



'Through The Garden Gate'

The monthly newsletter of the Englehart and District Horticultural Society
November/December 2018



**Englehart and District
Horticultural Society was
formed in 1956.**

General meetings:
3rd Wednesday of most months
at 7:00 p.m. in the
Presbyterian Church basement

- *Speakers, workshops,
demonstrations
- *Civic Improvement
- *Youth Involvement
- *Displays and Competitions
- *Environmental Stewardship

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engleharthort.weebly.com

A Word from the Editor

It's almost impossible to believe that this is the last bulletin for 2018. I hope you have been enjoying our monthly newsletter and ask that if you have an interesting horticultural article you'd be willing to share or an idea for a change you'd like to see, please let me know.

Looking Back... to October

Unfortunately for us (and Jeff), an injury prevented Jeff Warner from speaking at our meeting last month. Bonnie Warner and I jumped in the day before to put together a programme on decorating with pumpkins. The good news is that Jeff will speak to us in the new year



Some of the October competitions. Bonnie Warner and her fall creation.

Mark It on Your Calendar

November 28: Christmas Workshop
January 16: Annual Meeting

The Importance of a Good Tool

As an avid gardener, I can attest to the frustration that any gardener feels when using a poorly made or inappropriate tool. I also confess that I have, in the past, flung a gardening implement across the yard in frustration. I must also confess that some of the problem is my own fault, as I have not always been good at caring for my own tools. I have come across a little article that I would like to share with you over the snowy and cold months to come for a while.

Shovel/Spade

Call it a shovel or a spade – it's the #1 tool in every gardener's arsenal. "Spade" is generally used to refer to a flat-edged tool used mainly for cutting and digging. "Shovels" are a little more versatile, with a rounded edge that's often still plenty sharp for cutting through sod, but also able to scoop and move soil and mulch. Choose a shovel with a handle length that's convenient for your height. The top edge of the shovel should have a flat ledge, so you can comfortably step on it with your foot for more digging power. Look for thick-gauge stainless steel blades that won't bend or rust.

Gardeners of the Future

On October 17th, our Society was visited by 8 youngsters who had participated in the Youth Garden Competition this year. Each year our society sponsors this event and each year we are thrilled to see the children who plant and harvest their gardens. We continue to say a huge thank you to Lois Dekker and Dorothy de Champlain for giving up their time in August to talk to the gardeners and judge their gardens, making suggestions, praising the children's efforts. This year the placements are as follows: Grades 1-3- 1st: Makayla MacPherson; 2nd: Kyra Sheering and Sophia Crooker; 3rd: Rayna Charlton Grades 4-8- 1st: Aaron Mowbray; 2nd: Aiden MacPherson; 3rd: Ziggy Goddard and Karly Charlton



1st prize Gr. 1-3 1st Prize Gr. 4-8
Makayla MacPherson Aaron Mowbray



Once again the Society wishes to express its thanks to Lois Dekker and Dorothy de Champlain for the hours they volunteered to speak with the children and judge their gardens.

Reports from Your Directors

Programme: There will be no regular meeting this month due to the Christmas Workshop being held on November 28. Convenor Carrie Anne reminds people that she will be calling on them for help putting the kits together before the workshop. We will be making a lighted door swag made of greens and decorations.

Social: Carrie Anne Field asks members who volunteered to bring something in for the snack after the workshop to remember to bring it with them that evening. Carrie Anne will be the hostess for the meeting and Rosemary Campbell brings the gift.

Nominating Committee: This committee will be meeting to plan and make suggestions for next year's Executive members and Directors. If/when you receive a call from a member of this important committee, we hope you will agree to take a position as a Director or member of the Executive. Elections will be held at our January meeting and we look forward to seeing you there. At our November Director's meeting, both Treasurer Ginny Montminy and Secretary Bonnie Warner agreed to continue in their position for the coming year and were approved by the Directors in attendance. Thank you so much to these two very competent and invaluable women.

January Annual Meeting: The evening will start with a potluck supper at 6:00. Please bring along a main dish, dessert, salad, etc. to share with others. More information will be found in the January bulletin.

Membership: Ginny Montminy reports that we had 70 members in 2018 and already have 6 for 2019. Please attend our January meeting to renew your membership or contact Ginny.

Don't forget to check out our website: [www. englehartort.weebly.com](http://www.englehartort.weebly.com) and our Englehart and District Horticultural Society's Facebook Page for more information and photographs of society events.

Secretary Bonnie reminds all committee convenors that she needs an electronic copy of their committee's work during the past year for our annual report.

Gardening Advice

This month's piece of gardening advice comes from a man who is a Canadian horticulturalist and author, Mr. Robert Pavlis. It's an interesting idea which may cure some of us of our fear of growing orchids. It concerns the idea that we have that orchids are very difficult for the ordinary person to grow.

"When the public talks about orchids, they are usually talking about the *Phalaenopsis* moth orchid. It is very popular and available from many retail outlets at reasonable prices. They make an exceptional houseplant that can flower for most of the year. Orchids have a reputation for being difficult to grow because many people kill their orchids. The reason for this is that they are too nice to their plants. Orchids are easy to grow if you learn to do things right, but they will die if you pamper them.

- If in doubt – don't water.
- If in doubt – don't fertilize.

The single biggest reason for orchid death is overwatering. To prove this point, I tried a simple experiment. I took one of my orchids, removed all the potting media and sat it on my desk for seven weeks, with no water. At the end of the test period, the plant looked a bit dehydrated, but otherwise was quite healthy. How many houseplants can be treated this way and survive? Orchids are tough plants.

How should you water an orchid? Don't even think about watering until the media in the pot is bone dry. Then sit the pot in a water tight container, add water until it reaches the top of the media. Let it sit for 5 to 20 minutes. Drain and you are done. Once a month add a pinch of water soluble fertilizer to the water." (Robert Pavlis)

Now- does this set your mind at ease for the next time you see a beautiful orchid and are afraid to take it home with you?



Making Your Own Garland



Check out these easy steps to making your own garland for a fireplace mantle, stairway, doorway, hearth, kitchen or table centerpiece. You shouldn't limit creativity to Christmas....garlands add warmth to any room and pieces of furniture at any time of year and for any holiday.

Supplies: Clippers, 1/4 inch. to 1/2 inch diameter rope for a thick garland, (use jute twine for a narrow garland), 24 or 26 gauge spool wire, a selection of greens and flowers that dry well (eucalyptus, pine, bear grass, berries, boxwood, hydrangea, statice, straw flower, yarrow etc.), cones/pods/seedheads, etc.

1. Select greenery and the flowers that will make up the garland.
2. Measure the mantle, hearth or whatever you are decorating & add 24". Cut the rope to the correct length. (24" is added for a nice swagged look.)
3. Tie loops at each end of the rope for hanging.
4. Separate each kind of greens & flowers & cut into piece of about 6" to 7" long.
5. Cut several longer & stronger pieces of greenery, approximately 10" to 12" long & set aside.
6. In your hand, make small bundles with all the varieties of greens & flowers.
7. Start at one end & lay one "bouquet" on the top of the rope. (Continued on page 4)



Plant of the Month
Schlumbergera

This month the plant of the month actually becomes Plants of the Month. There is much confusion amongst these plants- the Christmas, Thanksgiving, and Easter cactus. These plants were originally found growing in trees in the jungles of Brazil. The Thanksgiving cactus blooms in November, around the time of the U.S. celebration. The Christmas blooms closer to Christmas but I have found that both types bloom whenever they 'feel like it'! (The Easter cactus is less commonly found in stores.) These plants prefer free-draining, humus-rich, somewhat acid growing media, such as a mixture of peat or leafmould and an inert material such as grit, perlite, or sharp sand. It is recommended that plants should be grown in relatively small pots as they don't mind being potbound. Schlumbergera are more tolerant of drought than many house plants, but can be damaged by both under and over-watering. Keeping the growing medium just moist throughout the year avoids either extreme. Too much light causes stems to take on a reddish colouration; however, very low light levels will prevent flowering. Day length is very important in controlling flowering; continuous darkness for at least 12 hours is necessary to induce bud formation. Even a small amount of light, ie- from an outside light, may prevent bud formation. A period of about 8 days with 16 hours of darkness at 16 °C (61 °F) has been shown to cause flower buds to form. Lower temperatures may slow this process. These plants are relatively pest free but sometimes may be attacked by aphids or mealybugs and may develop some rot caused by prolonged damp soil which may breed mould/fungus. Why not give these beautiful plants a try?



Poetry and Prose

The Holly and the Ivy

*The holly and the ivy,
When they are
both full grown,
Of all the trees that
are in the wood,
The holly bears the crown.
The rising of the sun
And the running
of the deer,
The playing of
the merry organ,
Sweet singing in the choir.*



Making Your Own Garland (con't)

7. Attach this "bouquet" with 24" gauge spool wire to the rope. Simply wind the wire several times around the stems of the "bouquet." Do not cut the wire.
8. Add another "bouquet" so tips overlap stems of first "bouquet," & attach to rope with the wire.
9. Now, to make the garland sturdy, you should attach one of your longer/stronger pieces of greenery to the back side of the rope. This larger piece of greenery needs to be the length of two "bouquets."
10. Repeat the process, (two "bouquets" front & one longer/stronger piece of greenery back) until you fill the rope with beautiful greens, flowers or berries. Secure wire by catching it under the last loop of wire.



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