



STREETSVILLE BLOOMS

Streetsville Horticultural Society

Proud to be a member of the Ontario Horticultural Association

Volume 20, Issue 4

DECEMBER 2013

NEXT MEETING: TUES., DEC. 10

CHRISTIAN REFORM CHURCH
2630 Inlake Court

Meeting starts at 7:30 p.m.

CHRISTMAS WORKSHOP*
With the Christmas Belles

**See details on Page 3*

FOOD DRIVE

SHS will hold a food drive at our December meeting with food donations going to Community Christian Reformed church charities. Items needed are:

- Tuna, Salmon
- Canned Meats - chicken, ham, luncheon meat
- Juice
- Baked Beans
- Condensed Soup (no tomato please)
- Chunky Soups and Stews
- Cold Cereal
- Oatmeal (not individual packets)
- Granola bars
- Nut Free Snacks
- Canned Fruit
- Side Dishes
- Kraft Dinner
- Cookies
- White Flour
- Baking items (cake, cookie and muffin mixes)
- Shampoo, Deodorant, Body Wash,
- Toothpaste
- Hot Chocolate
- Etc.

President's Message

As I am sitting in our sunroom looking out the window, I see the last leaves of autumn caught up in eddies of color as they swirl across the backyard. The black squirrels are busy digging up our lawn to bury acorns and the last Robins of fall are foraging around our dogwoods looking for seeds. Winter is coming in just a few weeks and we have prepared our garden as much as we can for winter.

Over the cold months it is a good idea to keep an eye on the birds that overwinter here in Mississauga. Many people put out bird feeders but an easier option is to leave some of your perennials like coneflowers or bee balm uncut so that the birds have a source of food for the cold months.

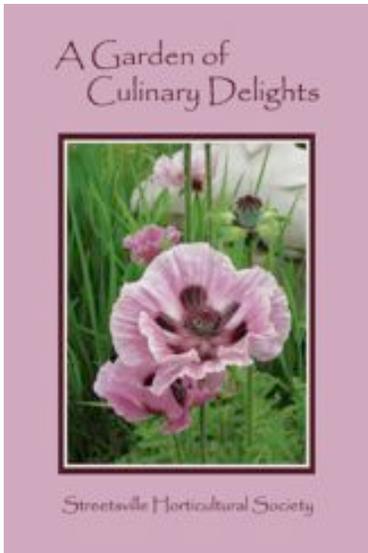
Although we may not want to think about the snowfalls to come, it is wise to plan for a winter garden. Perennials, bushes, grasses and garden ornaments are all important in giving a winter garden interest and texture, even when there is a foot of snow on the ground. A few lights (preferably low wattage) strategically placed around your garden can add a whole new dimension to your winter garden, especially with the long nights through the depth of winter.

The cold months also provide opportunities for us to plan for the next gardening year. If you are like us, there are always a couple of little corners in which haven't done too well over the last year. This is a great time for thinking through what you really want to do or change in your garden. Today we have more resources than ever before to help us make decisions about what we could do to bring more color and new vitality to our gardens. Maybe there are a few plants that just aren't "happy" where they are and need to be moved or taken out altogether. Or perhaps there is a new perennial you have spotted in an on-line catalogue that is just what you need to replace a dead bush. Our Society has members who have expertise in a wide variety of areas and I have found them eager to share their knowledge.

Christmas is just around the corner, and on behalf of the Board of Streetsville Horticultural

Society we want to wish you and your family a Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!

Rob & Sue Harshman, Co-Presidents



LOOKING FOR GREAT XMAS PRESENTS?

Perfect for Teacher, co-worker, boss, friends, Grandma, hostess gift etc.

Only **\$12** per (no tax)!!
cookbook (no tax)!!
Cash or cheque accepted.

Available at the December 10th Meeting.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended **Christine McEwan, Melissa Rodrigues** and **Elizabeth Sbrocchi** who joined our society in September and to **Sabbas D'Souza, Dione LeMay** and **Richard McCormick** who joined this November. Please make a special effort to make our new members feel comfortable at our meetings and to share with them some of the activities and events that you have experienced in the past.

Please wear your name tags at all times and greet one another by name. Introduce yourself to someone that you have not met before to expand your repertoire of friends within the society.

Grace McElhinney, Membership Chair

'The care of the earth is our most ancient and most worthy, and after all, our most pleasing responsibility. To cherish what remains of it, and to foster its renewal, is our only hope.'

Wendell Berry
The Unsettling of America

SHS FINANCIAL REPORT

Current Account	6,809.60
GIC	<u>10,000.00</u>
Opening Balance Sept. 1/12	\$16,809.60

INCOME:

Bank Charges Reversal	\$200.77
OMAF Grant	1,000.00
GIC Interest	116.76
Fundraising	125.05
Draw Table	468.80
Garden Tour	160.00
Membership	1,690.00
Plant Sale	4,059.71
Loblaws	25.00
Bake Sale	124.75
Tecumseh Judging	400.00
Refreshment Table	194.91
Newsletter Advertising	75.00
Premiums	103.00
Miscellaneous	22.00
District 15 AGM	170.00
Workshop	270.00
Donations	<u>20.00</u>
Total Income	\$9,225.75

EXPENSES:

District 15	450.00
OHA dues & Liability Insurance	884.75
P.O. box & room rentals	1,544.36
Bank charges	73.06
Board	46.17
Community Plantings	240.48
Education Table	57.44
Flower Show	1,232.60
Fundraising	63.00
Garden Tour	607.37
Miscellaneous	98.44
Premiums	507.65
Newsletter	406.50
Plant Sale	532.69
Programme Speakers	1,350.00
Publicity	310.75
Refreshments	38.15
Workshop	380.37
AGM	<u>54.84</u>
Total Expenses	\$8,878.62
Net Income	<u>347.13</u>

Closing Balance 8/31/13 \$17,156.73

CHRISTMAS WORKSHOP
With the "Christmas Belles"
and
Silent Auction Bake Sale



Come and join Monika Schouten & Carol Ashford, the 'Christmas Belles', as they demonstrate how to put together a Christmas arrangement on December 10th.

This year greenery has been purchased and been treated to help it last and keep it pliable. Due to the cost of purchasing greenery, **SHS members will be charged \$10 for the workshop**. Plan on making a table center, mantle spray or other **small** arrangement; bring your own small containers, pre-soaked oasis and any embellishments you wish to include: eg. pinecones, ribbons, berries, candles, etc.

You may also wish to take part in the **BAKE SALE, WHICH WILL BE HELD**, during the workshop. Please bring in your pies, tarts, cookies, squares, fudge etc. on paper plates to be sold to the highest bidder by Silent Auction. If you are a busy person this is a great way to stock up on your Christmas baking – buy someone else's home made goodies!!



REFRESHMENTS

A big Thank You to **Anita King, Mary Hachey, & Eleonora Roberts** for the goodies donated for the November meeting.

Don't forget to **LUG YOUR MUG** to the meetings. We should all avoid polystyrene

(commonly known as the brand Styrofoam) for cups, plates, carry-out containers and anything else that might touch consumables.

We all know that polystyrene is bad for the environment: but also know that it isn't so great for your health either. Plastics marked with the recycling code 6, for polystyrene, can be fashioned into soft or rigid foams, and are in common use. Not only do they require petroleum to make, but also they take eons to break down in the environment.

But what you might not know is that polystyrene can also release potentially toxic breakdown products (including styrene), particularly when heated! If you don't want harmful chemicals leaching into your food or drink, even at low concentrations, choose ceramic, glass (recycled), paper or safer plastics like numbers 1, 2 or 5.

Play it safe and bring your own coffee mug to the next meeting!

Mary Hachey, Refreshments

WHAT EXACTLY DO GARDENERS DO IN THE WINTERTIME?

There are lots of interesting activities — garden related that is — that gardeners may want to engage in.

- Clean your tools. Gardening tools, by their very nature, can get very dirty. Winter is the ideal time to clean them, sharpen them if necessary and make a list of potential replacements if need be.
- Clean out your garage. It will make gardening a whole lot easier come spring if the garage is orderly and the various bits of "junk" are gone.
- Remember to water any tender plants — like oleander trees — which you might be overwintering in the garage. You don't need to do this daily or weekly, but check them every few weeks and add some water as needed.
- Research plants that you are interested in. After all, you can't really spend much time in the physical garden, so enjoy the virtual one. Remember that if you are using the Internet, sites with .edu or .org extensions are more likely to have accurate information. The first refers to educational institutions — that's where the research is done. The second refers for organizations, such as the

Rhododendron Society for example. Again, this is where you're going to get your most accurate and current information.

- Study all the plant catalogs which have come your way. Decide what you want to add to your garden. Daydream about the gorgeous flowers you'll have or the bountiful harvest you'll gather.
- Tend to your houseplants or add some new ones. It's very easy to lose yourself in your outdoor garden in the warmer weather and therefore neglect your houseplants. So, use the winter to cut off dead leaves and plan which plants need to be repotted come spring.
- Start a garden with your children or grandchildren using kitchen veggies. Potatoes will easily grow in a pot or planter. You can cut a potato into several pieces to make several plants, just make sure that each piece has at least one or two "eyes." This is where growth takes place. Pineapple tops will root easily as well. If you have a nice big window in a sunny area, you can keep your herbs growing. If you have carrot or radish seeds left from last year, you can grow them indoors in pots, too, as long as you have a nice sunny window.
- A roter is a fascinating piece of indoor gardening equipment. A glass bulb, it is filled with water and cuttings from various plants, such as philodendron, can be placed in the water. It's amazing how quickly they develop roots. Once nicely rooted, you can take the new plants and put them in any planter that you want. In addition to providing you with more plants, the root is decorative as well, since many come in different colors.
- Feed the birds. Remember that in winter they are having more difficulty finding food since berries are pretty much gone, seeds have already fallen off annuals, the ground is frozen so no worms and insects to a large extent have died off. Keeping the birds returning to your yard is a way of keeping the balance of nature. Come spring they'll be there to eat the bugs that are plaguing you.
- If you enjoy using your fireplace over the winter add the ashes to your compost pile.
- Read gardening-related mysteries like Rex Stout's Nero Wolfe who loves his orchids or Ellis Peters, whose main character is a monk, who is also a herbalist.

- Catch up on your other hobbies (sewing, quilting, photography, woodworking, etc.)
- Rest so that you'll have lots of energy to start gardening in the spring — implementing all of those plans you've developed over the winter.

*Ellen Barcel,
freelance writer & master gardener*

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS

Poinsettias (*Euphorbia pulcherrima*) remain one of the most popular holiday flowers. Hybridizers have expanded the range of colors from the familiar red to pastel yellow and vibrant bi-colors. One of the most common questions after Christmas is "How can I care for my poinsettia so that it will bloom again next Christmas?" While this can be done, it's a very fussy, exacting process and since the plants are not that expensive, you might just choose to start fresh next year.

For those of you who are undaunted, the process for saving your poinsettia and getting it to rebloom begins with the care you give it the first season.

Light - Place it near a sunny window. South, east or west facing windows are preferable to a north facing window. Poinsettias are tropicals and will appreciate as much direct sunlight as you can provide.

Heat - To keep the poinsettia in bloom as long as possible, maintain a temperature of 65 - 75 degrees F. during the day. Dropping the temperature to about 60 degrees F. at night will not hurt the plant. However, cold drafts or allowing the leaves to touch a cold window can injure the leaves and cause premature leaf drop. If you've ever see a gangly poinsettia in bloom, with only a couple of sad looking leaves hanging on, it was probably exposed to temperatures that were too cool or extreme shifts in temperature.

Water - Water the plant whenever the surface feels dry to the touch. Water until it drains out the bottom, but don't let the plant sit in water. Wilting is another common cause of leaf drop. A wilted plant can be revived and salvaged, but it will take another season to improve its appearance.

Humidity - Lack of humidity during dry seasons, in

particular winter, is an ongoing houseplant problem. If your home tends to be dry and your poinsettia is in direct light, you will find yourself watering frequently, possibly every day.

AFTER CHRISTMAS CARE

January - March: Keep watering the poinsettia whenever the surface is dry.

April: Starting April 1st, gradually decrease water, allowing the pot to get dry between waterings. Be careful the stem does not begin to shrivel. This is a sign the plant is too stressed and is dying. In a week or two, when the plant has acclimated to this drying process, move it to a cool spot like the basement or a heated garage. You want to keep it at about 60 degrees F.

May: In mid-May, cut the stems back to about 4 inches and repot in a slightly larger container, with new potting soil. Water it well. Place the newly potted plant back into the brightest window you have and once again keep it at a temperature of 65 - 75 degrees F. Continue watering whenever the surface of the soil feels dry.

Watch for new growth. Once new growth appears, begin fertilizing every two weeks with a complete fertilizer. Follow fertilizer label recommendations.

June: Move the poinsettia outside, pot and all. Keep it in a partially shaded location and maintain your watering and fertilizing schedule.

July: In early July, pinch back each stem by about one inch. This is to encourage a stout, well branched plant. If left unpinched, the poinsettia will grow tall and spindly.

August: By mid-August, the stems should have branched and leafed out. Once again, pinch or cut the new stems, leaving 3-4 leaves on each shoot. Bring the plant back indoors and back into your brightest window. Continue watering and fertilizing.

September: Continue regular watering and fertilizing. Make sure the temperature stays above 65 degrees F.

October Poinsettias are short-day plants, meaning their bud set is affected by the length of daylight. To



re-bloom, poinsettias need about 10 weeks with 12 hours or less of sunlight per day. You will have to artificially create these conditions and it's crucial that you be diligent.

Beginning October 1st, keep your plant in complete darkness from 5 pm to 8 am. Any exposure to light will delay blooming. Many people place their plants in a closet, but if light gets in through the cracks or if you open and use the closet, it will affect the bud set. Move the plant back to the sunny window during the daytime and continue watering and fertilizing.

November: Around the last week of November, you can stop the darkness treatment and allow the plant to remain in the window. You should see flower buds at this

point

December - Stop fertilizing about December 15th. Keep watering and treat your plant the way you did when you first brought it home in bloom. If all has gone well, it should be back in bloom and ready to begin the process all over again.

WHAT DOES THIS IMPATIENS DISEASE MEAN TO MY GARDEN?

THE BAD NEWS

Impatiens Downy Mildew is a fungal disease. It started in Europe crossed to Florida and has recently become a major problem in Ontario and is now found throughout Canada and North America. It is part of a group called water molds. It causes yellowing leaves, almost complete leaf loss, and death of *impatiens*. If you turn the leaves over and look at the underneath they will be dusted with what looks like white flour. Despite a similar name and certain similarities in symptoms, downy mildew is not related to the powdery mildews.

The disease is spread by spores produced on the underside of infected leaves. These spores are splashed by rain, and are also carried for long distances on the wind. Extended periods of leaf wetness are required for spore production and infection, so severe outbreaks of downy mildew are only likely to occur during wet summers. This year conditions were ideal for spread of this fungus in Ontario.

The airborne spores remain viable for just a short time, but the fungus can also produce a second spore type (a resting spore) within the affected plant tissues. These resting spores are much more resilient, and are released into the soil as the diseased material rots down. If *impatiens* plants are placed in a flowerbed that was infected with downy mildew the year before, the new crop will not have a chance because downy mildew spores overwinter in our Canadian conditions for more than one season. Even if you didn't plant *Impatiens* last year chances are someone in your neighborhood did and the spores will infect your plants. There is no cure available for growers or home gardeners. It is likely that many growers will either dramatically reduce the quantities of *Impatiens* they grow or not grow them at all.

THE GOOD NEWS

This fungus only affects *Impatiens walleriana* which is the basic shade loving annual, in single and double forms however it does not affect New Guinea or sun impatiens.

WHAT TO DO NOW

Mark Cullen suggests that "this year and perhaps in the following few years, avoid buying any walleriana type *Impatiens*. This is going to save you time, money, and the visual disaster that the mildew will bring to your *Impatiens*".

There are many other annuals that will thrive in shade, tuberous begonias and angel wing begonias, wax begonias, browallia, coleus and pansies.

PREVENTION AND CONTROL

If you have or had infected plants, the plants should be removed and put in the garbage, not your compost. Thoroughly clean containers used for *Impatiens* and then soak the pots in a 10% bleach solution. Decontaminate any tools that you used to work with the *Impatiens*.

If you are going to buy *Impatiens* anyway; use pots - do not plant in the ground, use new soil in a very clean pot, keep the plant dry, only water from the bottom, give them lots of space with good air circulation, dispose of any of any infected leaves in the garbage or burn them.

Monica Ross

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP DESK

Thank you so much for your patience as I ease into my role as Membership Chair. I am not a secretary by trade and my computer skills are limited so some of the tasks have been quite daunting. If there are any issues with spelling mistakes on your name tags or you are not receiving your newsletter please inform me and I will make sure that it gets corrected by the next meeting.



The new name tags will be hanging on a board in an organized manner so you will be able to grab them easily. I think everyone will get to know each other with ease now that we can see everyone's names! Please remember to drop your name tag in the box at the end of the evening.

There will be a draw at the December meeting for those who had paid their membership in full so don't forget to get a ticket from me once you sign in. Good luck and thanks for paying those dues!

Life Members will have a separate sign in sheet and name tags will be in a separate pile on their own. Also, if you have not received your membership card, please drop by and see me to collect it.

On another note, I would like to thank all those lovely ladies who have been helping me at the membership desk and my greeters as well. I am still looking for greeters for the spring, April to June. A sign up sheet is at the membership desk.

Heather Tregaskes , Shirley Boyes and **Diana DiBase** will be helping me out at the desk in December.

Grace McElhinney, Membership Chair

VOLUNTEER HOURS

Please remember to submit your volunteer hours to Eleonora Roberts on a regular basis. Send to gattescohouse@rogers.com or write them down and hand them in at the meetings.

WINTER SUN

Morning's here, but where's the sun?
Does it not know the day's begun?
Does it not know we need its light
To banish shadows of the night?

Does it not know, should it be told
That winter nights are long and cold?

Without its beams to start our day,
We have to find another way
To warm our fingers and our toes
And thaw icicles from our nose.

So, come on, Sun, what's keeping you?
You've far to go and things to do.

Bernice Maddux

BEFORE YOU FORGET

Now in late November it's time to make a list of what worked and what didn't in your garden. Think of any problems particular plants created or solved.

Perhaps

1. Some are unhealthy, prone to disease or insect problems.
2. Some are growing too big and taking over space planned for other plants.
3. Some are struggling, planted in the wrong place with too little or too much sun, too much or too little moisture, inappropriate soil PH.
4. Are you still waiting for that special plant to earn its keep? Is it time for it to go?
5. What can you do to solve these problems?

Matching plants to the right location is critical, so carefully review the needs of any plants that have chronic problems and consider replacing them with something more suitable to the location. If you have a constant problem with disease or insects, take a look at what you are growing and how it is planted. If everything is crammed in together with little air circulation, mildew and other diseases will often be a problem. Insect problems can often be cured with the right companion plants, or insecticidal soap, if not maybe it is time for something different. Be ruthless with plants that grow too big, too fast; make the decision I am going to cut this in half every spring and toss the rest in the city compost. What plants did really well?

1. Do you want more of the same plant or plant family? Can you split them? Do you have space for more?
2. What function do these plants have? Are they just pretty? Do they make you smile?

There is usually at least one part of a garden that does really well, what is growing in this area, is it a particular color combination that makes you smile. Does this area always look good with a succession of blooms throughout the season? This information could be a clue to what else would do well.

Did the weeds get away from you, the seeds were started too late, you forgot to buy particular annuals, or search for a special plant, that expensive new annual was a disappointment? Create a garden calendar/journal and to do list; you can even add it to your Outlook or other on line calendar. Did you get overrun with zucchini or tomatoes? If so, write it down because you won't remember by next May.

Did you get a chance to sit back and smell the roses? If not think about what aspect of garden maintenance is taking so much time. You should be able to maintain 400 square feet of garden (not yard) in an hour per week. If you have plants that require babying, wrapping up, and constant deadheading to look satisfactory - just toss them and find something less demanding.

Monica Ross



Have something garden related you wish to sell?
Want to tell us about your home business?
Did you know you can advertise it in our newsletter?
For further information on sizes and costs of ad please contact Amgad Boles at (647) 933-3808 or amgadg@rogers.com

A GARDENER'S TOP TEN

Inspired by the Letterman Top 10, here are the Top Ten signs you have gone over the garden edge – thanks to the Gardeners Network



10. Your favorite poem is "Roses are Red, Violets are blue.
9. Your kids are named Rose, Violet, Daisy and Zucchini.
8. You have 8 X 10 family pictures of your Tomatoes and Peppers on your office shelf.
7. Your idea of Saturday Date Night is going out in the garden and hand pollinating the plants.
6. You think a cocktail is liquid fertilizer.
5. You rush home from work and go straight to the garden and hug your roses. (Ouch!) Then, you go in to your house and see you family.
4. On Christmas Eve, visions of "Sugar Peas" dance in your head.
3. After the first frost, you are seen holding funeral services in your garden.
2. You take your kids multiple vitamins from them to use as a supplement to your plants fertilizer.

And, the number one sign that you have gone over the garden edge:

1. Every Spring your family files a "Missing Person's" report. You remain missing all summer, and mysteriously re-appear in the fall.

FARMER'S ALMANAC WEATHER

DECEMBER 2013: temperature -5°C (1°C below avg.); precipitation 60mm (20mm above avg.); **Dec 1-5:** Flurries; cold east, turning mild west; **Dec 6-7:** Showers, mild east; rain to heavy snow west; **Dec 8-12:** Sunny, cold; **Dec 13-17:** Periods of rain and snow east, snow west; mild; **Dec 18-**

19: Sunny, very cold; **Dec 20-29:** Heavy rain and snow, then flurries, cold; **Dec 30-31:** Snow.

Annual Weather Summary: November 2013 to October 2014

Winter temperatures will be above normal, on average, with the coldest periods in mid and late December, early and late January, and early to mid-February. Precipitation will be above normal in the east and below normal in the west. Snowfall will be below normal in the east and much greater than normal in the west. The snowiest periods will be in early to mid-December, late December, early January, and mid-January.

April and May will be slightly warmer and rainier than normal.

Summer will be warmer than normal, with the hottest temperatures in early to mid-July, mid- to late July, and early to mid-August. Rainfall will be near normal in southeast Ontario, but below normal elsewhere.

September and October will be warmer and drier than normal.



"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"

Questions, concerns, ideas, want to **volunteer** call Presidents: Sue & Rob Harshman (905) 607-2802
Editor: Carol Ashford (905) 858-0748
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SHS website: gardenontario.org/site.php/streets