
2003 Annual Report

**North Toronto
Green
Community**



NORTH TORONTO GREEN COMMUNITY

The North Toronto Green Community (NTGC) is an incorporated non-profit organization working together with a cross-section of the community to promote conservation through grassroots action and the development of sustainable, self-supporting, long-term initiatives that are community based. Our mission is to promote local environmental action and awareness through community-based projects and programs.

Since 1995 when NTGC was started, the organization has designed and operated a wide array of projects dealing with environmental issues ranging from climate change to toxic wastes, atmospheric pollution to stream water management. All NTGC's projects are built with four main principles in mind:

- Results oriented
- Based on grassroots community planning, input and support
- Implemented by encouraging and coordinating partnerships between different economic sectors (business, community, government, etc.)
- Designed to encourage community participation in conservation by providing multiple benefits for people, businesses and the community at large

In 2003, the core programs we worked on were;

- The Eglinton Park Heritage Community Garden
- Stewardship and Clean ups
- The Lost River Walks
- The Green Garden Visit

We were also able to carry out Outreach and Public Education through:

- The Speaker Series
- The Internet through our three websites
- The 'North Toronto Green Community News', our bi-annual newsletter

In recognition of our contributions in Toronto and North Toronto in 2003, we received two awards:

- The North Toronto Post's 'Perfect Planet and Local Hero Award' and
- Heritage Toronto's 'Award of Excellence in the Organisation Category' (for contributions to natural heritage through Lost Rivers and other programs)

We received funding from the following organizations;

- The Ontario Trillium Foundation - core funding (2003 – 2006) for the organization for three years that enabled the organization to hire a full-time Executive Director.
- Environment Canada's Ecoaction program - for the Green Garden Visit Program – enabled us to hire a full-time advisor and part-time coordinator and enabled us to grow the program.
- Human Resource Development Canada's (HRDC's) Summer Career Placement program - enabled us to hire two students, one to coordinate the Eglinton Park Heritage Community Garden and the other to assist with the Green Garden Visit Program.
- The Heart Health Network – funding for the garden
- The Institute for Conservation Leadership – subsidized funding for Leadership training

NTGC Current Programs

The Eglinton Park Heritage Community Garden

The delightful Eglinton Park Heritage garden continued to thrive with heritage flowers & vegetables, as well as native plants. Carrie Clarke was our summer coordinator for the garden. The garden continued to be a place where people could come to garden, learn, share and appreciate nature in the city. We were able to share the garden's harvest with the community centre's Seniors Lunch and Learn program, and with Plant a Row, Grow a Row (foodbank). We held the following garden workshops in 2003;

- Organic Gardening 101 - Saturday May 17, 2003 - Helen Mills (Chair) and Andrew Roy (GGV coordinator)
- Build Your Own Trellis - Saturday June 14, 2003 - Denise Atkinson (Teacher and artist from Ottawa)
- A Workshop on Trees - Tuesday June 24, 2003 - Janet McKay (Coordinator, Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests – LEAF)
- Container Gardening - Thursday July 10, 2003 - Zora Ignatovic (Co-Coordinator, Foodshare)
- Pesticides and the New By-law - Tuesday July 15, 2003 - Cheryl Shour (President, Healthy Home Services) and The City of Toronto
- Butterflies and Insects - Tuesday Aug 19, 2003 - Sarah Brierley (Native Species Community Gardens' Coordinator, The Evergreen Foundation)
- Seed saving and Plant Propagation for Native Plants - Tuesday Sept 16, 2003 - Garrett Pittenger (Former Chair, Seeds of Diversity Canada)
- There were also two garden tours of the Eglinton Park Heritage Community Garden in 2003.

Stewardship and Clean Ups

NTGC has five naturalization sites that we work on every year. We do plantings and clean-ups at these sites and invite the community to get involved;

- Eglinton Park - Yonge and Eglinton (Mud Creek) – The Toronto law firm of Cassels Brock & Blackwell donated a day's worth of work of 15 of their law students to tend to the North Toronto Green Community's naturalization site in Eglinton Park.
- Sylvan Valleyway Ravine – Avenue Road and Lawrence (Burke Brook) – part of our annual Earth day clean up where we clean up a portion of Burke Brook.
- Earl Bales Park – Sheppard and Bathurst (de Havilland Creek, the Heschel Creek) – students from the Heschel school did a clean up and planting
- Lytton Park – Lytton Blvd and Avenue Road (Mud Creek)
- Lawrence Park - Lawrence and Yonge (Burke Brook Tributary)

In 2003, we added on a 6th site at Champlain Place at 495 Wilson Avenue with clean up activities at Mud Creek north.

The Lost River Walks

The "Lost River Walks" are guided hikes along buried stream courses, streams and waterways buried by urban development in Toronto. The Lost River walks continue to be held in partnership with the Toronto Field Naturalists & many other local groups. The Lost Rivers website; www.lostrivers.ca is renowned and has a wealth of information. It continues to be an important source of information for the public.

26 Lost River walks were held in 2003.

The prestigious "Heritage Toronto Award of Excellence in the Organisation Category" that NTGC won in 2003 was recognition of NTGC's contributions to natural heritage primarily through the Lost Rivers project.

The Green Garden Visit

The Green Garden Visit (GGV) is an ecological yard and garden consultation program started by NTGC in 2002. The program was developed as a template for communities by The Green Communities Association (GCA). The 1 to 2 hour visit introduces homeowners to a variety of techniques to make their gardens more planet friendly.

In 2002, NTGC ran the program as a pilot carrying out about 25 Green garden visits. In 2003, the demand for organic gardening service from individuals led to implementing changes by providing the organic garden service. We carried out 70 individual visits and 112 follow-up visits.

In 2003, we received funding from Environment Canada's Ecoaction program to carry out the project. Through the program, we conducted many ecological benefits to the gardens we worked in including reducing pesticide use in 25% of homes and increasing trees in 40% of homes and shrubs in 60% of homes. We planted a total of 144 trees and shrubs.

There was also unexpected demand from institutions and community groups, leading to the creation of a more community-based Green Garden visit. This led to the creation of a new community garden at Toronto Community Housing Corporations Champlain Place, a butterfly container planting on Eglinton Avenue with an energy efficiency program called Cool Shops and the Eglinton West BIA and more. We carried out a total of six community visits.

You can find out more at www.greengardenvisit.ca.

Outreach and Public Education

Here are just a few of the ways in which NTGC reaches out to the community and provides opportunities to get involved:

Speaker Series

This program is the **key initiative** in response to **the need for public education and outreach**. **Lectures** and discussions are held bimonthly on a variety of local, national and international environmental issues such as sustainability, energy efficiency, water conservation, gardening and waste. The emphasis is on how we can act locally to effect change. The speaker sessions we held in 2003 were:

- Water Conservation: Keep the Rain Out of the Drain - Jan 27, 2003 - Nicole Swerhun, Lura Consulting and Bill Snodgrass, City of Toronto
- Organic Gardening: Caring for the Earth in your own Backyard - Mar 31, 2003 - Lorraine Johnson, Canada's foremost native plant expert and author.
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- Waste and Recycling: Coming soon to Your neighbourhood... The Green Bin! - May 26, 2003 - Geoff Rathbone and Kate Middleton from the City of Toronto.
- All Candidates Meeting: North Toronto All Candidates' Environmental Meeting - Oct 8, 2003 - Wards 16, 22, 25 and 26
- Energy Efficiency Homes - Green, Healthy and Economical Home Living! - Nov 24, 2003 - Green\$aver – Stephanie Bolton; R-2000 - Peter Love, John Godden, Deborah Chute and Chungsen Leung

The Internet

NTGC has three websites;

www.ntgc.ca - NTGC main website

www.greengardenvisit.ca - Green Garden Visit website

www.lostrivers.ca - Lost Rivers Website

The North Toronto Green Community Newsletter

The NTGC Newsletter, 'North Toronto Green Community News' is published twice a year and is based on an environmental theme. The themes in 2003 were;

- Sustainable Transportation
- Energy Efficiency – the theme was chosen because of the black out in Ontario in August 2003

NTGC increased the circulation of the newsletter from 3,000 in 2002 to 4,500 in 2003. We also made it a more professional process with contributions for the newsletter from various different environmental organizations.

We also moved from having board members doing our mailings to getting High School students using up their mandatory 40 hours of volunteer-time to do our mailing. This freed up our board members to work on more important issues for the organization.

New Program: Eco Gift Wrapping

Over the holiday season, we were invited by Mountain Equipment Co-op to carry out eco-gift wrapping for their clients. We used kraft paper, raffia and greenery from Christmas trees that we picked up from a plant store. We had over 20 volunteers who came out to help us. This is a program we will continue with as it gives us an opportunity to meet people and spread the message of the North Toronto Green Community, give volunteers some valuable work experience and at the same time, we are able to fundraise.

Volunteers

NTGC has from its very beginning relied very heavily on volunteers. Our most important work over the years has been carried out by volunteers and we will continue to rely on volunteers for all our programs and activities.

NTGC increased its volunteer base by 13% from 2002 to 2003, from 397 volunteers to 448 volunteers. The increase was a result of the growing of a some of our programs such as the Speaker Series and the Newsletter and starting the Eco gift wrapping program which required more volunteers. 448 volunteers contributed a total of 11,532 hours in 2003.

Staff

NTGC was able to grow it's staff in 2003;

Full-Time Positions:

Executive Director- Minaz Asani-Kanji

Green Garden Visit Advisor- Andrew Roy

Part-Time Positions:

Green Garden Visit Coordinator- Anahita Belanger

Summer Positions:

Garden coordinator- Carrie Clarke

Green Garden Visit Assistant- Andrew Ouchterlony

2003 Financial Statement

Revenue

Grant Revenue	\$60,676
Program Revenues	20,013
Membership Revenue	2,928
Interest and Other Income	40
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\$83,657

Expenses

Salaries and Contracts	\$56,385
Program Expenses	15,688
General & Administration	5,219
Advertising & Promotion	3,357
Membership Expenses	1,678
Professional Fees	1,500
Insurance	871
Amortization	450
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Operating Expenses **\$85,148**

Excess of Expenses over Revenue	1,491
Fund Balance, beginning of year	7,953
Fund Balance, end of year	<hr/> \$6,462

2003 Board of Directors

Chair:

Helen Mills, B.A.

Vice-Chair:

Tom Arnold, B.E.S.,

Secretary-Treasurer:

Cheryl Shour, B.S., M.B.A.

Board Members:

Margaret Buchinger

Dorothy Herberg

Elaine Ramsay

Elizabeth Reynolds

Paula Kiss

Valerie Palda, M.D., M.Sc.

Harold Smith; B.Arch., MBA

Shachindra Tripathi

Grace Zhang