



What's Growing On?

The newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc.

Spring, 2007

Coordinators' Conference,
April 14, 2007



Seventy-five per cent of groups sent representatives.



Speaker Lorraine Johnson



From left to right, Raymond Carriere, President Communities in Bloom National, OHA president Liisa Walfgram, Denis Flanagan and James Lee, president of MGOI.

Executive notes

... by James Lee

2007 Coordinators Conference

It was with a fair amount of trepidation that your board launched its "first in years" Coordinators' Conference. Since then you've been involved from start to finish.

A significant 60 per cent of membership groups responded to the preliminary survey, which shaped the program presented on April 14.

If we had been concerned that people would be reluctant to take a leadership role or to otherwise contribute in the discussions, our worries were soon allayed. Our movers, shakers and team players got going and the exchanges were full of good ideas and pertinent questions.

From the beginning, we planned to share the information and ideas that were gathered with everyone, including groups that were unable to attend. Happily, 75 per cent of our member groups sent representatives at this conference.

As of today, coordinators should have already received all discussion group material as collated by Carol Dunk, a copy of my opening remarks, the

evaluation sheet results as compiled by myself and an expression of the board's appreciation from Ron Rossini, our vice-president and communications liaison. We hope that all of you will soon be able to share these reports with members of your local groups.

Our journey from the former Guelph educational program to new and complementary educational routes has been a long and difficult one. We appreciate your patience and have understood your desire for a resolution. We believe that we have now "nailed it" with the composite program that was announced at the conference and distributed to all member groups.

Your feedback at the conference from the evaluation sheets and flip chart records makes it abundantly clear that everyone wants three things:

1. Regular opportunities to meet and exchange ideas, receive additional training and discuss important issues
2. Celebrate what they do well and to improve in the areas where they feel less confident
3. The relationship between the board and the member groups and the relationship between and among member groups, is one of interdependence – we all need each other.

This feedback from the conference has now become our organizational mandate. This doesn't mean that everything can happen at once. Nor does it mean that everyone will be satisfied with each direction we take. What it does mean is that we are in this organization together to collectively make it strong, effective and enduring. We are accountable to each other – within each member group and within our organization as a whole – to make the things that matter to us most, happen.

I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to the MGOI board as well as to all of the participants who attended the conference. We could not have done it without you.

James Lee
President, Master Gardeners of Ontario Inc.

P.S. Don't forget the MGOI Annual General Meeting in Owen Sound, August 9, 10 and 11 in partnership with the OHA. (See Calendar, page 4.)

Zoning in

... news from our 11 zones

Zone 5

The Master Gardeners of **Niagara** will be providing advice clinics at Broadway Gardens and Rice Gardens in May and June as well as a garden design clinic at the St. Catharines Library.

Zone 6

The four MGIT members of the **Etobicoke** group meet regularly to prepare for the Interim Exam, which they will take in the autumn. The group finds that meeting to study regularly not only gives them the

incentive they need for learning, but they are getting to know each other too.

The Etobicoke MG group has been approached by a local nursing home for help in developing a garden that abuts the shore of Lake Ontario. The 50-year-old house has never had a formal garden plan.

The **Toronto** MGs will be holding advice clinics every Saturday and Sunday in May and the first two weekends of June at Islington Nurseries, and at Sheridan Nurseries on May 20. The group is also participating in Doors Open Toronto on May 26 and 27, giving advice in the various new gardens at the Toronto Botanical Garden. Toronto MGs also contributed to the Toronto Botanical Garden plant sale with a table of member-grown plants.

Zone 7

Prince Edward County MG
Phil Kennedy is the District 3

OHA representative.

Pat Burry is cultivating our youth with gardening know-how by working with schools, home-schooling individuals, libraries and after-school centres to educate kids aged 6 to 16 about gardening. Pat, along with a group of dedicated volunteers, also helped transform the gardens of the Prince Edward County Memorial Hospital in Picton to the delight and appreciation of patients, staff and visitors.

Zone 8

The five talks given by **Ottawa-Carlton** MGs at the successful 2007 Ottawa Home & Garden Show were well-attended and many people dropped by the MG booth for information.

The group also made five presentations as part of the Gloucester North Library Lecture series, which took place from January to April. Topics included: groundcovers, shade gardening, container gardening, growing

John Tripp, In Memorium



It is with great sadness that I regret to inform you of the sudden passing of John Tripp, Director of Zone 2. John was a long-serving director of MGOI and was noted for his exhaustive work, especially on the plant hardiness project, which he planned to share with all Ontario Master Gardeners. His lifelong enthusiasm for gardening provided him with many defining moments. His personality and eagerness to pitch in to improve the lot of his fellow Ontario

Master Gardeners will be sorely missed. Our condolences go out to his wife Helen, his family and many friends.

Ron Rossini
MGOI Communications Committee

vegetables and fall colour.

Both the e-mail and telephone hotlines are busy. Because digital photos are so easy to attach, the group's e-mail forum is particularly useful for plant and pest identification questions. Visit the helpline at www.geocities.com/mgottawa_carleton/HELPLINE.html

Zone 9

After a full year of planning and organizing and many hours of hard work, the **Peterborough and Area** MGs, together with the **Northumberland** MGs and the Peterborough Horticultural Society presented their most successful and profitable event to date. This year, the Peterborough Garden Show – For the Love of Gardening – doubled its floor space had a record number of visitors.

News to use

... tips for Master Gardeners

Online Resources

Pat Spencer of the Norfolk County MGs has compiled a list of great resources Master Gardeners have posted to the MG list-serv. She'll be posting updates to the list-serv twice a year. If you're a registered user of the Master Gardener list-serv, please share any useful resources you've found. If you're not registered as a user of this is a free service available to all Master Gardeners in Ontario, contact Avalon Hamlin of the Sarnia Master Gardeners at hamlin@ebtech.net. Here's a partial list of the resources Pat has compiled :

Vegetable Crops: Common Problems:

www.urbanext.uiuc.edu/vegproblems

Weeds: www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/facts/ontweeds/weedgal.htm

Invasives: www.rbg.ca/cbcn/en/projects/invasives/i_herb1.html

Seed Germination:
www.theseedsite.co.uk/normdeno.html

Kids in Gardens:
www.kidsgardening.com/family.asp

Gardener's Handbook:
www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/crops/gardbk/ghtoc.html

Native Roses:
www.wildaboutgardening.org/en/features/section5/rose/index.htm

Backyard Habitat:
www.wildaboutgardening.org/en/whats_new/backyardhab/application_form.htm

Soil E-Book

The Soil Biology Primer is an online book that describes the soil food web, including bacteria, fungi, protozoa, nematodes, arthropods and earthworms.



Says, NC MG Pat Spencer, "This is an excellent book to read online and understand about the myriad creatures in our soil so that we can properly care for and protect them." "View the book at soils.usda.gov/sqi/concepts/soil_biology/biology.html.

Viburnum Leaf Beetle

Viburnum leaf beetle larvae are feeding on expanding leaves, causing small holes at this time. The larvae are vulnerable to chemical control (e.g. insecticidal soap, frequent applications) only during the first 7-10 days after hatch. Larvae feed on the interveinal tissue from the

undersides of the leaves so target insecticide applications to the lower leaf surface.

– from *OMAFRA Nursery & Landscape Report*

Tributes

... activities & achievements

Long-Service Awards

Congratulations to 20-year members of the Kitchener MG group Gwyn Brundrett and Toni Moutray, and to 15-year member, Anne Morgan.

On the wires

... the electronic MG

Keep in Touch

The Master Gardener List-serv is an email exchange that keeps you in touch with other Master Gardeners throughout the province. This free service is available to any member who wishes to share gardening and group-related information. To register (it's painless, trust me!), email your name and MG group to Avalon Hamlin at hamlin@ebtech.net. There are now 300 subscribers, and those of you who are former members will be delighted by the spam-free and lively discussions focussed on gardening.

Calendar

... upcoming horticultural events

May 19

Shaw Garden Tour Niagara-on-the-Lake

Niagara MGs will be onhand to answer questions during this annual tour of six private agardens. Tickets and information: www.niagaraonthelake.com/displayevent/jpage/1/p/de/id/1328/content.do?f=2007-5-19&t=2007-5-19

May 22 to 25
2007 Agricultural Awareness Conference: Celebrating Achievements...Cultivating Opportunities
Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food

London Convention Centre
The program features workshops, presentations on topics such as building awareness, promoting agriculture in schools, effective crisis management and Canadian attitudes about food and farming. Details and online registration at www.naac-cnsa.ca.

May 26
Plant Sale
Picton, 9 a.m.

The Prince Edward County MGs' annual plant sale takes place in the Giant Tiger parking lot on Main Street. The sale features unique and special plants, grown or chosen for outstanding performance and beauty.

June 8 to 10, July 15

Triffids Plants
Open Days
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
10612 Sixth Line, Halton Hills
Help celebrate Triffids Plants 10th anniversary. Information:

905-877-7523 or triffids@aztec-net.com

June 9,10
Canadian Peony Society Show and AGM
Royal Botanical Gardens Hamilton
Information: www.peony.ca

June 16
Peony Walkabout
Central Experimental Farm Ottawa
Volunteers from the Friends of the Farm Peony Team and the Canadian Peony Society will be on hand to provide guided tours and answer questions from 9 a.m. to noon. Information: Mary Pratte at gmpratte@sympatico.ca or www.peony.ca.

June 16.17
Through the Garden Gate Tour of Wychwood Park and Davenport Ridge
The Toronto MGs will be Garden Guardians during the 20th annual garden tour sponsored by the Toronto Botanical Garden. Information and tickets: 416-397-1340 or www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca/specialevent.htm#ttgg

June 24
Heart of Northumberland Garden Tour 2007
The tour features eight intimate and beautiful gardens with country views of the Trent Hills in the Warkworth/Cambellford area northeast of Coburg. A birdhouse boutique and lunch is available at the historic church in Warkworth. Information and passports: 905-885-8435 (evenings/weekends) or 1-888-278-2483

August 10 to 12
OHA Convention 2007
Owen Sound
Keeping Ontario Beautiful: Visions of our Future
This year's conference is on the challenges of time to our lives, to the future viability of societies and the strengthening of networks among organizations that share a common vision. Full details, including speaker schedules and competition guidelines at www.gardenontario.org/sho/up_conf.php; online registration at www.gardenontario.org/sho/con_reg.php.

August 25
Master Gardeners of Niagara Technical Update
Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens and School of Horticulture
The day includes lectures by Dr. Allan Armitage, professor of horticulture at the University of Georgia, on Crazy Plants for Crazy Gardeners and Robert Ritchie, parks naturalist, who will speak about the park's restoration projects. The day includes a buffet lunch and garden tours. Limited seating; to register contact Barbara Large alan.large2@sympatico.ca , June Streadwick streadwick@sympatico.ca or Sandy Bibeau sbibeau@cogeco.ca.

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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.