



The Peony Post

March 2018

www.pickeringhorticulturalsociety.com



March Meeting Recap

We were very happy to welcome more than the usual number of people and noticed a lot of new faces. This is a good start to the gardening season.

Announcements

- A reminder about our next meeting (April) – Visitor Day and also celebrating 85 years “in business”.
- Our annual plant sale is on May 12 at the Gazebo in Esplanade Park. In addition to plants we will also be selling baked goods and pollinator houses (bee nests).
- We expect to participate in the annual ‘Artfest’ on May 26, also in Esplanade Park.
- The District 17 Annual General Meeting will be hosted by Bowmanville Horticultural Society on April 21. All details are on page 25 of the Yearbook.
- The time is now to sign up for the bus trip on July 7, 2018. We will be going to the Hockley Valley area, visiting private gardens and having lunch at Mrs. Mitchell’s Restaurant.

Feature Speaker – Conrad Richter

Conrad started out by painting some pretty scary scenarios of what could happen “When All Hell Breaks Loose”. Those disasters could be man-made or nature teaching us a lesson. Our way of growing food – think of monoculture factory farms – is a risky way to have food security. As

Next Meeting

April 10th, 2018
7:30 pm

Join us for

Visitor Day

and help us
celebrate our

85th
Anniversary



an example, he pointed to the Irish potato famine; we all know what happened there. A single pathogen can wipe out crops for years to come.

Conrad had good news as well. He encourages us to become foragers. A lot of plants that we consider weeds are actually very good for us. Burdock, comfrey, dandelion, stinging nettle and many others have high nutritional or medicinal value. In the meantime we will keep our fingers crossed and hope that hell does NOT break loose.

Refreshments

We thank Elizabeth de Verneuil, Erica Hubbard and Joanne Shaw for the lovely goodies they brought for us to snack on. In Mary's absence, Anne-Marie took over organizing the refreshment table. Well done, Anne-Marie.

Next Meeting – April 10th

As mentioned above, this will be a special meeting for all of us to enjoy. The focus will be on visitors who have not been to our meetings before. All members will do their best to be welcoming and let newcomers see how relaxed and friendly an atmosphere we enjoy. Maybe some of them will be impressed enough to sign up as members?

Let's not forget our *feature speaker*: **Melissa Spearing** will talk to us about '**Flower Phenology**'. For a lot of us 'phenology' is probably a new word to add to our dictionary. It's always great to learn about a new tool to add to our gardening skills.

Pickering has changed drastically since April 1933 when the decision was made to form a horticultural society; at that time it was called Pickering Township Horticultural Society. I think our founders would be proud that 85 years later we are still dedicated to adding some horticultural beauty and interest to this changed Pickering landscape. It is certainly something worth celebrating.

Up-coming Events

District 17 Annual General Meeting, April 21, 2018

This year the District 17 AGM will be hosted by Bowmanville Horticultural Society. It should be a very interesting day. Denis Flanagan's topic will be 'Tales of a Transplant'. With his sense of humour and fun he is always a pleasure to listen to. Fred Archibald of Archibald Orchards will be talking about 'Blossoms, Bees and Apple Trees' and, I am sure, will give us the fascinating story of his family's transplant from the Niagara region to Bowmanville.

If you would like to go to the meeting, please let Joanne know before April 6 so that you can be registered at the Early Bird rate of \$30.00. joanne@down2earth.ca

Plant Sale – May 12, 2018

This may be the last year we are allowed to have our plant sale at the Gazebo in Esplanade Park. We are hoping to make it the best one ever. Therefore, we have expanded our offerings to baked goods and pollinator houses. We are always very grateful for all plant donations from

our members. The problem is that some of us are running out of plants to donate or coping with the 'same old, same old' look; hence the idea of baked goods. If everybody could whip up a batch of cookies or muffins or cake, all of us can contribute at very little cost to the individual. We are also hoping that it will encourage some impulse buying. After all, who can resist a delicious looking cookie? We are counting on you, our members, to lend support to this new idea.

Some of you may be wondering why we need to raise funds when our financial situation is healthy at this time. It would be irresponsible of your Board of Directors not to plan for the future or not to ask "What if?" If anyone would like an in-depth discussion about our financial planning, as Treasurer I would be glad to answer any questions you may have.

Public Gardens Maintenance

As temperatures are slowly, slowly creeping up, it will soon be time to get the gardens cleaned up and looking like someone cares. We have not set a start date yet; it's too early to walk on soil which is very fragile at this stage. We have a great team, raring to go but could use some extra help. We meet every Tuesday morning from 9:30 till 11:00 at any one of the gardens we maintain. If you are interested, willing and able to join the team, we would really appreciate it. No experience necessary, just some enthusiasm for 'keeping Pickering beautiful'.



The Peony Post is published by the Pickering Horticultural Society eight times per year. Comments, suggestions or contributions are always welcome. Please send them to the Editor, Sigrid Squire, at asquire8347@rogers.com