



What's Growing On?

The newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc.

Winter, 2005



There was lots to learn at the Technical Update held at the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture in September.



PHOTOS: Georgie Kennedy

Executive notes

... by Mary Beverley-Burton

In early December the MGOI Board met to discuss a number of issues. Representatives from 10 of the 11 zones were in attendance – all of them dynamic and active members who had a lot to contribute. Here's a short report of the status of several important issues.

DRAFT MISSION STATEMENT

Under the guidance of Denise Edwards, who represents OMAFRA in a non-voting, advisory capacity, we spent time on strategic planning. As part of this exercise, a new mission statement has been drafted and distributed to all MG groups for discussion and input. The draft states: "Master Gardeners of Ontario Incorporated develops the knowledge and the leadership skills to enable volunteers to provide balanced, scientific horticultural information to Ontario communities." All coordinators are encouraged to provide input to their zone directors before the draft comes up for approval at the next AGM on June 11, 2006.

Education

In late October we learned that our application for a Trillium Grant, which was intended to fund

our proposed educational program with the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture, was rejected on the basis of a mistaken belief that the school is publicly funded. A second application is due on July 1, 2006 and we have every hope that it will be approved so that we can go ahead with our plans for the new program. Until then, we have developed an interim plan, under the guidance of Barbra Stock and Gary Westlake, details of which will be sent out shortly to all co-ordinators. The plan applies to MGITs who joined in 2005 and any who apply thereafter. There are three components to qualify for full Master Gardener status:

1.) Two years' membership as a MGIT and the fulfillment of 30 volunteer hours annually. Co-ordinators will need to monitor this component.

2.) MGITs must sit an open-book Interim Exam and attain a minimum 70 percent passing mark. Gary Westlake will develop and distribute a list of topics covered by the exam as a study plan for MGITs who will be taking the exam. It should be up and running in the New Year. The cost of the exam is \$100.

3.) Attendance at one technical update each year.

For MGITs who joined prior to 2005, courses must be completed by April 30, 2006 in order to receive a certificate from the University of

Guelph. MGITs who have not completed Hort I, II, and III by that date will be able to have their assignments marked and counted towards MG certification if completed by April 30, 2007. However, MGITs wishing to take advantage of this extension will not be awarded a U of G certificate. Accordingly, all those who became MGITs prior to 2005 are encouraged to complete their courses by the 2006 deadline.

TECHNICAL UPDATES

Many directors expressed concern that some Technical Updates were becoming fundraising gardening sessions aimed at the general public rather than educational days. To address this concern, Anne Morgan and Jennifer Grant will be working on a Guide to Technical Updates, which will be available by March 1, 2006.

MG DESIGNATION

It has been the policy of MGOI to restrict the use of the MG designation in professional or semi-professional activities. This restriction has now been removed to allow MGs who work in garden centres or other horticultural situations to take advantage of their qualification. The board is hopeful that this will aid our attempt to become more obvious and recognized in horticultural circles.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Details about Canada Blooms will come down the wire once we know where we will be located.

We are also arranging for the continuation of the Sheridan Clinics in 2006.

Data-gathering for the Plant Hardiness Project will begin in earnest in 2006 under the guidance of John Tripp of North Bay MGs.

Zoning in

... news from our 11 zones



PHOTO: Jim Fitzgerald

With thousands of school children going through the Stratford MG booth at the International Plowing Match, our newest MG, Don Farwell not only answered questions, but he also designed a contest on gardening that rewarded students with MG pencils.

Zone 4

Thanks to the hard work of all members of the Stratford MGs, the group had a beautiful and informative booth at the International Plowing Match in Listowel in mid-September. A stunning garden background was painted by MGIT Kerry Hackett on recycled closet doors using recycled paint.

Zone 6

Paul Zammit spoke to the Lake Simcoe South MGs in October about shade gardening. Everyone went home inspired for next year.

With the grand re-opening of the Toronto Botanical Garden, the Toronto MGs have a new office located within the Library. The fully equipped TMG office is beautifully decorated with the illustrations of member, Vivienne Jenkinson. Next time you're in Toronto, stop by to say hello and to admire Vivienne's drawings.

Tripp's Tips

After meeting North Bay Master Gardener John Tripp at the Niagara Technical Update, I realized that he was a very informed gardener indeed, and willing to share his knowledge (although modestly) with others. So here's his inaugural column featuring some of the tips he has collected over the years.

Surround

One of the newer products is Surround which is actually kaolin clay. It is used in toothpaste and so is quite safe but comes in a dust form so a breathing mask should be used. It is primarily used in the apple industry to prevent sun scald and to prevent the apple maggot from laying eggs. It forms a white film which should be washed off before the produce is eaten.

More information about using Surround is available at these websites:

- www.herbsandapples.com/orchard/surround.php
- www.umext.maine.edu/piscataquis/gardening/vol2iss3/kaolin.htm
- www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/hort/news/orchnews/2003/on0203a5.htm

Zone 8

The Technical Update saw MGs from United Counties, Renfrew, Ottawa-Carleton and Lanark as well as visitors from Peterborough and Simcoe gather for a day of lectures and fun at the Kemptville Agricultural College. A rousing round of Gardeners Jeopardy wrapped up an exciting and informative day. Thanks to Lee Boltwood and her team from across the zone for organizing the fun.

The Ottawa MGs held an editing workshop facilitated by freelance editor Jennifer Foster. The goal was to learn how to produce an accurate article which would "satisfy the most informed reader, be clear enough for a novice to follow and interesting enough to catch and hold the attention of those who are only casual readers." In October the Ottawa MGs published their first article in *Due West*, a quarterly supplement to the *Ottawa Citizen*.

Lanark MGs participated at a local craft sale to sell houseplants, used books, garden art, hypertufa containers and garden produce.



Lanark MGs Judy Wall, Dale Odorizzi, Sue Turnbull & Kathleen Lang

Zone 9

Rachel Burrows has stepped down as co-ordinator for the Peterborough and Area MGs. Rachel has been an inspiration and we wish to thank her for her efforts. Dianne Westlake takes over as co-ordinator.

News to use

... tips for Master Gardeners

Plant Propagation CD

Perdue University has just developed an award-winning CD-based course on propagation that covers everything from seed germination and seedling care to propagation by cuttings, division, layering, grafting and tissue culture. The CD sells for \$40 (US) and is used as advanced training material by Master Gardeners in the USA. To order, call 765-494-6795 or visit www.hort.purdue.edu/plantprop/webversion/Intro.html.



Plant propagation CD available from Perdue University includes skill-testing (and fun) quizzes.

Carolinian Plant Project

At the Technical Update hosted by the Kitchener Master Gardeners in November Dr. Paul Eagles talked about a native plant project spearheaded by the Carolinian Canada Management Committee that involves propagating populations of rare Carolinian species. Urbanization has fragmented these native plant communities and the project seeks to preserve and increase their numbers. Master Gardeners interested in participating in this project should contact Dr. Eagles at the University of Waterloo, 519-888-4567 ext. 2716 or eagles@waterloo.ca. More information about CCMC is available at www.carolinian.org/WhoWeAre_Committee.htm.

Tributes

... activities & achievements

Emeritus MGs

Emeritus status was granted to Tony Egerhazi (Kitchener) and Doreen Scales (Ottawa-Carleton).

Ottawa-Carleton

Gaston Tessier celebrates ten years, and Lee Boltwood, Fran Dennett, Joan McNab, Ruth Kempthorne, Polly McColl and Doug Bruce have achieved 20 years. Cindy VanderTol and Mary Ann VanBerlo have become fully fledged Master Gardeners.

Peterborough and Area

MGs Nancy Comtois, Darlene Mallen, Gillian Sandeman and Chris Tewsley have received their 5-year pins, Linda Fierheller has been honoured with a 10 year badge and Norma Evans, Beryl Harris, Hazel Wilson have been presented with their 15-year pins.

Lake Simcoe South

Congratulations to MGs, Georgie Kennedy, Cheryl Davis-Tunney and Llian Macrae who are now full-fledged MGs.

In Memorium

The sudden death of Guelph and Wellington County MG Bruce Monro on December 9 is a great loss to Master Gardening activity in the area. He will be sadly missed.

On the wires

... the electronic MG

The Seed Site

This comprehensive website includes information on harvesting, keeping, sowing and germinating seeds. The site has an extensive gallery of seedling images and an index to germination records for hundreds of seeds. Visit theseedsite.co.uk.



Calendar

... upcoming horticultural events

January 26-29, 2006 Guelph Organic Conference

The 25th annual conference will be held at the University of Guelph. For details visit www.organicag.uoguelph.ca or contact Prof. Ann Clark, Plant Agriculture at 519-824-4120 ext. 5208 or eaclark@uoguelph.ca.

March 2-5 Stratford Garden Festival

Inside/Out is the theme of this year's show. For information visit www.stratfordgardenfestival.com.

March 5-12 Philadelphia Flower Show

It's a tribute to Mother Nature at one of North America's oldest shows. For information visit www.theflowershow.com.

March 8-12, 2006 Canada Blooms

This year Canada Blooms celebrates 10 blooming great years! Details and advance tickets at www.canadablooms.com.

June 9-11, 2006 Niagara Flower and Garden Show

Plan to attend the biennial Niagara Flower and Garden Show on the grounds of the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture. The MGOI AGM will be also be held during the show. For details check out the show's website at www.niagaraflowerandgardenshow.com - it rocks!

September 23, 2006 Niagara Technical Update

Another information-packed Technical Update is in the planning stages by the Niagara MGs. Here's the program so far: Best Garden Plants for Ontario; Tantalizing Tropicals that will Rock your Garden; Charismatic Container Plants; Sensational Shrubs, Trees and Vines.

October 22, 2006 Toronto Technical Update

Mark your calendars for the Toronto Master Gardeners Technical Update at the Toronto Botanical Garden. Details will follow once the program has been confirmed.



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What's Growing On? is published four times a year for Master Gardeners in Ontario. To submit news about your Master Gardener group, contact Lorraine Flanigan, Editor at lorraine.flanigan@sympatico.ca.

