

# Belle River & District Horticultural Society



September 2011

"In the garden, Autumn is indeed the crowning glory of the year, bringing us the fruition of months of thought and care and toil. And at no season, save perhaps in daffodil time, do we get such superb colour effects as from August to November."

- Rose G. Kingsley, *The Autumn Garden*, 1905

c/o 322 Evelyn Street  
Belle River, ON NOR 1A0

## **Executive:**

Paul Schneider, President  
[pres-br@gardenontario.org](mailto:pres-br@gardenontario.org)

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Meetings are held at the  
Knights of Columbus Hall  
1303 County Road 22  
Emeryville, ON

7:30 - 3rd Wednesday of the month  
No Meetings December, July and August



Keeping Ontario Beautiful™



The Belle River & District Horticultural Society  
is a member of the  
Ontario Horticultural Society  
and  
Southwestern District 11

## *Canada Blooms*

**March 16-25 2012**

Canada Blooms is pleased to announce  
that they will be co-locating with  
the National Home Show.

2 wonderful events - one low admission.

Check it all out on their website:

[canadablooms.com](http://canadablooms.com)

## A Message from our President, Paul Schneider

Where did the summer go? Is one of the questions we hear most often these days. Isn't it true that sometimes a day seems so long yet looking back time flies? Didn't we just say how wet the spring was and that we can't get the gardens in order? Here we are in September and the most colourful season of the year is close at hand. I love the different seasons. I would not want to live in a place where every day was the same and the skies were blue all the time.

I hope you all had a good summer filled with fun and many different plants in your gardens. Now may I invite all of you to join us again every third Wednesday of the month to exchange ideas and tell us about your experiences? What is your favourite plant or flower? What did you do to make it look so spectacular? The board of directors and some dedicated members have been busy planning meetings that will be interesting and fun. I hope that you will join us and bring your spouse, neighbour or friend to see what it's all about. For the past few years we have reached a plateau of membership that stops just short of the magic two hundred. Why don't we try to break that barrier this year and go over it! But this cannot be just about size of the organization. You, the members are a very active group of gardeners! Our meetings are always very well attended. For the last year we averaged more than eighty people for all the meetings. That is more impressive than just a large number of members on paper only. I want to commend all of you and thank you for your loyalty.

Soon we will be looking for some new directors for our board. I am asking you to consider joining us at the management level of our society. Let me assure you that the rewards are greater than the work involved. The level of work you do with the other members of the board can contribute so much to the society. It is also a very good way to get some of your ideas realized. I know that we all are busy in our private lives. I believe though that some of you can find the time to help with our organization!

This next meeting we will meet Jim Spinks again and will visit with him the Healing Gardens of the area. Of course this is a virtual visit but we will learn ideas that are new to most of us. Mark your calendars for the third Wednesday of the month at 7:30 at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Emeryville.

I would like to remind you that our membership year begins in September. Our dues are still \$10 and I can give you a guarantee that you will have interesting meetings, learn something new, and meet some likeminded people. I hope to see you there!

Paul Schneider

## December 7 Christmas Party & Dinner at the Knights of Columbus Hall



Mark your calendar!  
More details at the  
October meeting.  
Suzette Cecile



## Speakers for 2011 - Margaret Dudley

### **September 21 - Healing Gardens in Essex County**

Jim Spinks, a popular educator and experienced gardener, will take us on a tour of healing gardens found in our area.

### **October 19 - Hummingbirds, etc.**

Learn from Carl Pascoe and his wife, Rachel Powless (two of only 6 bird banders in Ontario) about hummingbirds, other songbirds, monarch butterflies, and their work in collaboration with the First Nations.

### **November 16 - Municipal Trees Update**

The UN declared 2011 as International Year of Forests and so we welcome Bill Roesel, head forester of the City of Windsor, who will update us on 'Municipal Trees: the Challenges, Failures and Successes'.

Visit the OHA website  
([gardenontario.org](http://gardenontario.org)) to  
access and read their very  
informative Newsletter.



Years ago, when I first decided to join the Horticultural Society, I mistakenly thought that only people who were experienced and professional gardeners belonged to such clubs. I was hesitant to sign on the dotted line because, after all, I was just an ordinary, down to earth gardener like most people I knew - in fact like all the gardeners I knew. That's the view I hold of my gardening experience even to this day - an ordinary, down to earth gardener. Sure I have grown in my knowledge of plants and gardening but I would never place myself in a debate against seasoned horticulturists with a line-up of degrees after their name.

Sometimes, there is a deterrent to people joining our horticultural societies... people who wrongly consider themselves unworthy of being a member of a society with such experienced gardeners. Over the years, I found out that I was foolish in my way of thinking. And that's when I started to gain the full benefits of membership - when I realized that there were always others in attendance with the same questions and doubts I had about all aspects of horticulture. Also, over the years, I have now come to realize that there is not one person in our society who, at one time or another, hasn't had a 'question for which he/she sought an answer!' Not one!!!

Down to earth - the best place to be both physically & mentally when gardening. Just the day to day, every day, normal, ordinary garden life... if that's where you choose to be. And that's where I choose to be!

So let's look at some of those regular, run-of-the-mill plants & things that even I have in my garden... even after some 50 years of gardening. Nothing fancy, nothing hard, nothing out of the ordinary... probably just like the plants & things in most of your gardens.

Oh, maybe I should also mention... I have a hard time working in my garden with a book tied around my neck to check out the when, where and what of plants... you know the routine. Don't transplant this plant if the sun rose between 6 and 6:12 this morning and if you didn't water it 16.3 hours ago with a 2.3 ph soluble cow manure tea AND if the sun will hit it between 2:12 and 2:34 in the afternoon on the 3rd Monday of every other month... Now that's quite an exaggeration but I usually tend to do my gardening when I have the time to do it... with as little common sense as I have at the time... period. I simply don't have time to spend 7 hours reading up on a plant that I bought for 3 dollars. Sure, over the years, I have maybe lost a handful of plants over my gardening methods, but remember, I tend to deal with down to earth, ordinary type plants - no million dollar loss when I, on a rare occasion, lose a plant in the process. Remember that, OFTEN, the tried and true proven methods also fail!

Let's start with Autumn Joy sedum... "That's not Autumn Joy", I'm told! It looks close enough to Autumn Joy for me and that's all that matters. I really don't care if it has 17 jagged points or 19 jagged points on every other leaf. It is easy to care for and grows well in sun and a little less well in shadier spots and flowers from August to frost... with or without rain - what else do you want? Cars pass by my place at quite high speeds most of the time and no one has ever stopped with screeching brakes to tell me that my plant leaves had 19 jags instead of 17 like I said MY Autumn Joy had! And I usually divide and transplant these in 90° weather - never lost one yet! I am not a cold weather lover at all!!!

"What's that?" I'm asked quite often. "It's a yew", I reply, a little puzzled. After all, who on this earth doesn't know what a yew looks like. "It is?" is always the inquisitive response. What's so different about my yew that most people don't recognize it? I let it grow natural - no fancy trimming or forming it into a shape. It grows into a pyramidal form, just like, let's say, a spruce - just like it is normal for it to grow. Now, because I changed some paths in my garden in the past 2 years, I have had to clip it back, but I am keeping the pyramidal shape to it. No fuss, no muss and it keeps everyone wondering... and thinking that I have this most unusual and expensive tree growing in my yard. I started it from a shoot off a yew in my neighbour's yard! Free!!!

Hosta! Not even Marg Dudley has moved and re-moved hostas like I have done. Not that I want to keep moving them around but nature has a way of intimidating me into

doing so! In 1999, I was asked to place my yard on the BRDHS garden tour. Of course, I said yes. The evening before the tour, we had a magnificent hail storm that damaged not a single plant in my yard... except the 45 or so humongous hostas that were my pride and joy! Not only did it destroy the plants, it elevated them to *sainthood*. You have never seen such hole-ly plants in your life. They looked like grandma Moses had spent the night with a shotgun preparing them for a compost pile, 99% already chopped! Since 1999 I have tried to escape the dreaded hails of Essex County to no avail... so as of this day, I have only a few hosta plants hidden far back under several trees for protection PLUS an array of miniature hostas that I treasure, inside my arbour... thanks to Marg Dudley. And the irony of it all, since I have taken the final steps mentioned, we have not had a hailstorm - if that's what it took to appease the hail monster, I'm leaving things the way they are!

Potted plants - disasters of the century. I am the only person in all of Belle River and probably Essex County... or Ontario who plants pots and containers with annuals and perennials, continually from May 1 to October 15. Yep, that's right! It takes me that long to plant up 12 containers of annuals. I start up in May with large containers and all sorts of different plants (you know this routine well also - tall ones, short ones, trailing ones etc.) Don't tell anyone, but I also don't follow those rules too well either! I even plant dead trees! Ask members of our Society and they'll confirm that one!

I can already see the crinkled brows! "It takes you 5½ months to plant 12 pots of flowers?" As Paul Harvey would say, "And here's the rest of the story." You see, as fast as I can plant them, Mr. & Mrs. Squirrel un-plant them. Yes, I have used the chicken wire around the bottom and the onions in the pot (they eat them too, by the way!) and the marigold treatment and the 'cactus will keep them away' method (forget that one too) and the hot pepper (and I used homemade atomic hot crushed red peppers - bah, humbug! on this one too - it worked for the first 2 times I applied it). This summer, I have watched them sit there and scrumptiously enjoy my hens and chicks - with the pepper on them- (sempervivum for you Latino word lovers) and I'm sure they would have appreciated it had I brought them a glass of wine to go with the meal! Also on their menu are hostas, tree branches (all varieties) and a host of other plants - always the ones you treasure the most. This year I planted a golden rain tree in my yard - **all** parts of it are **very** poisonous... maybe they'll take a liking to that one...



Now, in case you think I hate animals, let me tell you that this year I allowed 3 squirrel families to nest in my trees and reproduce so that they would be able to aggravate me even more next year. Smart little wimps - they know enough to build them nests high and far from any human reach!!!

I'm trying a new method next year. I will put the soil in the pots and lay the plants next to the pots, up-rooted at that. Maybe, just maybe, they will then take the plants and put them into the pots for me! Reverse psychology!!! Finally, in case you want to ask, yes I did contact the U.S. Forces and they don't have any scud missiles left over from their overseas wars, otherwise I would have bought them and tried my aim!

Speaking of scud missiles... As most of you already know, I have not one blade of lawn grass on my property - none! However, I have 40 yards of mulch to spread when I decide to top up my gardens and paths. Not a problem... until the birds (mostly robins) decide to do a "search-a-worm". It is very difficult to enjoy the fruits of your labour when your eyes have to be cast downward at all times! I have literally dozens of scud missile holes in my mulch from birds digging for food within the confines of chopped wood! Fill them up today, they're back tomorrow! I have also tripped in their digs, twisted my foot in them and cursed them (gently, of course). I never knew my yard held such delicacies - glad they are enjoying them! Again, next year I am trying something new with them too. They like "search-a-worm"? I'm buying "search-a-word" books and placing them all around the yard - they might just like those more! I'll even supply the pencils... no, they're made of wood. I'll get them gel pens instead! continued on page 3

And, last but not least, a salute to those ever pesky, ever multiplying and ever annoying beautiful and pretty flowers. Let's see... we have the obedient plant... one plant this year, 75,000 next year. The morning glory - I love them but only to the extent of the number of plants that I decide I want. You cannot keep up to the removal of the seed pods - they have a knack of hiding on you most of the time, then next year you have 75,000 of them too. And those houltuynia plants - plant it here today and you have it way over there tomorrow and way, way down yonder the next day and...! None of these in my gardens!!!

I also remember one day being asked by a friend to come and look at some 'pretty' flowers... only to discover the 'prettiness' of bindweed (related to the morning glory - an ugly cousin of) and near impossible to eradicate with its 3 foot deep roots (no exaggeration!) Fortunately, I have none of these in my gardens (I did at one time, though). Dynamite sticks took care of them but only after several repeated applications!

When you ask someone for (or someone offers you) plants (even nurseries), beware of the following language:

- I have tons of these, I'll give you some;
- they are all over my yard, here, take some;
- You want to cover the ground? These will do it - they grow like weeds (because that's what they are);
- this bush will only get 2 feet high (if you constantly keep it trimmed that high);
- you only need one of these... they multiply really quickly;
- you can easily keep them in check IF you remove the seed heads before they mature;
- I had 2 of these plants and now they are all over the garden... do you want some?



There are hundreds of variations on that same theme, but I think you get the message. Beware; if it grows like a weed or looks like a weed or snickers when you look at it, IT IS A WEED!!! Tell your 'friends', politely, "Keep your lousy 'flowers'; I'd hate for you to divide your plant and have it die on you!" Ha! Ha!

Okay, gardening really is fun even when the plants you thought you wanted, you later discovered were 'weeds' and are not all that the garden catalogue and your 'friends' made them out to be. I have often told people, "I have met one honest nurseryman in my decades of gardening. I asked him to tell me about the Swiss Stone Pine (that produces the edible pine nut). He told me that it was a beautiful tree, slow growing, not wide at the base and that I would never regret getting it." I bought it and it has lived up to exactly what the man said. Today with the availability of the internet and all the blogs out there, it is wise to do your homework when purchasing plants, trees & bushes as well as flowers - hear what others have to say about them before falling for some sales pitches. Okay, there are some honest ones out there, but be alert.

In conclusion, if you are a person who just wants to be the ordinary, down to earth gardener, take heart. It is easy to do; it is fun to do; it is rewarding for you. Don't try and imitate the next person - make your garden comfortable for YOU - never mind what others tell you that you should be doing and how you should be designing and what you need to get or have... there is a time and place for all of that but the time for it is when **YOU** are ready for it. If you listen to everyone else telling you what to do it can be overwhelming and become a daunting task. Be your own type of gardener - you'll be much happier in the end.

Now remember, always take time to relax during the gardening season... why not take a ride to the zoo! While you are there, make sure to visit the butterfly bush, the canary creeper, the foxglove, the hare's tail grass, pheasant's eye, the swan river daisy, the bear's breeches, the tiger lily, the goat's beard and the lamb's ear as well as the oxeye daisy, the sheep's fescue and the leopard's bane! Who knows... you may even see a dogwood, catnip, skunk cabbage, elephant ears, hyena teeth grass, monkey flowers, zebra grass, cockscomb, black snake root and spider plants.

Enjoy your winter and rest - Spring will again spring before you know it!

Pat Bastien

PS: hyena teeth grass - **very rare** - because I made that one up...



*I have been to a lot of places, but I have never been in Cahoots. Apparently you can't go there alone. You have to be in Cahoots with someone. I've also never been in Cognito, either. I hear no one recognizes you there. I have, however, been in Sane. They don't have an airport; you have to be driven there. I've made several trips and am planning another one in the near future.*

Thanks, Brenda L., for this contribution.

## Orchid Show & Sale - Juliette St. Pierre

The Essex County Orchid Society is hosting an Orchid Show & Sale on November 12, 2011. This is the first time an Orchid Show of this caliber is being staged by the Society. This is a one day event where you will see many beautiful orchids artistically arranged in creative displays by vendors and members. There is no admission fee for the public and the event is taking place at Colasanti's Tropical Gardens in Ruthven on Saturday Nov. 12th from 10 to 4 pm. This will be a great opportunity for all orchid lovers and admirers alike to view an elaborate assortment of orchids and Orchid Art. A vast array of orchids will be available for purchase from our four vendors. There will be speakers both in the AM & the PM on orchid growing with an opportunity to ask questions on growing orchids successfully. For more information kindly check our website: [www.essexcountyorchidsociety.webs.com](http://www.essexcountyorchidsociety.webs.com)

*Map Quest really needs to start their directions on # 5. I'm pretty sure I know how to get out of my neighborhood*

## Membership Renewal - Jack Quick



Well, the summer and the end of our 2011 membership year are fast approaching. How about that for a segue into the fact that our 2012 Membership begins September 1<sup>st</sup>. I will be at the September meeting with the new 'bright yellow' cards. The cost of the membership remains the same at \$10.00 and we can all appreciate what a great value this is. At a time when everything else is going up in price or remaining at the same price but getting less in the package, isn't it nice to know that you are still receiving all the great benefits of your membership and at no additional cost. I look forward to signing you up for the 2012 membership year.

For your convenience, a renewal form has been attached to this newsletter - Online? Simply print the last page. Hard copy? Detach the last page and in both cases, fill out the form, sign it and either hand it in with your payment at the September meeting or mail it with a cheque enclosed to: Jack Quick, Membership Chair, c/o 322 Evelyn Street, Belle River, ON N0R 1A0

You Know you are addicted to gardening when . . .

- Your neighbors recognize you in your pajamas, rubber clogs and a cup of coffee;
- You grab other people's banana peels, coffee grinds, apple cores, etc. for your compost pile;
- You have to wash your hair to get your fingernails clean;
- All your neighbors come and ask you questions;
- You know the temperature of your compost every day;
- You buy a bigger truck so that you can haul more mulch;
- Your boss makes "taking care of the office plants" an official part of your job description;
- Everything you touch turns to "fertilizer";
- Your non-gardening spouse becomes conversant in botanical names;
- You find yourself feeling leaves, flowers and trunks of trees wherever you go, even at funerals;
- You dumpster-dive for discarded bulbs after commercial landscapers remove them to plant annuals;
- You plan vacation trips around the locations of botanical gardens, arboreta, historic gardens, etc;
- You sneak home a 7 foot Japanese Maple and wonder if your spouse will notice;
- When considering your budget, plants are more important than groceries;
- You always carry a shovel, bottled water and a plastic bag in your trunk as emergency tools;
- You appreciate your Master Gardener badge more than your jewelry;
- You spend more time chopping your kitchen greens for the compost pile than for cooking;
- You like the smell of horse manure better than Estee Lauder;
- You have pride in how bad your hands look;
- You have a decorative compost container on your kitchen counter;
- You can give away plants easily, but compost is another thing;
- Soil test results actually mean something;
- You'd rather go to a nursery to shop than a clothes store;
- You know that Sevin is not a number;
- You take every single person who enters your house on a "garden tour";
- You look at your child's sandbox and see a raised bed;
- You ask for tools for Christmas, Mother/Father's day, your Birthday and any other occasion you can think of;
- You can't bear to thin seedlings and throw them away;
- You scold total strangers who don't take care of their potted plants;
- You know how many bags of fertilizer/potting soil/mulch your car will hold;
- You drive around the neighborhood hoping to score extra bags of leaves for your compost pile;
- Your preferred, reading matter is seed catalogs;
- And last but not least... You know that the four seasons are:



- Planning the Garden
- Preparing the Garden
- Gardening
- Preparing and Planning for the next Garden

*I didn't say it was your fault; I said I was blaming you.*

*If I agreed with you, we'd both be wrong.*

## Projects Posted on the OHA Website.... just a small sample

One of the objectives of Horticultural Societies is to encourage the planting of trees, shrubs and flowers on public and private grounds. Horticultural Society volunteers are busy each year with local community beautification projects across the province. Access these links at: [http://www.gardenontario.org/gar/gallery\\_neighbourhood.php](http://www.gardenontario.org/gar/gallery_neighbourhood.php)

[Support Our Troops Rock Garden](#) - by the Greater Windsor Horticultural Society; [The project to renovate the gardens at the Top Generation Club hall](#) by the Gloucester Horticultural Society; [Delhi Tobacco & Heritage Centre](#) garden revamp by the Delhi & District Horticultural Society; [Bayview Memorial Stream Restoration Project](#) by the Oro/Medonte Horticultural Society; [Bolton Mill Park Tree Planting & Wetlands Enhancement Project](#) - Bolton & District Horticultural Society; [Flagpole Garden](#) - Kincardine & District Horticultural Society; Russell & District Horticultural Society's [project to build a bridge in MacDougall Park](#); Kanata - March Horticultural Society's care of [Molly Wilson Memorial Garden and Tom Thomson Park](#); Credit Valley Horticultural Society's [Community Projects](#); Tweed Horticultural Society's [Moir Garden](#); Ottawa Horticultural Society's [2009 garden renovation projects](#) at the Bronson Centre and the Rideau St. Branch of the Ottawa Public Library; Stoney Creek Horticultural Society's [Legion Garden](#); Projects by the [Leamington Horticultural Society](#).

*You do not need a parachute to skydive. You only need a parachute to skydive twice.*

## Frost Dates and Your Indoor Plants

### Zone 5 & Zone 6

Average dates for the last frost - 30 March to 30 April  
 Average dates for the first frost - 30 September to 30 October

By the 2nd week of September, we should be bringing in all our houseplants that have benefitted from the great outdoors throughout the summer. Remember to clear off all the bugs from your plants before re-introducing them into your home. Though unconventional and probably resisted by many people, I always place my indoor plants in a large garbage bag, give the inside a few sprays of a garden pest spray (Raid) and close the bag tightly for about 4 hours. That usually does it! *PB*

## Mosquitoes

Only female mosquitoes bite and drink blood. Male mosquitoes do not bite, they are vegetarians and feed on the nectar of flowers.

The smallest mammal in the world is Thailand's Kitti's hog-nosed bat, which is about the size of a bumblebee. One bat can catch over 1,000 mosquitoes in an hour.

Did you know that mosquito repellents don't repel. The spray blocks the mosquito's sensors so they don't know you're there.

Mosquitoes are attracted to the color blue more than any other color.



*I totally take back all those times I didn't want to nap when I was younger.*

Belle River & District Horticultural Society  
Application for Membership 2011 - 2012

Yearly Memberships are from September 1<sup>st</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup>

Please fill in the information below and sign the release

Make your cheque payable to: Belle River & District Horticultural Society  
If mailing, please mail to: 322 Evelyn Street, Belle River, ON N0R 1A0

Please mark which of the following applies to your application:

( ) New Member      ( ) Renewal      ( ) Junior Member

Mr. / Mrs. / Miss / Ms. \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to have website updates and other notices delivered electronically,  
please provide your e-mail address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
***PLEASE PRINT clearly***

**Please note that at this time, we no longer mail out our Newsletters.  
They are available at the meetings and electronically only.**

<p><b>\$10.00 per year for adult membership</b> <b>\$1.00 per year for junior membership - ages 6 to 14</b></p>
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**WAIVER & INDEMNITY**

In consideration of the approval of my application for membership in the Belle River & District Horticultural Society ("Society") and the granting of such membership, the undersigned hereby waives and releases each of its directors, officers, servants and members from time to time, from all liability including vicarious liability for any loss or injury howsoever caused resulting from the act or omission of any director, officer, servant or member of the Society. Furthermore, the undersigned hereby agrees to promptly indemnify and save harmless the Society and each of its directors, officers, servants and members from and against any damages, liabilities, claims and demands whatsoever arising out of, pursuant to or connected with any act or omission of the undersigned.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_