
2005 Annual Report

**Toronto Green
Community**



The Toronto Green Community (TGC), formerly the North Toronto Green Community, 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 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 TGC'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

2005 marked our 10th anniversary and we celebrated this event throughout the year. We highlighted our past accomplishments and also looked forward to our second decade.

TGC Programs

The Eglinton Park Heritage Community Garden

TGC conducted regular workshops throughout the summer:

Organic Gardening 101	Christine Oldnall
Plant Identification	Andrew Roy
Seed Saving	Garett Pittenger
Putting your garden to bed	Andrew Roy

We also held garden work bees at the garden every Tuesday evening in which many community members participated.

Stewardship and Clean Ups

TGC has six naturalization sites that we work on. This year, we did plantings and clean-ups at many of these sites and invited the community to get involved;

- Eglinton Park - Yonge and Eglinton (Mud Creek) – informally work at this location as it is connected to the Eglinton park garden.
- 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)
- Champlain Place at 495 Wilson Avenue (Mud Creek north)
- Lytton Park – Lytton Blvd and Avenue Road (Mud Creek)
- Lawrence Park - Lawrence and Yonge (Burke Brook Tributary)

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 and other local groups. **In 2005**, 19 Lost River walks were held across Toronto, with an average of 15 attendees. To commemorate our 10th anniversary a special anniversary walk was held during two weekends of September.

The Green Garden Visit

The Green Garden Visit (GGV) is a 1 to 2 hour ecological yard and garden consultation program that began in 2002 as a pilot program. The visit introduces homeowners to a variety of techniques to make their gardens more planet friendly. Over the years we

have conducted many individual and community visits and tested the feasibility of ecological garden implementations.

In 2005, TGC trained 20 volunteer consultants to conduct the ecological visits. At the end of the intensive training program, about 8 of the consultants continued on to conduct approximately 80 visits, with a special emphasis on stormwater management in the Hoggs Hollow district. In addition to the outreach to homeowners, the program helped nurture the start-up and expansion of ecological gardening businesses.

The Canadian Film Centre

The Canadian Film Centre is situated on 21 acres of the former estate of the famous horse breeder, E.P. Taylor. Last year helped start a butterfly garden and tend a rose garden. This year, working with students from the University of Guelph, a survey was conducted of the property with a view to assessing the feasibility of a long-term restoration plan.

1000 Tree Program

The 1000 tree program was started to educate the public about the state of maturing trees in North Toronto. The goal of the program was to plant 1000 trees in Toronto by the year-end. In fact, in 2005 2334 trees had been planted.

10th Anniversary Celebration and Commemorative Booklet

As a landmark event for our 10th anniversary, we held our first ever fundraising party at the end of November. About 100 people attended this extremely successful event which included lots of food, music, food, a silent auction and celebration with friends. We produced a wonderful commemorative booklet to recount our history and allow our many supporters, members, partners and friends to send us congratulatory messages.

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. The emphasis is on how we can act locally to effect change. **In 2005** we expanded the speaker series to six lectures that were all very well attended and well received:

January 31	Healthy Buildings	Martin Liefhebber of Breath Architects
March 28	The Holistic Garden: Creating Spaces for Health and Healing	Karen York , a certified horticulturist and managing editor of Gardening Life magazine
April 18	Urban Trees: the Life of the City	Andy Kenney , Assistant Professor at the University of Toronto, and Janet McKay , Executive Director, Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests (LEAF)
May 30	What's all the fuss on climate change?	Dr. Danny Harvey of the University of Toronto.
Sept 26	Youth, Environment, and Education	Elise Houghton and Alice Casselman of EEON (Environmental Education Ontario)
Nov 28	Socially responsible investing	Micheal Jantzi Research Associates

Eco Gift Wrapping

For the third year, TGC was invited by Mountain Equipment Coop to ecologically wrap gifts for their clientele. This is a favourite program for both recipients of the wrapping and volunteers. The event was expanded this year to 12 days, and 48 volunteers collectively contributed 292 hours. The event was very successful, raising close to \$5000 and informing many people about TGC's activities thanks to the volunteers who came out to help, many of them new to the organization, and to MEC's excellent support.

Partnerships

Don Valley West One Tonne Challenge

The One Tonne Challenge is the Federal Government's Kyoto commitment to have individual Canadians reduce their carbon dioxide emissions from an average of five to one. With the help of John Godfrey, MP for Don Valley West, an organization was created that received funding from the Federal government to carry out the one tonne challenge in Don Valley West. In 2004, TGC became the fiscal sponsor of Don Valley West. In 2005, DVW shared office space with TGC and partnered on various projects.

Green Community Canada's Step 2 Sustainable Transportation Project

In 2005, TGC supported Green Community Canada's Step 2 Sustainable Transportation Project with shared office space, resources and co-facilitated some youth outreach events.

Additional Partnerships

Fairlawn United Church
Fairlawn Community Centre
Heschel School
TCH- Champlain Place
Downsview Services for Seniors
People and Organizations in North Toronto
Central Eglinton Children's Centre
Toronto Public Health
Rockcliffe Gardens
African Food Basket
Canadian Film Centre
Forest Hill Collegiate
Upper Canada College

Outreach Activities

The Internet

TGC operates two websites: www.ntgc.ca and www.lostrivers.ca. The websites received a total of 113 546 unique visitors on 143 300 visits in 2005.

The Toronto Green Community Newsletter

Our **spring 2005** newsletter was a 10th Anniversary edition and highlighted our programs and achievements over the past ten years. The fall edition was a special issue focusing on youth. We significantly increased the distribution of these newsletters to over 40,000 each and had them delivered door to door to homes across North Toronto.

Summary and Future Plans

2005 was a very significant year for our organization, as we celebrated 10 years of successful programming and looked forward to the next decade. In 2005 we expanded our reach, welcoming 78,570 participants to our events. We held a very popular Speaker's Series, which will continue into 2006. We conducted 81 Green Garden Visits and in the process fostered the launch and growth of multiple ecological gardening businesses. We celebrated our tenth anniversary with a commemorative booklet and our first ever (successful) fundraising event which significantly increased the profile of the organization across Toronto.

In 2005 we received funding from the following organizations;

1. The Ontario Trillium Foundation - core funding (3rd year of 3 year funding)
2. Human Resource Development Canada's (HRDC's) Summer Career Placement program – Hired two students, one to coordinate the Great Garden Adventure Program and the other for the Eglinton Park Heritage Community Garden.
3. Youth Employment Services (YES) – funding for youth placement through HRSDC
4. ON-SITE (HRSDC employment placement program)
5. The Institute for Conservation Leadership – subsidized funding for fundraising training
6. Sustainability Network – funding for a fundraising program
7. People and Organizations in North Toronto (POINT) – The Great Garden Adventure
8. Toronto Public Health
9. City of Toronto and Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) – funding for Green Garden Visit program in Hoggs' Hollow

Looking Forward

During this Anniversary year, the Board revisited our past successes and reviewed next steps for the organization. As part of this review it was decided to move forward with a plan to change the organization's name to the Toronto Green Community. This decision was made to reflect the wide scope of our programs and to improve our ability to provide meaningful, sustainable programs for Toronto. While the name may change, the organization remains committed to its grassroots, engaging approach to environmental action. We will slowly embark on the transition involved in this name change and anticipate some new marketing material and a revised website in the upcoming year.

For 2006 we will concentrate on becoming a truly Toronto wide organization and we will reach out to more sectors within Toronto. The very successful Green Garden Adventure program will be made available in more locations. The garden workshops will grow from 4 workshops in 2005 to 6 or more in 2006, with plans to produce a Train the Trainer ecological workshop manual to

allow other community groups to benefit from our experience and increase the reach of our ecological awareness message. As always, TGC will concentrate on encouraging community participation and awareness of our environment and what we as individuals, working together, can do to facilitate change.

Volunteers

TGC has always relied heavily on volunteers for their passion, vision and dedication to our programs and activities. In 2005, 537 individual volunteers worked with TGC. Volunteers led Lost Rivers walks, maintained the Eglinton Park Heritage Garden, and wrapped gifts at MEC as part of our holiday fundraiser. They performed administrative tasks in the TGC office, manned information booths at events and cleaned up and planted native species at our naturalization sites. Volunteers conducted green garden visits and public outreach in the Doors Closed Campaign, they created and edited material for the TGC Newsletter, and much more.

Staff

Executive Director:

Minaz Asani-Kanji (left on maternity leave Feb 28th, 2006)
and replaced by Cheryl Shour

Summer Positions (through Human Resources Skills and Development):

Garden Coordinator- Christine Oldnall
Great Garden Adventure Coordinator- Caitlin Mahy
Outreach Coordinator- Jovanna Vukovic

6 – 8 month positions through Onsite and YES:

Development Director- Cindy Docteur-White
Green Garden Visit Program Manager- Anita Atkari
Green Garden Visit Advisor- Zora Ignatovic
Office Assistant- Mobin Choudary

2005 Board of Directors

Chair:

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

replaced by Marc Rose February 15, 2006

Vice-Chair:

Harold Smith; B.Arch., MBA

Secretary-Treasurer:

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

replaced by Josh Matlow February 27, 2006

Board Members 2005:

Yvan Champagne

Sarah Climenhaga (stepped down during the year)

Sheila Harrison (stepped down during the year)

Dorothy Herberg

Mary MacNutt (stepped down during the year)

Michele Martin

Josh Matlow

Camillo Ponziani

Elaine Ramsay (stepped down during the year)

Jaye Robinson

Marc Rose

Cheryl Shour

Harold Smith