



DECEMBER NEWSLETTER 2023

“The purpose of a Horticultural Society is to increase interest in horticulture by encouraging private and public gardens, by holding meetings, exhibits, plant sales and field trips.”

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT — *David Hearn*

Looking back on 2023 we can probably say that we have had a successful year with memberships starting to return to normal (before Covid) and attendance at meetings picking up as well. Our membership for the year was 128 which was down from the previous year, perhaps due to the closure of a nursery and the discontinuance of personal discounts at others.

Four life memberships were given out in 2023 with more to follow in 2024. These are given to members who have belonged in the society and have been active for 20 years or more.

Once again, we had seven indoor meetings with an eclectic group of speakers thanks to Barb Toye, Program Director. In May, the windup barbeque/pot luck, with a great assortment of food was very well attended.

The yearly plant sale held in May was our most successful yet with over \$4,300 in gross sales. Thank you again to the Borrowers for holding it at their home and all the work involved.

Mary Rastal and Lyn Coulthard, Home Tour Co-ordinators, arranged ten home garden tours in July and August. Each and every one was wonderful and unique in its own way. Much thanks to those home owners who provided such beautiful gardens.

College Avenue Garden is looking exceptionally well this year thanks to our three permanent volunteers, Heather Ashe, Frank Van Delft and Teresa Cotton. Also scheduled, were two very productive Spring and Fall cleanup campaigns. We did lose our Centennial Flowing Crabapple Tree but it has recently been replaced thanks to a generous donation from DeGroots Nursery. We had some recent problems with squatters in the garden and that has been remedied for now.

Four members of the Board were pleased to attend District 11 Spring and Fall Advisory Meetings

The Board has approved the creation of an endowment received from the generous donation of a deceased longtime member. Also approved, the interest will go towards purchasing trees for city parks. This will be reviewed after five years.

Please record your volunteer hours and submit them to Secretary Nora Penhale before the end of the year. Nora will send you the required form if needed.

The Sarnia Horticultural Society Facebook page was recently established. It has 198 members with many postings of pictures and notations and has proven to be a great asset.

In closing, I want to thank everyone for volunteering and for your attendance at meetings this year. Wishing everyone a great 2024 and a wonderful Christmas Season.

My quote this time is:

“Gardening adds years to your life and life to your years.” ~ Unknown”

UPCOMING EVENTS 2024 — Marilyn Rawson

Meetings are held during the months of January – April and September – November on the 3rd Wednesday of the month at 7pm at the Royal Canadian Navy Club, 1420 Lougar Avenue, Sarnia.

A BBQ dinner is open to all members in the month of May at the College Street Garden.

November is the AGM as well as a social with snacks, bingo and prizes.

January:

- Wednesday January 10th at 1 pm - board meeting at Hospice
- Wednesday January 17th at 7 pm - meeting at Navy Club. The speaker is Maureen Murphy on “Bonsai Gardening as a Hobby.”

February:

- Wednesday, February 21st 7 pm - meeting at Navy Club. Speaker TBA

March:

- Wednesday, March 20th at 7 pm – meeting at Navy Club. Speaker TBA

- No announcement about Canada Blooms for 2024 at this time

April:

- Sunday, April 14th from 1-3 pm is clean up at College Avenue Garden
- Wednesday, April 17th - meeting at Navy Club. The speaker is Terry Dent on Native Gardening
- Saturday, April 20th is the Annual General Meeting of District 11 in Essex.

COLLEGE AVENUE GARDEN — *Heather Ashe*

The Fall 2023 Cleanup

The Fall cleanup took place Sunday Oct.15. Sixteen volunteers gathered at the College Ave. garden and made short work of some basic tasks that needed doing. There was a range of things to do including pruning (large scale and small), removing some old rose bushes and weeding. All of that, and more, was done very expertly. The weather favoured us – it was cool and the rain started just after we had finished. Special thanks to Frank Van Delft, Mark Phillips, Nora and Kevin Penhale, Monika Deleersnyder, Nellie and Mike Tanner, David Hearn, David Hughes, Jane Morgan, Mike and Christine Virostek, Doug Chaytor, Teresa Cotton and Karen Durance.

Our Garden's New Crab Apple Tree

On July 20 a line of violent storms moved quickly across southern Ontario and arrived in Sarnia about 4:00 p.m. The storm didn't last long but was exceedingly violent. Many trees were snapped and uprooted and power lines were damaged. The cleanup continued for weeks. One of the trees uprooted was the large crabapple at the centre of the society's garden at 231 College Ave. North. City workers arrived several days later and removed the tree, then the roots.

The original tree was a Royalty crabapple, planted 60 years ago. A modern version that is more disease-resistant is the Robinson crabapple. DeGroots Nursery knew of our loss and on October 26, Jeff Baarschers planted a young Robinson for us. Here he is proudly standing beside the newly planted tree. Thank you, Jeff, and DeGroots for this wonderful addition to our garden.”



WINTER IN THE GARDEN — *Marilyn Rawson*

The cold weather may curb our enthusiasm for the outdoors but there is still pleasure in the landscape.

- Remember to care for the wildlife by putting out feeders with seeds and suet and dried corn for squirrels and chipmunks.
- Enjoy birdwatching. Evergreens provide beauty in all seasons and they shelter birds and animals.
- Berry bushes, seed heads of plants and grasses provide colour and beauty as well as food for birds and animals.
- Buy a heated birdbath.
- Care for and enjoy your indoor plants. There are many colourful plants including cyclamens, poinsettia, Christmas cactus, amaryllis and paperwhite narcissus.
- Decorate outside containers with evergreens, pinecones, birch twigs, colourful balls and ribbon.
- Make ice luminaries.
- Light up the night by stringing lights and lanterns. Solar lights are great!
- Enjoy your patio in winter with an outdoor heater and use of a firepit.
- Install a weather station.
- Do maintenance work on your pathways. Organize your garden shed and sharpen tools.
- Do winter composting.
- Put out wreaths and ornaments.
- Start planning your gardens by viewing catalogs and garden books. Order seeds and summer bulbs.
- Last but not least, photograph nature's beauty of your winter garden.

This year **Winter Solstice** will be December 21st .The definition of “solstice” is when the Earth's poles reach maximum tilt from the sun. This is the shortest day of light in the Northern Hemisphere. Celebrations have honored the symbols of fire and light along with life and death.

The **Farmer' s Almanac** predicts a colder winter than normal for Southern Ontario. There will be above normal precipitation and snowfall. Colder periods will be late December early January and early to mid February. Snowiest weather will be mid to late December and early to mid January.

VOLUNTEER HOURS — *Marlyn Rawson*

OMAFRA – *The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs* gives grants to horticultural societies yearly based on volunteer hours and membership. Volunteer hours can be obtained for work in our horticultural garden, preparation and work at our plant sale, administrative work, work on newsletter, preparation for meetings and attendance at Board meetings, District 11 Meetings and OHA Meetings.

Submit your volunteer hours to Secretary Nora Penhale at knpenhale@gmail.com before the end of the year. Submit the hours indicating areas involved.

DISTRICT 11 MEETING INFORMATION — *Marilyn Rawson*

On Saturday, October 28th, David Hearn, Grace White, Jan Casbourn and Marilyn Rawson attended the Fall Advisory meeting of District 11 in Wheatley.

It is good to get together with the other 13 societies in our district to learn and share ideas. Some of these societies are from small towns and villages that provide the garden planting in their communities. The district has a membership of 1380 members who provided 18,364 volunteer hours in 2022.

Highlights:

- During the meeting, the constitution was reviewed and changes were also made in funding.
- The district has a new banner.
- Received information and updates about OHA. The July AGM convention was held in Ottawa.
- The website gardenontario.org is a good source of rules and information.
- OHA had a booth at the CNE and plans on doing this again in 2024.
- OHA is in the process of developing a Family OHA Scholarship and Bursary. Hopefully, this will be available next fall.
- OHA participates in group discounts with Co-operators insurance. Members of OHA, their children and grandchildren may qualify for a discount of home and auto insurance. For more info call a representative at 1- 800-387-1963 or cooperatorsgroupinsurance.ca
- In the 19 districts of OHA there are 264 societies. A newsletter is published three times a year. There is news from these areas along with beautiful garden photos. It can be accessed online at gardenontario.org/newsletter.
- District 11 President Sandra Rammeleare from Tilbury was honored with the Award of Merit at the convention and there is an excellent article about her in the OHA newsletter.

The annual meeting of District 11 will be April 20, 2024 in Essex. The society is celebrating their 50th anniversary next year. The OHA convention will be held in Guelph, July 12th – 14th 2024.”

MEMBERSHIPS — *Jan Casbourn*

The issuing of SHS memberships for 2024 started in October. Memberships are \$12 (single) and \$20 (couple). Please email Jan...jcas@cogeco.ca to notify her if you wish to pay using e-Transfer. The address is to our treasurer, Monika, at monikadeleersnyder@yahoo.ca and then you will receive your card by mail. The previous practice of mailing or drop off at Jan Casbourn's will continue...559 Lakeshore Rd., Sarnia N7V 2S6.

President David Hearn suggested this year that the Society recognize and honour members who have contributed to the organization for more than 20 years with a Life Membership. The following individuals received certificates and will no longer pay for membership; Doug Chaytor, Teresa Cotton, and John and Ann Vanden Hoven. Congratulations!

The total membership for 2023 was 128 members. Included in that number is the total paid memberships of 116, four Life members, and eight complimentary [summer home tour hosts.]

Sarnia Horticultural Society Member Discounts:

The following discounts apply to regularly priced items and your membership card must be shown at check-out.

- Country Lane Greenhouses (Wyoming) – 10% discount on plants - open April to mid-June
- Canadale Nurseries (St. Thomas) – 10% discount on everything – open 7 days a week year round
- Canadian Tire – 10% discount on plants
- MasFrankc Garden Centre (Parkhill) – 5% discount on annuals and perennials – open April to November
- NB Sipkens Nurseries (Sarnia) 10% discount put toward a society project – show your card.
- Westland Nurseries (Grand Bend) – 5% on everything – open year round
- Windover Nurseries (Petrolia) – 10% discount on perennial plants only.



Charles Dickens wrote that nature gives to every time and season some beauties of it's own.

THE SHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS FOR 2024 — *Grace White*

Nominating Committee: Grace White (chair), Marleen Jackson and Barb Toye.

I would like to thank Marilyn Rawson, Diane Dorgeloos and Debbie Montgomery for their time served on the Sarnia Horticulture board. Marilyn Rawson for service as the president for many years and now past president of the SH club. Also, Diane for holding the plant sale for many years at her home on Windemere. Your contributions are all much appreciated.

Our three new candidates joining the board are: Audrey Carr, Nelly Hyde and Mike Tanner.”



The board for 2024 will be:

Plant sale, Martin Burrow

Directors at large:

Frank vanDelft
Marlene Jackson
Audrey Carr

Nelly Hyde
Mike Tanner
Grace White

Executive:

President, David Hearn
Vice-President, David Hughes
Secretary, Nora Penhale
Treasurer, Monika
Deleersnyder

Directors:

Program, Barb Toye
College Garden, Heather Ashe
Membership, Jan Casbourn
Hospitality, Doug Chaytor

