

MARCH 2020

# NEIGHBOURS

## *of Mississauga Road*

An exclusive magazine serving the communities of Mississauga Road, Sherwood Forrest, Erindale At UTM, Sawmill Valley and Indian Road

MISSISSAUGA  
MASTER GARDENERS

[www.mississaugamastergardeners.ca](http://www.mississaugamastergardeners.ca)



Connecting neighbourhoods to nature.

[www.bloomingboulevards.org](http://www.bloomingboulevards.org)

*Seedy  
Saturday:*

An Annual Green Community  
Tradition with a Positive  
Environmental Impact

Cover photo by Ivy Cahigas,  
Fable Studios



Best Version Media



## Seedy Saturday



From left, Jeanne McRight (from Blooming Boulevards), and members of the Seedy Saturday planning team Shirley Daniels (from Mississauga Master Gardeners) and Carole Berry

Photo by Ivy Cahigas, Fable Studios

# An Annual Green Community Tradition with a Positive Environmental Impact

By Annette Torchia

Saving the planet can begin in your own backyard! And a great place to start is by visiting the 18th annual Seedy Saturday event, Saturday, April 4, 9 a.m.- 3:30 p.m. at the Unitarian Congregation of Mississauga's (UCM) Great Hall, 84 South Service Rd.

Seedy Saturdays are coordinated through Seeds of Diversity and take place across Canada to promote heritage seed collection and sharing. Eighteen years ago, Susan Berry and her mom, Carole Berry, started Mississauga's Seedy Saturday tradition at UCM. Susan's sister, Andrea Berry had a heritage seed business, so the love of gardening seems to run in the family. "There's quite a lot of interest in it now because of biodiversity and climate change,"

says Susan. "Seedy Saturday has been growing and changing over the years and is a recognized and accessible community event that families and people of all ages, including novice and advanced gardeners can enjoy."

Until recently, I never heard of Seedy Saturday, so I was impressed when I learned of all this free, educational and fun filled event has to offer people and our community. To start, there will be more than 1,000 different seeds available at the event, with numerous vendors and organizations coming stocked with full catalogues of 100 to 200 seeds – everything from vegetable seeds and herbs to perennials.

The event will also offer children's program hosted by EcoSource, an organization that promotes environmental education. EcoSource

workshops run all day, and parents can drop their children off for a day program while they go explore the event grounds. It's never too early to start educating the next generation about the importance of the environment and what they can do to make a difference – plus, it's a nice break from screen-time.

Seedy Saturday will also host other organizations who are working in Mississauga on issues related to climate change and water retention. For example, residents can learn how to assist with managing flood water and carbon capture initiatives. The grounds at UCM have numerous gardens developed with Credit Valley Conservation, and the conservation authority will lead a workshop on using native plants to benefit the environment.

One solution is called a bio retention



The Great Hall at UCM

Photo by Ivy Cahigas, Fable Studios

swale, which allows run-off from the parking lot to flow down into a specially designed ditch filled with native plants and trees. Not only is the swale a beautiful break to the parking lot, it has a very positive environmental impact: “When the property was re-developed

in 2000, it was noted that some of the neighbouring homes east of the land near the Etobicoke Creek were flooding,” Susan tells us. “Since implementing the bio retention swale, the flooding has been reduced.” An added benefit is that the plants clean the



water before it makes it way to Lake Ontario.

“Blooming Boulevards” is another great program to check out at Seedy Saturday. Knowledgeable and enthusiastic gardeners can teach you how to design your very own bird or butterfly garden on your boulevard, free of charge! As the boulevard is city property, planting is not generally allowed without permission from the city. However, the City of Mississauga is waiving the permit fee for anyone who works with Blooming Boulevards to install a bird and butterfly garden to help promote biodiversity and manage water run-off. “Grass is semi-permeable and causes run-off,” Susan explains. “But if you plant tall grasses and tall flowers, those plants use up so much of the water that their roots will travel down into the soil, pulling up lots of nourishment and creating places for the water to go.” It’s an incredibly smart method of preventing flooding, and also adds beauty to the surrounding landscape. Another great benefit of bird and butterfly gardens is that you don’t need to mow the grass, which reduces energy and carbon emissions. Furthermore, the plants themselves actually capture carbon and reduce greenhouse gases. It’s a win-win!

Gardeners will be thrilled to discover that a variety of 45-minute workshops run throughout the day, including new and exciting ways to compost, best practice gardening tips and planting techniques. Representatives from the City of Mississauga will also be present, as will the event co-sponsors, the Mississauga Master Gardeners, who will expertly answer your gardening questions.

Need garden supplies? They’ll be vendors for that too! And don’t forget to stop by Cathy’s Crawling Composters and pick up some worms. Red wigglers are a type of worm that you place into your compost; these useful little creatures eat food waste and turn it into fertilizer for your garden. I’m sure the kids will love getting their hands dirty at this station! In addition to all of these fantastic attractions, visitors can also learn how to set up a bee garden, the basics of vegetable gardening and how to grow your own native plants from seed. There will also be coffee and food available throughout the day at the Cozy Café.

With the growing concerns around climate change, even small acts can contribute to significant outcomes. “Climate change and food security are very relatable and relevant right now,” Susan points out. “And everyone contributes to greenhouse gas emissions, so why not consider what we can do to minimize our own footprint? By doing things like gardening in our backyard, preserving seeds, planting a boulevard and connecting with the outdoors, we can make a positive difference towards a better environment and community.”

If you’re an expert gardener or just a beginner, or if you’re just enthusiastic about getting outside, there is much to do and learn at Seedy Saturday, and I would encourage anyone with an interest in biodiversity and the environment to check out this engaging and informative annual event.

Hope to “seed” you and your green thumb there! 🌱



Bioswale at UCM

Photo submitted by Susan and Carole Berry



Butterfly Garden at UCM

Photo submitted by Susan and Carole Berry



Attracting bees to your garden is a great way to help the environment

Photo courtesy of Credit Valley Conservation

Organizers encourage residents to refer to the website ([www.seedysaturdaymississauga.ca](http://www.seedysaturdaymississauga.ca)) and the event Facebook page closer to the event date for an up-to-date program schedule. For any questions about Seedy Saturday, please contact [seedysaturdaymississauga@gmail.com](mailto:seedysaturdaymississauga@gmail.com).

Do you know a neighbour who has a story to share? Nominate your neighbour to be featured in one of our upcoming issues! Contact us at [atorchia@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:atorchia@bestversionmedia.com)