



Toronto
Green
Community

2015

ANNUAL REPORT

Our Mission: To inspire, facilitate and support diverse communities in developing an environmentally sustainable city through education, engagement and joint neighbourhood initiatives.

Our Vision: Engaged and connected communities thriving in a sustainable Toronto.

PROGRAMS

TGC initiatives educate, engage and build communities while enhancing biodiversity and green spaces in the city.

Introducing Rivers Rising...

In 2015, TGC launched a new program funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation and Lush Charity Pot in partnership with the Native Canadian Centre's First Story program and the Toronto Community Garden Network.

Rivers Rising explores Lost River Watershed communities to capture and share stories about:

- Lost rivers and urban ecology
- Indigenous cultures (past and present)
- Newcomer and immigrant heritage

...and to discuss opportunities for blue green infrastructure projects and community-based eco-tourism social enterprise initiatives. The launch event attracted 149 people!

As part of the first phase of Rivers Rising, the project team reached out to community members and groups of Year 1 project neighbourhoods: Rockcliffe-Smythe/Mt Dennis and Yonge & Eglinton. We recruited 24 Ambassadors from the newcomer and Indigenous communities who, over the course of the following 8 months, received hands-on training and shared knowledge during weekly workshops led by experts and peers to prepare them for leading tours for the public.

As 2015 drew to a close, the project reached new heights with the 'Winter Solstice' themed walk on December 20 which was attended by nearly 150 people! It was co-organized and led by Rivers Rising Ambassadors, members of the project's collaborative partners and local community members. A special acknowledgement to Ed Sackaney, Wisdom and Knowledge Keeper, and Catherine Tamaro, of the Wyandot of Anderdon Nation.

Lost Rivers

Since 1995 over 25,000 people have participated in a Lost River Walk. Throughout the years, Lost Rivers continues 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.

In 2015, 49 Lost River walk leaders led 21 Lost River walks with a total attendance of 1,759. The annual Salmon Run held in partnership with the TRCA and Park People in October hosted 1,100 attendees but only sporadic salmon sightings unfortunately! The Lost Rivers team also provided workshops and presentations to 6 groups reaching hundreds of people.

The Lost Rivers website, currently under revision, contains maps of rivers and sewers in the Don and Toronto Bay Watersheds, with more research on the wider city continuing. This effort will be supported thanks to our new role as a community partner in the Canadian Historical GIS Project funded by SSHRC.

Eglinton Park Community Garden & Naturalisation Site

2015 marked the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Eglinton Park Heritage Community Garden (EPHCG) which flourished once again, hosting nearly 20 workbees from mid-May to early October with 30 volunteers devoting more than 320 hours to soil preparation, planting, watering all days of the week, weeding, harvesting, composting and general maintenance. The well-established vermicomposting operation also yielded close to one cubic metre of high quality compost. There was also a new addition to the garden in the form of a planter of native species generously donated by RBC as part of its Blue Water Day Event activities in June. The community garden remains a showcase of the possibilities of gardening and growing food free from chemical fertilizers or pesticides while supporting heritage and native varieties and creating a welcoming gathering space for the community. A very dedicated team of volunteers ensures that EPHCG continues to be a valuable community resource that provides an oasis to pollinators, a relaxing haven for local residents, a welcoming space for ESL learners, and plenty of opportunities for education and engagement.

Great Garden Adventure

The Great Garden Adventure (GGA) continues to be a very popular program that we are able to offer thanks to the support of many community partners. Every summer we build a creative team of volunteers and students funded through ESDC Canada Summer Jobs who apply their knowledge and acquire many new skills while spending their summer outdoors. The program provides a wonderful opportunity for children from diverse communities to learn about ecosystems and to enrich the connection to nature that children intrinsically feel. Through the simple act of seeing and caring for the growth of plants, children are able to make a link between the origins of the food they see on their table and the role played by elements like sunshine, water, soil, and pollinators in its survival. Lessons provided to children at an early age can lead to life-long appreciation and practices that may also have a ripple effect in the wider community.

In 2015, we engaged our little adventurers at the following locations:

- Eglinton Park Community Garden in partnership with POINT
- Ellen Giles Garden in partnership with University of Toronto Student Family Housing
- Emmett Park Garden in partnership with Community Action Resource Centre
- Oriole Community Garden in partnership with Working Women's Centre
- Thorncliffe Park in partnership with Thorncliffe Park Women's Committee
- Winchester Square Community Garden in partnership with Central Neighbourhood House in St. Jamestown

OUTREACH

Corporate Engagement

TGC endorses workplace group volunteerism to foster a connection to nature and greener living, while stimulating team-building. We provide opportunities for employee groups to plant trees, remove invasive species and lend a hand in the community garden. In 2015, we hosted a group consisting of approximately 30 employees from Richter LLP and they succeeded in planting 80 trees! We greatly appreciate the opportunity to work with participating companies and are proud that all the groups we have hosted report that we have exceeded their expectations in creating a memorable and worthwhile volunteer experience.

Community Engagement

Partnerships

TGC's achievements would not be possible without the collaborative support of our community partners: Toronto Community Garden Network, First Story & the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, Community Story Collective, Toronto Field Naturalists, Evergreen, Toronto & Region Conservation Authority, Humber Heritage, Thorncliffe Park Women's Committee, Highland Creek Community Stewardship Program, Park People, East Toronto Storefront, David Suzuki Homegrown National Park, Community Canoe, Vanishing Point, Canadian Historic GIS Project, Ted Rogers School of Hospitality and Tourism Management/Ryerson University, Eglinton Park Residents Association, Rockcliffe-Smythe Community Association, Mount Dennis Community Association, Anne Johnston Health Station, Apple Tree Farmers Markets, Woodgreen, People and Organizations in North Toronto (POINT), Central Neighbourhood House, Dallington Pollinators Community Garden, Naadmaagit Ki Group, York Hispanic Centre, Centre for Community Mapping, Dodem Kanonhsa, DreBuMedia, Parkdale Park Friends, Parkdale Community Information Centre.

Festivals and Events

TGC raised awareness through an information booth at the Urban Watershed Forum (Evergreen Brickworks), Park Crawl (David Suzuki Foundation's Home Grown National Park), YIMBY Festival, and Culture & Live Arts in Parks Event! CLAP! (Parkdale).

FUNDRAISING

“Laugh for the Environment” Comedy Fundraiser

Always a crowd-pleaser, the ever-talented Second City alumni volunteered their time and talent in delivering a very memorable improvisational comedy show at Second City once again. As has been the tradition at our Laugh for the Environment events, it was BullFrog Powered by 100% green electricity. A wide range of corporate and individual support for our popular silent auction augmented our fundraising efforts making the entire event a great success!

Eco-Gift-Wrapping

Maintaining what has become a holiday tradition, TGC provided shoppers with an attractive, creative and eco-friendly alternative to gift-wrapping. In addition to returning to Mountain Equipment Coop for the thirteenth year, we also made our first appearance at HOLT RENREW's Bloor and Yorkville locations. Furthermore, we provided a hands-on "how-to" eco-gift wrapping session on-site for LUSH employees who impressed with their creative talents!

We greatly appreciate the continued support we receive from satisfied customers and the dedicated volunteers who return year after year to contribute their efforts at one of the busiest times of the year. Our volunteer staff always features a healthy contingent of high school students who develop a life-long habit of giving back to their community.

At a time of year that delights in consumerism and excesses, TGC makes a positive environmental statement and impact by eliminating waste and reducing deforestation.

Government & Corporate Support

- Ontario Trillium Foundation
- LUSH Charity Pot
- Human Resource Skills Development, Canada Summer Jobs

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

Revenue	2015	2014
Grant Revenue	64,475.00	14,670.00
Donation Income	7,899.00	7,501.00
Program Revenue	18,334.00	19,502.00
Interest and Other Income	-	1,611.00
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	90,708.00	43,284.00

Expenses

Salaries and Contracts	44,420.00	17,847.00
General and Administration	8,766.00	3,171.00
Program Expenses	20,376.00	11,092.00
Professional Fees	1,871.00	1,871.00
Insurance	1,598.00	1,593.00
Advertising and Promotion	38.00	970.00
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	6,741.00	36,543.00

Excess (Deficiency) of Revenue Over Expenses	13,640.00	6,741.00
Fund Balance (Beginning of the Year)	39,681.00	32,940.00
Fund Balance (End of the Year)	53,321.00	39,681.00

Our Team

Much of what we accomplish is in great part thanks to the many gifted and energetic volunteers without whom the organization would not thrive. We sincerely appreciate the dedication of so many individuals who share our vision of a sustainable Toronto.

2015 Board of Directors

- Mercedes Byers, Chair
- Sandra Hill, Vice Chair
- Ray Nakano, Corporate Secretary
- Imran Noorani, Treasurer
- Helen Mills (Ex-Officio)
- Angela Wallace
- Xandra Quak
- Samira Drapeau
- Angela Sacco
- Paula Messina (Ex-Officio)

The Board would like to acknowledge the invaluable contribution made by the members of our:

Lost Rivers Team:

- Helen Mills
- John Wilson
- Richard Anderson
- Ian Wheal
- Madeleine McDowell
- Wai Yee Chou
- Lacey Williams (in Vancouver)

Community Garden Team:

- Phyllis Miller
- Vinyse Barber
- Derek Barber
- Marc Willoughby
- Colette Slone

Great Garden Adventure Team:

- Gabriela Goldsmith
- Nolan Scharper

Rivers Rising Team:

- Ushnish Sengupta
- Rhonda Teitel-Payne
- Helen Mills
- Paula Messina
- Special Mention:*
 - Brian Maclean

We would also like to extend a special thank you to
Working Women Community Centre
for providing us with an in-kind regular meeting space throughout the year.

Toronto Green Community

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