

# The GARDEN POST

Richmond Hill Garden & Horticultural Society



**September/  
October  
2015**

## NOTES FROM NORMAN

The aroma of boiling vinegar is spreading through the kitchen as I begin my tribute to “preserving nature’s bounty” by pickling some beets. This is an annual event in our house and this year I was fortunate enough to find lots of tiny beets, fresh from the fields, at a wonderful Mennonite market just outside Mount Forest. There is something a bit sobering about the smells of picking and preserving, knowing that summer is moving on and autumn will soon be with us.



This has been a great year for our garden, brought on, I suspect, by the large amount of spring rain. The early summer perennials were spectacular and now the self-seeding annuals are in full display. Amidst the lush growth we have also had some remarkable surprises.

Our *Saint Swithun* rose is by far our strongest and most independent, with branches, laden with blooms, often reaching well over our heads. This year several white cosmos plants are towering through the bush and strangely enough they complement each other. It is generally believed that roses do best by themselves yet this vigorous David Austin cultivar seems quite happy having a close companion.

Further down the drive and just a few feet from the main bush, a trumpet vine has emerged from the asphalt. I have named it the “rugged individualist” as every day it is threatened by the coming and going of vehicles but still survives. The plant continues to prosper and of course it is impossible to move it – without excavations. So its fate is uncertain, held in the hand of Mother Nature.

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**“Centre of Attention”**

by Sandra Calderon

More award winning photos from our August competition inside!

## Notes from Norman continued...

In other areas of the garden, larkspurs have suddenly appeared. What a pleasure to have these beautiful blue and summery blooms that simply arrived from somewhere. If they don't self-seed this year, they will definitely be on the planting list for next spring.

I hope you have enjoyed your gardens this summer as well and that you have made a few interesting discoveries. Meanwhile, back to my pickled beets – the assembly line is ready and I can swing into production. Enjoy the rest of the summer! N.M.

### July 2015 FLOWER SHOW RESULTS *Delphinium, Rose and Lily show*

#### Specimens:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Rahe Richards	32 pts.
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Evelyn Gray	31 pts.
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Kevin Dark	27 pts.

#### Potted Plants:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Linda Lynott	10 pts.
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Jackie Dedlow	9 pts.
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Rahe Richards	6 pts.

#### Special Exhibits:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Rahe Richards	7 pts.
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Lynda Burke	4 pts.

#### Design:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Patty Carlson	12 pts.
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Linda Lynott	6 pts.
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Lynda Burke	4 pts.

#### Fruit & Vegetables:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Rahe Richards	14 pts.
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Jackie Dedlow	6 pts.
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Julia Thomas	6 pts.
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Linda Lynott	5 pts.

#### Youth:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Daniel Rostirolla	10 pts.
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Michael Rostirolla	9 pts.

### August 2015 FLOWER SHOW RESULTS Summer Show

#### Specimens:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Rahe Richards	40 pts.
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Jacky Dedlow	32 pts.
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Evelyn Gray	26 pts.

#### Special Exhibits:

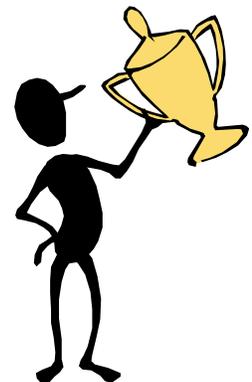
1 <sup>st</sup>	Lyne Webb	4 pts.
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Rahe Richards	2 pts.
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Lynda Burke	1 pt.

#### Design:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Linda Lynott	10 pts.
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Patty Carlson	5 pts.
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Lynda Burke	5 pts.

#### Fruit & Vegetables:

1 <sup>st</sup>	Joe Celebre	43 pts.
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Rahe Richards	5 pts.
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Jacky Dedlow	4 pts.



## AWARD WINNING PHOTOS

by Richmond Hill Garden and Horticultural Society Members

### Some Basic Tips for Flower Photography

By John Kot

Each year our flowers provide a wonderful display of colour and help to feed the pollinators. They also provide great subject matter for photography. The following are some basic tips for flower photography.

1. Select good specimens: the flowers should be well formed and colourful. Good specimens (free of bug holes, etc) are especially important if shooting a close-up photo.

2. Lighting: it is generally best to photograph on a cloudy day, which provides more even light. On a bright sunny day (especially mid-day) you will face the challenge of compensating for dark shadows and harsh bright spots. On a sunny day it is best to photograph during the first or last hour of daylight as the colours are more saturated then.



Lilies by Sandra Calderon

4. Background: although this is part of composition, it deserves special attention. Distracting elements in the background will always make a poorer photograph. When composing your shot, always check the background. You may need to change your position to remove the distracting elements. You can also blur the background by using a shallower depth of field (lower f-stop number), but check that your main subject is still in focus.



Single Yellow Rose By Brian Moore

3. Composition: you can photograph a large group of flowers, a smaller group of a few flowers, a single flower, or details of a single flower. For a group of flowers consider an odd number (3, 5, etc) and select an arrangement that forms a diagonal line or a triangle. Also consider shooting a close-up of a single flower or part of a single flower to highlight the interesting details many flowers have.



"Strange Succulent" by Susan Biensch

## More Award Winning Photos...

5. Focus: generally your subject should be in focus. To get more in focus use a larger f-stop number (e.g. use f/16 rather than f/4). A wide angle lens will also have more in focus, as will shooting from a greater distance. Shooting close-ups presents a challenge because there will be less depth-of-field (the range that is in focus). In extreme close-ups, you will need to use an advanced technique called focus stacking to get everything in focus.

6. Shutter speed: your shutter speed needs to be high enough so that you do not get motion blur, especially if hand holding the camera. Consider using a tripod, if the shutter speed is slower.

7. Wind: wind is also a factor that can result in a blurry picture even if the camera focus is correct. This is particularly of concern for close-up photography, as even very little wind will have a significant effect. Increasing the shutter speed will help; however this will reduce the f-stop and thus the depth of focus (you can compensate a bit by increasing the ISO). Also consider photographing in the early morning when there is less chance of wind. You can also try to block the wind with a piece of cardboard. Another option is to bring the flower inside, if possible.



**"Peony Nibbler" by Lou Angelo**

These are just a few of the basic tips that will get your started on the road to better flower photography.

### OUR TOP PHOTOGRAPHERS

**FIRST PLACE-** Susan Biensch received the Highest Aggregate score of 220 points

- A. M - Bee on Liatris
- A. M - Strange Succulent (see previous page)
- A. M - Sunny Calendula (see page 12)
- A. M - Mom Said "Blend In"
- A. M - Bird Food Thief

**SECOND PLACE:-**Lou Angelo received the 2nd highest aggregate score with a total of 215 points

- H. M - Heralds of Spring
- H. M - Pink Bouquet
- H. M - Rose at Dundurn Castle
- A. M - Family
- H. M - Peony Nibbler

**THIRD PLACE-** Brian Moore received the 3rd Highest Aggregate Score with a total of 211 points

- H. M - Fall
- H. M - Winter
- H. M - Peony
- H. M - Single Yellow Rose (see previous page)

*For the complete list of Honourable Mention winners see page 11.*



## ***Summer in the Southern Tier*** **109<sup>th</sup> Ontario Horticultural Association Convention**

It has been my experience that while all O.H.A. Conventions are good, some are exceptional. This year's event in Ancaster, hosted by District 6, would definitely fall into that category. The beautiful campus of Redeemer College was a perfect facility of a Convention of this size. Everything was very well planned and organized. I was amazed by the number of volunteers who made every effort to offer information and direction. I had the feeling that they were really enjoying the Convention as well – such a healthy sign.

I attended two seminars; *Making Food History Relevant*, presented by Janet Kronick, Historic Kitchen Co-Ordinator of Dundurn Castle and *Attract New Members* by Past President, James Graham and Gary Brenner from District 19. Both were excellent. With a wide range of speakers, seminars and tours along with a spectacular Flower Show, there was certainly something for all delegates to enjoy. The business sessions offer dele-



gates opportunities to learn more about the workings of the O.H.A. across the Province, through the Districts and individual Societies.

Once again the speaker at the Saturday Banquet was sponsored by our Society as a memorial to Gladys McLatchy. And what a huge success this year! Lizzie Matheson presented “Conversation Pieces”. While she is an extremely talented floral designer and instructor, she has all the makings of a really good stand-up comic. I especially enjoyed her stories about her long-suffering husband

George! The presentation was a great success with the President of the O.H.A. seeking me out afterwards and adding “Thank you, Richmond Hill, for a wonderful evening”.



Thanks also to you for allowing me the opportunity to represent our Society at the Convention. It was a very successful event and I was proud of our participation and accomplishments.

**Norman McMullen, President**

I was pleased to attend the OHA conference and I felt it was one of the best conventions ever. There were many interesting and informative workshops and displays. It was also a time to meet with old friends from all over Ontario and a chance to make new acquaintances. If you have never attended an OHA Convention you should plan to attend next year's event in Waterloo, Ontario. I can guarantee you will enjoy it!

**Kevin Dark**

# OHA Winning Entries from our Richmond Hill Hort Members

## Youth Awards

### Section B: Artistic Creativity

Class 3: Welcome to the Southern Tier

Daniel Rostirolla (Age Group 12-14) – 1<sup>st</sup> place

Michael Rostirolla (Age Group 9-11) – 1<sup>st</sup> place

Class 4: Foodland Ontario

Daniel Rostirolla (Age Group 12-14) – 1<sup>st</sup> place

Michael Rostirolla (Age Group 9-11) – 2<sup>nd</sup> place

Best in Show rosette awarded to Daniel Rostirolla for his Class 3 entry.

### Section C: Floral Design

Class 5: Captured in Time

Daniel Rostirolla (Age Group 12-14) – 1<sup>st</sup> place

Class 6: Having Fun

Daniel Rostirolla (Age Group 12-14) – 2<sup>nd</sup> place

Michael Rostirolla (Age Group 9-11) – 1<sup>st</sup> place

Judge's Choice rosette awarded to Michael Rostirolla for his Class 6 entry.

### Section D: Plants

Class 7: Cactus Dish Garden

Group Effort – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place

### Section E: Fine Arts

Class 9: Crawford Lake

Daniel Rostirolla – 1<sup>st</sup> place and the Harry Wyma Fine Arts Award plaque

Michael Rostirolla – 2<sup>nd</sup> place

Class 10: Seed Package

Daniel Rostirolla – 2<sup>nd</sup> place

Class 11: Dogwood Poster

Group Effort – 2<sup>nd</sup> place

## Photography (Youth):

Class 12: Pollinators at Work

Daniel Rostirolla (Age Group 12-17) – 2<sup>nd</sup> place

## Publications:

Class 3: Yearbook Cover primarily photographic – 3<sup>rd</sup> place

Class 4: 2014/2014 Special Event Poster – 3<sup>rd</sup> place for our Open Gates Water Gardens Tour

Class 5: 2014/2015 Special Event brochure/pamphlet/flyer – 1<sup>st</sup> place for our Open Gates Water Gardens tour passport

Class 6: Club/Society Brochure – 1<sup>st</sup> place for our Membership Pamphlet

Class 11: Club/Society bookmark – 1<sup>st</sup> place

## Arts:

Class 8: "Isn't She an Apple Doll?"

Lucia Rostirolla – 1<sup>st</sup> place



See more of our award winners on the back page.

### ***From our July Members Only Garden Tours***

*Mary and Hassan Sadeghi* are a dynamic gardening duo, who love to develop their gardens from scratch. This garden is their second to Hassan recounts how back in 1998 when they moved to this home, there was nothing but a pear tree and some grass to work with.

Gardening is also a family heritage for Mary. Her father was a passionate gardener and passed his love of plants and flowers on to her. The sweet pea growing on trellises and climbers, a cottage garden classic that you don't see enough of around here these days, grew like a perennial in her city back home in Iran. Mary grows her sweet pea from seed every year as a reminder of this past.



**Pears and Wheels**

### **Garden Overview**

The main front garden balances the poise of a cascading Crimson Queen Japanese maple, a blue spruce standard and the steady green of boxwoods, with bursts of dramatic dahlias in varying heights, sizes and colours: deep burgundies and purples, bright whites and red/yellows. This circular garden is framed within the warm yellowy-orange glow of nasturtiums and marigolds, and vivid blocks of petunias.

But the front garden is just a prelude to the back gardens. There are 13 gardens in all throughout Mary and Hassan's property, each started small and from scratch and grown out little by little, year by year. There is a rose garden, an iris garden, a lily garden, featuring a variety of day lilies, exotic speckled ones, outrageous tango lilies, orchid-like toad lilies, and giant tree lilies, which Mary excitedly

tells me will grow as tall as sunflowers in a couple more years.

There is even the glory lily, which should technically be considered a part of their sprawling vine collection. Reoccurring vines help tie together the separate gardens and add an ethereal effect. Among the assortment of vines are morning glories, over 40 clematis, wisteria, the tropical looking trumpet vine, and let's not forget, grapes! Then there is a fruit garden, with pear, cherry, sour cherry, nectarine, kiwi, plum, mulberries and Cornelian cherry trees growing, and a prize apple tree that's grafted to produce five different varieties of apples.



**Exotic Lilies**

## More of the gardens of Mary and Hassan Sadeghi



Mary and Hassan opened their garden to Michelle Lorimer as part of our July Members Garden Visits.

Beyond the pond there is a cluster of benches that break the trail and an old wagon wheel that demarcates the entrance into the grove

Mary's liberal interspersing of pots filled with colorful annuals set off her perennial garden beds, giving a cheerful and relaxed feel to the garden, and also a very personal one.



Michelle Lorimer © 2015. Richmond Hill Garden and Horticultural Society

### **Sunday, October 4, 2015 – McConaghy Centre 2 – 4 pm**

We look forward to welcoming new members to this reception so we can get to know you better and share news and information about all the exciting things happening in the Richmond Hill Garden and Horticultural Society.

### **Annual December Banquet and Awards Night Dinner**

Tuesday, December 1, 2015



## Zucchini Patties (makes 3 to 4 servings)

2 cups grated zucchini (drained and squeezed)  
2 eggs -- beaten  
1/4 cup chopped onion  
1/2 cup flour  
1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese  
1/2 cup grated mozzarella cheese  
1/2 tsp. salt  
2 tbsp. vegetable oil



1. Combine all ingredients. (except oil)
2. Heat oil over medium high heat
3. Drop mixture in heaping tablespoons into pan and cook for a few minutes on each side until golden brown.

Makes 6-8 patties.  
You can also freeze them after cooking.

*Submitted and kitchen tested by Jennifer Pyke*

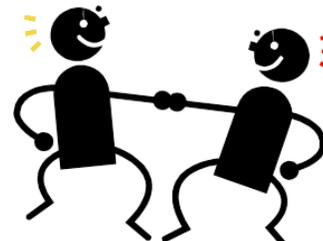
## Welcome to New Members for July and August:

**Marsha & Arnie Cohen** joined the Horticultural Society at our July general meeting. They are novice gardeners. So welcome to Horticultural Society

**Maia Shefler** renewed her membership in July. She is a intermediate gardener who enjoys scrapbooking and travel. She has volunteered to open her garden for Members' Garden Visits. We welcome back Maia S.

**Steve & Adrienne Chaiet** joined the Horticultural Society online. Steve is legally blind and is a hobby horticulturalist. Steve heard about the Horticultural Society through The Liberal.

**Ling Wang** joined the Horticultural Society online in August. She is a novice gardener. She looks forward to helping with publicity and planting and maintaining public gardens.



## Martin Galloway: GARDENS AS ECOSYSTEMS

Since this most engaging talk in July I have spent many moments in the garden pondering the various weeds and insects I encounter.

Martin Galloway certainly was able to convince me that “Everything is part of the life cycle” and that we should “know more about their story” instead of viewing them as pests.

There are no ‘bad guys’ in the view of biologists; nature is not “cute, cuddly and controllable”.

Those red aphids on the rudbeckias are food for ants, dragonflies control mosquitoes, spiders are the number 1 predators and snakes control rats, mice and even slugs.

Continued on page 10.

## **Martin Galloway Continued...**

Flowering plants and insects evolved together, since many plants need a means of transferring pollen to ovaries and the pollinators need nectar and pollen. Flowers with tubular corollas attract the long tongued hummingbird; other tubular flowers reward the pollinator with only small amounts of nectar, thus keeping the insect moving from flower to flower.

Seeds and fruits must be dispersed and this can happen in many ways; birds, squirrels, wind, broadcast - the seeds simply fall to the ground. The pattern of spots inside a foxglove helps the bumblebee track its way into the flower. Bloodroot seeds have a fleshy tag which is taken and buried by ants and will germinate a good distance from the mother plant.

Ferns and mosses need moisture to reproduce, grow them in a damp spot; evergreens with pollen and cones can reproduce without water and thus can survive in dry sandy conditions, try them in a dry garden.

Many more examples of the interdependence and cooperation of everything in nature were given in Martin's lively and enthusiastic style.

Finally he reminded us that humans have been around for two hundred thousand years, agriculture for ten thousand, and long before all that, Nature had everything worked out.

"We need to applaud the diversity that is on our gardens. In nature, there are no bad guys!"

J.W.

**Martin Galloway at Chalk Lake Greenhouses in Uxbridge Ontario.**



### **Gardening Tip:**

September is a good month for gardeners to buy and plant bulbs for next spring. Shop early for the best selection.

## Our Annual Corn Roast



Dave Biensch kept the fires burning at last years annual Corn Roast.

### THE RUSSELL TILT CORN ROAST

**Sunday, September 13, 2015**

You don't know what you are missing if you have never been to...

**The Russell Tilt Corn Roast.**

3:00 o'clock p.m. until dusk.

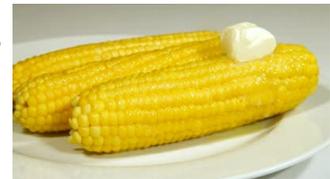
Join us at 25 Bridgeford St. South, (off Centre Street, Richmond Hill)

Price \$6.00 All are welcome! There will be delicious food and good company.

Meet your fellow members and enjoy the harvest.

Bring your own lawn chairs.

**Doreen Bulled, Event Coordinator**



### **Honourable Mentions for Photo Awards:**



**Dee Sutters** A.M - Clematis Running Rampant

**Cheryl Crosby**

H. M - Festive Fall

**Diana Lee**

A. M - Peony

**Emily Raskauskas**

H. M - Purple Rhododendron

**Marj Andre**

H. M - Coral Peony

H. M - Newfoundland Moos

**Morteza Tehrani**

H. M - Frozen Beauty

**Michelle Lorimer**

H. M - Crying in the Rain

H. M - Reflecting the Sun

**Sandra Calderon**

H. M - Centre of Attraction

H. M - Vibrant Pink Lilies

H. M - Cluster of Beauties

H. M - Vibrant Pink Rose

**Jennifer Pyke :**

H.M.- for "Ibis" (see photo below)



## And now the June and July Weather Report...



Temperatures	July 2015	July 2014
Mean Temperature	21.5°C	20.0°C
Mean Maximum Temperature	27.5°C	25.3°C
Mean Minimum Temperature	15.9°C	14.6°C
Lowest Temperature	10.5°C on the 4 <sup>th</sup>	10.0°C on the 10 <sup>th</sup> & 17 <sup>th</sup>
Highest Temperature	33.5°C on the 27 <sup>th</sup> & 28 <sup>th</sup>	31.0°C on the 22 <sup>nd</sup>
Total Rain	26.2 mm	97.8 mm
Total Precipitation	26.2 mm	97.8 mm

*This July was the second driest in 57 years. The driest July in the last 57 years was 20.2 mm in July 1994; the wettest was 210.4 mm in July 1996.*

*The 40 year mean July temperature (1959 – 1998) is 19.9°C.*

*We had 2 days with thunderstorms in July 2015 compared to 4 days with thunderstorms in July 2014. We had 9 days with high temperatures 30°C or higher compared to only 2 days with temperatures 30°C or higher in July 2014.*

Temperatures	June 2015	June 2014
Mean Temperature	17.9°C	19.8°C
Mean Maximum Temperature	23.1°C	25.4°C
Mean Minimum Temperature	12.7°C	14.1°C
Lowest Temperature	6.0°C on the 7 <sup>th</sup>	8.0°C on the 7 <sup>th</sup>
Highest Temperature	28.0°C on the 10 <sup>th</sup>	30.0°C on the 28 <sup>th</sup> , 29 <sup>th</sup> , 30 <sup>th</sup>
Total Rain	165.6 mm	84.3 mm
Total Precipitation	165.6 mm	84.3 mm

During June this year we had 5 days with thunderstorms. The wettest day was 34.0 mm on June 27<sup>th</sup>. Highest June rainfall recorded was 202.8 mm for June 2010. Lowest June rainfall recorded was 8.1 mm for June 1963.

During June 2014 we had 7 days with thunderstorms but much less rainfall. The average rainfall for the month of June (1959 – 1998) is 73.8 mm. The mean temperature for June (1959 – 1998) is 18.1°C.

*\*Picture of "Sunny Calendula" curtesy of Susan Biensch*

## A SHARED PLIGHT

### The Dangers of Neo-nicotinoid and Other Pesticides



Bee Photo by S. Biensch

Here's the thing: Never mind what you hear or read about the decimation of bees due to Neo-nicotinoid pesticide use being some tree-hugger's hysteria.

These tales are distributed by Big-Pharma and Big-Agri to hide the truth, in the interest of making the biggest profit with the smallest investment, similar to climate change denial, for the same reason - corporate greed. Commercial bee keepers and farmers are rewarded with cash deals to lie outright, denying reality and sowing doubt about the truth.

Here's the truth: Nicotinoids kill bees. No bees, no pollination; no pollination, no crops; no crops, no people. So-called Neonics are systemic in character; seed treated with them absorbs the poison, distributing it throughout the system as the plant develops. Bees, both commercial crop-pollinating types and wild bees, along with other pollinating insects, such as hover flies, visit the flowers, delivering affected pollen and nectar to the young. Such exposure reduces productivity, is linked to earlier worker-bee mortality, decreased overall production and decreased nesting in solitary bees. Exposure increases susceptibility to parasites and disease. Prolonged, low-level exposure weakens motor skills - individuals can't function.

In new studies, pesticides in general, including Pyrethroids, kill larval bees in greater numbers than adults, hence, fewer workers are produced at the outset. In a chilling twist, it has been shown that bees become addicted to plants that contain systemic Neonics, such as Imidacloprid, Thiamethoxam and Clothianidin, all sold under various brand names. This means that untreated plants are being ignored and numbers decline thus causing a break in the chain of nature upon which we all depend. Not only insects are directly impacted. In its latest studies, the Journal of Environmental Immunology and Toxicology shows that amphibians, fish, birds and bats are also affected. As well, Neonics leach into aquifers.

It's not a giant leap to question whether other species, such as ourselves, might also be in danger. After all, unless we buy only organic products, including meat and dairy or grow our own food from untreated seed, do we not consume the products of treated crops every day? Here's some sobering news: Three new studies *confirm* exposure to common insecticides during pregnancy can cut a child's I.Q. four to seven percent by age nine. Clearly, pesticide use endangers many life forms.

What can we do? Stop pesticide use! Pressure politicians, sign petitions, boycott companies that produce, sell or use Neonics or their by-products and urge others to do likewise. Grow our own plants from certified organic seed. Avoid those alluring but poison-laced, ready-to-grow plants at nurseries and garden centres. If it isn't labelled, Guaranteed Pesticide Free, it isn't!

**Article contributor: Barbara Higgs**

## August Member's Garden Feature: The Garden of Susan Biensch

When Susan Biensch first left Florida to come to Canada, she went from a growing climate which mostly entailed cutting back the overgrowth of lush year-long growing, sun-kissed tropical perennials, to our growing season which spans only a quarter of the year and requires a variety of hardy perennials that can live through the long, cold months of winters here.

She's been at work for 25 years since then, cultivating a garden that has grown as her awareness of the multiple purposes of gardens has grown. Since joining the Hort eight years ago, she has gradually grown a garden that today has become a Canadian Wildlife Association certified backyard habitat. Her garden offers a variety of flora that help sustain the fauna native to our area and is also a registered monarch waystation for migrating monarch butterflies.

The garden is a feast to the eyes, with splashes of red from geraniums, million bells and lobelia (red is for the hummingbirds) throughout a sprawling perennial medley. But the garden feeds another passion of Susan's: her hobby of making dried flower arrangements and homemade potpourri. Plants such as statice, which she grows annually from seed, lemon gem marigolds and calendula, yarrow, liatris or gay feather, hyssop and beebalm, lavender, love in the mist (nigella), rue and the ubiquitous snowball hydrangea all make great dried flowers and are used in her various arrangements and pot pourris.

Trial and error, experimentation and conservation abound in this garden, and this year's curiosities include two new carnivorous plant additions: the Venus flytrap and the ant eating pitcher plant!



Figure 1&2: A variety of native, colourful pollinator-friendly perennials.



Figure 3&4: The pond features watercress, water hyacinth, water lilies, surrounded by lilies, irises, splashes of red and deep purple and chartreuse potato vines. The tropical looking dracaena spikes are 5-7 years old now (staying dormant in the garage during the winters) and now look like mini palm trees...perhaps a touch of Florida after all.

Michelle Lorimer © 2015.

## The Garden of Joe Celebre

Joe Celebre's earliest memories of being in the garden go back to when he was five year old, when he would go out with his grandfather to till the fields of their farm in Cosenza, a province in Southern Italy. By eleven he would be ploughing with oxen. It's therefore easy to see the method behind the madness of row after spacious row of potatoes, tomatoes, pole beans, zucchini, swiss chard, endives, romaine, kale, radicchio, broccoli, carrots, celery, onions, beets, an array of Italian herbs, kidney and soy beans, sweet and hot peppers, squash, pumpkin, cantaloupe and watermelon that make up Joe's backyard "farm" here in Richmond Hill, Canada.

Joe has been gardening at this present location for 42 years now, and with the crops that he produces he is able to feed his extended family of fifteen (plus food for neighbours) for about ten out of the twelve months of the year. His helper in the cooking, preserving and freezing of these ample crops: his wife Silvana.



An interesting tip from this master gardener comes from his knowledge of the land in the mountainous region of Cosenza. Having to plant crops on hilly ground meant digging much deeper into the soil, loosening a greater depth of earth to then plant olive and fig trees, as well as other crops; the water table was not easy to reach, and so digging much deeper and turning the soil around the vegetable plants so it is loose and light allowed the roots to grow deeper in their search for water, and thereby thrive. In his present garden Joe hand tills and digs his trenches for vege-

tables 20 inches deep, leaving the soil loose and airy, in preparation for sowing his seeds. What is the apparent advantage here? He never waters his vegetable garden. That's right: he never waters these extensive gardens. He waits instead on the spring and summer rain, and because he's allowed the roots to go deep, they find the moisture they need, without him having to water. The water collected in his many rain barrels is used in his greenhouse instead.

Still, Joe admits that vegetable growing is not a perfect science: this year was not a good one for his crop of cucumbers and for some tomatoes. And he seems amused at how the cantaloupe patch he'd sown and tended to this summer is dying, while the surprise cantaloupe patch which he neither sowed nor tended to is thriving.

Along with vegetables, Joe is also a master grafter. The entranceway to his backyard garden is a mini orchard of pear and fruit trees, most of them home grafted via his method of diagonal slitting, duct tape and loosely binding plastic bags, to produce two or three varieties on one tree. Some interesting combinations are a cherry tree with both sour and sweet cherries, a pear tree with four different types of pears including San Juan pears, and an apple tree grafted to grow Matsu apples. **M.L. 2015**



## August Member's Garden Feature: The Garden of Ruth Perratt

On visiting Ruth's garden on a summer's evening, one is immediately struck by how the nuanced hues of a setting sun, with its pinks and purples and blues, are mirrored in her lovely garden.



Since moving one and a half years ago, the Perratts began by fencing the property and building a needed retaining wall. Then, upon the advice and design of Marion Jarvie, they brought in good soil for an extensive garden bed that would run the perimeter of the backyard lot. Ruth asked Marion to recommend plants that were a mix of sun and shade because some spots were more sunny than others. She also wanted a garden that she could maintain herself. From first

glance, Ruth's affinity for cool blue/purples is evident: the cranesbill geraniums, the catmint, the delphiniums, a blue spruce standard (St. Mary's Broom), caryopteris, asters – and in spring, columbines and irises. Complementing these blue/purples are the pink/ purple of roses, azaleas and rhododendrons, astilbes, coral bells, phlox, weigela, persicaria and barberry. The occasional white flower: roses, lychnis and phlox, add soft brightness in spots throughout.

In the centre of the backyard landscape is a raised stone patio around the garden's signature tree: a lovely branching pear. The mature tree provides natural shade for the outdoor patio, and is a lovely centerpiece to the surrounding gardens.

To add even more interest to the mix, most of these lower growing flowers and shrubs were interspersed with a variety of small trees, each with slightly differing hues to add interest: sweetgums, various cornus kousa (such as the lovely variegated Summer Fun), a variegated willow standard, the exotic looking Japanese Umbrella Pine, as well



as Shirazz, Autumn Moon and Black Lace Japanese maples. The close and complementary intermingling of different plants; the variegation and repletion of leaf and flower colours; the wrap around garden bed structure itself: all of these combined to produce a fluidity of form and colour – and the overall effect was one of serenity and unity.

Michelle Lorimer © 2015.

Richmond Hill Garden and Horticultural Society.

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### Goodwill and Kind Thoughts

May I remind you that if you learn a Member is ill, in hospital or has had bereavement, please be sure to contact our Goodwill Ambassador, Margaret Roberts, at meroberts7@gmail.com or 905-884-8410. She will send a beautiful card on behalf of our Society.

I know from personal experience that it is always nice to know our friends and fellow members are thinking of us at difficult times and wishing us well. As our Society continues to grow, it is even more important to make sure that Margaret receives this information in order to pass along our best wishes.

Norman Mc Mullen

### *Congratulations to our RHGHS Flower Judge and 2015 OHA Competition Award Winner*

#### Lynda Burke:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> place in Design, Class 7 “Woodland Sanctuary”
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place in Horticulture Class 29 “Hosta, Blue, 3 leaves”
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place in Collections Class 58 “Mixed Cut Garden Flowers”
- Honourable Mention in Horticulture Class 31 “Hosta, Variegated, 3 leaves & Collections Class 59 “Cut Garden Foliage”



#### Richmond Hill Garden and Horticultural Society

Location of Meetings: McConaghy Seniors' Centre, 10100 Yonge Street, Richmond Hill, ON

(north of Major Mackenzie, just south of Arnold Crescent)

Annual Dues: Single \$25; Family \$30



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