

# District 9 Annual Report 2014

Haldimand, Niagara North, Niagara South

*District Director - Susan Lusted*



On reviewing the Annual Reports for District 9, there is a recurring thread in each one. All of our societies exhibit a commitment to community involvement.

Dunnville had another busy year with all the beds around Dunnville to tend to. Working with the BIA and the Chamber of Commerce has helped to make the town come together. We purchased large planters to be placed around town in the summer and were able to decorate them at Christmas time along with the BIA's help. The purchase of a new wreath for the Remembrance Day service completed the restoration of the clock in conjunction with the Dunnville High School students.

Fort Erie continues to work with special needs students at the local high school greenhouse. A partnership with Gilmore Lodge was formed and their gardens were planted and maintained. The memorial gardens at Douglas Seniors' Centre were replanted and maintained. A new garden at the Fort Erie Railroad Museum was designed, planted and maintained.

In 2014 the Grimsby Garden Club celebrated the 50th Anniversary of the GGC with special events: The High Tea, Frankie Flowers at the Library evening, The Grimsby Garden Tour and the Flower Show. The garden club was actively promoted at the Grimsby Home & Garden Show, the GGC Annual Plant Sale and the Grimsby Farmers Market (with an educational booth 4 times throughout the summer), resulting in a substantial increase in new members. The trillium Awards were judged and awarded.

Lincoln began their community volunteer activities designing Garden #1 for Ball's Falls Conservation Park. Garden #2 was the result of working with the Town of Lincoln in the design. Another garden was designed and implemented at the Vineland Research and Innovation Centre. Completion on this is set for early 2015. Mulberry trees were grown from seed at Beamsville High School with the guidance of the Niagara Region Conservation Authority. Despite an unusually cold winter, our plant sale was a huge success.. To wrap it up, Lincoln had a wonderful, fun filled 2014, and have left a flower filled mark on Lincoln.

For the Niagara Falls Horticultural Society, 2014 was a challenge for our Society and gardeners in general. It began with one of the harshest and long-lasting winters in memory. Never-the-less, nature made up for this with a growing season supplemented by timely rainfall and moderate temperatures that encouraged remarkable plant recovery. The Society contributed \$1000 toward tree planting for the City of Niagara

Falls' Arbour Day event. Volunteers planted up the three Firehall beds at the start of the month. August was time for the 93rd Flower and Vegetable Show, again with a full slate of entries that we were able to share with an appreciative general public. At the School of Horticulture the grand opening of the Legacy Prairie Garden which our Society has contributed to, was held September 13th.

For Niagara on the Lake, 2014 has been an interesting and successful year for the co-presidents, no doubt due to the organization of the past president. The society also gave back to the community with its annual Flowers for Seniors, on March 21st. Work was completed on their parkette project also. The annual garden tour was a huge success and featured some splendid gardens for the public to view. Our slate of speakers taught us how to garden in small spaces, in vertical spaces and in containers. Combining vertical climbers of flowers and edibles, one speaker showed us how to use the same spaces for plants that matured at different times.

For Pelham, Community Planting, maintenance of gardens at the Pelham Public Library and the Maple Acres Library garden in Fenwick were a focus. There was Formal recognition by the library on social media and public notices for work done in the community. There was Community Planting at The Royal Canadian Legion gardens, Fonthill On. Planning was instituted to start Community Garden in conjunction with the local Community in Bloom Committee with about 25 individual plots. Garden Magazine subscriptions were donated to the 2 public libraries

In Port Colborne, members worked at our plant sale in May, which is a main fundraiser. The rose show was held a week early and after such a cold winter, entries were not as plentiful as usual. The planting committee always does a great job and has a good rapport with their City contact. A variety of speakers to suited different members' interests. We hope to encourage some of the newer members to take positions on the executive.

Ridgeway had an eventful year. We started with a successful Plant and Yard Sale in May. We had informative speakers and some beautiful Flower Shows. To contribute to our community beautification, donations were made to support the Stevensville Kinettes, the Ridgeway BIA and the Crystal Beach Community Improvement Group for their summer plantings. Ridgeway has an ongoing relationship with Maple Park Lodge, a full-care facility in Fort Erie, for its garden care and contributions of plants through its members and the Maple Park's Recreation Director. This year Maple Park entered the Communities in Bloom competition where they received 5 blooms and also a special environmental award for their new butterfly garden.

The Smithville Garden Club though one of smallest garden clubs had a busy year. They successfully hosted the District 9 AGM. The youth group planted 6 gardens with

donated seed packets. These gardens were judged in August and monetary prizes were awarded. Members attended the Presidents' meeting in Vineland and also attended the Fall Forum with Carson Arthur from HGTV as the speaker. Over 70 plants were donated to Community Care in Smithville.

The St. Catharines Horticultural Society donated monies raised from their monthly 50/50 draw at the November AGM to Community Care. Earth Day was celebrated and participated in along with students from Parnall Public School. This society worked with District 9 and Niagara Master Gardeners on the first Niagara Seedy Saturday. Start Me Up Niagara were the recipients of over nine hundred dollars from this event. District 9's Fall Forum was hosted in St. Catharines and included a catered luncheon, a standard flower show, along with Carson Arthur from HGTV. This society also maintains a number of gardens in the city of St. Catharines. Small wonder the city is called "The Garden City"

The Thorold Horticulture Society enjoyed another successful year, hosting its Annual Flower show in the spring and maintaining public gardens within Thorold. The society helped to advertise of Seedy Saturday and were involved in the City's re-vamping of criteria for grants to community groups and held our regular monthly Mini-Flower shows and our annual Rose & Flower Show in June. A number of new initiatives, including: the rebranding to Thorold Garden Club and a Satisfaction Survey of members were initiated. The newsletter was distributed and new letterhead was created. A successful outreach programme was initiated with businesses

2014 proved to be one of change for The Welland Horticultural Society. Their website was revamped by one of their members. A successful plant sale which is a major fundraiser. Welland is known as "The Rose City" and each year; this society celebrates with the city of Welland by hosting their Rose Show. This year, there were some surprise first time winners. They also ventured out on a bus trip to Whistling Gardens after the owner spoke at one of their meetings. Again, 2014 was a successful year in the community volunteering and gardening.

#### District 9

In 2014 we donated \$500 to the Niagara Region Science Fair, judged and participated in the awards presentation.

District 9 organized and participated in Niagara Seedy Sunday along with Niagara Master Gardeners. With the help of the St. Catharines Horticultural Society, we were able to donate \$927 to Start Me Up Niagara. Our spring AGM was organized by the Smithville Garden Club. In the fall, we undertook to have a catered luncheon and speaker. Carson Arthur was a huge success along with the flower show.

Each year, we host a Presidents' Meeting to go over the filing of forms and the use of the Garden Ontario Website. Each of our societies has a presence on the web. This year, we networked on membership and the implementation of best practices for such things as our society monthly meetings. Like District 9's societies, District 9 contributed to our greater community and had another successful year.