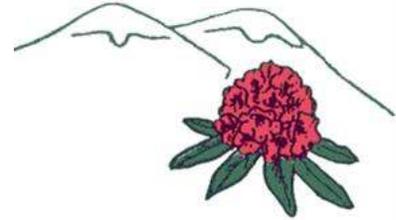


# THE RHODOVINE



THE MOUNT ARROWSMITH

MARS

RHODODENDRON SOCIETY

P. O. Box 342

Qualicum Beach. BC

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Dollar Table - Cassy LaCouvee

Newsletter Editor - Linda Derkach

Garden Tour – Kathy Loyer

Truss Show – Ray Walker

Greeter – Guy Loyer

Historian - Cassy Lacouvee

Library – Donna deBoer

Meeting Coordinator- Tony Ansdell

Membership – Tony Ansdell

Milner Gardens - John England

Program Chair - Ann DeBrincat

PR - Marilyn Dawson

Refreshments - Anne Gutsche

Sunshine – Maria Bieberstein

## THIS MONTH:

### *Learning with the Best*

Join us for a conversation  
with four of the most  
knowledgeable in the  
“rhododendron world” ...

**John Deniseger**

**Chris Southwick**

**Art Lightburn**

from the Nanaimo

Rhododendron Society

and our own

**Don Bridgen**

Our experts will share their  
collective wisdom, answer  
questions and help to get  
our gardening season off  
to a good start.

Bring along a friend or  
neighbour.



*Rhododendron 'Cilpinense'*  
blooms early to mid-March.

## MARS Meetings

Qualicum Beach

Civic Centre

2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the  
month 7:30 pm

### Next Meeting

Wednesday,

January 8



Hummingbirds love *Monarda didyma* 'Gardenview Scarlett' – and most other monardas as well. While it spreads more rampantly than other bee balms, it earns a place in the garden as provider of nectar for these tiny, ferocious treasures. More on wildlife-friendly plants next month with Ciscoe!!

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Mount Arrowsmith Rhododendron Society  
Presents

*Ciscoe Morris*



*Creating a Wildlife-Friendly Garden*

Date: Wednesday, February 12, 2014

Time: 7:30 pm

Place: Qualicum Beach Civic Centre

Bonus: **Cultivate Garden Centre** and **Arrowsmith Greenhouses**  
will have wildlife-friendly plants for sale!

**Everyone is welcome!**

**Non-members: \$5**

Ciscoe Morris is a well-known Pacific North-West gardening expert and television personality in Seattle. His book, Ask Ciscoe, was among the top selling garden books nationwide.

Ciscoe has co-authored books on roses and perennials, and writes a weekly garden column in the Seattle Times. Ciscoe leads garden tours all over the world, and is a much sought-after speaker.



## ***Now That Was A Party!!!***

*Marilyn Dawson*

At the beginning of the week the weather looked iffy and the committee feared that many would not attend the annual MARS Christmas party on Dec. 7, but by Saturday, it was clear, sunny and cold and more than 40 members and guests turned out for holiday greetings at the Rotary Hall event. It was a rousing success. Those who missed it for whatever reason missed a fine start to the holiday season.

The food kept coming, enticing appetizers, a variety of vegetables, salads, meats and desserts. How do you classify cabbage rolls? Meat or veg?

Whatever... they were wonderful. As they have in the past, Terry and Verna Richmond brought the turkey from Port Alberni complete with dressing and gravy; Barbara Kulla supplemented with a turkey breast and John and Arlene England brought the ham. Linda Derkach peeled enough potatoes to fill a huge casserole of the sinfully rich mash.

Throughout dinner Dave Klinger provided a piano background, taking time finally to get his own dinner. Later, President Linda as host welcomed Nanaimo president and former MARS member Art Lightburn and wife, Susan, as part of her opening remarks. Maria Bieberstein and Barbara Kulla led the group through the raffle table generously loaded with a variety of plants, bird houses and much more. Then followed the gift exchange, where pretty bows and fancy wrapping caught the eyes of many and were snatched up to start the exchange all over again.

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The evening ended with a rousing rendition of The 12 Days of Christmas led by Dave Klinger, only the words were not **quite** the classic version.

Big thanks are in order. The committee thanks all those who brought the delicious food, those who turned up early Saturday afternoon to set-up and all those who were able to stay and help with the clean-up. It was much appreciated. Special thanks to Maria Bieberstein, Barbara Kulla and Marilyn Dawson for creating the table settings and the room décor and for coordinating the event.

**And speaking of a great party.....here's the recipe for one of the many delicious dishes enjoyed by all...**

### **Warm Shaved Brussels Sprouts Salad With Apples and Cranberries**

*Joanne Hamilton brought this tasty and nutritious dish to our Christmas party. She gleaned it from the program "Gardening with Ciscoe."*

"The flavor of uncooked Brussels sprouts is sweet and fresh, and that's why I love this recipe. The maple syrup and wine vinegar dressing, bursting with diced apples, walnuts and bacon (if you like), is prepared sizzling hot and poured over thinly shaved raw sprouts to soften and season them. The results are a simple, vivid and delicious dish, perfect for your holidays or pretty much any day!"

#### **Ingredients:**

1 tablespoon mustard seeds  
1/4 cup red wine vinegar  
3 strips bacon, diced (optional)  
14-18 medium Brussels sprouts

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil  
1/4 cup thinly sliced leeks or minced shallot  
1 crisp apple such as Cameo, Honey Crisp,  
Pink Lady or Gala, diced  
1/4 cup chopped walnuts, hazelnuts or  
pecans  
1/4 cup dried cranberries  
1/4 cup maple syrup  
1/2 teaspoon celery seeds  
1/4 teaspoon ground clove  
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste.

Place the mustard seeds in a small bowl and cover with the vinegar. Let soak for at least 4 hours or up to overnight. Strain the soaked seeds and reserve the vinegar.

Trim the stem end of the sprouts and remove any tough outer leaves. Run the whole sprouts through the 4 mm blade of your food processor, or simply cut them thinly, crosswise, with a knife.

Cook the bacon until crisp and drain on paper towels.

In a medium sauté pan, heat the oil over medium heat and add the leeks and apples. Cook for 2-3 minutes, until the leeks are starting to become translucent. Add the walnuts, cranberries, mustard seeds, reserved vinegar, maple syrup, celery seeds and clove. Season with salt and pepper. Stir over the heat until the dressing is nice and hot, about 1 minute.

Immediately pour the hot dressing over the shaved Brussels sprouts and toss in the cooked bacon if you are using it.

Taste and adjust the seasoning with additional salt and pepper, and maybe a splash of vinegar or oil, if desired. The salad is perfect now, but will be optimal for eating after resting for a few minutes to soften the sprouts and blend the flavors. Serves 4 to 6.

## **Snippets from Your Executive.....**

- ❖ **Our March meeting will be held one week later than usual due to an event at the Civic Centre ..... March 19 is the new date.**
- ❖ **MARS members are encouraged to bring a friend to our meetings. We have great programs coming up....good information for everyone. Invite your neighbours too!**

## **MARS Programs in 2014....**

### **January 2014**

- ❖ **Learning with the Best**
  - ✓ **Expert Panel on Rhododendron Care and Culture**

### **February 2014**

- ❖ **Ciscoe Morris of Seattle TV Fame**
  - ✓ **Creating a Wildlife-Friendly Garden**

## **Update: ARS 2015 Convention in Sidney, BC**

*Marilyn Dawson*

The 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary ARS convention is still more than a year away but planning is already under way. Although the early May event is in Sidney, and the hosts are Victoria based Calvin Parsons and Lois Blackmore, all of District One is making a contribution. (District One comprises five chapters on the island and two on the lower mainland.) Each chapter is taking on a role and MARS has been chosen to run the Silent Auction, a fixture of these meetings.

Already MARS has a standing committee in place: Marilyn Dawson, Barbara Kulla and Maria Bieberstein, who will be organizing the auction. At present they are looking for ideas. We need about 30 items that will interest a wide range of visitors coming from across Canada, the United States and abroad. The committee members will approach the donors, but the question is whom do they approach. What are items that are light enough to travel or are particularly Canadian, or even better, particularly from the island? Of course, there will be some donated plants, probably rhododendrons. At previous conventions, wine has been a very good seller. Are there any particularly good wineries on the island that could be approached? What about the creative arts?

If you have an idea for this 2015 event, anyone on the committee will be glad to listen.

MARS will also be asked to contribute a basket of mixed items or the equivalent, which also will be auctioned. Again, suggestions are encouraged. At the Nanaimo convention, MARS donated a West Coast burl. What should it be this time? Again, we welcome ideas.

## **Garden Journal**

*Linda Derkach*

*President and Newsletter Editor*

During a rare break in the hustle and bustle of this month, I wandered around my garden, made note of all the work ahead...but also rejoiced in the snowdrops poking through the debris...and my *Helleborus niger* 'Josef Lemper' with its pure white flowers towering over luscious green leaves.



*Helleborus niger* 'Josef Lemper'

*Helleborus* 'Pink Frost' and *H. x nigercors* 'Honeyhill Joy' are not far behind.



*Helleborus* 'Pink Frost' is just emerging and will be in full bloom by March.

I am grateful for the prolific and long-lasting blooms of *Viburnum x bodnantense* 'Dawn' and the tiny bell-shaped flowers of *Arbutus unedo* 'Compacta' that have provided some attraction for the three hummingbirds that have chosen to grace our garden this year...and for whose very survival we feel responsible.



*Viburnum x bodnantense* 'Dawn' blooms now on bare branches, leafing out later.

While many of you have experienced hummers in past winters, this is our first....so we are quite thrilled! When freezing temperatures were predicted, the resident "bird-man" of the house created and erected a system for keeping the hummer food from freezing - thus ensuring their survival till spring. A brooding or heat lamp connected to a thermostat hangs near the feeder, and during those very cold days and nights, the heat lamp burned brightly, keeping the hummingbird sugar water at "hummer temp" and our feathered friends humming along.



Bird-man added a shiny, red bow to make sure all the hummingbirds in the area know where they can get sustenance.

As the days lengthen, rhododendron buds swell and our gardens start the annual cycle again, I wish you all a wonderful New Year and happy gardening. Your MARS Executive team has been working very hard to bring you interesting programs, and I look forward to seeing you all at upcoming meetings.

Remember to bring a friend or neighbour - visitors are always welcome at MARS!!