

October 2015 Newsletter

"Youth is like spring, an over-praised season more remarkable for biting winds than genial breezes. Autumn is the mellower season, and what we lose in flowers we more than gain in fruits."

- Samuel Butler



From the President's Pen

Join Our Winning Team....

There are a few vacancies on the Executive of the Perth and District Horticultural Society for 2016. This is your opportunity to make a real difference. Think about paying it forward by volunteering some time to help your community. Trust me you will receive more than you will give to this society. We all have valuable skill sets. All we ask is you give us your gift of time and experience. This will be

part of your legacy for future gardeners. If you are interested, come and speak with me or if you would like to nominate anyone please speak with Madeline Archer.

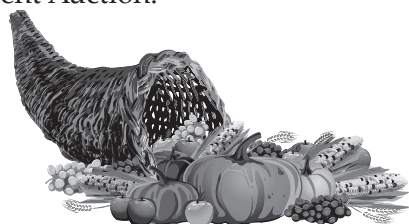
Join our winning team to initiate change and take part in a year guaranteed to be full of activities and new experiences. I can promise you will feel empowered and all ideas are welcomed and encouraged. So cross over the line and consider being a part of our Executive.

Jane Law



Upcoming Meetings

On November 24, we will be having a potluck and the Annual General Meeting. The planned guest speaker is Cindy Zorgel demonstrating simple Christmas designs, followed by a Silent Auction.



Winter Preparation of Gardening Tools

All gardeners have their absolutely favourite gardening tools, one or three we love and recommend to our friends. The Fall is the ideal time to look after them before storing them away for the Winter. Here are some useful tips for their care:

- If you need any of them sharpened, e.g. secateurs, shovels, branch trimmers and so



President: Jane Law • **Newsletter:** Irene Hofmann • ihofmann812@gmail.com



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

on, now is a great time to take them all in and have them sharpened professionally. If you can sharpen them yourself, use a whetstone at a 45 degree angle.

- make sure that each implement is carefully cleaned of all mud and debris. It may require some soaking in warm water first. Dry thoroughly after they are clean.

- if there is any rust showing, rub with a fine wire brush or steel wool.

- some gardeners store their trowels and small implements in a container of oil-soaked sand.

- wipe all wooden handles with a light coating of linseed oil or paste wax to keep them from cracking.

- empty all garden hoses before storing. Winding from one end forces all water in the hose out the other end.

- clean the undercarriage of your lawn mower. Anything left will cause rust. The blades probably need sharpening too after a Summer of use.

Submitted by Lynda Haddon

Love at First Site

Dale Odorizzi, Lanark County Master Gardeners

For some time now, you have been dreaming about vegetables grown, harvested and eaten from your own little plot of land. To make this happen, first think site selection.

To be productive, most vegetables require lots of sun—a minimum of six hours per day, eight hours is better. Take the time now to study your yard and record the amount of direct sun each area receives. A flat space is better than a slope but if the slope is sunny and flat areas are shaded it is possible to work the slope to your advantage.

Beware of a location at the bottom of a slope. Water runs downhill and your nice, sunny, flat garden plot might be flooded before spring is over. Frost tends to be more severe in low lying areas so be prepared for an early frost. My good news is that for the past 15 years, my vegetable garden has thrived in a low-lying area. I have built up my beds so they are no longer a muddy mess in the spring and the benefit is I rarely have to water my garden all summer long.

Vegetables do not like a lot of competition from weeds or tree roots. Roots from a tree will extend well beyond the drip line (the outermost circumference of the tree canopy). They are greedy feeders and will take the nutrients

planned for your garden. Once established, your vegetable garden will be producing for a long time and trees continue to grow. Weeds will be an ongoing problem.

Size is important. How big do you want your garden to be? The answer to this question depends on a lot of things. How much land is available? How much time and effort is available for the garden? What types of vegetables and fruits do you want to grow? How many plants do you want to grow? My advice to a new vegetable gardener is to start small. It is better to have a garden that is too small than to have one that is abandoned because of all the work involved creating and maintaining it. 10-20 square metres will produce a lot of food!

Flower Show Results

Month: June 2015

Judges: Mary Dixon and Carol Wilson

Total Number of Participants: 7

Section I: Horticultural Specimen

Number of Participants: 4

Class 2: Collection of Peonies: no winner

Class 3: Bearded Iris-1 spike

1) Ute Schall von Oppeln

Class 4: Siberian Iris-1 spike

1) David Archer

2) Ute Schall von Oppeln

Class 5: Any Rose-I stem or spray

1) Barbara Smith

2) Barbara Smith

Class 7: Hosta-3 leaves

1) David Archer

2) Barbara Smith

3) David Archer

Class 8: Any other perennial-named-3 stems

1) Robin McIntosh

2) David Archer

3) David Archer

Section II: Design

Number of Participants: 4

Class 12-13: Spring and Summer-a duo design

1) Janet Cain



Class 14: Cheek to Cheek-an analogous colour design

- 1) Madeline Archer
- 2) Janet Cain
- 3) Pam Newton

Month: September 2015

Judges: Carol Wilson and Mary Dixon

Total Number of Participants: 5

Section I: Horticultural Specimen

Number of Participants: 4

Class 3: Zinnia- 3 stems:

- 1) Robin McIntosh
- 2) David Archer
- 3) Robin McIntosh

Class 4: Rose-hybrid tea-an cultivar- 1 bloom

- 1) Carole Anne Armour
- 2) David Archer

Section II: Design

Number of Participants: 2

Class 19: Wee George- a miniature design

David Archer

Class 20: Prince & Princess- a design in two containers

Madeline Archer

Lasagna Gardening

By Dale Odorizzi, Lanark County Master Gardeners

No, I am not going to teach you how to grow lasagna. I am going to talk about a "no-dig" method to use to grow the vegetables you love and use to make lasagna. Lasagna gardening refers to the method of building the garden up by adding layers of organic material.

There is no need to remove existing sod and weeds. They are organic matter and contain a wealth of nutrients. You don't have to double dig or work the soil at all. The first layer on top of the sod will be corrugated cardboard or 10+ sheets of newspaper laid directly on top of the sod or weeds in the area you have selected for your garden. Wet this layer down thoroughly to keep everything in place. The grass and weeds will quickly break down as they are smothered by the cardboard.

To make a lasagna for dinner, you carefully layer ingredients. Instead of three layers of noodles topped with three layers of sauce and cheese you alternate a layer of noodles with a layer of sauce or cheese. The same is true with a lasagna garden. It is ideal to alternate "brown layers"

and "green layers". The brown layers should be about twice as deep as the green layers but don't get out the ruler out, just layer them. The end result of the layering process is a 50-60 cm high layered bed. It will shrink down in a few weeks.

Green Ingredients - grass clippings, fruit or vegetable scraps, coffee grounds, tea leaves and bags, weeds, well-rotted manure, compost, spent blooms, garden trimmings.

Brown Ingredients- leaves, shredded newspaper, peat moss.

Anything that goes into a compost pile, can go into a lasagna garden. These materials break down to provide nutrient rich crumbly soil.

Create the lasagna garden at any time of year. Fall is the optimum time as there is an abundance of organic material such as fallen leaves and general yard waste. The lasagna garden can sit and break down over the winter and will be ready to plant in the spring. Fall rain and winter snow keep the materials in your garden moist and speed breakdown. Starting in the spring or summer, requires more "soil-like" amendments, especially finished compost so you can plant right away. Layer as many greens and browns with layers of finished compost in between. Finish off the entire bed with 8-10 cm of finished compost and then plant.

Plant your other garden as you would any other. When you dig down, if you hit your cardboard, you may have to cut holes in it. To maintain the garden, add mulch to the top of the bed in the form of straw, grass clippings or chopped leaves. Once established, care for your garden the same way you would care for any other. If using a "Square Foot Garden" approach, you will need to top up your bed with extra compost.

A Garden Of Ghoulish Delights

*Dr. Leonard Perry, Extension Professor
University of Vermont*

Halloween, with its make-believe ghosts, goblins, and witches, comes but once a year. But you can keep the spirit of Halloween alive by choosing plants for theme gardens that conjure up thoughts of this spooky day.

Granted, it's too late in the year to actually plant the garden, and most of the plants wouldn't survive fall frosts and still be around

for Halloween. But that shouldn't stop you from planning for next year now while the spirit of the season is at hand.

Chances are you may already have plants in your garden with ghoulish connections. While we all know that the broomstick-riding witches associated with Halloween don't really exist, folklore tells us that once upon a time anyone who was a bit different risked being called a "witch" or being accused of having special powers. Sometimes a woman was declared a "witch," simply because of the plants she grew in her garden, plants thought to be used for casting spells.

Do you have witches' thimbles, devil's nettle, fool's parsley, or wolf's bane in your garden? If you do, and this was several centuries ago, the talk around town might be that you are a "witch." Don't recognize any of those names? You may know them by other names.

Witches' thimbles is another name for foxglove, a biennial with tall spikes of large, bell-shaped white, pink, purple, or red flowers. It's a source of digitalis, a heart medicine.

Devil's nettle or yarrow was once used as a poultice for wounds. This plant comes in a variety of colors and grows to heights of two to four feet. While some species are tall and yellow, many newer cultivars (cultivated varieties) are short, don't spread, and come in a range of colors.

Fool's parsley is a hemlock herb, not to be confused with the tree although just as deadly. Wolf's bane, or aconite, has small yellow flowers. In the 1500s it was mixed with English yew, powdered glass, arsenic, and a number of other deadly ingredients to make pills. A word of caution: if you plant any of these poisonous plants, be sure to keep curious kids and pets away.

According to folklore, other plants that "witches" grew in their gardens include cumin and verbena (both for love potions), opium poppies (sleep potions), and morning glories (wicked spells). "Witches" also mixed monkshood, which has spiky purple blooms, with cinquefoil, belladonna, water parsnips, and ashes to make a strong potion that allowed them to talk to spirits "on the other side." An ointment of monkshood and belladonna supposedly made objects fly.

These folklore witches also made sure they planted flowers from every birth sign, so they would have the ingredients needed to cast spells on everyone. Chrysanthemums, heather, and thorns were needed for power over a Scorpio.

Someone born under the sign of Aquarius could be "hexed" with potions using foxglove and snowdrops. For your witches' theme garden, you also need to plant three or four rows of red flowers--nasturtiums, geraniums, zinnias, vinca, and monarda, for instance--around the edges of the garden to keep "witch hunters" away.

To keep "witches" out, border your garden with yellow and green flowers and foliage. Plant marigolds, rudbeckia, sunflowers, green zinnias, and Bells of Ireland, for example. These colors remind "witches" of the sun (which they supposedly hate), so they will keep their distance.

Another way to create a Halloween theme garden is to plant only orange and black flowers. While some gardeners may argue that there are few true black flowers, many near-black flowers are available, especially in the iris and tulip families. There are also some pretty black pansies that will last into fall and maybe even to Halloween. Grow these with an orange variety called "Jolly Joker." You can find deep maroon (almost black) varieties of bachelor's buttons, snapdragons, cosmos, sunflowers, and gladioli. Check seed catalogs and ask the experts at your garden center for other varieties.

For orange, it's easier. Many common flowers like zinnias, marigolds, daylilies, and cosmos all come in orange. You also might try butterfly weed, orange nasturtiums, and oriental poppies. Of course many fall chrysanthemums are found in shades of orange.

While not in Halloween colors, "spiky" perennials with their sinister or ghostly appearance can be used for contrast or accent. Popular in recent years is the artichoke or cardoon with its large silvery, deeply cut and sharply pointed silvery-white leaves. Or try other silvery spiky perennials such as globe thistle or sea holly. Yucca, or Spanish dagger, has several cultivars all with long leaves with needle-like tips.

Or instead, how about plants with creepy names like bloodroot, bleeding heart, Dragon's blood sedum, or blood lily for your theme garden? Or scary names like snapdragon and devil's tongue (also known as the voodoo lily)?

Add a few stone gargoyles or folk art, such as that found at craft shows, like pumpkin clay pots (for candles) or pumpkin and Halloween character silhouettes carved out of wood. Or how about some orange and ghostly green lighting for the garden? With a Halloween theme garden, you can enjoy this October holiday for many months of the year!