



# Tulip Times

Niagara-on-the-Lake Horticultural Society

Established 1917

Spring 2010

## President's message

Welcome to all NOTL Hort members. As my second year as president it is my pleasure to inform you our Society is as vibrant as ever and how awesome to have such a great slate of executives and directors. We are also excited to have Jackie Heyden and Jordan Albers from the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture on our Board...how great to get students involved as they are our future. This year everyone is pitching in to help grow our Society and ensuring every area is run smoothly.

We have split up responsibilities and each Board member is in charge of various committees and sub-committees. Betty Alexander in charge of fundraising has already presented a plan with objectives and goals. Barb Waller & Gloria Thurston (2<sup>nd</sup> VP), have jumped in to do marketing and the newsletter, which will be published in the spring and fall. Marion Boon is wearing two hats, 1<sup>st</sup> VP & for her second year doing a fabulous job looking after membership. Our prayers were answered when Donna Carter agreed to take on the position of Treasurer. Linda Derstine is doing a bang up job in Hospitality and always makes sure we are all well fed and our thirst quenched. Shirley Northwood as Public Relations Director will get the word out and let everyone know who we are. And last but not least, Melissa Achal, Jordan Albers and Jackie Heyden are looking after special events and will have their hands full with all "our happenings".

We have some incredible speakers lined up for this year and some great off premise meetings scheduled in April and September.

I know we are all itching to get outside, work the soil, watch things grow and not to forget to stop and smell the roses.

## Upcoming Meetings

- **April 27<sup>th</sup>** – Behind the Scenes of the Butterfly

## Past Happenings.....

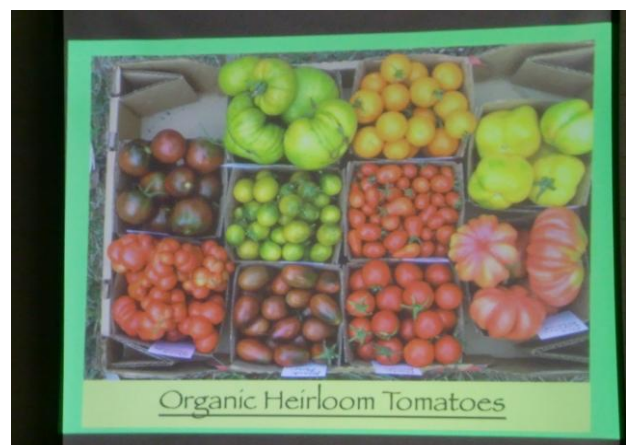
### January's meeting

Theresa Forte Garden Columnist/Writer/Photographer & Design Consultant presented interesting slides of her various trips to some beautiful US gardens.. The presentation also covered design trends for the garden such as colours and furnishings, accessories.

**At our February meeting**, Linda Crago of Tree & Twig Vegetable Farm entertained us with a show of her organic market garden. She explained why organic and heirloom plants are so valuable and displayed slides of some of her exotic vegetables such as tomatoes, eggplants and peppers which were in a dizzying array of wild shapes and colors. We finished with a quiz to see if we could guess the types of vegetables with names such as Elephant ears (sweet potato) or Turkey Crow (beans.) Many of us left inspired and anxious to try heirloom vegetables in our gardens this summer

**Arlene White** also spoke to us about the possibility of locating a Bicentennial Peace Garden in Niagara-on-the-Lake – this would become part of a bicentennial peace garden trail of gardens in the Niagara and Western New York area.

*Some of Linda's organic tomato varieties*



**At March's meeting** Lorraine Menon of Pathways to Perennials charmed us with a poem "My wife the gardener." She discussed

**Conservatory & the Botanical Gardens.**

- **Tues. May 25<sup>th</sup>** – “Tips & Tricks for Gardeners” by Jim Mabee
- **Tues. Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>** – **Harvest Bounty – Chili & Corn Night at Kurtz Orchards**

**Facts & Other Happenings**

**Saturday, July 10<sup>th</sup>  
19<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL GARDEN TOUR**

11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

**Tickets \$10.00**

Includes a grand prize draw

Tour **six** fabulous **residential** gardens and **two** unique **commercial** gardens.

For ticket information e-mail [notlhortsociety.com](mailto:notlhortsociety.com) or call Shirley 905-468-2325. Check out our website [www.notlhortsociety.com](http://www.notlhortsociety.com) for more information and updates.

**Spring has Sprung Contest** – Nominate your favourite spring garden. Details in the Niagara Advance.

**June – September – Garden of the Week Contest** – Nominate your favourite garden. Details in the Niagara Advance.

**June – August – Member Garden Stroll** – Members are invited to stroll through other members’ gardens.  
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**Web links to check out:**

[www.notlhortsociety.com](http://www.notlhortsociety.com)

**Pathways to Perennials** – [www.pathwaystoperennials.com](http://www.pathwaystoperennials.com)

**Evelyn Alemanni** – [www.allea.com/gardening-ea.htm](http://www.allea.com/gardening-ea.htm)

**Landscape Ontario** - [www.landscapeontario.com](http://www.landscapeontario.com)

**Tree & Twig Heirloom Vegetable Farm** – <http://treeandtwig.ca>

**Palatine Fruit & Roses** – [www.palatineroses.com](http://www.palatineroses.com)

**Edible flowers** - <http://whatscookingamerica.net/EdibleFlowers/EdibleFlowersMain.htm>

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the importance of living shade and gave us lots of good ideas for plants and techniques to create shade gardens for any location. We were also lucky to have 2 students from the school of horticulture selling some great canna lillies.



*Jackie and Jordan at work*

**Getting the Garden Ready in Spring**

*By Evelyn Alemanni*

As the last bits of snow melt and days warm up, it’s time to get the garden ready for spring. By tackling this potentially daunting project in an organized way, your garden will look super in no time at all.

Surely you’ve been reading seed catalogs all winter, and perhaps the seeds have arrived. You can start them indoors before the last frost, under lights, to give the little plants a head start. Be sure to acclimate them to the outdoors before planting by setting the seedlings out for a few hours each day, starting in a shady place, then gradually moving them into the sun for longer periods, and finally, planting them.

Remove any leaves that have collected around shrubs during the winter and clean out the beds to remove any overwintering pests. Run the lawnmower over this material to shred it, then drop it into the compost pile. Take some of last year’s compost (or buy bags of compost) and spread it on your planting beds to a depth of 2 to 3 inches. This will help reduce weeds, and of course, provide nutrients to the soil. No need to work it in, just spread it on top. If you didn’t have time during the winter, now’s the perfect time to tune up your lawnmower. Drain the old gas and oil and refill. Change the sparkplug and air filter, and treat yourself to a new mower blade for a nice, crisp cut.



Likewise, sharpen your pruners and check shrubs and trees for wood that has died back. Carefully remove dead branches while pruning the shrub to a pleasing shape and size. Rose bushes can benefit from being cut back to about 18” high. Remove any branches with a diameter less than one-quarter inch, and fertilize with rose food to give new growth a boost.

## 2010 Executive

### President:

**Shirley Madsen** 905-468-2325

[notlhortsociety@gmail.com](mailto:notlhortsociety@gmail.com)

### 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

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### 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President/Marketing

**Gloria Thurston** 289-868-9143

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### Secretary

### Volunteer Opportunity

### Treasurer

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### BOARD:

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**Betty Alexander -Fund raising** 905-262-5453

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**Linda Derstine** 905-685-9466

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**Jordan Albers - Special Events** 905-988-5386

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### My wife, The Gardener

She dug the plot on Monday, the soil was rich and fine  
She forgot to thaw out dinner, so we went out to dine...

She planted roses Tuesday, she says they are a must,  
They really are quite lovely, but she forgot to dust...

On Wednesday it was daisies, they opened with the sun  
All whites and pinks and yellows, but the laundry wasn't done!

The poppies came on Thursday, bright and cherry red,  
I guess she really was engrossed, but never made the bed.

It was dahlias on Friday, in colours she adores,  
It never bothered her at all, the crumbs upon the floors.

I hired a maid on Saturday; my week was now complete,  
My wife can garden all she wants, the house will still be neat.

Its nearly lunchtime Sunday, I can't find the maid.  
Oh no! I don't believe it! She's out there with a spade.

(from 'Shades of Heartland' - Hosta newsletter)

Annual flowers to set out in the early spring include pansies, violas, stock, snapdragons, Iceland poppies, and alyssum. If you're anxious to get going, plant these in a container that you can cover or bring into the house during cold nights. If you're an avid vegetable gardener, early crops can include all kinds of lettuce, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, radishes. Be sure add a small amount of balanced, organic fertilizer to the planting hole and water your new plantings well. If there is no rain, watering lightly every day for the first week will help them get established. You might consider adding a row cover to protect flower and vegetable seedlings during cold nights.

Then stand back, and enjoy the excitement of a spring garden.

*Evelyn Alemanni is an obsessed, award-winning gardener and international judge for Communities in Bloom and America in Bloom. See her garden at [www.allea.com/gardening-ea.htm](http://www.allea.com/gardening-ea.htm).*

### Butterfly gardens can be Elegant

By Theresa Forte

Canadians love butterflies. Not just a passing fad, butterfly gardens can be found in public spaces, schoolyards and suburban backyards. In fact, they are more popular than ever.

A butterfly garden provides the ideal solution for clients who are looking for an easy to maintain, colourful, scented and ecologically friendly garden. The good news is they don't have to look like an untamed meadow to be successful. If you have any doubts about the elegant nature of such a garden, just visit the outdoor display at the Niagara Parks Commission Butterfly Conservatory, you will be impressed.

Butterflies are equally at home in humble or sophisticated surroundings so long as their basic needs are fulfilled. Butterflies, like all wild garden visitors, need shelter, space, water and food.

A beautiful butterfly garden featuring all-season interest can be planned using self-seeding annuals, easy care perennials, shrubs and trees. Include plants of varied heights so that a luxurious layered effect is created.



*Butterfly bush*



## **A weed is a plant that has mastered every survival skill except for learning how to grow in rows.**

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### ***Doreen's corner***

Nature Laws Are; 1. Harmony in colour, 2. Fitness of form, 3. Simplicity. F.PARKER>

As soon as March moves in we think of our garden.. AND there is something we could do toward getting the garden out of bed. This is an important step. Draw a simple shape of your garden, X in the perennials. Figure out what you need or want to fill in . This will help you save money by not buying plants you have no room for.

NEXT; clean and sharpen tools - shovel, pruners, hoes, axes.

MID APRIL; Start warm weather plants indoors -tomatoes, peppers, eggplant, squash.

END OF APRIL, remove winter protection from roses and prune.

Repair fencing, rake up winter debris.

BEGINING OF MAY, fertilize trees and shrubs - weed flower beds.

Lift and divide large clumps of perennials, eg-hosta.

MID TO END OF MAY, build up low spots in the garden with soil. Overseed damaged lawn areas and fertilize.

Plant out pansy, snapdragon, dianthus seeds.

Prune shrubs - buddelia, butterfly bush but delay flowering shrubs, forsythia, lilac, till after blooming.

Fertilize perennials when 2 to 3 inches showing .

Be generous with compost. (2 centimeters each year.)

Start off garden with soil the consistency of chocolate cake.

The trend this year is bold colours to electrify your garden.

Thanks to Doreen Bennett

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### **Annie's Apple and Marigold Afternoon Surprise**

Ingredients:

2 cups apple juice

3/4 cup water

1/2 tsp salt

1 1/2 cups rice

2 slices fresh ginger (thin slice)

-1 piece cinnamon stick - 2 inches long

-2 large marigold heads (flower petals only - as a substitute for saffron to add a citrus flavour)

Method:

-bring juice, water and salt to a boil in medium saucepan

-add remaining ingredients

-reduce heat to low and cover and simmer for 25-30 minutes until liquid is absorbed

-remove ginger and cinnamon

-add marigold petals

Trees, shrubs and tall perennial grasses will provide needed shelter while offering the homeowner privacy, layered structure and a long season of interest in the garden. Flowering plants will be most effective in attracting butterflies when they are planted in large (easily visible) groups. By including seasonal food sources, migrating butterflies will be encouraged to visit.

Butterflies feed on the nectar found in two families of flowering plants. Preferred favourites include those having clusters of tiny flowers such as buddleia, sage and thyme. As well, butterflies seek out members of the daisy family such as aster, coneflower and rudbeckia.

Host plants provide a home for the eggs laid by the female butterfly. These will provide the correct food for the caterpillars to eat when they hatch. Host plants include asters, milkweed and birch. For example, the Monarch butterfly will deposit eggs in the milkweed plant.

Many sources recommend a wilder, fringe area planted with native plants to encourage butterflies to visit. These plants can be clustered along the back of the border or interspersed among the "proper" plants included in the plan. (One reference suggested planting the edge of the ditch leading to the drainage area, often located along the back of the garden, as an ideal location for the wilder materials).

Butterflies love to sunbathe, it warms their wings for flight. (They can't fly if their body temperature is too low). Include a few flat rocks in the garden for this purpose. A saucer of fresh water will also encourage the butterflies to stay and visit.

Once the garden is established, a layer of mulch will help to keep watering and weeding to a minimum. Spring bulbs planted among the mid-range perennials will add a welcome splash of colour to the early garden. The emerging foliage will provide a pleasant foil for the flowering bulbs and later conceal the foliage as it fades by late spring.

Under no circumstances should pesticides be used in a garden that has been planted and designed to attract butterflies, as the chemicals will kill the desirable insects as well as the pests.

No matter if the client has a suburban plot, city courtyard or country estate, a butterfly garden can be designed to provide a simple or sophisticated all-season interest feature for their property.

**Theresa M. Forte** is a freelance garden writer and photographer based in Niagara Falls, Ont.

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