

Ideas Compiled From Informal Discussion at AGM 2011

Note: This discussion time was so beneficial to everyone that I am requesting that if and when you have any other great ideas please send them to me at: sec-d11@gardenontario.org and I will continue to add to this list of outstanding ideas.

AMBASSADOR

Held a very successful Pasta Dinner – proceeds to be used to build garden benches/growing boxes for wheelchair bound people.

AMHERSTBURG

To increase their membership, they had a booth at the Canadian Tire Store on Victoria Day. Arrangements with Canadian Tire was that when you bought a membership to the Society, you were given a 20% discount that day in the store garden center.

BELLE RIVER

They pass around a Volunteer's list at a meeting. People sign up for whichever area they feel they would want to help with. When that occasion arises, they are called and if they can at that time, great... if not, then they just move on down the list of those who signed up for that particular function. That way, people's time is spread around and you don't feel obligated nor asked to participate in something in which you have no interest. Belle River Horticultural Society uses: 1) Help with Society planted gardens in town. 2) Managing the coffee table at monthly meetings. 3) Setting up the Hall for monthly meetings. 4) Plant Market (sale) preparation and helping the day of. *Make your list unique to your society.*

A clipboard is passed around at the meetings so that people can write down their gardening questions. At one point, later in the meeting, the president reads out the questions one at a time and people get to offer their expert advice as answers to the question(s). This also allows people who are a bit shy to ask questions, realize that everyone, at some time, has to ask for advice. This works very well.

BLenheim

They made their own rain barrels and sold them for \$55.00 each. This year, they will be asking \$60.00. That project was very well received.

Throughout the year, members submitted digital photos of their gardens. At their Christmas potluck dinner, they ran a PowerPoint presentation of these photos.

Blenheim has a garden show. The society is given a free spot at the show where they set up a booth to talk about the society and what they do and sell memberships as well. They have people fill out and submit a free ticket for one of their rain barrels that they raffle off at the end of the day.

At the senior's Fair, they set up a booth and sell memberships. This is just another way of making their presence known in the community.

ESSEX

On a specific day, they had members open up their gardens to the members. At the end of the day, they hold a potluck dinner. They were very pleased with the results.

GREATER WINDSOR

For their plant sale, they set everything up the night before (indoor sale).

All small kids that come to the sale receive free cookies and a small dollar-table plant for free.

Every 15 minutes, a different table is chosen and they have a blue light special and that table usually clears – no left overs at the end of the day.

They keep reducing their prices throughout the day – this keeps people moving and no plants have to be taken away at the end of the sale.

They have lots of carts and wagons available to get the material to the buyers' cars

They invite vendors and instead of charging them, they are asked to donate a penny-sale prize. The winners are finalized at the end of the sale.

KINGSVILLE

This society painted swan gourds to look like Canada geese. Along with these, they had straw and sheaves of corn stalks for sale at a cost of \$2.00 each.

LEAMINGTON

They hold a Wreath Making Day (click here to view this year's flyer). This turns out to be a very successful event.

In the past, they have found that raffles don't work well in their society.

RIDGETOWN

They hold 2 plant sales; one in the spring and another in the fall.

They set up a table at the Farmer's Market as well. They had Master Gardeners make presentations at different times and this was well received by the public.

SARNIA

They post their Newsletters on their website.

In May, June July and August, they open up two gardens for viewing between 6:30 and 8:30 p.m. They offer a membership (free) to anyone whose garden is being displayed and is not a member of their society. In May, they also include a greenhouse in the tour. People go the gardens of their choice or all of them if they wish. It is advertised that the rain date for these is always the same time, same day but the following week.

THAMESVILLE

Members volunteered to man a booth at the Town Wide Yard Sale. They sold memberships and geraniums, which they had donated to them by a local greenhouse owner.

TILBURY

They use [Vista Print](#) to make their posters and signs. To view photos of some of these, follow this link – click here.

They make use the free advertising in the local papers.

They take advantage of free advertising on digital signs around the area.

When planting the gardens around Tilbury in the spring, they also set up a tent nearby; they have a barbecue (sell food) as well as memberships. They also make sure that a list of their events is clearly visible to the public.

Tilbury has a parade every year. They have a Wheel Barrel Precision Team that only Linda Henderson could so vividly describe to us amid the roaring laughter during her detailed report of the event. Click here to view a photo of the team. During this parade, they have kids carry banners and signs as advertisement for the society.

WATFORD

This society offers evening bus tours to various nurseries and greenhouses and charges \$5.00 to cover the cost of the bus (a member of the society donates her time as the licensed driver). This is a buying trip which usually ends up in a full load of plant materials... and of course, they end the evening with a Tim Horton stop... The bus is insured and the OHA already covers the insurance for the members (only members are allowed on these escapades).

They take a night to meet at a beautiful garden and have an appreciation dinner barbecue. Everyone who during the year has had anything to do with helping the society is invited. Town Council personnel... anyone, just to let them know they are appreciated for helping in any way at all.