



BRANDON GARDEN CLUB

April, 2016

Editor: Kathy Vandale

President Bill's Message

As I write this, the temperatures are once again on the rise and hopefully we won't see any more minus daytime temperatures until late into the fall. There is rain forecast for this weekend; but, rain is something we need and it will help clean things up.

A reminder about the upcoming workshops: Hypertufa Rag Pots on April 23rd; Green Spot on May 12th; Alternative Garden Centre on May 16th; and, Patmore Nursery on May 18th. Also, do not forget about our PLANT SALE on May 28th. This is our Club's main fundraiser. Please help out by donating any extra plants that you have and/or by volunteering to work at the SALE.

There are a couple of area events coming up: the Oak Lake & Area Garden Club's 13th Annual Garden Day on Saturday, April 30th and the Hartney Horticultural Society's Garden Day 'Leap Into Spring' on Saturday, May 7th.

As you may know, our club looks after (weeding, etc.) Mini Millennium Park on the corner of 18th and Richmond. We are looking for one or two volunteers to work at this Park. We usually work at the Park for a couple of hours on Thursday mornings; so if you have the time and are interested, please let me know.

Tonight, April 20th, Dave Hanson from Sage Garden Herbs will present "All About Herbs"



Even though the snow has finally left, this is still funny!



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There are so many interesting and exciting speakers and hands-on programs planned for the 2016-2017 year. You won't want to miss out on **ANYTHING**, so make sure to check the program at www.thebrandongardenclub.weebly.com for a complete list of events, dates and times.





Waking your garden up after winter

Rising temperatures and more sunlight signal perennial plants to wake up and resume growing in spring. You can help them recover from their winter's rest by making the flowerbed a welcoming place for healthy growth. Winter debris, including fallen leaves and dead plant material, can harbor pests and diseases. There are a few key things that you can do in order to ensure that your garden has the best chance possible going into its growth and blooming seasons.

Clear all debris

Clean up all fallen leaves and broken stems in and around the garden.

Prune

Cut back dead stems on your perennial plants, shrubs and on nearby trees. This allows for more air to circulate your garden as well as encourages new growth. If you did not prune back your perennials last fall, they are probably looking pretty ugly as spring sets in.

Perennials actually prefer to be left standing throughout the winter, for extra protection. But by definition, herbaceous perennials will die back to the ground during winter. If you did leave your perennials standing last fall, once you start to see new growth at the base of the plants, it is safe to begin removing winter mulch and pruning them down to ground level.

Most evergreens require little to no spring care other than some tidying up. Spring is a good time to fertilize evergreens, because they are actively growing at this time. However, if the soil is healthy and rich, you only need to feed your evergreens about every other year. Look for a well-balanced food, labeled especially for evergreens.

Most spring blooming trees and shrubs set their flower buds in the summer or fall of last year. Pruning them in the spring, before they have bloomed, would mean pruning off this year's flowers.

If you left your ornamental grasses up for winter interest, you can cut them back as soon as you can get to them. You do not need to wait for new growth. Cut grasses to within a few inches of the ground. They'll come back up when they are ready.

Pruning roses is intimidating to many gardeners, but actually very good for the plants. Becoming an accomplished rose pruner takes time and practice, but keep in mind that it is very hard to kill a rose with bad pruning.

Rototill/Fertilize

Depending on your beliefs on rototilling, the end of winter/beginning of spring is the time to do it. Make sure you never rototill the ground when it is wet. This can be detrimental to the integrity of the soil and will deplete the air supply needed to aid in growth. Instead, rototill when the soil is damp enough to form a ball but will still easily fall apart. This allows more air to get into the soil. While you are rototilling is the perfect time to add fertilizer.

Plant

This is probably the most obvious of all but planting a seed or bulb is always exciting because there is always that mystery of what exactly is going to happen

When it comes to deciding what to plant, you need to do some planning. Make sure you are planting things that work well in your climate and in the area that you are putting them in. If you are new to gardening, some research may be necessary.

Mulch

Mulch protects your garden from a variety of things such as weeds and extreme temperatures while doing cool things like conserving water and feeding the soil. Spread the mulch in your garden leaving a space a couple inches in diameter around the stems of plants or trunks of trees to allow for air flow and to avoid water logging. Wait until the soil warms up and dries out a bit, before replenishing your mulch.

Examples of organic mulches include:

Bark, Shredded or Chipped

Compost

Composted Manure

Grass Clippings

Newspaper

Shredded Leaves

Straw

Organic mulch will decompose and have to be replaced, however in the process it will also improve your soil's fertility and, of course, its organic content. Generally the dryer and woodier the mulch, the slower it will decompose and the less nutrients it will give to the soil.

The finishing touch in the spring is edging. A crisp edge makes a garden bed look polished. It also helps prevent your lawn from crawling into your flower bed.

Happy Gardening!

CLIMATE RESILIENCY FOR BRANDON How Do We Get There?

The realities of global climate change have had strong impacts on cities across the world, and Brandon is no exception. Our buildings and our public infrastructure must be able to operate safely to sustain the increasing storm events as a result of the climate change. We need to plan, to understand, to anticipate and to adapt to the shifts in climate. Resilience planning provides the foundation of building a sustainable city.

Please join us at this engaging event, "Climate Resiliency for Brandon", featuring guest speaker Roger Rempel, a Winnipeg-based environmental engineer with more than 20 years of experience in environmental assessment and climate resilience planning. Rempel is currently the Acting Chair of the Prairie Regional Adaptation Collaborative, an instructor for Engineers Canada's PIEVC Protocol, and has facilitated community forums on climate risks, and trained professional engineers and government planners in climate resiliency workshops throughout Canada, the United States, Brazil, Costa Rica, St. Lucia and Honduras.

Time: 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Presentation: 5:45 – 6:15 p.m.

Date: Tuesday, May 03, 2016

Location: Brandon Design Studio, 638 Princess Avenue (Please use the Cultural Resources Centre entrance at the northeast corner of the A.R. McDiarmid Civic Complex. Additional visitor parking is available at the parking lot at the corner of Princess Avenue and 6th Street).

For further information, please contact either Robert Zilke at r.zilke@brandon.ca, 204-729-2113 or Louisa Garbo at l.garbo@brandon.ca, 204-729-2117. PLEASE PROVIDE US WITH A NUMBER OF ATTENDEES IF YOU ARE ATTENDING AS A GROUP.

The Brandon Garden Club will be receiving a complimentary review copy of Lyndon Penner's new book called Native Plants for the Short Season Yard. It will be shared with the members when it arrives.

On Saturday, April 30th at 2:00pm, Laura Reeves will be doing an information session/author reading at Brandon Public Library. Laura is the author of Laura Reeves' Guide to Useful Plants:

<http://www.mcnallyrobinson.com/9780993783500/laura-reeves/laura-reeves-guide-to-useful-plants#.Vv1Rok8rKUK>

Laura is a Manitoba author and her book discusses how to identify certain plants and the many ways these plants can be used in everyday life. If you would like more information, please contact Erika Martin at Western Manitoba Regional Library, 710 Rosser Avenue, Brandon 204-727-6648

Brandon Garden Club

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