

Blooms by the sea

Take one great idea. Mix in a lot of community support, add members of a garden club, sprinkle with liberal amounts of enthusiasm and a can-do attitude. Result? *Blooms by the Sea* —a major garden show at the Mariners Centre in Yarmouth, May 1-3. Think of it as a baby sister to Canada Blooms.

It's ramping up to be a huge success story in Atlantic Canada. The start-up tasks and to-do list seemed never ending: register the Yarmouth Garden Show Association (YGSA), apply for grants, develop a website, attract investors, prepare a list of vendors and presenters and sort out logistical problems—to name just a few. But the YGSA team pulled it off in spades.

The event promises to be a treat for the eye and a bouquet for the senses. Workshops on garden journaling, birding, bird houses, container gardening, cool tools, garden photography, bee keeping and much more are planned.

"Yarmouth is the best place to garden in Canada. It's the banana-belt of the Maritimes, says Ann Jones, "so it's time we exploited this!" As co-chair of the event, Jones sees *Blooms by the Sea* as an opportunity to learn and have fun. "There will be demonstration gardens, vendors selling garden products, prominent speakers, seminars, a garden café and children's programs. This is definitely a family affair."

Gil Dares concurs. As a member of the management board at the Mariners Centre, he was looking for new ways the facility could be used. When his wife Esther (chair Communities in Bloom) suggested a major garden expo, his ears perked up. "This was exactly the kind of thing we had in mind," he says.

Although Dares doesn't profess to be a gardener, as co-chair he hopes that *Blooms by the Sea* will provide inspiration, not only to experienced gardeners, but to anyone with an interest in nature and the outdoors. Novice to expert, there's something for everyone. "Yarmouth is known by gardeners for its climate. We will soon be known for our hospitality as well," he says.

This story is brought to you by Coastal Life in support of Blooms by the Sea. www.bloomsbythesea.com

Tulips by the Sea photo by Peter Muise.

