

PE 16-1.1

**In less than three years, the TBG has achieved a lot!**  
**103 ways that the Toronto Botanical Garden has made dramatic progress**

**More green ... and other colours!**

1. Creation of the Woodland Walk and Bird Habitat. Until a few years ago, the southwest corner of Lawrence and Leslie was a weed-choked wilderness. Now, at more than 23,000 square feet, it is TBG's largest garden and a valuable migratory habitat.
2. Establishment of the Pollinator Garden and installation of three beehives
3. Refurbishment of the Water Channel, TBG's best-loved "hardscape" feature
4. Installation of the playful, natural-materials sculpture 'Stooks and Punes' by superstar landscape designer W. Gary Smith on the site of the proposed new Children's Garden
5. Cooperation and design services for the new City parking lot plantings
6. Securing of grant funding by TBG for irrigation of the parking lot plantings
7. Enhancement of the building interior with live plants in public areas
8. Greatly improved design and maintenance of all our gardens
9. Addition of the North Flower Bed thanks to a generous donation from the Milne House Garden Club
10. Extension of irrigation from the Demonstration Courtyard to the North Flower Bed
11. New accessible, raised beds and new irrigation in the Kitchen Garden

**Education**

12. Establishment and expansion of a dedicated Education Department
13. Expansion and enrichment of programs for children
14. More offerings for high-needs children from priority neighbourhoods
15. Expanded family outreach programming at Allan Gardens Conservatory downtown
16. Expansion and enhancement of programs for adults
17. Establishment of joint Certificate program in Floral Design, Garden Design and Landscape Design with post-secondary institutions
18. Creation and training of a staff team to care for TBG's beehives, and the establishment of urban beekeeping courses

19. Creation of a master plan for a future Children's Garden designed by W. Gary Smith
20. Permission from the Toronto Regional Conservation Authority to incorporate adjacent tableland into the proposed Children's Garden

### **Community Outreach**

21. TBG is a far more vibrant and relevant community-first organization than it was several years ago, having purposely initiated programs to connect with various multicultural communities
22. The diversity of visitors to the gardens and participants in courses and programs has increased visibly and dramatically
23. Creation of a more welcoming environment for all visitors, with better internal and external signage and a "what's on" video monitor in the lobby
24. LivingSocial 'lunch and tour' offer that has drawn over 700 new visitors to TBG this fall, generated new memberships, record shop sales, and the identification of an innovative tool to let Torontonians know about all TBG provides our community.
25. Establishment of a full-time Librarian position
26. Creation of new programming in the library, including 'Gardening on the Web,' seminars, a Summer Reading Club for kids, and the HortiCULTURE Salon Series of intimate discussions on the intersections of culture and horticulture
27. Migration of the obsolete library catalogue to a new on-line platform at no cost to TBG
28. Addition of new electronic Library resources, including the JSTOR science database at no cost to TBG
29. Refurbishment of the TBG Weston Family Library, including new soft furniture and a 'laptop bar' for research
30. New \$10 Booklovers Membership for horticultural society members, the general public and to students in horticultural programs across the GTA
31. Opening of a revitalized Art Gallery in the Weston Family Library, featuring renowned botanical artists each quarter and an annual show of work by TBG students
32. Offers to horticultural societies to house their print resources in the Weston Family Library, to provide correct care for collections and support the work of these important groups.

## Community Service

33. Participation in important community-action and community education initiatives such as Trees for Life, Canada's Garden Route and the Urban Tree Conference
34. New partnerships and cooperation with peer institutions and not-for-profits from across the horticultural, cultural, artistic and environmental spectrum
35. Improved signage for accessing the teaching garden
36. Growing use of informational QR codes
37. Establishment of a weekly organic farmers' market from May through October

## Improved Community Facilities

38. General building refurbishment, including painting, stripping/staining, new blinds, new stage curtains in the Floral Hall
39. Installation of a new audio-video system in the Floral Hall
40. Complete renovation of the Garden Hall
41. Refurbishment of the Garden Café, including new lighting
42. Expansion of shop space; upgrades in stock and displays
43. Expansion of shop hours
44. Additional event services available for facility-rental clients
45. Additional and more diverse preferred suppliers available for rental clients

## Operations: Revitalized, Streamlined

46. Improved staff morale, effective teamwork and mutual support
47. Biweekly all-staff meetings, chaired by staff members on a rotating basis, to foster information-sharing and open communications among all departments
48. A much stronger and more active working relationship between staff and the TBG Board of Trustees
49. Re-mapped budget template for greater clarity and management information
50. Collaborative budgeting process to ensure departmental input and buy-in
51. Process/policy reviews to enhance efficiency and internal communication
52. Upgrades to computer systems and other operating systems
53. Implementation of Raiser's Edge fundraising software

54. Utilization of free software to replace programs formerly used on subscription
55. Competitive quotes process expanded, generating significant savings on printing, IT services, insurance, office supplies
56. Installation of fencing to secure stored plants from theft
57. Installation of an alarm system at lower cost than continuing night security staff
58. Outsourced cleaning service, allowing reduced maintenance staff to concentrate on servicing rental spaces
59. Redesigned quarterly Program Guide: new look, less paper, lower printing cost
60. More efficient billing for rental-services fees
61. Improved tracking of purchase orders and invoices
62. Revision of rental and course refund policies to align with peer practices
63. Targeted expansion of rental clientele, including additional government ministries
64. Employment of a professional shop manager, enabling marked growth of profitability
65. Expanded paid-tour offerings

### **More Active Volunteerism**

66. Improved communication with volunteers
67. Improved screening, better activity matching with individual preferences and talents
68. More accurate tracking of volunteer hours
69. New channels for volunteer recruitment
70. Participation in corporate volunteer-opportunity fairs
71. Almost 100 new volunteers within the past year
72. Revision of role descriptions and development of a thorough volunteer manual
73. Improvements to the Keepers of the Garden training program and garden manual
74. Enhanced training for volunteer Tour Guides

### **More Fun!**

75. Free concerts in the garden every Thursday evening in August and July: the Edwards Summer Music Series - Gardens of Song, with renowned artists in all disciplines from jazz to country to heritage/ethnic and world music

76. Addition of complementary “Terrific Thursdays” events on concert evenings: free activities for children and families with Education Department staff and a free series of fresh-produce cooking demonstrations by prominent local chefs
77. Establishment of the ‘Woman To Woman’ luncheon/fashion event showcasing TBG gardens as a marquee event each spring
78. Creation of the ‘Garden Open’ series celebrating notable private design/landscape locations in Toronto
79. Expanded Holiday Open House
80. Addition of new features on TBG Lecture evenings, including themed displays, demonstrations by partner organizations and low-cost themed supper options
81. Establishment and rapid growth of “Talking Books” chats in the Library before each TBG Lecture, highlighting resources in support of each Lecture topic
82. Launch of the mid-winter ‘Tropical Escape,’ highlighting TBG’s relationship with and TBG-Downtown programming at Allan Gardens
83. The ‘White Party’ event showcasing balcony/patio plantings
84. Performance in the gardens by the MM2 Dance Company

### More Members, More Benefits

85. More frequent, more effective contact with donors and members
86. New membership offerings, categories, and opportunities
87. Partnership with Heritage Canada for discount membership and free admission to noted botanical gardens around the world
88. Creation of a bi-weekly e-newsletter with links to extra resources and popular blogs
89. Formal members’ survey for feedback and direction

### Expanded Communication

90. A dynamic new website
91. Greatly increased media coverage and promotion to grow recognition and visibility
92. Strategic advertising, to obtain a higher profile at low cost
93. Aggressive guerilla marketing, neighbourhood flyers, co-operative exchanges, etc
94. Rapid growth in social media presence and numbers of fans/followers on Facebook and Twitter

95. Stronger branding: posters, banners, signage, TBG-logo merchandise
96. Participation in Word on the Street, Big on Bloor and other public festivals
97. Nurturing of warm relations with our City-staff neighbours at Edwards Gardens
98. Improved communications with the Garden Club of Toronto, Milne House Garden Club, Toronto Master Gardeners and dozens of horticultural organizations
99. New partnerships and stronger ties with institutions and other non-profits from across the horticultural, cultural, artistic and environmental spectrum
100. New contacts for corporate community-service days
101. Use of innovative social media tools such as Groupon and Living Social to promote new visits and memberships
102. Expanded presence at Canada Blooms, including speakers' series and a retail component, throughout the 10-day show (show duration doubled as of 2012)
103. More active participation in Tourism Toronto and its initiatives

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TBG