



**STONY PLAIN
HORTICULTURAL
SOCIETY**



down the Garden Path

S.P.H.S. 2009 Board

EXECUTIVE BOARD

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- Vice President: Ericka Unterschultz 780-963-6061
- Secretary: Janice Nickolson 780-963-8242
- Treasurer: Stephanie Camilleri 780-968-0780
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Meeting DETAILS

General meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month (except July, August and December) at 7:30 pm. **Meetings for February and March are at the Stony Plain United Church, 5014 – 51 Ave.** This is just east of the Senior's Drop-In Centre. In April, we should be in the new high school up at Westerra. Membership is not required to attend a meeting but we do ask for a \$2.00 drop-in donation fee.

Message from the PRESIDENT

As these last few weeks pass before we are able to get our hands into the earth there is time to do some thoughtful planning for the upcoming gardening season — the laying out of our garden plots, what flowers to try, etc. How much do we need of each vegetable to give us what we want for fresh usage and storage?

I have asked the parents and students at Keephills School to give me some new ideas for the G.R.O.W. project. Some suggestions that were presented to me were to have the students think about where their food comes from and to look at the cost of getting the food from the producer to the consumer. This idea would work well for everyone. While we all enjoy fresh oranges in the winter, we should, whenever possible, buy from local markets and producers. There are two factors which influence our choices — one is cost and the other is variety. Production costs in North America tend to be bigger than products from other countries, but food that travels great distances often has less flavour as it has to be picked before it is vine ripened. There are a lot of choices to be made when buying our groceries each week. This season The G.R.O.W. Project will be trying to make the students aware of where their food comes from and how important producers are. Many folks (not any of us, hopefully!) go to the grocery store to buy a bag of apples, a bunch of bananas, a watermelon and assume these products will always be on the shelf for the consumer to buy. Next time you pick up an avocado or a fresh head of lettuce give pause to the horticulturist or farmer who has a passion for the earth and who tries to be a good steward of it.

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SELL trade

If you wish to buy, sell or trade garden related items you are welcome to list them in the newsletter. Give the information to Karen Berglund. We are encouraging our members to add to the newsletter. Helpful bits of information, comments on events, and upcoming events — we would love to hear from the members regarding these or other matters.

HORTICULTURE highlights

QUESTION of the month

**Answer to February question —
What is xylem?**

Xylem is the principal water/mineral conducting tissue in a vascular plant.

March Question of the Month – What is meant by the term “decurrent” ?

FLOWER AND COLOR of the year, 2010

Flower — Snapdragon

Color — Yellow

BIRTHDAYS and ANNIVERSARIES

March: Verta Delainey,
Simon Deman,
Margaret Doige,
Martha Gitzel,
Charlene Rubik and
Ericka Unterschultz



DATES to Remember

March 21, 2010

Seedy Sunday – Alberta
Avenue Community League Hall
11:00 am – 4:00 pm.

April 24, 2010

2010 A.H.A. Annual conference to be held in Camrose — Mark this on your calendar. The guest speakers and topics will be Vicky Cole — “Water Conservation” and Jim Hole — “Living Green”.

May 4, 2010

Half Price Admission Day to the Devonian Botanic Gardens

May 29, 2010

Annual Spring Plant Sale at the Heritage Market Gardens

June 2, 2010

Half Price Admission Day to the Devonian Botanic Gardens

July 6, 2010

Half Price Admission Day to the Devonian Botanic Gardens

July 10-11, 2010

Martagon Lily Show at the Devonian Botanic Gardens

July 17-18, 2010

SPHS Yard & Garden Tour

FLOWER Bouquets

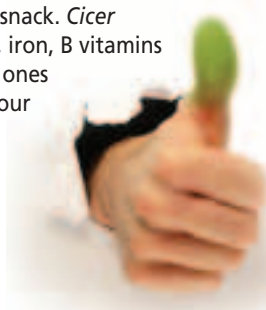
Thank you to Diane Coulthard for doing the Garden and Garden Poster Board to be taken to Seedy Saturday and to be used with our club promotional items. Thank you to Ericka Unterschultz for finding us a temporary location to hold our February and March meetings.



GREEN thumb

I grew up in a fairly conservative household and this included the variety of food we ate. Sunday supper usually included roast beef with all the trimmings. There was always blue cheese and red cabbage in the refrigerator and aquavit in the freezer. As people travel around the world, they bring with them their ethnic and traditional foods. I never saw an avocado on our table and certainly not a pyrogly. Not only do foods from other countries provide us with variety but also with nutritional options.

One food item I never saw growing up was the chickpea (garbanzo bean) — a foreign word in a house that served Danish/English/German cuisine. Recently this little gem has seen its way into my life. My family has not come around to its unique flavour but I have become quite fond of it. For thousands of years the chickpea has been a part of the diet in the Middle East, western Asia, and the Mediterranean. The unique taste can be described as a combination between beans and chestnuts — rich and buttery. The beans are ground into flour, eaten in soups and stews, added to salads, made into a spread called hummus, roasted and eaten raw as a snack. *Cicer arietinum* are rich in protein, calcium, iron, B vitamins and fibre. If you are able to get fresh ones from the garden they have more flavour than the ones that have had to travel across the miles.



There are two types of chickpeas: Kabuli and Desi. Kabuli, the most common chickpea, has large cream coloured seeds and the plant has white flowers. The other variety, Desi, has purple flowers and smaller seeds that are brown, black or purple. The chickpea plant grows 30 – 70 cm tall and has pods that bear one or two seeds. The plant itself takes about four months to produce mature fruit — this can be a challenge if the growing season is cut short by an early frost.

Chickpeas can be grown in most regions of Canada including the Prairies, where they are grown commercially. Seeds should be planted in May in a location with full sun, good air circulation and the soil should be well drained. Germination temperature is 15°C. They will germinate at lower temperatures but the percentage may be slightly less. The addition of compost and a light application of an organic fertilizer will help produce a good healthy crop of chickpeas for you to enjoy. Seeds should be planted in a row 2.5 cm to 5.0 cm deep and 10 cm apart then watered thoroughly. Lay down mulch between the row to help with water retention but also to help with weed control. As the plants start to grow thin to 30 cm apart. The plants will spread out as they grow but will not require staking. After they emerge and if there is a threat of frost, they should be covered with a row cover. By mid-September the chickpeas should be ripening. Chickpeas are indeterminate and will continue to produce flowers as well as have mature peas to pick. In the fall when the weather turns cool plants should be pulled up and hung to dry. Some of the immature chickpeas will continue to ripen and can be picked at a later date. The beans should be completely dry when they are picked off the plant.

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ODDS and ENDS

SHOP Talk

Keephills School G.R.O.W. Project News
G.R.O.W. will be starting up again this year in April — fast approaching that is for sure. I would like to encourage everyone to try to make it out to the school this year. The project was started in 1996 and we are on our way to another good gardening season. Talk to Karen Berglund 780-963-6575.

WILDLIFE Note

Remember to feed the birds. There are a lot of common redpolls, woodpeckers, black-capped chickadees, pine grosbeaks and both the white-breasted and red-breasted nuthatches. They are very pleased to find a feeder filled with black oil sunflower seeds.

SPHS Library

Check out our supply of gardening books. Members may sign the books out for a month at a time.

Feel free to donate any extra books you may have.

If you would be interested in managing our library, please see Karen.

DEVONIAN Botanic Garden

Seed Catalogue is now available on-line at www.devonian.ualberta.ca The garden is getting greener! Call 780-987-3054 ext. 2234 or email lhewlett@ualberta.ca

Master Gardener Program at the Devonian Botanic Garden

Be the gardener you have always wanted to be. Call 780-987-3054 ext 2229 or email dbg.mastergardener@ales.ualberta.ca. available at www.devonian.ualberta.ca.

A.H.A Conference

Our club is looking for a delegate to represent us at the conference. If you are interested please talk to Karen Berglund.

The results from the photo competition are in and will be posted at the general meeting. I would like to encourage everyone to look at this activity. I think along with supporting the A.H.A., it also give us time when we are out and about to slow down and take a closer look to get a different perspective on the horticultural world around us.

There is a call for nominations for the following positions, at the AHA General Meeting in Camrose this year. If interested, please consider one of the following positions.

Two year term

- President
- Secretary
- Zone 2 Representative/Director
- Zone 4 Representative/Director

One year term

- Vice President
- Treasurer
- Zone 1 Representative/Director
- Zone 3 Representative/Director
- Zone 6 Representative/Director

GUEST SPEAKERS for the year

March 2

Dr. Ieuan Evans – Growing Fruit in a Northern Climate. Dr. Evans, who resides locally, is a well renowned horticulturist with extensive experience who will talk about growing various fruits and berries in our locale.

April 6

Eric Chen – Organic Gardening.

Mr. Chen, a local organic and market gardener, has gleaned a wealth of knowledge in this field with practical experience. He will discuss this topic and his own history in getting involved with it.

May 4

Kim Neill, Town of Stony Plain – Communities in Bloom Program – A discussion explaining the program, its history, and what is has meant to the town of Stony Plain.

June 1

Ron Berezan, The Urban Farmer

–Permaculture Gardens – Creating Abundance for People and the Planet. Permaculture is an approach to designing beautiful living systems that provide food (and other essentials) for people in sustainable ways, and Mr. Berezan is an ardent advocate of this practice.

MEMBER'S PICKS by Barb Tinney

Favourite Fruit Varieties : Tri-Star(Day Neutral) strawberries. Plants are self fertile.

Favourite Vegetable Varieties: Green Arrow Peas, French Breakfast Radish.

Favourite Flower Varieties: Dahlia, lilies, sweet peas, zinnias.

Favourite Herb Varieties: Dill

Added Garden Tips: Plant peas early and stake well on fence. Always use inoculants for good production.

ANNUAL SPRING plant sale

Spring is another month closer. Seeds are arriving in the mail. Time to start getting ready to plant our seeds. Remember the Plant Sale when you're planning

your plantings. We would love donations of vegetables, perennials and annuals. Annuals are especially popular at these sales. Our society's colour for the year is yellow. What if we try to have a few yellow flowers there for the sale! The date of the sale is May 29. If you wish to volunteer, please let Jo-Ann know.



Message from the **PRESIDENT**

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When my kids were young and able to ride in the shopping cart I would play "Vegetable I.D." with them at the grocery store. There are a lot of strange looking fruits and vegetable for use to choose from these days. The grocery stores have books on display and recipe cards for us to take home. Next time you go to the store check out this valuable service that has been added for our benefit. You never know, your kids might be willing to try a mango or a plantain.

Many foods that were only grown in other parts of the world are being given a chance here. Some of the limitations here are of course the hot dry summers, late and early frost and our soil type. Many of these problems can be overcome on a small scale so try growing some peanuts in a pot or in your greenhouse or use row covers to extend your growing season to grow yourself a loofah sponge.

— Karen Berglund

GREEN thumb

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Chickpeas or somewhat hard to shell because their pods are a bit sticky and tend to cave in rather than split. One way to work this out is to put them in a large box and walk on the pods shuffling over them to release the seeds. The beans should then be dried thoroughly and stored in a cool, dark place for up to four years. Use some of the seeds to start over next year. They will be true to type if you grow only one variety.

When you wish to cook the dried beans you will need to cover a small amount of beans with a generous amount of water and let them soak overnight in the refrigerator or for a few hours at room temperature. Drain, place in a large sauce pan and cover with water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, cover and cook gently for 1 to 1 1/2 hours or until very tender. Drain well. They are then ready for use in your favourite recipe.

— Karen Berglund

2 MINUTES a Day for...

... a GREENER PLANET :

Contained in the study "Environmental Plan for the Floral and Nursery Industry", we are told that over 140 million pounds of old plastic pots are thrown away at the end of each season in North America. Other studies show that over 3 billion tons of carbon dioxide is given off each year by the harvest of peat. Try to use alternatives to plastic and peat growing containers. Veseys has the Coir Growing products made from 100% coconut fiber. Coconut trees grow new coconuts on a monthly basis. Peat on the other hand can take up to 220 years to renew itself. Try the eco-friendly Cow -Pots. Two Connecticut farmers were looking for a way to dispose of excess cow manure — the products are called Cow-Pots. Make your own small pots out of newspaper. The newspaper pots are great for starting cucumbers, squash, sweet peas, annual vines or other plants that are sensitive to having their roots disturbed.

HISTORY and Trivia

December 1982 A New A.H.A. Logo. The Alberta Horticultural Association has adopted a new logo. This symbol made its first appearance on the parchment keepers that were awarded at the 1991 Provincial Show. However, it was only at the last A.H.A. Board of Directors' meeting that the symbol was officially adopted. The wild rose blossom is surrounded by the words "Alberta Horticultural Association" and "Albertani Concrecentes" meaning Albertans Growing Together.

The Alberta Horticulturist Publication listed the show dates of the various clubs:

- Parkland Garden Club — August 22nd, 1981
- Stony Plain Horticultural Society — August 19th, 1981
- News letter editor — Betty Vladicka.
- Subscription should be sent to Dorothy Adamson, Secretary.

Testing Your KNOWLEDGE

Who is the President of Olds College?

Answers to February's questions:

Who owns Grove Valley Gardens? Rob Pedersen

And where are they located? Located on Hwy. 16 and Campsite Road in Spruce Grove. (Ph:780-962-7283)

POET'S corner

The Barbed Star

I've seen glowing sunsets,
Turned back wandering sheep,
And listened to frogs
In spring as they peep.

I've been smothered by thistles,
And covered with snow,
Frozen in ice,
And a roost for the crows.

I may look all rusty
And useless to some,
But looks are deceiving,
A use-I have one...

To remind you that you'll always have
A home here in the hills,
A place to come whenever you wish,
As long as the good Lord wills.

— Robin Kile
Franklin, West Virginia