



BRUECKNER RHODODENDRON GARDENS STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE (BRGSC)

Wednesday, July 9, 2009

Port Credit Arena, 40 Stavebank Road
'Youth and Seniors' Room 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

ATTENDEES: Frank Buckley (City of Mississauga) (interim Chair), David Culham (Chair), Christina Woodward (Secretary), Para Kanp (City of Mississauga), Maria Da Costa, Robert Kernohan, Edel Schmidt, Daphne Van Ginkel, Liz Malicki

REGRETS: Marta Brueckner

ITEM	DISCUSSION	ACTION
1.	Approval of Minutes for June 11, 2009 [Moved: Liz Seconded: Daphne]	
	Frank Buckley turned the Chair responsibilities back to David Culham, returning after a four month absence.	
2.	Update on Marta Marta continues to make progress as she recovers in hospital. Her sincere thanks to the Committee for brightening her days with the gorgeous bouquet! She is anxious to return home and to routine activities. She worries over her own garden and the rhodies at BRG.	
3.	Heritage Rhododendrons: Discussion Liz welcomed David back to committee. She commenced the discussion by inviting the committee to consider the BRG rhodies as "heritage" plants with historical significance deserving particular care. Over the past while numerous concerns have been expressed on the nature of what is ailing many of the rhodies and how best to correct. She posed several possible options on what could be done: make an all out effort to salvage the remaining rhodies, let nature take its course, or work on a selected group rhodies only. She asked that	

we define the issue(s), and opened up the floor for the committee's collective thoughts on how to proceed.

Para spoke at length on the topic:

- 90% of the rhodies are in good condition
- Fertilization program has been in effect for 2-3 years
- David Smith, DCS Agronomic Services, completed soil tests and tissue samples
- Irrigation system was installed for individual care of the rhodies
- Fusarium Wilt was diagnosed at the University of Guelph, the fungus was shown to be present in the soil
- Wayne Graham, City Parks, confirmed that there was a fungus problem in the soil in the early 1990's
- The recent pesticide ban has prevented a proper solution to the current problem
- Sulfa, in two forms, was applied, as was Rapsody, a biofungicide
- Nitrogen fertilizer should not be applied for 2 years after sulfa application
- The high summer temperatures in the Ontario climate create a challenge for some of the rhodies, especially those with a Tigerstedt cross such as Janet Blair. These should be avoided in future plantings. Christina offered that other crosses also have shortcomings such as the Laponicum's, suitable for very cold climates, but nonetheless do well in this area. We should be careful about what we eliminate because the challenges are probably localized.
- The drainage is good
- David Smith will do a soil test in the fall.
- Encourage looking at the successes

Daphne asked if the age of the rhodies is a factor. Para: this depends on a number of things, though it is known that hybrids are weaker than species.

Christina asked about the waterlogged areas prevalent on the slopes of the main beds last summer and wondered about the suitability of the drip line irrigation system. Para: the current practice includes this type of irrigation, but agreed that some of the nozzles were placed too close to the stems and which have since been moved further away. Misterters are also functioning in the main collection.

Christina commented that the tree canopy is far too low and this creates a dark, dank environment that activates fungi and is possibly responsible for ill health and demise of many rhodies over the years. While volunteer efforts to raise the canopy have helped, Frank commented that this is by nature limited because of safety issues. Christina commented that in addition to safety for volunteers, there is also the issue of proper handling of tree pruning by the skilled professional. Frank acknowledged that it has taken a very long time to schedule the forestry crews for tree work, but they are inundated with priority tasks throughout the community. He will continue to request their assistance.

Lastly Christina made an appeal that if the City applies Dr. Brueckner's

	<p>of pruning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The HD rhodies are doing well; a few of the plants in the back of the bed have been brought forward to a sunnier area where they appear more healthy.. 	
6.	<p>Report from Design Team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Nick Yarmoshuk from the Board of Directors of the Rhododendron Society of Canada, Niagara Region, met on site with the DT to assist in their selection of replacement rhodies for KS Hill area. The Team was able to draw on Nick's expertise and knowledge for matching suitable plants to this area and for locating known suppliers. Subsequently the Team drew up a list of Lepidotes and Elepidotes which was forwarded to Frank to process. Delivery date from supplier should be held until late August or later. - Questions to Para: were their specific challenges he faced during the completion of the Godfrey Lane bed, the first formally designed area the Team was engaged in. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • specific plants are difficult to find and obtain because they are rare or suppliers are out of scope • please provide alternatives or substitutes when making up future lists of plant material • plants were ordered too late 	
7.	<p>Report from Volunteer Coordinator</p> <p>Hours are still incomplete. Please send to Maria as soon as possible.</p>	
8.	<p>Marketing</p> <p>Christina restated the need to press forward with more awareness and promotion efforts where BRG strengthens its existing visitor base and broadens the visitor base beyond the local community. Creating awareness and building enjoyable visitor experience would naturally strengthen volunteer interest and commitment.</p> <p>Frank commented that this issue has come up repeatedly and has not been satisfactorily addressed by the committee. There was agreement amongst the members that the lack of a front-line contact, email address, or telephone, make communication difficult. Furthermore, there is no one designated to supervise or to schedule volunteers once they have signed up. There was no resolve on how to address this issue.</p> <p>There was discussion on new contacts the BRGSC should pursue, including local service clubs, gardening clubs and web sites, local associations, public library, targeted bulletin boards, corporate</p>	

	<p>sponsorship.</p> <p>Daphne offered to contact the Ontario Horticultural Association on the Web (OHA) to see if that organization would include BRG information on its web site.</p> <p>Christina will approach the Mississauga Public Library on brochure distribution and other notices. She will revise the brochure as appropriate. She will also explore links with other rhododendron gardens/parks for greater exposure and contact.</p> <p>Liz raised the question on whether we need more volunteers. Committee agreed that we do, but that volunteer effort requires continuous commitment. By the same token, BRGSC needs to provide contact person, phone and email.</p> <p>The current numbers of volunteers look good but their attendance to BRG is inconsistent. Liz will follow up on networking opportunities with another stewardship committee regarding recruitment efforts</p>	<p>Daphne</p> <p>Christina</p> <p>Liz</p>
9.	<p>Cloverleaf Garden Club Tour: debriefing</p> <p>Daphne provided a debriefing on the tour based on her notes taken on the day and from the feedback received from garden sitters, tour committee and members' comments. Firstly, the weather was very cooperative. Over 420 tickets were sold; an estimated 200 visitors came to BRG with about 70 people attending one of several "tours" conducted by BRG volunteers. Many visitors came to picnic as BRG was scheduled through the lunch hour.</p> <p>Daphne displayed the photo poster which she prepared from Christina's 2009 photographs of the BRG flowering.</p> <p>The event garnered awareness, satisfaction with a local garden.</p> <p>For future reference, the poster cost \$40.</p>	
10.	<p>Other Business:</p> <p>A cash donation for \$100.00 was recently received from a frequent visitor to BRG.</p> <p>For purposes of comparison, Liz enquired how many Stewardship Committees exist across the area. The committee was told these come and go.</p>	
11.	<p>Next Meeting - August 12, 2009</p>	

12.	Adjournment 9:15 p.m.	

Recorded & Submitted:

CAW