



# Greely Gardeners Group

## Newsletter

January 2008

### GREELY GARDENERS CALENDAR:

#### WINTER/SPRING PROGRAMME

**NOTE:** *Our February and March meetings will be on Thursday nights to avoid clashing with rehearsals of the Greely Players. We return to Wednesday nights in April.*

**Thursday, February 7,** Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Topic: FRUIT AND VEGETABLES IN YOUR GARDEN. Guest speaker: John Vandenberg of Rideau Pines Farm.

**Thursday, March 6,** Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Topic: PREPARING YOUR BODY FOR SPRING. Guest speaker: Dr Victoria Clarke, Chiropractor.

**Wednesday, April 2,** Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Topic: STARTING A NEW GARDEN IN GREELY. Guest speaker: Darrell Kekanovich from Ritchie's Feed & Seed.

**Wednesday, May 7,** Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m. Topic: Trees – Identifying Species and Problems. Guest speakers: Dave and Erin Neave.

#### OTHER GARDENING EVENTS

**Manotick Horticultural Society** usually meets on the second Monday of the month at 7:30 in the RCMP Club House off Nichols Island Road. For more information call Margot Belanger at (613) 692-1575 or email [rbelan1575@rogers.com](mailto:rbelan1575@rogers.com).

**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 & District Horticultural Society** meets on the third Monday of the month, 7:00 at the Russell Legion. For information call Lindsey McPhail at 613-445-0754.

**For rose lovers: Saturday, April 5** – Lecture by Dr. Neville Arnold and Catherine Arnold on their research programme breeding disease-resistant roses that are winter hardy in Canada. The lecture, with slides, will include information on where, when, and how to obtain selected lines for your home garden. There will also be a silent auction of root-stocks from selected lines. Presented by the United Counties Master Gardeners at the Morrisburg Meeting Centre, 12580 County Road 2, at 1:00 p.m. Admission \$12. Reservations required. For information or to reserve call 613-774-3996.

#### WANTED: TALENTS TO SHARE

Last year's hypertufa workshop (see September 2007 Newsletter) was such a success that we'd like to do more workshops. That's where you come in – we need ideas on what to make at a workshop, and we need people with the talents to lead a workshop. Now, we know that our members have all kinds of hidden talents, this is your chance to share them with your fellow gardeners. So if you have a talent and/or an idea for a workshop, talk to Gill or any member of the executive and we'll see if we can make it happen.

## TIP OF THE MONTH...



MANY OF US HAVE HOUSE PLANTS AND POTTED PLANTS that we keep indoors over the winter. Most of these plants are varieties of tropical or sub-tropical plants. In their natural environment these plants enjoy humidity levels around 60%. At this time of year the air in our centrally heated homes can become very dry, with humidity levels as low as 15 to 20%. So we need to give our humidity-loving plants a little extra help.

One easy and inexpensive way to do this is by making a pebble tray. Here's how:

First, find a tray. It should one-to-two inches deep, big enough to hold the plant(s) you want to put in it, and it must be watertight. An aluminum foil baking tray will do the job if you don't have anything else that's suitable.

Now spread a one-inch layer of pebbles in the tray. You can buy bags of pebbles at garden centres or in the aquarium section of most pet supply stores.

Pour clean water over the pebbles just until the water is about half the depth of the pebbles – you don't want your plants actually sitting in the water. Set your plant pots on the pebbles and you're done. As the water evaporates it creates a humid micro-climate around your plants. Don't forget to top up the water regularly.

For larger plants, too big to sit in a tray, you can also try the pot-in-pot technique. Stand the pot in another pot or container that is slightly larger. Pack the space between the two pots with damp peat moss. Water regularly to keep the peat moss damp, but as with the pebble tray don't overwater – the plant should never be sitting in water.

And while we're on the subject, when was the last time you looked at the roots of your potted plants? The last time you re-potted them? Can't remember when? Well, if your plants are looking tired, small, wilted, inspect their root system. Taking your plants out of their pots from time to time won't hurt them. Simply spread some newspapers on the floor, turn the pot upside down and gently slip the plant out. If the roots look white, and healthy they're doing all right and you can put it back in its pot. But if they look brown, soft, or discoloured, or (and this is the worst case scenario) if they smell bad, then it's time to do something about it.



Using a sharp knife or pruners, carefully cut away any diseased or discoloured roots and repot in a slightly larger pot than it was in before, (about one-third bigger), and replant using fresh potting soil. Be sure to pack the soil well around the sides of the root ball, and water well. In just a few weeks, you are going to notice your plants looking much healthier, and robust.

**Your plants are going to love you for this!**

### Greely Gardeners Group, Executive Committee:

President - Gill Toll 821-6123; Vice-President - Anita Snelgrove 821-0447;  
Treasurer – Melissa MacDonald 821-9680; Secretary - Melody Tomka 821-1985  
Shelagh Heatlie 821-0816; Shelley Piercey 821-1120; June MacDonell 821-1949;;  
Past-President/Newsletter Bob Stanley 821-1847