

**Russell and District Horticultural Society**  
Records of Decision  
General meeting held on Monday, April 18, 2011  
Location: Russell Legion / Lions Hall

1. Lindley MacPhail, President, opened the meeting by welcoming everyone.
2. Since the minutes of the March meeting have not yet been completed, there was no approval process.
- 3. Coming events and news:**
  - Lindley reminded everyone about the sale of alliums as a fundraiser for the OHA; anyone interested can place an order by simply putting their information on the order sheet at the end of the meeting;
  - There was a reminder of the June flower show coming soon; details can be found on the RDHS website;
  - Pegi reminded everyone of the Echeveria challenge and offered more cuttings from her plants which she brought to the meeting; those interested should help themselves;
  - Pat gave an overview of the AGM of District 1 held in scenic Williamstown on April 9:
    - The meeting was a resounding success with over 100 people in attendance, which is good considering the small number of horticultural societies in District 1 compared with other Districts.
    - There was a good representation from the Russell area.
    - Vickie Weimer, president of the Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA) was guest speaker; she visited the NavCan centre in Cornwall as a possible venue for the next OHA convention; it would be an excellent place as it has everything the OHA would need to put on a successful convention;
    - The OHA still has to decide whether to have the next convention in Eastern Ontario, since it's so "far away" from the majority of societies in southern Ontario (the "hub" of the horticultural world so to speak), AND (and it's a big AND) the OHA still has to decide if District 1 would be "awarded" the task of organizing it; it's suspected that since District 1 is one of the smaller districts, it might be a daunting task for it to take on.
    - Dr. Neville Arnold spoke on the sex life of roses and had people in stitches; it was both an informative and entertaining talk.
    - In the afternoon, Ed Lawrence gave an informative presentation on pruning, complete with practical applications using various branches on which he demonstrated pruning techniques.

- We would like to know who is planning to attend the OHA Convention on July 15-17 in Sudbury;
  - The RDHS helps members who wish to attend with the costs; please register early.
  - Visit the OHA website at [www.gardenontario.org](http://www.gardenontario.org) for more details.
- On Victoria Day weekend, the society usually holds its annual plant sale at the Curling Club;
  - However, due to logistics problems, i.e. it's a large event to organize and there usually aren't enough members to help set things up, and the annuals sold are easily available at any nursery, the organizers came to the realization that the returns from the sale could no longer justify the efforts being expended; therefore, it was decided to discontinue the plant sale in this format;
  - Instead, there will be a smaller plant sale in MacDougall Park, consisting of some heirloom vegetables and plants from members' gardens;
  - Set-up will be kept to a minimum, thus requiring less labour;
  - Lindley will be sending out an e-mail asking members for their help that day;
  - This will also be used as an opportunity for membership recruitment; it's important to keep membership up since we depend on it for OMAFRA subsidies;
- The RDHS also subsidizes the "Giving Garden" at St Thomas Aquinas High School;
  - Ann Jackson and her students have developed this unique garden whose produce is available for anyone to pick anytime;
  - There is no "stealing" possible in this garden as all produce is free to anyone for the picking;
- Another project in which the RDHS is involved is the development of a children's reading garden at the new public library;
  - Cindy and Scott from Beyond the House have agreed to take on this project at no charge and as a gift to the community;
  - The reading garden will be 35' X 80' and will only be accessible from the children's library;
  - It will be fenced in to prevent intrusion and vandalism, and provide seclusion and privacy;
  - Its construction will be designed to spark the children's imagination and creativity; as an example, a waterless pond made with glass beads with lily pads in it will provide a sitting area where children can read.

#### 4. Guest Speaker

This portion of the meeting is usually dedicated to a guest speaker. However, as our guest speaker could not attend due to illness, an ad hoc presentation was begun by Lindley;

- Lindley spoke about rain barrels and their use for water conservation and use in the garden;
  - Ideas for water accumulation and storage as well as various ways of connecting barrels and using different faucets and hoses for distributing the water to parts of the garden were presented;
  - Many places sell all kinds of rain barrels; connecting parts and faucets can be purchased at local hardware stores;
  - Lee Valley Tools sells kits that contain everything needed to set up a rain barrel water collection system;
  - Smiley's on highway 31 also sells water containers up to 1000 litres.
- Marcel gave an overview of a long-term plan for MacDougall Park which he's preparing;
  - The plan will contain a lot of information about the Park, including its history, an inventory of existing plants and possible proposals for new plantings;
  - In addition, the plan will outline management and maintenance practices based on Plant Health Care techniques which focus on producing healthy plants so there are fewer problems, and on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) techniques for the control of various pests;
  - The intent of the plan is not only to have a long-term vision for the Park, but also to formalize the RDHS role in its management;
  - This is a role that has been fulfilled by the society for many years; however, establishing that role on paper and eventually presenting it to Township Council for approval will solidify the RDHS role and involvement in the Park into the future;
- This led to a discussion on what is involved in IPM and its use for controlling pests;
  - As Lindley stated, the most important thing in IPM is proper identification of pests from the start;
  - If pests are not properly identified, then effective control strategies can't be developed and implemented;
  - The intent is to use control measures that least disrupt natural controls, and that are the least toxic to the environment and living creatures (including people);

- Pesticides are used only as a last resort;
  - This precipitated a group discussion and interaction on various non-toxic and target specific controls such as Bt (*Bacillus thuringiensis*), a formulation of a naturally occurring bacteria that is specifically toxic to larvae of the moth and butterfly family (Lepidoptera);
  - Insecticidal soap is a great relatively non-toxic control but is non-specific and must be used carefully as it can also kill beneficial insects; luckily, because it works only if applied directly to an insect (what's known as a contact poison), controls can be selective to target pests and avoid beneficials;
  - Members brought up other home-made controls that are in use with varying degrees of success.
5. The next meeting will be on Monday May 16 and the presentation will be on **Registration of New Plant Varieties – What's Hot.**

Minutes taken by Marcel Beauchamp.