save your ticket!

---

### Second Annual Beer Bottle Truss Show —The Results!

Last May, the Fraser South Second Annual Beer Bottle Truss Show was another fun event with eleven participants in ten categories. Judging was by the traditional method—with everyone getting to vote for their favourite. The winners were:

- |                          |   |                                       |  |
|--------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Best Red:</b>         | Arnim Roeske with 'Britannia'. A close runner-up was the Gregsons with 'Trilby'.  | <b>Best Multicolour:</b>              | Arnim Roeske (again!) with 'Edwin O. Weber'.   |
| <b>Best White:</b>       | Lillian Emerson with 'Mrs. A.T. de la Mare' and second prize went to Mike Trembath with 'Queen Anne's'.                     | <b>Most Lurid:</b>                    | The Neyedlis won this class easily with Lem's Monarch.   |
| <b>Best Blue/Purple:</b> | Arnim Roeske again with 'Olin O. Dobbs'. The runner-up was Vicki and Michael Neyedli with 'Blue Boy'.                       | <b>Most Flaccid:</b>                  | Robert Bishop with 'Rainbow' was the stand-alone winner.                                       |
| <b>Best Pink:</b>        | This was a close race with Vern Finley just beating out Arnim Roeske with a cross of 'Colleen Barber' and 'Coronation Day'. | <b>Best Last Year's Truss:</b>        | Mike Trembath won the trophy for the second year in a row with an elegant truss of 'Bowbells'. |
| <b>Best Yellow:</b>      | Vicki and Michael Neyedli won with 'Simmon's Choice'.   | <b>Most Elegantly Weevil Notched:</b> | A new category for 1995. A hard fought battle with the Gregsons just beating out Vern Finley.  |

## June Picnic

Those who partook in the June picnic will agree it was a great success—good company, scrumptious food and a beautiful setting.

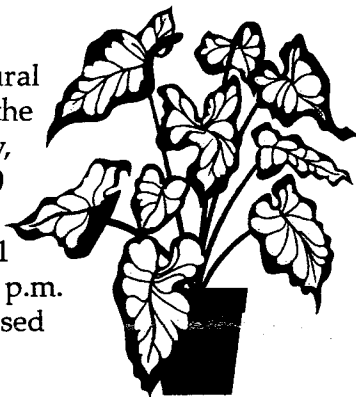
We made the event even more memorable by dedicating a beautiful park bench in memory of Harold Johnson in Williams Park.

## Planting at Williams Park

Now that we have Harold Johnson's bench placed we need to plant some rhodos around it. We've got the rhodos—all we need are the gardeners to show up! We have tentatively booked Saturday, October 21 at 10:00 a.m. This date and time will be confirmed at the September meeting and in *The Yak's* October issue. Come join in—it is a great way to get to know fellow chapter members.

## Can-West Show Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre

This annual horticultural trade show is open to the public on Wednesday, September 20 from 1:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and Thursday, September 21 from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Tickets may be purchased at the door.



## Tree Tour of Riverview Lands Western Canada's First Botanical Garden

The Riverview Horticultural Centre Society is having its next guided walk of the Riverview Lands on September 24 at 10:00 a.m. For further information call 290-9910.

## Fertilizing Evergreen and Deciduous Trees and Shrubs

by Dave Adams, Oregon State Nursery

One of the primary differences between conifers and deciduous plants is that conifers appear to take in nutrients all year long, whereas deciduous types seem to shut down in the fall. Generally speaking, there are two types of plant growth. One type of plant begins growing and grows steadily all summer, provided soils don't dry out or the weather doesn't get too hot. The second type grows and stops, grows and stops, making two or three flushes of growth each season.

For crops that grow steadily all summer, primarily deciduous trees and shrubs, it is imperative that they don't dry out or run out of fertilizer or get too hot for an extended period. These factors stop growth; some species are difficult to restart. Timely irrigation and fertilization are necessary for maximum growth. Fertilization during winter months has little or no effect on subsequent spring growth. Apply the first fertilization in the spring, approximately 30 days prior to bud break.

Conifers and broadleaf evergreens appear to take up nutrients all year, studies show the highest leaf nutrient levels occur from November to April. Nutrients appear to be stored in the leaves. This characteristic can be used to read the nutrient health of your plants.

Pine and rhododendrons, for instance, grow in flushes. They grow and stop, grow and stop, several times a year, dependent upon species, irrigation, temperature, nutrition, time of year, etc. Most pine and rhododendrons hold leaves into the third or fourth flush when counting back from the tips. Plants with leaves only in two flushes are sick or very hungry. In short, if the plant's nutritional levels are very low, there is nothing to store in the old leaves and they fall off. If the plants have been well fertilized for several years, you will find leaves or needles into the third or fourth flush.

Fertilizers applied in November, after temperatures are low and days short will not promote winter growth, but the plants will have several months to take in the nutrients and store them until spring. Applying the same quantity of fertilizer in March as opposed to November will not give the plant as much time to take it in,

thus reducing the total quantity and the amount of spring growth. Fertilizers applied at or near bud break seem to have little effect on current growth but do influence the second flush.

Learn to read your plants. Plants are in poor shape when leaves exist only on the first or second flushes; leaves are small or short, stem length of each flush is short. Some elements move very slowly in the soil and can be applied during the winter months without promoting excessive growth. Heavy rains tend to move even relatively insoluble elements such as calcium, magnesium and phosphorus into the soil. Nitrogen is probably the most important element in causing excessive vegetative growth. Since it also tends to wash away easily, nitrogen should be applied as a slow-release material or in several small applications.

(a reprint from the Mount Arrowsmith April 1995 newsletter.)

## Fraser South Rhododendron Society

### Executive and Committees

President:	Norma Senn
Past President:	Don Martyn
Vice President:	David Sellars
Treasurer:	John Warner
Secretary:	Janet Warner
Directors:	John Anderson Mike Bale Arnim Roeske
Membership:	Arnim Roeske
Programs:	Les Clay and David Sellars
Library:	Pat Dahl
Newsletter:	Wendy and David Sellars
Publicity:	Hedy Dyck
Hospitality:	Phil Anderson
Ways and Means:	Diane Scott

# rootstalk

by Indumentum

Apparently, there is a lot of interest among experienced gardeners in 'monochromatic' borders. Vita Sackville-West's 'white' garden is one of the best known but 'red', 'blue' and even 'yellow' gardens are becoming popular. Nobody, however, talks about 'green' gardens but that's what we have, at least in the rhododendron areas. Rhododendron lovers learn to like 'green' gardens because that's what we enjoy for about nine months of the year.

Green garden enthusiasts quickly learn to appreciate rhododendron foliage. Not just the exciting new growth lancing skywards in June but the basic settled-in foliage of August and September. Naturally, the species are pre-eminent at this time of year with *R. orbiculare*, *bureavii*, *pachysanthum* and *recurvodes* particularly outstanding. But many of the hybrids also have beautiful leaves. In our garden, the foliage of *R. yakushmanum* x *smirnowii* is superior to either of the species—a somewhat heretical thought. In fact many of the *yakushmanum* hybrids have outstanding foliage despite the fact that they tend to be denigrated in the popular press. We particularly like 'Queen Alice', 'Marion Street', 'Mardi Gras' and the recent hybrid 'Silver Skies' by Frank Fujioka of Whidbey Island. Some of the old standbys also have great foliage such as 'Unique', 'Scintillation', and 'Virginia Richards'.

Spring is still a fall and winter away so enjoy your foliage while you can before the colours distract the eye.