



Toronto  
Green  
Community

2014

# ANNUAL REPORT

***Our Mission*** is to engage Torontonians in environmental initiatives where we live, work and play.

***Our Vision*** is for people to live in sustainable communities with:

- Clean Air and Water
- Access to Local, Organic Food
- Abundant Green Spaces
- Minimal Waste

# ***PROGRAMS***

## **Community Garden & Naturalisation**

Our garden-related programs educate, engage and build communities while enhancing biodiversity and green spaces in the city.

### **Planting Events**

We gratefully acknowledge the participation of the following groups in planting events that help to increase our City's tree canopy:

- RBC
- Friends of Bickford Park
- Salesforce
- Friends of Roxton Road Parks
- Community Canoe

### **Eglinton Park Community Garden**

One year away from the twentieth anniversary of its founding, our community garden continued to be a valuable oasis in the park where our workbees maintained a hub of native and heritage flowers and vegetables. It remains a showcase of the possibilities of gardening and growing food free from chemical fertilizers or pesticides. Food grown in the community stays in the community through donation to the *Anne Johnston Health Station*.

### **Great Garden Adventure**

This past summer, the Great Garden Adventure (GGA) celebrated its tenth anniversary teaching children from diverse communities about ecosystems, practical advice on how to grow their own food and links to broader issues around food security. We believe that lessons provided to children at an early age lead to life-long practices and serve as a means of educating the broader community.

The GGA uses fun outdoor games, eco-crafts and activities to teach children about ecosystems, gardening and composting while increasing their knowledge of and connection to nature. During *The Great Garden Adventure* children spend time together outdoors learning about and interacting with their natural environment and engaging in physical activity. Children plant in a garden, learning to identify plants and their functions, the basics of pollination, the life-cycle of insects, and the food web concept. We engaged our adventurers at the following locations:

- Eglinton Park Community Garden in partnership with People & Organizations in North Toronto
- Ellen Giles Garden in partnership with University of Toronto Student Family Housing, downtown
- Emmett Park Community Garden in partnership with Community Action Resource Centre at Eglinton Flats
- Oriole Community Garden in partnership with Working Women's Centre in Don Valley Village
- Thorncliffe Park in partnership with Thorncliffe Park Women's Committee
- Winchester Square Community Garden in partnership with Central Neighbourhood House in St. Jamestown

## Eco-Gift-Wrapping

As a true holiday tradition, the Eco-Gift Wrapping program provides Torontonians with an environmental friendly way to wrap gifts during the holiday season, reducing waste and providing memorable and traditional gift styles for recipients.

In 2014 we marked our twelfth year of eco- gift wrapping at Mountain Equipment Coop. We also returned to Dufferin Mall for a fourth successful year. We appreciated all the generous donations that we received from approximately 900 satisfied customers and the dedicated volunteers who return year after year to contribute their efforts at the busiest time of the year. Our volunteer staff always feature a healthy contingent of high school students who develop a life-long habit of giving back to their community. All wrapping materials used were either re-purposed or recycled and produced over 1,200 wrapped gifts that were subsequently fully recyclable.

## Lost Rivers

Throughout the year, the Lost Rivers program continued to remind Torontonians of the rich ecological history of the City through heightened awareness of lost river watersheds and efforts to restore the ecosystem that once supported those river watersheds. Taking that conversation to the next level, several walks featured the theme of “Blue-Green” cities integrating efforts by citizens to keep city waters clean and blue.

Holding more than 33 walks for over 1,400 participants, highlights include the Salmon Run Walk on September 28th in Highland Creek co-sponsored by Park People and The Toronto Conservation Authority; and the Homegrown National Park Project’s Park Crawl which ended at Trinity Bellwoods Park featuring a special appearance by TGC honorary patron David Suzuki. We met the continued growing demand from schools for presentations and tailored Lost River Walks. *Poetry Walks* with guest poets Maureen Scott Harris, Maureen Hynes, Anita Lahey, Nick Power and Dilys Leman led to the creation of poems that will become part of the Opening Celebration of the Pan Am Games in July 2015.

Funding from *TD Friends of the Environment Fund* allowed us to collaborate with the David Suzuki Foundation's Homegrown National Park (HGPN), Community Canoe, Friends of Roxton Road Parks (FORRP), Friends of Bickford Park, the North American Native Plant Society, Toronto Laneway Tours, and others to create a vibrant green corridor along the former path of Garrison Creek. We supported five Community Canoe plantings with more than 300 butterfly plants, created a laneway butterfly garden, held a laneway greening workshop, gave a presentation to the Harbord Village Residents Association, held two lost river walking tours, planted over 75 trees in three parks, and created a new Lost Rivers Thirsty City Guide with a downloadable pdf and interactive map with audio. The blue-green city theme of the field guide emerged from community discussions and walks.

# ***CORPORATE & COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT***

## **Corporate Engagement**

We continued to engage employee groups in 2014, not only encouraging volunteerism through workplaces but greener living in all aspects of life. With the participation of two groups we planted 95 trees and shrubs and over 500 butterfly plants. We sincerely appreciate the support received by these companies who reported deep satisfaction with their volunteer experience.

## **Community Engagement**

Throughout the year, TGC information booths could be spotted at fairs and festivals including the Live Green Toronto Festival and the Hot and Spicy Food Festival. We continued our long standing collaboration with Eglinton Square and were a key stakeholder contributor in the Midtown in Focus initiative launched by City Councillors Josh Matlow, Karen Stintz and Jaye Robinson which will form the basis for future prosperity in Eglinton Park and green spaces throughout the North Toronto community. We also welcomed new partnerships in 2014 with the Centre for Community Mapping, the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto/First Story, the Toronto Community Garden Network and University of Toronto Libraries.

## **Movie in the Park**

On June 19<sup>th</sup>, TGC played host to the first ever outdoor screening of a film at Eglinton Park. Appropriately billed as the “Movie in the Park”, the event capped Councillor Karen Stintz’ Environment Day by engaging residents with fresh air and popcorn seated steps away from our garden. Community members enjoyed viewing the documentary film *Growing Cities* and learned about urban farming and the power it has to revitalize our cities and change the way we eat.

# **FUNDRAISING**

## Laugh For the Environment Annual Comedy Fundraising Event

For a fourth year we held a successful fundraiser at Second City on November 8<sup>th</sup>. As has been the tradition at our Laugh for the Environment event, it was *BullFrog* Powered by 100% green electricity and featured the very best of the Second City alumni who volunteered their time and talent in delivering a very memorable Improv show. Our fundraising efforts were augmented by our popular silent auction. We appreciate the wide range of corporate and personal support that we received through donations of items for our silent auction.

## Scotiabank Charity Challenge – Toronto Waterfront Marathon

On October 19<sup>th</sup>, TGC joined hundreds of charities in competing in the Toronto Waterfront Marathon. Our team of runners (and walkers) were supported by friends, family and our supporters in raising funds to deliver our programs.

## Government & Corporate Support

- Human Resource Skills Development Canada Summer Jobs
- City of Toronto – Investing in Neighbourhoods
- Canada Direct Energy
- Minto Park/Minto Communities
- TD Friends of the Environment

## Individual Support

A special thanks to the generous and ongoing support of all individuals who made donations to TGC online, through various programs, workshops, and events.

***We gratefully acknowledge the generous support  
of everyone mentioned above!***

# *Financials at a Glance*

<b>Revenue</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2013</b>
Grant Revenue	14,670.00	86,515.00
Donation Income	7,501.00	7,725.00
Program Revenue	19,502.00	25,662.00
In-Kind Donation (office equipment)	-	-
Interest and Other Income	1,611.00	1,439.00
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	43,284.00	121,342.00
<b>Expenses</b>		
Salaries and Contracts	17,847.00	90,408.00
General and Administration	3,171.00	19,381.00
Program Expenses	11,092.00	5,025.00
Professional Fees	1,871.00	2,000.00
Insurance	1,593.00	545.00
Advertising and Promotion	970.00	439.00
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	36,543.00	117,797.00
Excess (Deficiency) of Revenue Over Expenses	6,741.00	3,545.00
Fund Balance (Beginning of the Year)	32,940.00	29,395.00
Fund Balance (End of the Year)	39,681.00	32,940.00

# Our Team

Much of what we accomplish is at least in part thanks to the support of dedicated board members, interns and volunteers. TGC attracts many gifted and passionate individuals who help us meet our objectives.

## 2014 Board of Directors

- John Ballantine, Chair
- Mercedes Byers, Vice Chair
- Sandra Hill, Corporate Secretary
- Andrea Coyne, Treasurer
- Yossi Cadan
- Abe Dyck
- Deron Fung
- Stephanie LeNguyen
- Ray Nakano
- Imran Noorani
- Raj Sundar
- Ahrun Thiagarajah
- Helen Mills (Ex-Officio)
- Paula Messina (Ex-Officio)

Thanks to Alina Racoviceanu who was unable to complete her term with TGC.

TGC recruits board members through Maytree Foundation's *Diverse City on Board* and Altruvest's *BoardMatch*.

The Board would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution made by our **Community Garden Team** members:

- Phyllis Miller
- Vinyse Barber
- Derek Barber
- Marc Willoughby
- Colette Slone
- Leandro Koscianski,

*as well as* our **Great Garden Adventure Team**:

- Nolan Scharper, Program Coordinator
- Ketan Chaudhary
- Gabriela Goldsmith
- Crystal Fung.

We would also like to acknowledge the support provided by Chris Govern of Management Advisory Services, Rhonda Teitel-Payne, and David Street of Lerner's LLP.

The Board extends a special thank you to the **Working Women Community Centre** for providing us with a home for the past year.



## Lost Rivers Team

- Helen Mills
- John Wilson
- Richard Anderson
- Ian Wheal
- Georgia Ydreos
- Madeleine McDowell
- Wai Yee Chou
- Rodney Hoinkes
- Valentine Makhouleen
- Marguerite des Trois Maisons
- Paula Messina
- Ray Nakano
- Abe Dyck

## Volunteers

TGC relies on the commitment and skill of many volunteers without whom the organization would not thrive. Our volunteers play key roles in many areas including: Lost Rivers, our Community Garden, Eco-Gift Wrapping, graphic design, website maintenance, research, writing, editing, fundraising, event planning, outreach, administration, and much more. A special thank you to Volunteer Toronto for their support and their key role in the Volunteer Sector. We sincerely appreciate the dedication of so many individuals who share our vision of a sustainable Toronto.

***We gratefully acknowledge the dedication and generous contribution of time, energy and passion made by everyone mentioned above!***

**Toronto Green Community**

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