



# Greely Gardeners Group

## *Newsletter*

December 2012

### **GREELY GARDENERS EVENTS**

#### **MONTHLY MEETING -- Wednesday December 5**

#### **Annual Christmas Pot-Luck Diner ... an event not to be missed!**

Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m.

#### **MONTHLY MEETING – Thursday January 3**

Topic: “Orchids”

Guest speaker: Douglas Vye, Past President Ottawa Orchid Society

Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m.

#### **MONTHLY MEETING – Thursday February 7**

Topic: “Lawn Maintenance”

Guest speaker: Neill Ritchie, Ritchie Feed and Seed

Greely Community Centre, 7:00 p.m.

### **Annual Christmas Pot-Luck Diner**

If you have not already signed up for this event and wish to do so, please contact Sue Young at 613 574-0098 to indicate what favourite food you would like to bring and whether you are bringing a guest.

Please contact Sue before Sunday December 2<sup>nd</sup> so we know how many to plan for in seating, soft drinks and prizes. Hope you will be joining us.

## OTHER GARDENING EVENTS

**Manotick Horticultural Society**, Christmas Pot-Luck Dinner, Monday December 10<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 p.m., Members only, Main Hall, RCMP Campground, Long Island Locks, Manotick.

**Ottawa Horticultural Society**, AGM and potluck dinner, Tuesday December 4<sup>th</sup>, 6:30 p.m., Members only, Tom Brown arena 141 Bayview Avenue (at Scott).

**Osgoode Garden Club** meets the third Wednesday of the month; from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Osgoode Library on Osgoode Main Street.

**Kanata-March Horticultural Society**, Year End Potluck Supper and Photography Competition Results, Friday December 7, 7:00 p.m., Members only, Old March Town Hall, 821 March Road.

**Russell and District Horticultural Society** meets third Monday of the month 7:00 p.m., Royal Canadian Legion/Lion's Hall at 24 Legion Lane in Russell. Details of upcoming events are posted on their website: <http://www.russellgardeners.ca/>

## MONTHLY REPORT – SEASONAL PLANTERS

On November 7<sup>th</sup> our guest speaker Catherine Disley entertained over 40 members with a demonstration of how to put together seasonal outdoor planters. A range of assorted greenery, including white pine, cedar, juniper, yew, fir and cotoneaster, a bundle of red osier dogwood and other decorations that covered two tables, was arranged into two quite different displays.

The first container that Catherine put together was more traditional with a centre of red osier dogwood surrounded by cascades of different shades of green. It was finished with gold glitter-covered decorations, three large red Christmas balls and a ribbon. The secret of attaching the balls to sticks and how to make a ribbon were shared with the members as we watched the whole come together as a delightful creation.



The second container was more natural; the same centre of dogwood was amended with three large pieces of white birch and surrounded by clumps of different greenery. It was finished with three very large pine cones. Catherine also showed us how to attach the pine cones to sticks with the use of long wire pipe cleaners. While there was an

attempt to be a bit modern with the positioning of the pine cones, Catherine quickly realized she was dealing with a more traditional crowd and placed the cones in the front of the planter rather than suspending them or using other branches at unusual angles in the planter. She completed the planter with pieces of birch bark as added decoration.

The planters were given away as draw prizes and taken home by two lucky members of the GGG. It was an evening enjoyed by all.

## TIPS – ROSEMARY AS A HOUSE PLANT

If you bring only one herb indoors for the winter it should be rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*). The basil, geraniums, and so on can be restarted in the spring from seed or cuttings, or bought in pots. The thymes, sages, lavenders, and mints, will survive outdoors in most winters, but rosemary is a tender perennial shrub that will not survive a Canadian winter (although attempts are underway to develop a winter-hardy strain). It must be brought indoors.

Rosemary is the perfect herb for wintering indoors. First, its Christmas associations are timely. It is said that the colour of the rosemary blossoms turned from white to blue because the Virgin Mary hung her cloak on rosemary bushes to dry in her flight from Herod's soldiers. Its appearance and fragrance are Christmas-tree like. With the addition of a red ribbon and perhaps a few small gold ornaments, the upright rosemary really does look like a Christmas tree.

Rosemary is also wonderful as a house plant because it doesn't readily shed its leaves (although be prepared for some leaf drop as the plant acclimatizes itself to the indoors). It requires little care other than good light, regular watering and perhaps occasional misting of its leaves, to compensate for the dry indoor air. When cutting rosemary for use in cooking, it is better to cut a sprig two or three inches long instead of just pulling off leaves. If you do this, the plant will reward you with improved bushiness and new growth.



Best of all, pests don't care much for rosemary — probably its protective resinous oils are off-putting to most insects. Crafting with rosemary is an aromatic pleasure. Depending upon whether you are bringing one plant or ten into the house, you can tie sprigs of rosemary onto your holiday packages, arranged as a small wreath around a candle base, or sewn into sachets for use as bath-bags. A craft that has been practised since Elizabethan times is that of gilding rosemary sprigs for use in Christmas decorations. Try spraying a sprig with gold paint...it might shrivel a little, but should probably last well through the holidays.

So pot up a rosemary plant from your garden: water well before digging, choose a pot of sufficient size to accommodate the roots, and don't allow it to dry out for the first few days. Rosemary, although classified as a tender perennial, can withstand some freezing temperatures and you can usually leave your rosemary until after all the other garden clean-up is done — but don't wait too long! And in the spring, you can return your rosemary to its spot in the herb garden, already a good-sized plant, not a little seedling or rooted cutting.

(Adapted from the GGG website - Tips).

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### Greely Gardeners Group – 2012 Executive Committee

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

**Treasurer** - Jane Rietze 613-699-6330

**Events Co-ordinator** - Geoff Voyce 613-692-5384

**Member-at-Large** - Sue Young 613-574-0098

**Newsletter** - Heather Clemenson 613-821-7445

**Vice-President** - *vacant*

**Secretary** - Denyse Becker 613-425-1157

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

**Member-at-Large** - Phyllis Nickerson 613-574-0214

**Website Updates** - Gary Hall 613-821-7445