

# A little knitting, a lot of fun

Classes at Milton Mall's Lewiscraft store

STORY AND PHOTO BY ANN KORNUA

The staff at Lewiscraft in the Milton Mall put aside regular working hours to hold afternoon craft classes for both beginners and more experienced crafters. The Milton Mall store is small and can give a personal touch to activities such as knitting classes and painting lessons.

"One of the programs we have is knitting for beginners. People can just drop in if they are having problems with their patterns," Yvonne Cerhit, Milton Lewiscraft assistant manager said. "As an experienced knitter I know that the main thing is to get people to read and to understand a pattern. Most of the time people get the material and the pattern, go home, get confused, and don't have anyone to answer their questions. That is what we are here for, helping people to get what they need."

In the fall, Lewiscraft takes part in a proactive community program called Knit for Kids with the Salvation Army. "People buy the wool and knit hats, mitts and scarves and little sweaters and then come back with the items to donate them. We pass these donations on to the Salvation Army," Yvonne explained. "It's good for the community. When they bring them back, we reimburse them for the wool they bought." The hats and mitts go to help families and individuals in need of warm clothing during the cold

Canadian winter months. Lewiscraft is actively getting their customers and also residents in Allendale to donate their skills and time.

The classes at Lewiscraft provide a location for people to experiment with creative ideas "Everyone socializes and has a comment interest with the craft. The main thing is to have people come into a relaxed atmosphere and to enjoy what they are doing. Knitting classes take place every Thursday from 1:30 to 3pm," Yvonne said.

As well as knitting classes, manager Krista Ferrier-Meter teaches painting classes. "She is a very accomplished painter. The classes take place on Wednesdays. She talks to them about colour and stroke work. I took lessons with her 10 years ago and she is an excellent teacher," said Yvonne. "We are just trying to get everyone involved. We want to make this a very friendly store where anyone can ask us questions and get the answers they need." If you are an experienced knitter who is looking for a social outlet or just starting out and needing advice or looking to start new and exciting craft projects, give the craft classes at Lewiscraft a try. For more information, stop by the Milton Mall Lewiscraft and inquire to any staff member on how you can get in on the fun or just drop by the knitting classes on Thursday's at 1:30.



The knitting club at Lewiscraft meets every Thursday at 1:30 offering help to beginners and experienced knitters. From left are members Amanda Kay, Assistant Manager Yvonne Cerhit, knitter Brent Wolters and manager Krista Ferrier-Meyer.

## Giving You the Dirt

BY SEAN JAMES, N.P.D.,  
PRESIDENT OF FERN RIDGE LANDSCAPING

### Drought tolerance...

Our little mini drought in April got me to thinking. It seems that we're often suffering from a lack of water when we usually expect a plentitude. Perhaps, since soon they're going to be charging us what water actually costs, we should be compiling lists of drought tolerant plants.

This month, we're going to focus mostly on plants for shade. We don't think of it but drought tolerance in the shade is more important than for the sun since any rain often does not make it through the tree's canopy. Interestingly enough, most of the native forest plants are very drought tolerant or 'Xerophytic'.

An excellent shrub for shade is Flowering Raspberry, (Rubus odoratus) which has huge, bright green, maple-shaped leaves, palest yellow fall colour and large magenta flowers in June. One would think that with such large leaves it would need lots of water but it's just not true. While quite plain, Five-leafed Aralia, (Acanthopanax spinosissima) is also good for deep, dry shade.

Believe it or not, Hosta are excellent drought tolerant specimens. The more blue the leaf is, the more tolerance it exhibits. If you want to add texture to the garden, (Don't make me remind you about the importance of texture!), Hosta are an excellent bet. The variegated cultivars such as 'Great Expectations' and 'Paul's Glory' will brighten a shady area nicely.

A good contrast to Hosta is the perennial Bigroot Geranium, (Geranium macrorrhizum) which has excellent drought tolerance and loves - doesn't need but loves - shade. It is one of the few plants that I would plant under a spruce. Almost evergreen leaves turn reddish-orange in November and grow about six inches high. Flowers are in June and sometimes again, sporadically, in the fall and range from

almost white through clear pink to bright magenta. If you don't want it taking over the world, (it does tend toward Napoleonic invasiveness), there is a variegated cultivar which some specialty nurseries stock.

Now don't pre-judge the next choice. In fact, let's just call it by its botanical name, Solidago flexicaulis. This plant is wonderful since it blooms in the early fall, has buttons of bright yellow flowers, suffers from few pests or diseases, spreads slowly and is extremely drought and shade tolerant. It doesn't even need good soil. With all those things going for it, can you fault it for being a Goldenrod? Oops. The cat's out of the bag. Well...Goldenrod does NOT cause allergies - it just blooms with Ragweed which does, and how! If it makes you feel any better, Zigzag Goldenrod doesn't look like the standard Goldenrod. Again, there's a nice variegated cultivar available. Lost Horizons in Acton stocks it now and again.

Solomon's Seal is another native which has super form and tolerates a wide range of conditions. Be patient with it since it wants to get happy before establishing. Mulching with rich compost helps with moisture levels in shade plantings and will also help the trees. Solomon's Seal, (Polygonatum), gets about two feet high with elegant, arching stems.

It's tough to find but a good ground-cover is Canada Wild Ginger which has felty, heart-shaped leaves. Again, it's slow to establish but it's worth it. Sometimes the Country Squires Garden in Campbellville has this available. An excellent contrast is the grass-like Silver Sedge, Carex platyphylla which grows to about eight inches high and is completely evergreen.

Well that oughta keep you hopping. Go get 'em.

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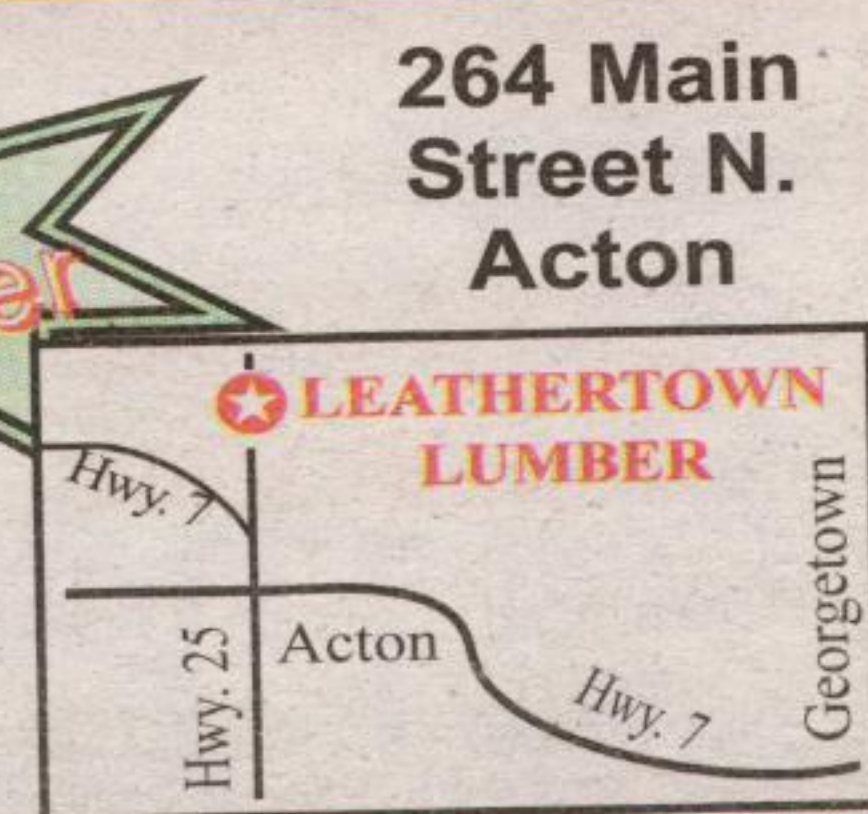
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