

March 2016 Newsletter

Gardening is a labour full of tranquility and satisfaction; natural and instructive, and as such contributes to the most serious contemplation, experience, health and longevity.

- John Evelyn, 1666

From the President's Pen

Happy spring! We finally made it. March is such an exciting month as we see the blanket of snow erased from our gardens. We all wait with bated breath for the weather to warm and the days to become longer.

We start to see lots of signs of new life with birds starting to appear for their summer visit. Our minds dance with new projects which we would want to undertake this spring and we start to leaf through books of seeds and bulbs. All the stores are bounding with new tools and we start to think "I need to pick up that"!

Seedy Sunday was such a successful day because volunteers from our society gave freely of their time to educate participants

on what we do and why we do it. I am grateful that Carol Wilson and her team undertook this task and did such a fantastic job.

This year we have an early spring so tulips are starting to appear in the stores. The pastels are a welcomed change to the darker and more festive colours of winter activities. Life is there to be embraced.

On a personal note, I would like to thank all of those who offered their condolences on the recent loss of my daughter. The outpouring of love and support has made the last few weeks bearable. Our family is truly blessed to know such genuine and caring people. My heartfelt appreciation.

Jane Law



Lanark Orchid

Renals

Perth & District
Horticultural
Society

P.O. Box 494
Perth, ON, K7H 3G1
www.gardenontario.org

District #2 of the
Ontario Horticultural
Association

Upcoming Meetings

On April 12, 2016, the planned topic is "Garden Features" with speakers Colleen O'Connell and Dave Cybulski.

On May 10, 2016, Dr. Riddick will speak on "Tick-Proofing Your Property."

Junior Gardeners

Junior Gardener Supplies:
Please bring in your houseplant

cuttings, clean 4" flower pots, strawberry containers, yogurt containers, styrofoam trays, Canadian Tire Money (so far we have \$30 in CT\$ to use to purchase supplies).

Thanks for your continued support, Robin McIntosh and Karen Kristine

Canada Blooms

If you are craving some garden inspiration, be sure to take a trip

President: Jane Law • **Newsletter:** Irene Hofmann

to Canada Blooms which is on from March 11 - 20, 2016 at the Enercare Centre, Exhibition Place, 100 Princes' Blvd., in Toronto.

D2 AGM

April 23, 2016 – Smiths Falls

Smiths Falls Horticultural Society is hosting the D2 AGM on Saturday, April 23, 2016 at the Legion. Registration is \$20.00 per person. The closing date for registration is April 9, 2016. If you plan to attend, please see Barb Smith at the meeting on Tuesday to register.

Ottawa Orchid Society Show

April 16 and 17

The Ottawa Orchid Society is pleased to announce that its 35th annual show will be held on April 16 and 17, 2016 at our new location at the RA Centre, 2451 Riverside Drive in Ottawa.

This show is one of Eastern Ontario's largest annual floral events with more than 35 displays of live plants and over 600 different orchids from around the world. It's the best opportunity in the region to experience the colour, fragrance and beauty of the world's most exotic flower. It brings together growers and hobbyists from Eastern Ontario, as well as from the U.S., Quebec and throughout Ontario.

Besides the many orchid exhibits, there are Ikebana floral arrangements, a gallery of orchid-inspired art works, crafts and photography. Volunteers will host educational tours; expert growers from the Society will be on hand to diagnose pests and diseases and provide advice on growing healthy plants. The sales area will feature more than 25 vendors, including international orchid breeders offering a range of outstanding plants and supplies. Orchids are a preferred subject for many photographers. Tripods are welcome on Sunday morning of the show, from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

Show hours are 12-5 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday 9-5 p.m. Admission is \$12 for adults; seniors and children over 12 are \$10. Admission

will be reduced by \$2 on presentation of the discount coupon at the door. As well, groups of 15 or more are eligible for an additional group discount if arranged in advance with the Show Chairman. The RA cafeteria is open during the event.

More information on the show and extra discount coupons can be found on our web site at www.ottawaorchidsociety.com.

Monthly Financial Statement

January 31, 2016

Ledger Balance January 1, 2016 \$3,063.34

Receipts -

Misc. Donations, general funds	\$ 26.00
Memberships	180.00
Non-Member Fees	9.00
Yearbook/Sponsorship	300.00
Miscellaneous	13.00
	\$ 528.00

Expenses -

Yearbook	\$ 613.57
Meeting Expenses	702.12
Speakers	75.00
Library	31.45
Advertising	45.20
Miscellaneous Donations	100.00
Bank Service Fees	2.50
	\$ 1,569.84

Ledger Balance January 31, 2016 \$2,021.50

Reserve fund – GIC matures

July 18, 2016 - \$2,553.92

Fertilizing Houseplants & Other March Gardening Tips

*Charlie Nardozi, Horticulturist and
Leonard Perry, UVM Extension Horticulturist*

Fertilizing houseplants, cutting and forcing woody branches such as pussy willows into bloom indoors, and cutting back leek seedlings are some of the gardening activities for this

LAST CALL

The deadline for the D2 Photo Contest is March 16, 2016. For entry information and details, go to <http://www.gardenontario.org/site.php/district2>

month. Now that the days are getting longer, your houseplants either will be resuming vigorous growth, or have been growing (perhaps blooming) with the bright days of winter and in need of some fertilizer. It may seem a contradiction to have growth in winter, but with leaves off the trees and reflection from the snow, even the shorter days and less sun typically of winter can cause houseplants to grow. More light ends up reaching them than with summer shade.

If organically inclined, you can use a seaweed or fish emulsion blend for fertilizer. But look for one labeled as “no odor” to avoid the usual pungent smell. You can fertilize monthly at the label’s recommended dilution rate, or fertilize every time you water using a quarter-strength mix. Such a fertilizer regime applies to non-organic products as well. Or you can use a slow-release fertilizer product that lasts over a long time, if you tend to forget to fertilize.

When the pussy willow buds are beginning to swell, go on a scavenger hunt for them in wet areas. Just make sure you’re not cutting on private property without permission. Take 2-foot cuttings from the bush, trying not to deform it by taking too many cuttings in one location. Bring them indoors and place them in water in a cool room. This is a process called “forcing”.

You can force many other woody branches too. If your shrubs were unfortunate to get coated with and damaged by ice this past winter, this might be a good use for broken branches. Some like to soak branches in a bathtub overnight before putting in vases of water.

The closer to the natural bloom time of the shrub or tree, the more rapidly it can be forced into bloom indoors. Some of the quickest to bring into bloom by forcing, often in 2 to 3 weeks, are spirea, forsythia, honeysuckle, pussy willow, shadblow, witchhazel, birch, red maple, and weeping willow. Those taking 4 to 5 weeks to force into bloom include flowering quince, lilac, redbud, dogwood, rhododendron, crabapple, and pear.

If you started leeks indoors, they are probably getting pretty tall and leggy by now. Trim them back to about 2 inches in height, so they don’t get spindly and fall over. Like grasses, leeks grow from near the soil line, so you won’t harm the growing point by trimming tops back.

Dig out seed-starting trays and pots and wash them in soapy water. Then, in a bucket or work sink or flat plastic tub, sterilize them in a solution

of one part bleach to nine parts water, or one part household disinfectant such as Lysol to two parts water. This will help prevent diseases such as “damping off” on seedlings.

In planning your veggie garden layout, avoid planting members of the same plant family in the same spot they were in last year, or even the year before. Members of the same family are susceptible to the same diseases and insect infestations. For example, avoid planting members of the tomato family (tomatoes, potatoes, peppers, and eggplant) in the same place year after year.

Other activities this month include visiting a maple sugarhouse event, taking mowers in for tune-ups before the spring rush, resisting soil preparation if your garden is too wet, pruning fruit trees if needed (when temperatures are above freezing), and buying some potted flowering spring bulbs such as tulips, hyacinths, or mini daffodils for color indoors.

(Charlie Nardozzi is a nationally known horticulturist, author, gardening consultant, and garden coach; CharlieNardozzi.com).

More from Charleston

The Charleston Horticultural Society had a wonderful speaker 8th February and he spoke to a full house, over 300 people in attendance. Jon Carloftis has many credentials, is an author, garden designer, TV personality and has written over 200 articles for many magazines you would very familiar with: Country Living, Southern Gardening, Martha Stewart Living, Town and Country, to name some of them. We have probably already enjoyed some of his creations in gardening magazines. His focus for this talk was on small gardens although he indicated he would share how to also take a large space and make it appear smaller and more intimate. One of his many specialties is rooftop gardens in New York City.

He had several slides of his amazing work and shared why he took the approaches he did on several of his designs. Here are some of his ideas for small gardening:

- When beginning with a blank slate, start by identifying its problems and how you would fix them. A “problem” could be a downspout, ugly wall, propane tank, air conditioning unit. Some solutions for such challenges could be encasing the offender in a trellis, painting

the wall and even adding "a window" which actually is a mirror and reflects the view back into the gardening space. When using mirrors in a garden, watch out for sun reflection and potential for sun reflection to burn something else. In shadier areas, mirrors work very well. He also uses large garden pieces/art to enhance a small space and draw the eye.

- Mr. Carloftis designs in the winter because he says "I can see the blank slate of the garden." It is more difficult to put your finger on what you would like to improve/change in your garden when it is full and lush.

- Join two buildings with an avenue of trees. The result is as if you have "been somewhere." Short, trimmed bushes could work well too.

- In all gardens, firstly pick a focal point and then work with your chosen point, e.g. nicely shaped tree, flowering tree, garden art, etc.

- Fibreglass columns are available (from Home Depot, Lowe's), are light to work with, easy to paint and make stunning trellises either to walk

under or obscure a less than stellar view.

- Lacking space for entertaining in a small yard? Use your driveway as part of your entertainment area. Put casters on planted boxes which can then be moved around either for entertainment purposes or on your whim.

- If you are working with an ugly view/building next door or such, put something beautiful in front of it. Takes the eye off of the ugly part.

- Recycle what you have whenever you can: raise beds, use old bricks/stones to edge or for pathways, bamboo sticks make good garden stakes, old farm equipment can look spectacular in a garden at times.

- Got a problem area, e.g. very shaded, acidic soil? Plant containers and place them in these challenging areas.

For more information on Jon Carloftis and to see some of his amazing work and ideas, look for him at www.joncarloftis.com, Fine Gardens

Submitted by Lynda Haddon (Feb. 2016)

Horticultural Heritage:

*From the archives of The Perth Courier
Friday, March 11, 1910*

A Complete Garden has Three Essentials

The usefulness of the Perth Horticultural Society was shown in a tangible form last Friday night, when a lecture was given under its auspices in Library hall, by Mr. R.B. Whyte, of Ottawa, president of the Ontario Horticultural Association. The lecture was well attended. Mr. Henry Taylor, the local president, presided. In opening, Mr. Whyte referred to different phases of the horticultural act and narrated the good work being done. The grant given a society must be divided up: it was not to be spent on one department alone. The grant was proportionate to the more a society spends, the more it receives. The many good things a horticultural society can do for a community are: promoting garden work in schools and giving of seeds to school children. A society can better itself by monthly exhibitions of stuff grown by members, regularly established question box at society's meetings, and garden meetings.

The subject for the evening, "A Busy Man's Garden," was featured by a ground plan of his own garden. His garden was half an acre in size. It was full to overflowing and laid out for the sake of beauty and convenience. He did all the

work himself before eight o'clock in the morning and after tea. His garden was for the benefit and pleasure of his own family and friends. A complete garden contains fruit, flowers and vegetables. It was made artistic by careful study in laying it out symmetrically. Everything must be convenient and neat. There should be good wide paths. He did not favour the box-like paths. His paths were made of boulders. They were always clean and dry. There were pleasant resting places conveniently located. Good sharp tools were needed.

In particularizing on some varieties of vegetable, the speaker favoured "Golden Bantam" corn, "Dwarf Champion" tomato, "Eclipse" beet, "Malakoff Early" and "County Gentleman" were also two good corn varieties.

Mr. Whyte favours fruit and flowers. His garden is a mass of bloom. The true success of the flower grower is continuity of bloom and the speaker gave a list of the varieties that would give this from April to fall. A householder should have his garden produce all kinds of fruit. The speaker gave by chart a list of the best kinds of fruit, annuals and perennials and stated the best excitement in gardening was the effort to produce something new.

Mr. Whyte is a veritable encyclopedia on horticulture and answered numerous questions. He was accorded a hearty vote of thanks.