



# Greely Gardeners Group

## *Newsletter*

March 2011

### GREELY GARDENERS EVENTS

**PLEASE NOTE:** Our March meeting will be on **Thursday, March 3**, but as of April our meetings will be on the first Wednesday of the month.

#### **Thursday March 3** - Topic: "**Landscape Design - Starting from Scratch**"

Guest Speaker: Mary-Anne Schmitz, of Gardening By Design  
Greely Community Centre, at 7:00 pm

#### **Wednesday April 6** - **Magnolias, Japanese Maples and Rare Trees for Eastern Ontario**

Guest speaker: Richard Aubert  
Greely Community Centre, at 7:00 pm

#### **Reminder GGG Membership:**

If you are intending to renew your annual membership at our next meeting, to save time please consider printing and completing the membership form sent with this Newsletter. At only \$10 for the year, we are still the best bargain in town!

### OTHER GARDENING EVENTS

- **Manotick Horticultural Society: Monday, March 14**, Bill Bitz will talk about "Growing Vegetables". 7:30 pm, Main Hall, RCMP Campground, Long Island, Manotick.
- **Russell and District Horticultural Society: Monday, March 21**, "Let's Get Growing" Starting seeds, dividing, air layering, transplanting, seed exchange, soil testing, cold frames. 7pm at the Russell Legion/Lion's Den; **Saturday, March 26**, a hands-on workshop about dividing, pruning, air layering, propagation etc. details to be announced. For more detail see: <http://www.russellgardeners.ca/events.html>
- **Osgoode Garden Club** meets on the third Wednesday of the month; 7:00 pm at the Osgoode Library on Osgoode Main Street. For information call Louise Boudreau 613-826-0385.

## Report of the February 3 Meeting

Once again, the Greely Gardeners Group were treated to a very informative evening with Joan and Peter Knippel who provided members with a chance to get the answers to those puzzling questions which they have been saving since we last invited Joan and Peter to speak with us. We were reminded that all the snow that has fallen on our gardens is a good thing; that sometimes we have to get rid of a plant that doesn't perform as it should or that continually harbours insect infestations; that with changes in our climate and in environmental legislation, we may need to adjust our expectations for our lawns; and that in less than three months, we will be back working in our gardens!



## Tip of the Month Starting Seeds Indoors

Seeds started indoors require the same three basic conditions as those started outside – soil, light and water. Use a *sterile* soil or soil-less mix to avoid fungus problems. *Sterile* should be clearly indicated on the packaging. After it has been thoroughly moistened, the medium can be placed in clean flats, peat pots, soil blocks (see February Newsletter) etc. The size of the container depends on the type of plant you're growing.

Seedlings need a *lot* of light or they will grow tall and "leggy." Even a window that receives full sun might need to be supplemented with artificial light. If you are using only artificial light, use bulbs that are specifically made for growing plants. Fluorescent tubes are ideal because they don't produce much heat, which can quickly dry out your seedlings. Place lights a foot or less above your seedlings and raise them as the plants grow. The lights need to be on from 12 to 15 hours per day.

The third ingredient is water. You want to keep the growth medium moist, but not let it become too wet. It is best to water from below. To promote germination, many gardeners cover flats or pots with plastic wrap to keep the planting medium both warm and moist, but must be removed as soon as the seeds sprout. At this point you will need to keep an eye on things to maintain the proper moisture. Placing the containers on a raised bed of gravel with a small amount of water below the level of the gravel may help prevent the plants from drying out. For the most part you want to plant seedlings outside just as they become large enough to survive transplanting – that usually takes about eight weeks. As a rule of thumb, if you're aiming to plant in late May, you shouldn't start most seeds before mid-March. You may want to provide your seedlings a little food in the form of a weak, water-soluble fertilizer. And *most important*, for a week or two before you plant them out, put your seedlings outside in a sheltered, shady spot to harden off. But be sure to bring them in if there's frost in the forecast, and beware of cold winds that can be fatal to tender seedlings.

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## Greely Gardeners Group – 2010-11 Executive Committee

**President** - Gary Hall 613-821-7445

**Vice-President** - Lee Nickerson 613-574-0214

**Treasurer** - Melissa MacDonald 613 821-9680

**Past-President** - Shelley Piercey 613-821-1120

**Secretary** - Sue Young 613-574-0098

**Events Co-ordinator** - Phyllis Nickerson 613-574-0214

**Members-at-Large** - Jackie Livingstone 613-821-3542; Gill Toll 613-821-6123

**Newsletter** - Heather Clemenson 613-821-7445 **Website** - Gary Hall 613-821-7445

[www.greelygardeners.org](http://www.greelygardeners.org)