
2006 Annual Report

**Toronto Green
Community**



The Toronto Green Community (TGC) is an incorporated, non-profit organization working with all sectors 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 (revised in 2006) is: TO IMPROVE TORONTO BY ENGAGING ITS CITIZENS IN COMMUNITY BASED ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVES

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 storm 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

2006 was a very meaningful year for the organization as we addressed key strategic matters including the scope of the organization and governance models:

- Addressed all the logistical aspects of the name change including filing the appropriate papers and finalizing banking changes
- Carried on strategic discussion of the implication of the name change on the way the organization delivers its programming. A summer visioning session was critical in this process and delivery models have been subsequently tested.
- Received charitable status in summer (backdated to January 2006) and created a charitable receipt process.
- Created the position of Development Manager initially staffed by Cindy Docteur-White, to develop a strategic plan for fundraising including managing our charitable status, expanding our membership base, refining our grant writing, and developing a corporate partnership strategy.
- Reviewed accounting systems and working with a Quickbooks expert implemented a "funder-based" management accounting system

- Completed the year by initiating a review of our by-laws, a search for enhanced fundraising software and hired a consultant to develop a new content management system website.

TGC Programs

Greening Toronto's Gardens (GTG)

This program, under project manager Nadia Bellio, continued on with TGC's longstanding competency in green space programming. GTG which includes our Great Garden Adventure children's program, our management of the Eglinton Park Heritage Community Garden and the delivery of workshops was enhanced in some very special ways in 2006.

In keeping with our name change, one key objective of the GTG in 2006 was to reach out to an audience outside of our "North Toronto" core. We achieved this in several notable ways including a partnership with two Spanish speaking community groups, assisted in planting native plants at two remote community gardens, delivered 6 on-site and 4 off-site garden workshops, and developed new partnerships with an ESL program office. In addition, for the first time the Great Garden Adventure was delivered at a new venue at a rooftop garden on Charles St. The success of the GTG provides an important framework for the protocols that can be used for delivery of other TGC programs across the diverse sectors of Toronto.

The Lost River Walks

These ever popular guided hikes along Toronto's buried streams and waterways continued in 2006. The Lost River walks continue to be held in partnership with the Toronto Field Naturalists and other local groups. In 2006, about 29 Lost River walks were held across Toronto, with a total of almost 700 attendees. A new board member, Ron Fletcher is also now serving as board liaison with the Lost Rivers committee.

Speaker Series

This bimonthly program, managed by Board member Harold Smith, continues to offer an excellent opportunity for public education and outreach. The emphasis is on how we can act locally to effect change. In 2006 six speaker evenings were delivered with a total attendance of almost 300 people.

January 30 Eco-Villages: Models for sustainable living

With **Jeff Gold** of **Whole Village**

Attendance: 75

March 27 Bringing Life Back to the Landscape with Wildlife Habitat Gardening

With **Leslie Work** of **the Backyard**

Attendance: 30

April 18 Spending Green - Making your Dollars Count

With **Toby Heaps** and **Karen Kuhn** of **Corporate Knights Magazine**

Attendance: 38

May 29 Go Further Youth Movie Night

Attendance: 30

Sept 25 Green Power Your Home

With **MPP Mike Colle's** office and featuring: **Dan Adirim, Blair Beesley** and **Carolyn Moss**

Attendance: 80

Nov 27 Straw bale and Sustainable Building

With **Chris Magwood** of **Camel's Back Construction**

Attendance: 40

Doors Closed Campaign

For the second year, we partnered with Conservation Council of Canada to go door-to-door to businesses in North Toronto for the Doors Closed campaign.

Fundraising and Income Generating Programs

Funding

In 2006 we received funding from the following organizations;

1. Human Resource Development Canada's (HRDC's) Summer Career Placement program – Hired one summer student, Melanie Lessard to coordinate the Great Garden Adventure Program and the Eglinton Park Heritage Community Garden.
2. Youth Employment Services (YES) – funding for a 6 month intern, Nihar Bhatt, to manage outreach and volunteer coordination.
3. People and Organizations in North Toronto (POINT) – funding for The Great Garden Adventure
4. Eco Action – funding for Greening Toronto's Gardens
5. Toronto Public Health – funding for Greening Toronto's Gardens
6. Toronto Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) – funding for Greening Toronto's Gardens
7. Toronto Trees and Parks Foundation- funding for Greening Toronto's Gardens

Eco Gift Wrapping

For the fourth 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, managed by Rachel Climenhaga was expanded this year to 13 days, and engaged 50 volunteers who collectively contributed 345 hours. The event was very successful, taking in about \$4800 before expenses and informing many people about TGC's activities. Thanks to the volunteers and to MEC's excellent support.

Green Tie Celebration & Fundraising Event

A volunteer committee of both and non-board members led by Erin Klein and Ellen Giles helped coordinate this year's event at the Gladstone Hotel. This event was successful on many different levels including tremendous community exposure, attendance by over 135 people and the best ever fundraising total of just over \$7,000. Katrusia Balan, a co-op student from U of T helped to manage several aspects of the

event. The TGC Green Holiday Guide, edited by Melissa Tkachyk of the board, was an integral part of the fundraising efforts and also contributed to building new corporate partnerships. 1000 copies of the Green Holiday Guide were produced and distributed primarily at the Green Tie Event, an EEON outreach table in December and at the Eco-Gift Wrapping event.

Outreach Activities

The Internet

TGC operates two websites: www.ntgc.ca and www.lostrivers.ca. The websites received a total of 10,170 and 134,653 unique visitors respectively in 2006.

The Toronto Green Community Newsletter

Our first newsletter of 2006 was produced in the summer, edited by Jacquie Briggs on the theme of "Food". We produced a second edition on the theme of "Energy" and its release in September coincided with the launch of our energy initiative which started with a speaker series. Ten thousand copies were produced of each edition and both were at least partially funded by advertising revenue.

Tabling Displays

In 2006, TGC made a special effort to attend events that were more geographically dispersed.

We attended the following community outreach events, many of which involved volunteers:

University of Toronto Job Fair
York Environmental Fair
Don Mills Fair
Canada Blooms
St. Paul's Forum

Fairlawn Neighbourhood Centre
Wellness Auction
Timeraiser
Councillor McConnell's Environment Day
North American Native Plant Society
Plant Sale
Councillor Hall's Environment Day
Councillor Thompson's Environment Day
Councillors Stintz and Walker
Environment Day
St. Gabriel's Church Event
Wychwood Festival
EEON General Meeting

Halloween Compact Fluorescent hand out

'Five parent volunteers and their little goblins helped distribute 90 compact fluorescent lightbulbs on Halloween. Along with the special "treat", recipients in five different neighbourhoods across Toronto were informed about the energy and dollar savings of replacing regular bulbs with CFL's'

Volunteers

TGC has always relied heavily on volunteers for their passion, vision and dedication to our programs and activities. 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. Volunteers participated in public outreach in the Doors Closed Campaign; they created and edited material for the TGC Newsletter, and much more.

We were also a part of the Timeraiser through which we obtained one volunteer and the University of Toronto Environmental Professional Experience Student Volunteer

Placement course through which we also obtained a volunteer who volunteered 200 hours to the organization.

We attracted volunteers to the organization by posting notices on Goodworks, Volunteer Toronto and TRCA Volunteer websites.

Looking Forward

For 2007 we will continue our efforts on becoming a truly Toronto wide organization and we will reach out to more sectors within Toronto. We anticipate renewed funding for our Greening Toronto's Garden (GTG) program and early in 2007 will distribute the beautiful and informative Train the Trainer ecological workshop manual which is in its final stages of development. This manual will allow other community groups to benefit from our experience and increase the reach of our ecological awareness message. Our next phase for this project planned for 2007 is to create even more specialized information such as ESL in the garden and links between culture and food.

Following upon the model of Greening Toronto's Gardens, we will conduct mini needs assessments with new partners to ensure that our program delivery is matched to program need. We are specifically looking to launch 2 or 3 new projects which were initiated in 2006. These include a solar thermal project (led by Board member Dan Adirim), a multi-unit residential waste project (led by Board members Ellen Giles and Yunis Kariuki) and a Lost Rivers guidebook (led by Board member Ron Fletcher). 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.

In addition to our programming efforts, 2007 will see also the launch of our new website at torontogreen.ca and implementation of new fundraising software.

2006 Board of Directors

Executive

Chair:

Marc Rose

Vice-Chair:

Harold Smith; B.Arch., MBA

Secretary-Treasurer:

Josh Matlow

Board Members

Dan Adirim

Ron Fletcher

Ellen Giles

Tawnya Hallman

Erin Klein

Yunis Kariuki

Michele Martin (stepped down August 2006)

Meghan O'Keefe

Jaye Robinson

Melissa Tkachyk