



November 2022

The Strathcona Gardener

Growing with the Community

www.strathconacountygardenclub.ca

strathgardenclub@gmail.com

Message from the Past President

Greetings to Garden Club Members! As we draw near to the end of 2022, I regret the need to share with you the following news. Our SCGC President, Andrew Davison, has made the decision to resign as president of the club as of November 15, 2022. New circumstances in his life make it infeasible for Andrew to continue his responsibilities as president and to maintain his membership in our club. On behalf of the members of the Board, I thank him for his contribution to our Board of Directors over these last seven years. As vice president, he also took on the responsibilities of Snacks, and some of you may recall him dressed in a chef's outfit as he supervised our monthly snacks. I, personally, will miss all he had to share on all-things-garden and his various delicious recipes and his support for me when I was president. I do wish him the best.

In the absence of both President and Vice-President, the Board will operate by appointing a chairperson to preside over meetings, until we are in a position to appoint an interim president who will oversee the responsibilities of the president until we hold our next AGM. This is in accordance with our bylaws.

I would also like to take this opportunity to say farewell to five other board members who will be leaving the garden club board by the end of this year. To say I am grateful to each of them and their contributions to our club is an understatement. Pat Komarniski has been our Membership Director since 2011, and she has worked hard for the club, maintaining excellent membership records, as well as being involved in organizing Oldman Creek Community Garden. She has been the first point of contact for many club members who came to sign up for membership at our speaker meetings and those who phoned to make inquiries. She told me it is time for her to retire from the club board; apparently, she is not as young as she used to be.... I do know that I will still see her around at OMC community garden.

Marlene Exner has been on the Board since 2011, as well. She, too, is retiring because it is time for someone else to take on the job of Newsletter editor. Again, the word **excellent** comes to mind when I think about Marlene. Over the years, she has published wonderful newsletters, including all those excellent articles she has written. Her most recent articles have been on three club members who were recognized last July for their outstanding contributions to our club over the years: Sheila, Brenda and, this month, Pegi. I have also come to rely on her for her editing skills; she doesn't even ask for permission to edit any

contributions I make to the newsletter – she just does it, always making my words sound so much better.

Dorothy Gilbey has also been on the Board for at least 10 years as Phoning Director. She has worked with the Phoning committee to get information out to our membership and to remind them of our meetings. It is that personal contact with members that I have valued at a time when so many of our connections with members are through e-mail. I have always valued Dorothy's comments at Board meetings, comments that have been wise and well-considered.

Marianne West has been on our Board for three years. She offered her help to our club in 2020 when meetings were being cancelled, when all of us were struggling with all kinds of changes and adjustments. (She has technology skills that I can only dream of.) With these, she offered to help us by setting up our speaker meetings on ZOOM. (I had barely heard of ZOOM at that point!) With her excellent assistance, we were able to connect with speakers from the U.S., New Brunswick, Ontario, and B.C., as well as Alberta, and, thus, we were able to keep our speaker meetings front and centre of our club. Two years ago, Marianne was elected to the position of Fundraising. I know many of you remember her sitting at the raffle ticket desk, selling you tickets for the many raffle items. She put much care into deciding the main prize for each raffle.

And finally, Leesa Lacombe. Leesa is new to our Board, joining us in 2022. As Speaker and Events director, Leesa brought to our club new and interesting speaker ideas, through her connections on social media and her work with the County. I will not forget Lisa Harding who presented last September: the garlic lady who plants 6,500 garlic plants annually. It took me two trips to find Lisa's farm stand, but I now know where to get this dreamy honey, and of course, organic garlic. Then, there was Blooms on 7 Flower Farm in July. Brianna Sims was an excellent addition to our speaker roster. It is always exciting to learn of new ideas and new presenters, and that is what Leesa gave us.

Thank you to all! Thank you for your contribution and service to our club!

With so many Board members leaving, I am also very grateful to three club members who have offered to accept three of the vacant positions. Cindy K who will be responsible for Fundraising. Elaine who will be responsible for Membership. And Jana, who will become our Newsletter Editor. To our club members: our club could not operate without all these volunteers so when you meet these three ladies in January or February, do not hesitate to thank them for joining our Board.

We have been unable to fill a very important position on our SCGC Board of Directors....that of Speaker and Events. So, at last Monday's Board meeting, I offered to serve the club membership by volunteering as interim Speaker and Events director until the next AGM and the Board agreed. We have a wonderful speaker for our January meeting, Grace Salaysay, an excellent speaker booked for March, Tim Moreland, and two pending for February and April. And other ideas and suggestions and direction from a survey which I encourage all of our members to complete. We are on a roll! It has been a great pleasure to be a club member for 11 years. It was wanting to garden at Old Man Creek that first drew me to the club, and it is the people I have met at meetings, at events, at Old Man Creek, on the Board of Directors that keep me here!

Too late, I realized that I had not included one of our volunteers at the plant sale in the thank you note last month. My apologies JC; we appreciate your stepping up to help out as you often do.

Finally, thank you to our members for reading this long message, but I felt it was important to honor all these club members who have and will contribute to our Board of Directors. My best wishes to all of you for an excellent Christmas, celebrating with family and friends!

Donna, Past President

Next Meeting

Jan 12 **Grace Salaysay, Fresh Space by Grace**
7-9 pm **“Indoor Plants”**
Council Chamber, Community Centre
401 Festival Lane, Sherwood Park



Grace is an Interior Plant Consultant. She specializes in creating and maintaining indoor plants in commercial spaces through her business **Fresh Space by Grace**. The purpose of her company is to enhance feelings of happiness and well-being through the addition of living plants in indoor environments. She is also team lead at an indoor plant store in Edmonton named Botaniful, a lovely store absolutely filled with indoor plants. She has appeared in three interviews on Global News.

Bring your own mug for a chance to win a Tim’s card. There’s no inflation at our snack table. A loonie still gets you a beverage and a selection of amazing snacks. Another loonie gets you a raffle ticket. A donated item for the raffle gets you a smile and a thank you!

Upcoming Meetings and Events

Dec 7 Fresh Greens Wreath Workshop
 Workshop Fully Registered

Feb 9 TBD

March 9 Tim Moreland, Aspen Ridge Greenhouses
 “Good Buying vs Bad Buying”

Meeting Dates for 2023

It’s time to mark your 2023 calendar with all the dates for our regular meetings: Jan 12; Feb 9; March 9; April 13; May 11; June 8; July 13; Sep 14; and Oct 12. Hopefully, it will be possible for the November Potluck to go ahead on a yet-to-be-determined date.

What's on your Wish List for 2023?

The Board has compiled a survey seeking member input on the topics of interest to you in our monthly meetings, possible speakers you may be aware of and events you would enjoy participating in. It only takes a few minutes and your input is invaluable. Visit this link to share your wishes with the Board: [SGCG 2023 Member Program Input](#). **Please reply by December 10th.**

Garden Club Membership Fee Increase

At the AGM in October, the members voted in support of increasing the annual club membership fee to \$25, effective January 1, 2023. This increase will help offset rising costs, particularly for insurance, and will help to stabilize the Club's financial position. The membership covers an individual or a couple with dependent children.

Our New Board of Directors

Congratulations and welcome to our newly elected / appointed members of the Board who assume their new roles in January 2023. And thank you to our continuing Board members who will keep on doing what they have been doing so well. If you feel you could step up to fill one of the still vacant positions, please contact Donna. You can be appointed on an interim basis until the next AGM by the Board.

President	Vacant
Vice President	Vacant
Secretary	Susan Robblee
Treasurer	Allison McKinnon
Past President	Donna Reimche
Membership Coordinator	Elaine Vandermuelen
Advertising Coordinator	Cindy Garneau
Fundraising Coordinator	Cindy Kahn
Speaker & Events Coordinator	Donna Reimche
Newsletter Editor	Jana Chouinard
Social Media Coordinator	Vacant

Potluck Survey Highlights

By now, you all know that our annual potluck was cancelled. The decision was initially made by a split vote of the Board in October, which we followed by a quick survey to ask members' intentions. This was felt to be necessary because the potluck date had been advertised to members for several months, creating an expectation, and because no discussion or suggestion of cancellation was raised at the AGM only a week or so earlier. Thank you to the 72 members (about half of all members) who responded to the survey. Thirteen of you said you would attend, 2 said maybe and 57 said no. The total number of people attending amounted to 24.

The small number of positive responses – expressing the intention to attend – re-affirmed for the Board that the event should not proceed. The potluck is the most expensive and heavily subsidized club event and thus requires broader attendance than was reported to justify the substantial cash outlay.

Phoning Committee is Dissolved

At its October meeting, the Board of Directors voted to dissolve the Phoning Committee. With fewer and fewer members answering the phone when our volunteers call, this activity was determined to no longer be a necessary and effective use of volunteer hours. The decision is effective immediately, so you will NOT receive a phone call with details of the January meeting, UNLESS you are among the five members who do not have email. News of Club meetings and events is readily available to members through this newsletter, the web site, our Facebook page and assorted local newspapers and advertising sites. Lori H has graciously volunteered to call those without email.

The Board extends its heartfelt thanks to Dorothy Gilbey who coordinated the committee of phoners but who also made many calls as back-up to phoners when they were away or otherwise unable to make their calls. An equally heartfelt thank you to the members of the phoning committee, some of whom have served for many years, decades even: Pat Barker; Pegi Gunn-Graham; Marj Kennedy; Pat Komarniski; Lil Parker; Shirley Radmanovich; and Gerrie Schmidt.

Rose News not all Rosy

Tim Moreland, Owner Operator of Aspen Ridge Greenhouses, has asked Donna Reimche to share some information about roses with her friends. So here goes, Friends! Tim is anticipating a big shift in the rose market for 2023. One of the biggest wholesale suppliers of bare root roses is going out of the business of bare roots. Greenhouses depend on these bare roots to pot, grow and sell the fully potted rose plant. Without easy access to this bare root stock, Tim expects availability to be slim and rose plants to be costly. He says those of us who love and grow roses will be very fortunate if we are able to over-winter our roses. So give them all the TLC you can now and hopefully you will be rewarded come spring!

Hot Pepper Jelly

Recipe provided by Cathy Johnson

1 red and 1 green pepper, seeded and chopped
2 jalapeño peppers, seeded and chopped (I usually use red ones but green are fine)
2 Thai chili peppers
1 1/2 cups pickling vinegar
6 1/2 cups sugar
6 oz / 170ml liquid pectin

Combine chopped peppers and vinegar in blender. Blend smooth. Pour into a large pot. Add sugar. Heat on medium-high and stir till sugar dissolves. Bring to boil. Boil 3 minutes.

Stir in pectin. Return to full rolling boil on high. Boil hard for one minute. Remove from heat. Skim off foam

Pour into hot sterile jars to within 1/4 inch of top. Seal. Makes 6 half pints. The color of your jelly will depend on the color of the peppers. Each of my batches is different, but always delicious!! Enjoy!

Celebrating Pegi Gunn-Graham, Outstanding Gardener and Honorary Member

Pegi Gunn-Graham, recognized in July as one of the Club's trio of Outstanding Gardeners in the Year of the Garden 2022, was further honored at the Annual General Meeting in October. The membership voted to make her our first ever lifetime Honorary Member in recognition of her meritorious service to the Garden Club. When Pegi received the news, she thanked the Club and said she is pleased about the free membership, as she won't ever forget to make the annual payment. Pegi, who attended the Celebration Tea in July with her daughters Catriona and Siona, humbly expressed some surprise at the recognition, but it was clear that her daughters were pleased that their Mother's many years of active garden club engagement were being applauded. Deservedly so. Congratulations Pegi!



Pegi's love of gardening first sprouted in her grandfather's extensive gardens in Athens, ON where she became fascinated by all the different types of flowers. In time, she transplanted this love and passion into her own flower beds on her acreage south of Sherwood Park which she tended for nearly a half century. She first sought out the older women in her community and later, members of the garden club, to learn from them and this learning was expressed in her creative, experimental and always evolving beds. The red bed, the white bed (home also to black flowers), the mini-plant garden and the mini-pond garden, dedicated to plants under 2 inches and home of lovely mosses – theme gardens, well before the concept became trendy.



Speaking of trendy, I must take the opportunity to comment on Pegi's attire for the Celebration Tea. You will note that it is a denim skirt, generously endowed with multi-colored embroidered flowers. I am told that this skirt is Pegi's handiwork, perhaps from some 40 years ago. It is lovely, and fitting, and after so many years, it still fits! Wish I could say that.

Pegi says she's grateful that no one can remember exactly when she first showed up at the Garden Club. It may have been not long after she finished embroidering the skirt. She recalls when Peter Stavely was President and the club had only 35 or 40 members. She soon joined the Phoning Committee – essential in times preceding

email – and she remained on it for over 25 years. She would still be on it today, but for the fact that the committee has been dissolved.

Over time, Pegi became one of the go-to people when someone had a question. She set out to teach herself not only common names, characteristics and what the plants required to thrive, but their Latin names as well, just because she wanted to know. It was her own personal challenge. Her knowledge was put to good use every year at the Garden Club plant sale. Rain or shine, Pegi presided over the donated plant material table, identifying and cataloguing the many plants that came, keeping extensive lists of them year after year.

Pegi became a true steward of her environment, providing habitat for birds and pollinators. She had a thriving patch of milkweed, essential to the monarch butterflies, which she shared generously with fellow gardeners. I once took advantage of her 'sharefulness' and visited her garden to obtain a chunk of milkweed. Alas, I was not

successful as my milkweed never reappeared, but I will never forget Pegi, refusing to bow down to her joint and mobility issues, wielding a garden shovel to extract a stubborn and deeply rooted piece of milkweed for me.

Pegi designated part of her acreage as a tree and plant nursery for townspeople to start or store their trees, shrubs and plants until they had space in their own gardens. She also nurtured and gave away trees and other plants. In the last five years before leaving her home, she lent out portions of her sizeable vegetable garden to refugee families to use as allotments.



Of course, Pegi got involved in the Communities in Bloom campaign, in which Strathcona County was quite successful. For many summers, she committed to help maintain several beds including a 30 foot one along Baseline Road, which I recall was always very attractive and inviting. She was also a founding member of Rural Roots, aimed at the issues and interests facing acreage owners and rural families.

Pegi is valued not only for her contributions to our Garden Club, but also to the community at large. We honor you and value your grit and determination, your commitment, your expertise, and your 'sharefulness'. We are proud to have you as our first lifetime Honorary Member.

Membership Perk\$

Present your 2022 Strathcona County Garden Club Membership Card at the following establishments for possible discounts on your purchases. Contact information and more details may be found on the Club website.

Apache Seeds Arch Greenhouses Kuhlmann's Greenhouse Garden Market Cannor Nurseries

Aspen Ridge Greenhouse Cal's Grower Direct Cal's Whitemud Garden Centre Arrowhead Nurseries

Salisbury Greenhouse All Seasons Garden Centre BMR Greenhouses & Water Gardens

Millcreek Nursery Ltd Jils Landscape Supply Ellerslie Gift & Garden Sunstar Nurseries Ltd.

Estate Gardens Greenhouse South Cooking Lake Greenhouses

Strathcona County Garden Club Contacts

Board Members	Name	Phone Number
President	Vacant	
Vice President	Vacant	
Past President	Donna Reimche	
Treasurer	Allison McKinnon	
Secretary	Susan Robblee	
Speaker and Events Coordinator	Donna Reimche	
Membership Coordinator	Pat Komarniski	
Advertising Coordinator	Cindy Garneau	
Phoning Coordinator	Dorothy Gilbey	
Fundraising Coordinator	Marianne West	
Snack Coordinator	Lori Hawrelak	
Newsletter Editor	Marlene Exner	
Support Volunteers	Name	
Membership Assistant	Pat Barker	
Facebook Administrator	Marlene Parish	
Old Man Creek Gardens	Sheila Flint	587 990 9935; smayflint@gmail.com

Farewell from the News Chair

Well, I can't really complain that my last month has been a slow news month. It seems there is more information to bring to you today than at any other time in my tenure as Newsletter Editor. And that has been a while. I am taking this as a sign of an active, thriving and engaged club with places to go and things to do. I fully intend to visit some of those places and do some of those things with you, just not as Newsletter Editor. I have had a great deal of support and positive feedback from many members, both on and off the Board, over the years and I am truly grateful for all of it. Occasionally, I have also had an error pointed out to me and I am also grateful for that! Most of all, I appreciate all the friendly, helpful, clever, unique, humorous, dedicated and 'shareful' people I have met and worked with, in the Club generally and on the Board. FYI, 'shareful' is an Elliotism, a brilliant word, I think, coined by my youngest grandson when he was about 4 years old. (I later learned that the Urban Dictionary recognizes and defines the word.)

In closing, I think you are being left in very capable hands and I can hardly wait to read Jana's first issue! I wish you all a wonderful Christmas season. Go well into the New Year!

Marlene