



Perth & District Horticultural Society

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What's Up (PDHS News)

March 2020

President's Pen

Is it going to be an early spring, or is this a false spring? Mother nature playing with us, getting our hopes up. I hope that it is an early spring so we can get out in the gardens soon to prep them for the upcoming growing season. Just in case spring is around the corner, I will start my seeds under the grow lights soon so that by the end of next month, they will be ready to go in the greenhouse to harden off and be hearty and healthy to transplant in May.

This month will be busy for our Junior Gardener committee as we get the supplies ready for our volunteers to start teaching the program on April 9th. This is my tenth-year volunteering for the Junior Gardener program. Each year I look forward to meeting the students and walking them through the different phases of horticulture: planting seeds and potatoes, discussing soils, mulch and compost; designing dish gardens; and creating flower arrangements. If just one young person takes away the desire to garden and watch things grow, I know I have done my job!

Linda Bartlett
President



PDHS Plant Sale 2020

Our Annual Plant Sale is the biggest fundraiser we have for our Society. This year it will be held on Saturday, May 16th, 2020, in the gymnasium at The Stewart School. Our Plant Sale is usually successful and helps us to continue our Junior Gardener's Program, which we offer in our area elementary schools.

This year we would like to try a different way to collect plants for the Plant Sale. We want to set up a system where we have a few members volunteer to pot up plants brought in by all members starting at the beginning of May. The idea would be that members would dig up and split their plants and then put them in bags, boxes, pots, or whatever is convenient for you. If you could identify the plants when digging them up, this would be much appreciated. Members would water their plants until they can drop them off at Robin McIntosh's place in Perth or Richard Catchpaw's place on Keays Road.

We will have three potting-up sessions: Friday, May 8th, Saturday, May 9th and Tuesday, May 12th, from 1:00 to 4:00 PM. We will need six to eight volunteers for each session to meet at Richard's place to pot-up the plants and get them ready for the plant sale. The volunteers would also create name tags for the plants. We would then transport them to The Stewart School on Friday, May 15th, to set up the display of plants and price them. We will need

volunteers for Friday evening to set up the plants and again on Saturday for the plant sale.

We hope this will bring in more plant donations from our members and give some other members who do not have gardens anymore but still love to play in the dirt, the opportunity to do so.

If you have any questions or suggestions for this event, please see me or email me at pdhsmembers@gmail.com. David Archer will be the Plant Coordinator for this event but won't be back until our April meeting.

Linda Bartlett



Junior Gardeners Program

Again, this year the program will run once a week on Thursdays for an hour each week from April 9 to May 14.

Thanks all for continuing to donate strawberry containers, yogurt containers (750, 650, or 500 ml), small sour cream or cottage cheese containers as well as Canadian Tire money.

Ruth Nelson has been busy with the plant cuttings. She advises that we now have enough cuttings for this spring's program.

Please consider volunteering with us, it is a lot of fun and very rewarding. If interested, please contact the co-coordinators, either Sandi Sissons: s.sissons1@outlook.com or Robin McIntosh: robinmcintosh435@gmail.com.



**SPRING IS NATURE'S WAY OF
SAYING, 'LET'S PARTY!'**

—Robin Williams



Looking Ahead to April 14th

Lynn Lavoie on Dazzling Hydrangeas – How to Get Them and Keep Them

Hydrangeas are among the most popular flowering shrubs, and it's easy to understand why. Hydrangeas are showy, versatile and adaptable. However, to get the best out of your hydrangeas, there are a few factors to consider - most importantly, the variety that you are growing. We will discuss the main types and how to maintain them, for a recurring dazzling display!

Lynn Lavoie is an avid plant enthusiast, who owns and runs Monarch Garden Design. Her botanical fervour led to a late-career change in her fifties. Lynn went back to Guelph University to study horticulture while working as a seasonal gardener at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington. Since graduating, she has learned lots from staffing the perennial and nursery sections of three garden centres, working in landscape maintenance and installation and launching her garden design business.



Gardening Question Box

- Q. *How and when should I cut back my clematis?***
- A.** It would depend on when the clematis blooms. If it is a spring bloomer, that means it would bloom on old growth, and buds were produced last year and have had to survive all winter. In our climate, these are more problematic to get to bloom. Do not cut these down in the spring as you would be removing the flower buds. Once they have bloomed, selective pruning is OK but not necessary. Try to keep the vine from getting unruly. Remember where you prune the TOP bud on that branch is where

it will make new growth. And the new growth could be quite long.

If it is a summer bloomer (after the middle of June) like a purple Jackman, it is easier to prune. They can be pruned to the ground if you want to go that short). They bloom on new growth, so on the growth put on that spring will bloom.

*Paul Pietsch,
Lanark County Master Gardener*

Your questions are welcome. Drop them into our question box at one meeting, and we will answer at least one Question in our newsletter at our next meeting.



Community Gardens

We are very grateful for the dedicated PDHS volunteer gardeners who help us take care of three of Perth’s gardens. Our focus is principally the Museum; cleaning, weeding and planting constitute most of the work. We are always in the garden unless you receive an e-mail from me, Lynda Haddon, indicating we are ready to clean up and plant the Flag Garden in the Tay Basin. We usually begin gardening around the beginning of April, or when the ground is sufficiently defrosted.

We garden a total of three hours a month, on a Thursday morning, from 9:30 until 11:00 AM, EVERY OTHER THURSDAY. There are limited tools available at the Museum, so most volunteers like to bring their own.

If you think you would like to join us in the gardens, please either check off the appropriate box on your membership form or leave your name and E-mail address with Janet Weiss, our very efficient membership volunteer. She will pass along your name and address to me, and I

will contact you when we are ready to get started.

There is some parking on the street, but if you would like to park in the Museum parking lot, you can do so. Please let me know on our first gardening day, and I will get you a parking pass.

See you in the gardens and thank you for considering joining us.

Lynda Haddon
Community Garden Coordinator
lynda@jumelle.ca

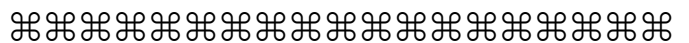


Perth Seedy Sunday

PDHS participated in Seedy Sunday, organized by the Perth Farmer’s Market. We based our theme on our Junior Gardeners program. We had a workshop for children to learn to plant potatoes in a Yogurt container as well as tomato seeds in handmade newspaper pots. Barb Michie, our member who does a fabulous job of collecting seeds and packaging them up, was there for the whole day giving away seed packets for donations for the Junior Gardeners program. She raised \$180.00 in donations. We had a great day, and it was enjoyed by our volunteers as well as the people who stopped by to see us. We sold ten new memberships as well as two renewals. We did a Free Membership draw, and the lucky winner was Pip Hanes. Congratulations!

A big thank you to our volunteers: Sandi Sissons, Kathy Allen, Jane Avery, Robin McIntosh, Richard Catchpaw, Joan Hunter, Nancy Kelly, Catherine Stephen-Dunn, Ute Schall, Mary Dixon, Phyllis DeRutyer and Barb Michie.

Linda Bartlett



District 2 AGM

The D2 AGM to be held on Saturday, April 18, 2020 at Johnny Leroux Stittsville Community Arena, 10 Warner-Colpitts Lane, Stittsville, will be hosted by the West Carlton and Stittsville Goulbourn Horticultural Societies. The theme for this year's AGM is "Butterflies and Bees." It is \$20.00 Registration fee which includes lunch. Please see Barb Smith, our Treasurer, if you wish to attend. Deadline for registration is March 31, 2020.



Repotting Houseplants

Unlike outdoor plants, which get lots of attention throughout the growing season—pruning, deadheading, fertilizing, mulching, and watering—houseplants often just sit on their shelf, enjoying their regular or semi-regular drink of water. But there are a few things you can do to show your houseplants a little TLC, including repotting them from time to time. This easy task gives you the opportunity to refresh and replenish the soil, eliminate salt and mineral residue from watering, perhaps give your plant a bigger pot to grow in, and do a little maintenance if the foliage has gotten unruly. Repotting should also stimulate new growth and allow your plant to flourish in its new home. There may even be an opportunity to divide a houseplant, so you may need more than one pot.

Spring is the best time to repot houseplants. The day before you plan on repotting, give your plant a nice long drink. The day of, protect your working area with newspaper or a tablecloth. Have your clean pot(s) at the ready. If your plant needs more room, you want to make sure the pot is no more than two inches bigger in diameter than the previous pot to avoid root rot.

If your pot doesn't have a drainage hole though this is highly recommended, add a layer (about half an inch) of activated charcoal to the bottom of your pot. Then add a few inches of potting soil. Make sure your soil is formulated for the plant you are repotting, such as cactus soil or African violet soil.

Carefully remove the plant from its pot and trim away any dead leaves. Tease some of the old soil away from the roots. Gently place the plant in the center of its new pot, so that the plant's base, when covered, is about a half inch from the rim. Add houseplant soil around the root ball to fill in any gaps, ensuring roots are covered. Use your finger to gently tamp down the soil, eliminating any air pockets. Give the plant a light watering. Your plant may go through a period where it looks a little under the weather, but this could just be the shock of transplanting. Having a regular houseplant maintenance schedule will keep your plants happy and healthy.

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Name the Newsletter Contest

A huge round of applause for our new Newsletter Coordinator, Jane Avery.

But alas our newsletter does not have a name, so we have decided to run a contest to name our newsletter. All members are eligible to submit a name. Please submit your choice by March 31st, 2020 to Linda by email at pdhsmembers@gmail.com. Our Executive and Newsletter Coordinator will decide on the winner, who will receive a prize at our next meeting. Good luck!