



Greely Gardeners Group

Newsletter March 2002

GREELY GARDENERS CALENDAR:

Note - our April meeting is NOT on the first Monday this month...

Monday April 8, 7:45 p.m. Greely Community Centre

Prepare Your Lawn for Summer. Was your lawn a browned to a crisp last summer? Have little critters been chewing on your grass all winter? Are grubs eating away at the roots? Whatever your lawn problems, our guest speaker will offer solutions that will help you keep your half acre green and healthy all season long.

Saturday May 11, 10:00 a.m. Greely Community Centre

Flower bed design — hands-on demonstration.

Monday June 3, 7:45 p.m. Greely Community Centre

Gardening that you can eat.

Saturday June 22, 10:00 a.m.

Members garden tour.

August – date to be arranged

Field trip.

Monday September 9, 7:45 p.m. Greely Community Centre

Members' Flower Show and Annual Meeting.

Monday October 7, 7:00 Greely Community Centre

Plant Swap and Sale.

Monday November 4, 7:45 p.m. Greely Community Centre

Birds in the garden.

Monday December 2, 7:45 Greely Community Centre

Christmas Pot Luck Dinner.

Other Upcoming Events

Tuesday, April 9, 7:30 p.m. Tomkins Hall, Church Street, Manotick. Manotick Horticultural Society monthly meeting.

Wednesday April 10, 7:00 p.m. Greely Community Centre. COGG (Community Organization Greening Greely) monthly meeting. New members always welcome.

Saturday and Sunday, April 27 & 28, 10am to 4pm. Craft Tea and Bake Sale presented by Friends of the Farm craft group and other area artisans at Building 72, Arboretum, Central Experimental Farm.

Sunday, May 12 (Mother's Day) 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Rare and Unusual Plant Sale presented by Friends of the Farm and specialty growers and nurseries, in the parking lot of the Neatby Building, Carling Ave and Maple Drive.

Tip of the Month

HANGING BASKETS HAVE BEEN HANGING AROUND FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS. They were popular in ancient Rome, and today they provide instant color in the spring for porches, patios and decks. One of the reasons they are so popular in our climate is that you can easily bring them inside when there is a threat of frost. There are many types of hanging baskets to choose from – plastic, wood, wire, half baskets to mount on a wall, compressed fiber and even plastic pouches. You can line them with everything from garden soil to sphagnum peat moss or shredded coconut fiber.

There are some important things to consider when you build or buy a hanging basket. Where you will be hanging it? Wire baskets lined with moss will leak some every time they are watered. Will you be hanging it where leaking water won't be a problem? Some plastic hangers come with a saucer attached to the bottom that allows for drainage but will hold some water. The fiber baskets don't stand up very well if they are hung out in the rain or where they are constantly wet. Half baskets or pouches mounted on a wall can leave water stains.

Size is important too. The smaller the basket the more often it will have to be watered especially if it's hanging where it can get full sun all day. Keep in mind that a large basket filled with mature plants and soil will be very heavy when it's wet so take care that where you hang it will support the weight. Also keep in mind the size and strength of the person who will be moving the basket around. A soil-less mix will be lighter than potting soil.

Once you've got your basket, what to put in it? Use your imagination and creativity, and don't limit yourself to flowers. There are almost no limits – although corn is probably not a good idea! A large basket with a combination of lettuce, cherry tomatoes, herbs and a few edible pansies will look great and you can get a salad or two out of it over the summer. Just one patio tomato plant will fill a 12-inch basket to overflowing and produce great tasting tomatoes all summer and into the fall if you protect them from the cold. Or you could try a herb assortment – chives, sage, parsley, basil and rosemary, for example. Nothing beats cooking with fresh herbs harvested as needed from a hanging basket just outside the kitchen window. And they will last well into the winter hanging inside after the first frost.

New Members Wanted

Membership in the Greely Gardeners is down this year, and we need your help to do something about it.

First, we need your suggestions on what can be done to make the GGG more attractive to local gardeners. If you have ideas for new events and activities, let's hear them. Would a different meeting day or a different time, even a different location make a difference? Tell us what you think.

Second, tell your friends and neighbours about the GGG. Tell them what a bargain it is at just \$10 for a year. Better still, bring a friend to the next meeting. It costs nothing to come and check us out.

Greely Gardeners Group, Executive Committee

President ~ Bob Stanley 821-1847

Activities Director ~ Alison Whitlock 821-4469

Secretary/Membership ~ Shelagh Heatlie 821-0816