



Greely Gardeners Group Newsletter

July 2006

GREELY GARDENERS 2006 CALENDAR:

Wednesday, September 6, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Monthly meeting and AGM. Topic: BULBS AND FALL PLANTING". Guest speaker: Neill Ritchie of Ritchie's Feed and Seed.

Wednesday, October 4, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Topic: "IMPROVING YOUR GARDEN WITH COMPOST AND MULCH". Guest speaker: Lindley McPhail, Master Gardener.

Wednesday, November 1, 7:15 p.m. Greely Community Centre. Topic: "KEEPING YOUR INDOOR PLANTS HAPPY AND HEALTHY THROUGH THE WINTER".

Wednesday, December 6, 7:00 p.m. Greely Community Centre. GARDENERS' CHRISTMAS SUPPER. Members and their guests. Details to be announced.

OTHER UPCOMING EVENTS

It's garden party season...

Friends of the Farm Victorian Tea Not exactly a gardening event, but... A "classic tea" will be served on the lawns of the Central Experimental Farm Arboretum on August 6 from 2 to 4 p.m. You're invited to bring a patio chair and listen to the music. Enter the best hat contest and don period costume (not required). Admission is free, formal tea \$5.50. For information and to register call 613-230-3276.

Down to Earth Gardens 3rd Annual Garden Party. Billed as a celebration of summer, this event takes place on August 6 from 1 to 4 p.m. (rain date August 13). There will be prizes for best dressed gardeners, samples of edible flower creations, herbal teas to taste, nature trails and llamas to visit. And all plants will be on sale. Down to Earth Gardens is near Burritt's Rapids. For information or directions, email patti@storm.ca or call 613-269-2687.

Russell and District Horticultural Society's Flower, Fruit, Vegetable and Photography Show. This annual event take place on Saturday, August 19 at the Russell Curling Club, and is open to the public from 2 - 8 pm. Last year there were some 400 enteries plus the Junior Horticultural Society's entries. The Curling Club was filled and the aroma was wonderful.

Osgoode Garden Club meets on the third Wednesday of the month, 7:00 p.m. at the Osgoode Library on Main Street. For information call Louise Boudreau 826-0385.

Russell and District Horticultural Society meets on the third Monday of the month, 7:00 p.m. at the Legion Hall, corner of First Street and Legion Lane.

Manotick Horticultural Society meets on the second Monday of the month in the RCMP Club House off Nicholl's Island Road. For information contact Mary Kealey at 823-1658.

FIELD TRIP TO KIWI GARDENS

A dozen determined members braved a threatening weather forecast on July 15 and were rewarded by sunshine when they got to Kiwi Gardens in Perth. We enjoyed the gardens and the art for a couple of hours before adjourning for an excellent lunch in the indoor courtyard at Code's Mill in Perth town, thus avoiding the downpour that had been forecast.

Note to Heather and Gary: Next year write it on the calendar!

TIP OF THE MONTH



HOW DID YOUR LILACS DO THIS SPRING? Mine were the best they've ever been, but according to Mark Dallas, who runs Galetta Nurseries in the far west end, that has more to do with Mother Nature and just plain dumb luck than with my skills as a gardener. Mark says he gets a lot of calls every Spring from people who want to know why *their* lilacs aren't blooming when all around them other people's gardens are filled with scented blossoms. According to Mark there are many reasons why this can happen. Here are some of them...

Why lilacs don't bloom:

- * Not enough sun. Lilacs need six or more hours of sun a day.
- * Too much nitrogen. Lilacs prefer a less fertile soil. Don't use chemical fertilizers on them.
- * Poorly drained soil. Lilacs grow best in ditches along the side of roads: damp but well-drained. They don't like to dry out or to be soaked all the time.
- * Poor pruning. Lilacs should only be pruned after they have flowered. If you haven't already pruned your lilacs, now would be a good time.
- * Variety. Most of what we think of as "native" lilacs are originally from Europe. They bloom in late May or early June, but some varieties are much later — the Preston Lilacs that grow along the 417 for example — and Japanese lilacs usually wait until the end of June.
- * Winter cold. Flower buds on lilacs form during the previous year and, in a bitterly cold winter, the flower buds will die off. This past winter was very mild, so there were lots of flowers this year. The winter before was vicious, so there were far fewer flowers.

Note: Mark adds that there are about 4000 different varieties of lilacs, and about 200 distinct species. If you are looking to plant lilacs, he recommends you try to find some of the Preston series. These lilacs were developed in Ottawa, are exceptionally hardy, and tolerate the worst growing conditions. Here's an interesting Web site about them, and about Isabella Preston, one of Canada's most famous plant developers. http://collections.ic.gc.ca/BotanicalGarden/varieties_preston.html.

Greely Gardeners Group, Executive Committee:

President ~ Gill Toll 821-6123; Vice-President ~ Anita Snelgrove 821-0447; Secretary ~ Heather Clemenson 821-7445;
Treasurer ~ Gary Hall 821-7445; Past President/Newsletter ~ Bob Stanley 821-1847