

Rosseau Community Garden Comes to Life

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Photos by Linda Sellers



Rosseau Community Garden



Linda Sellers

2020 did not stop the Rosseau Horticultural Society (RHS) from bringing their dreams to life despite new challenges and setbacks (e.g., no traditional meetings or fundraising). The RHS was more determined than ever to share their purpose: to encourage and promote gardening and landscaping, to contribute to civic beauty, the preservation of the environment and the conservation of wild plants and animal life.

The most notable dream realized by the RHS this year was finishing the community garden that had been started in 2019. It was the brainchild of a RHS member and home veggie gardener and an enthusiastic group of RHS members ran with it. The path to completion was paved with the hard work, good nature and tenacity of volunteers.

We knew that if we were going to embark on such a project, it needed to be done well. To help understand what that meant, the RHS reached out to their neighbours at the Bracebridge Horticultural Society who had been down a similar path before and were very helpful in sharing their insights and suggestions for the project.

A plan was developed that called for building four raised garden beds (essential for the rocky terrain), a fence to keep the critters out (e.g., deer, bear), a gazebo for shade, a shed for storage and picnic tables for working and relaxing. A suitable spot was selected and readily approved by Seguin Township. The space was just a short walk away from other activities in the Village and adjacent to the RHS healing garden at the Rosseau Nursing Station.

A promotional live music event was held outdoors in the summer of 2019 (when we could still get together and sing and dance with reckless abandon). It was a huge success and generated real enthusiasm for the

project. The event's proceeds, together with generous donations from many sources, contributed greatly to covering the costs of building the community garden and other RHS initiatives.

Excitement for the project continued to grow as boxes for the raised beds were built on site by a team of volunteers, then filled with good soil and mulch at the end of the growing season in 2019. Gardeners signed up over last winter for available plots, needing only to become members of the RHS at a nominal cost to qualify. As the plots became useable in the Spring and gardeners began to 'get at it', everyone enjoyed seeing the different plantings, growing techniques and fun decorations selected.

As the community garden came to life, so did the landscaping of the surrounding area. Apple trees were added on a path leading to the adjacent healing garden. Bird houses, garden gnomes and other garden flair appeared. Milkweed, Bee Balm and Echinacea clumps also popped up as the area was transformed. Just wait until those butterflies appear next year!

With so many people pursuing outdoor activities this year, touring the Village of Rosseau on foot or simply enjoying a daily walk included visiting the community garden as a focal point for many.

The positive impact of the RHS was also evident elsewhere in Rosseau as it continued with its annual beautification project. Garden boxes were planted throughout the Village in the spring and maintained during the summer and into the fall, providing some wonderful floral displays.

Great support for these projects was provided by RHS members, community volunteers and Seguin Township staff. We are all truly thankful to have this group contributing to enhancing our community.