



Northern Nevada Garden Railroad Society

ORDER BOARD

Published for the Friends and Members of NNGRS
www.nngrs.com

June 2008

Notes from the NNGRS Meeting...

Sunday June 22, 2008:

The June meeting was held at the home of Fred and Margaret. 23 members and guests were in attendance.

The Twigge's layout was very nice and appreciated by everyone that attended. Everyone enjoyed the ice cream, cookies and drinks at the conclusion of the meeting

Geoff reported on the Big Train Show in Ontario, CA. Several vendors were missing from the show.

John Latimore: reported no changes to Roster.

Rich Walton: reported that Kathy finished the membership cards for anyone interested in having one. The club account currently has \$402.

Please notice the attached information on the proposed trip to Mt Shasta dinner train in October.

Dee Szabo

From The Engineer...

I have sitting here for several days hoping that I would hear something about the upcoming Water and Rails Pond tour. But not a word. The only suggestion that I have is to go to their web site for the latest information.

Jim Lohse, a relatively new member, has submitted the second in his series of growing plants hydroponically on page 3. Jim is also involved with Virginia & Truckee Railroad Historical Society.

Geoff Brunner
Engineer

UP COMING EVENTS...

July 12th, Hotel reservations for the 2009 Garden Railroad Convention open at 8:00 am. <http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/dentc-denver-marriott-tech-center/> (This is a change in date.)

July 18th, 19th, and 20th Water and Rails rail and garden tour. www.waterandrails.org (Note: There will be no regular July meeting.)

Aug. 17th, Meeting at the home of John & Wilma Smith at 2:00 pm.

Sept. 21st, Meeting at the home of Harold & Florence Wiebke, 2:00 pm in Sparks.

Weekend of Friday October 10 thru Sunday October 12. Proposed Dinner train on Saturday October 11, 2008. (See page 2.)

Oct. 19th, Meeting at the home of Bob & Jane Gaw, 2:00 pm at their home in Jacks Valley.

Nov. 8th & 9th, 2008 Railfair, Placer County Fairgrounds, Roseville, CA.

Nov. 16th, Meeting and dinner at the home of Ray & Terri Rich, 3:00 pm in Sparks.

Dec. 6th, Annual Dinner Meeting at the Station Grille, Carson City. 5:00 pm Social hour Dinner served at 6:00 pm.

July 5th to 11th, 2009, The 25th National Garden Railway Convention, Denver, Colorado www.2009ngrc.com.

Please let your meeting hosts know you are coming.

SHASTA SUNSET DINNER TRAIN

Proposed date:

Weekend of Friday October 10 thru Sunday October 12. Dinner train on Saturday October 11, 2008

Dinner Train Cost:

Per person cost \$97.50 + gratuity. All trains board at McCloud at 5:30 P.M., depart at 6:00 P.M. and return approximately 9:00 P.M.

Menu:

Black Butte Beef Wellington- A choice filet mignon, topped with mushroom pate' and wrapped in delicate puff pastry, baked to a golden brown. Presented with Chef Hines' Merlot Sauce and topped with a delicate béarnaise.

Chicken Marsala – Chicken breast breaded and seasoned with fresh herbs, sautéed and presented with a lemon caper sauce.

Maryland Stuffed Tilapia- Tender tilapia fillets enfold a rich savory stuffing, baked and drizzled with seasoned lemon butter.

Tenderloin of Pork Cascade- Hazelnut crusted tenderloin of pork roasted with fennel pear stuffing and served with an apple brandy sauce.

Rules of the Rails:

Dinner train fare includes three-hour train ride, four-course dinner, coffee, tea & soft drinks and sales tax. Gratuity is not included. Wine is available to purchase.

It is suggested that you dress as you would for any fine dining experience. The following attire is not acceptable: hats, athletic tank tops, muscle-tees, ripped, torn or frayed clothing and cargo, athletic or jean shorts. Dress shorts are acceptable.

Advance reservations and payment are required. Master Card, Visa, Discovery and American Express are accepted. There will be a \$10.00 processing fee for all cancellations. Cancellations may be made up to one week prior to departure. There will be no refunds given for cancellations after that point, but you may re-schedule up to 48 hours prior to departure.

The train is partially wheelchair accessible. Please let us know your special needs when calling for reservations.

State law prohibits smoking on trains or in stations.

Other events:

Saturday October 11, Fall Pumpkin Train.

Cost:

\$18.00 for adults \$12.00 for children under 12

Departure Time:

2:00 p.m. & 4:00 p.m. Fall Pumpkin Train features both open-air cars and inside seating. Operating between McCloud and Signal Butte, children and parents alike are allowed to de-train and select a pumpkin of their choice as part of the ticket price. Hot drinks and finger food are available for purchase.

Travel to:

John Smith has suggested that we might be able to hire a bus for our trip to Mt Shasta. If we were able to have at least 30 people leaving on Friday October 10 and return on Sunday October 12, the cost would be approximately \$100.00 per person. We would have use of the bus all weekend.

If we don't have enough club members that want to take the bus, remember we can include our family and friends to make up the 30 people that we need. More than 30 would be great.

Another suggestion that John had was to ride the train at Yreka, CA, which is approximately 35 miles north of Mt Shasta. The web site for this train is www.yrekawesternrr.com. The train schedule for October is Saturday & Sunday only, leaving at 11:00 am, cost is \$20.00 for a three- hour ride. If we rode this train on Saturday morning we would be back in plenty of time for our dinner train.

WHERE DO YOU FIND HYDROPONICS SUPPLIES ANYWAY?

By Jim Lohse

This is the second article in a series about landscaping and plants. The last article focused on explaining the theory behind growing plants hydroponically. If you go to most nurseries the employees will not be familiar with hydroponics. Most nurseries also don't sell the supplies you need to grow plants in sterile or "soilless" mediums like peat moss, coco coir or Rockwool.

Your choices for hydroponics stores in Reno are limited to Anything Grows on Moana Lane. Anything Grows now carries a peat moss mixed with perlite and a ph balancer. Their website is at

Both The Farm and Advanced Garden Supply are in South Lake Tahoe -- Advanced does carry a peat moss mix, but call ahead to see if it's in stock. There does not appear to be a hydroponics store in Eagle, Dayton or Carson Valleys.

WHAT MEDIUMS ARE AVAILABLE IN OR NEAR RENO?

Each medium has it's advantages. Peat moss allows oxygen to get to the roots but drains more slowly, which means less frequent watering. Rockwool is best at getting oxygen to the roots, but drains so quickly it has to be rewatered frequently. Coco is somewhere in between. My favorite method is to mix 60% peat moss mix with 20% coco and 20% Rockwool "croutons."

If you visit these stores, they will assume you are growing a flowering plant and will try to sell you both a high-nitrogen liquid 'grow' fertilizer and a high-phosphorous liquid 'bloom' fertilizer. Let them know up front what you are growing. If you're growing fruits or flowers, you need both types of fertilizers. If you are just growing lettuce, you only need the 'grow' formula.

These stores will also assume you are growing your plants for maximum yield. When growing fruits and flowers, people make the mistake of assuming that the plant with the most leaf growth will produce the most fruit or flowers. This is not true, it's actually the root mass that determines the yield. The roots store the plant carbohydrates that will be used in fruit and

flower formation. In a later article I will continue to explain how to encourage the best root growth, how to prune plants, what temperatures are best for plant growth and more technical stuff.

WHAT DO I CARE, I WANT TO SEE A RAILROAD! WATER AND RAILS IS COMING

At this point you may be asking, "What do I care about hydroponics? I'm trying to landscape a railroad!" The main point is that there are much cleaner ways to grow plants than using fish emulsion. These cleaner methods will lead to a more bug-free environment.

If you are not growing a garden next to your railroad and simply want to landscape the area, I have a few suggestions. The first suggestion is not to miss the Water and Rails Pond and Garden Railroad Tour this year. It's on July 18, 19 and 20 – more information is at . By visiting and speaking with the people on this tour you'll get the best idea of what plants look good trackside and what plants will survive our climate year after year. Nurseries can only give you a rough idea of what will work in your particular climate. If you find a Water and Rail location near your house, you'll get a much better idea of what works in your neighborhood.

For example, plants that will grow in Reno may not survive the cold in Antelope Valley. An important guide in selecting plants is the Sunset Western Garden Book by the editors of Sunset Magazine. This has long been the gardener's bible. It includes great climate maps and a dizzying array of plant listings. Once you figure out what Zone you're in you can look up plants you like and see their characteristics. If you've never seen this book you are certainly missing out on some great information.

PLANT SELECTION IS LIMITED IN THE HIGH DESERT

Plant selection in local Reno nurseries is limited, compared to, let's say, Santa Barbara or San Francisco, because our climate is much more harsh. Near the ocean the high temperatures are limited and freezing almost never happens. Not so here – I recommend that you don't plant anything that isn't cold hardy to -10 below zero. While it may never get that cold, other factors like wind play a role in plant hardiness. Just because a nursery says a plant will grow is not a guarantee – I brought some purple hop

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bushes here from California and despite a nursery saying they would survive, they didn't make it through last winter. I miss my hop bushes but won't replant them here.

I also see people around Reno with ordinary Japanese maples or even special lace leaf Japanese maples in their front yard. While these trees may live several years, just one bad winter will spell the end for these plants. If you want that great Japanese look, I suggest you stick with bamboos that are rated to take the cold. One great thing about bamboo is that it tends to be self-mulching. The leaves that drop make a nice carpet that resists weeds.

ARE YOU AFRAID OF BAMBOO?

Are you scared of bamboo? There is a false fear of bamboo running out of control. Here's some things to think about when considering bamboo: There are running-style bamboos and clumping-style bamboos. The running type are the ones that take over your yard (and your neighbor's), grow very tall and scare people away from bamboo. Reno nurseries tend to only sell running bamboos. If you want more information I suggest you visit Bamboo Sourcery's website at [bamboosourcery.com](#). They are in Sebastapol, CA.

Now, back to the discussion of how to grow bamboo safely. Clumping bamboos grow in a clump and will only spread a few inches in diameter each year. There are giant bamboos that grow up to 70 feet in Asia, there are hedge bamboos that grow between six and ten feet tall, and for garden railroaders there are ground cover bamboos that stay within a few inches of the ground. These shorter bamboos aren't cold hardy below 0 degrees, so plant them only in areas protected from wind and full exposure.

Even if you want a running style bamboo, if you prepare properly you won't have a problem. You can place plastic or metal barriers up to two feet deep and this will prevent the spread of the underground rhizomes. You can also dig a trench around the bamboo and cut the rhizomes as they spread into the trench.

Finally, bamboo rhizomes and roots will only grow in the presence of water and nutrients. The most common example of runaway bamboo is next to a lawn. The last time I checked bamboo was not taking over the Nevada desert! The last option is to grow

bamboo in containers, but I don't recommend container plants be left outside in the winter or the roots may freeze, killing the plants.

JUNIPERS ARE A HARDY CHOICE THAT MIMICS EVERGREEN TREES

In my opinion you can't beat junipers for our climate. There are a few junipers that take the cold and grow close to the ground, mimicking the look of a forest. Green Mound Juniper and Japanese Garden Juniper are both available locally and have the right growth habit for your trackside forest. Both have a deep green color. For a blue hue, try one of the many blue junipers like Blue Rug Juniper.

There is an excellent article about junipers and many other ground cover plants on the Sunset Magazine website at [sunsetmagazine.com](#)

Of course, an unweeded garden will also lead to a variety of native "plants." Remember, a weed is simply an unwanted plant! Across the street on the empty lots is a beautiful weed that must be a relative of the artichoke based on the wonderful blooms. No one ever watered there, it must be a "native plant."

The last plant to mention is a dwarf pine common to the Reno area, the Dwarf Mugo Pine. I bought one at Home Depot last year and it looks great! It will grow taller (to 4 feet) but if you prune the tips and keep it low, it will bush out horizontally and will be a great complement to your garden railroad layout.

See you at Water and Rails, I'll bring back some ideas in the next article.

Needed: Willing to trade a right hand LGB switch -- 12 ft. radius Part no. 1805 for a left hand switch -- same specs. . Used or new, with or without the LGB switch machine. If no trade then what about selling. Bob Gaw, 775-267-2420