



Greely Gardeners Group

Newsletter

October 2004

GREELY GARDENERS CALENDAR:

NEXT MEETING: Wednesday, Nov. 3, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre

This month's topic is "Hard landscaping" – the use of arbours, archways, entranceways, patios, paths, and other garden structures, and how they fit into your garden landscape. Our guest speaker is Mary Anne Schmitz, from Artistic Landscaping. Mary Anne's presentation will be illustrated with slides.

Wednesday, December 1, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre

This is our **Christmas Pot Luck Supper** for members and guests. It was a good time last year, and with even more members we are looking forward to a party! Mark your calendar for December 1st and come and enjoy an evening with the Group at the Community Centre.

Please let us know what you would like to bring:

- Appetizer or side dish
- Main course
- Salad
- Dessert

Also please let us know as soon as you can how many will be joining us. Call Gill at 821-6123 or email her at gilltoll@sympatico.ca. Or you can sign up with Shelagh at the November 3 meeting. Reminder: For the party you will need to bring your own plate, cutlery, liquid refreshment and something to drink out of! Coffee will be provided as usual.

GREELY GARDENERS CALENDAR FOR 2005

At last month's meeting we asked everyone to list topics that they would like to see on our calendar for next year. A lot of you responded, and as a result we now have plenty of ideas to work with for the 2005 calendar – in fact more than we can fit into one year! Gill Toll, our Events Director, is now busy lining up potential speakers on some of the most requested topics. She'll provide some early details at the November meeting. Look for a complete calendar of events for 2005 in future newsletters.

Thanks to all those who came up with suggestions. And remember, any time you have an idea for a topic or a speaker, pass it on to Gill or any member of the executive.

MEMBERSHIP DUES

While we're on the subject of 2005, membership cards for next year are now available. You can pick one up from Shelagh when you renew your membership, which remains at just \$10 for 2005. And don't forget that your membership card is worth money – it will get you a discount on plants at the following garden centres: Ritchie's Feed & Seed, Richmond Nurseries, Rideau Woodland Ramble and Down to Earth Gardens (the last two are both in Burritt's Rapids). You do have to show your membership card to get the discount, so make sure you have it with you next time you go plant shopping.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

Manotick Horticultural Society meets the second Thursday of the month at 7:30 at the Legion Hall on Ann Street in Manotick.

If you know of upcoming events that you think would interest GGG members, call Bob at 821-1847 or send an email to stanleyb@rogers.com.

TIP OF THE MONTH



FALL IS TRADITIONALLY A TIME FOR PUTTING THE GARDEN TO BED and preparing the borders for their required cold dormancy. But fall can also be a beginning. With the cool temperatures and predictable rainfall, it is an ideal time to consider the installation of specimen trees. From now until the soil is frozen, trees and shrubs can be planted into your outdoor living space. Potted specimens available at your local nursery will also be entering dormancy at this time of year making them ideal candidates for installation.

Dormancy is a type of botanical anaesthetic, so if undertaken well, the planting operation will cause a minimum of stress for the tree or shrub. Carefully plan where a new tree or shrub is to be planted, then dig a hole that is half again as large as the root ball contained in the pot. This ensures that new roots will grow out to meet friable, well-prepared soil instead of encountering the compact, oxygen-deprived soil typical of poorly cultivated sites.

After removing a newly purchased tree from its pot, gently tease the roots free from the “pot shape” they have grown to resemble. Sometimes the new roots will continue to grow in the typical circular pattern of the pot perimeter even after they are installed into the living soil. When this happens the roots are prevented from growing out into the surrounding soil where nutrients and moisture can be found. Furthermore, roots that do not reach out into the living soil provide poor anchoring for the tree. As a result, even after a number of years the tree risks toppling over in high winds or when the soil becomes soft after an exceptional amount of rainfall.

The soil to be replaced into the planting hole can be amended with organic matter to supply nutrients and to encourage earthworms that will promote adequate drainage and aeration. Well-rotted compost or manure is ideal. Plant a new tree or shrub at the same depth it was growing in its container. Piling soil higher up the stem could lead to stem rot. Mulch the site well after planting, but keep the mulch away from the main stem. This will delay freezing of the soil and offer the new roots an additional amount of time to develop and mature. Then water the new acquisition well. A thorough drink will collapse any large air pockets unavoidably left during installation. Don't fertilize the newly planted specimen – a thick layer of mulch and a thorough drink of water should see the new plant through its first winter.

Do not expect to see extensive growth next year from a tree or shrub planted this fall. In order to accommodate new green growth a plant must first develop supportive root growth underground. Next spring most growth will take place under the soil out of sight. Give new trees and shrubs a chance to gain a firm root-hold before expecting the production of new branches. In the first growing season after installation, what you get is what you don't see!

This article by Marg Fleming, Manager of Horticulture at the Toronto Zoo, was originally published on the I Can Garden website at www.iCanGarden.com.

Greely Gardeners Group, Executive Committee

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