



## SPRING NEWSLETTER 2024

“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*

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Once again Spring is just around the corner and we are again reminded that global warming and climate change are here. We just had one of the warmest Februarys ever. This has brought out the early bloomers in the garden such as hellebores, crocuses, daffodils, snowdrops, and others.

My yard has changed somewhat as a mature rabbit has taken up residence and has trimmed off several of my shrubs. Gardening will be a challenge for me this year. The ground is not even frozen so we can look forward to many detrimental insects such as earwigs and Japanese beetles.

In keeping with diversity in our gardens we should try and plant many native plants, shrubs and trees to enrich the habitats for birds and pollinators. I am going to try to fit in two more Serviceberry trees. Perhaps I will actually get some berries myself after the robins have had their fill.

This year, our plant sale is scheduled in May, so please consider putting aside some plants to sell. Last year’s sale was a great success! Also, plans are being made for a bus tour. At the November AGM, a silent auction is in the works.

A great slate of speakers is scheduled again for this year and membership is increasing rapidly.

In closing, I want to thank the board members and all who have volunteered to make the club successful. My quote for Spring is by Marcus Cicero, “*If you have a garden and a library, you have everything you need.*”

Wishing you a great growing season and a **Wonderful Easter**



## UPCOMING EVENTS FOR 2024 — *Marilyn Rawson*

Meetings are held during the months of January – April and September – November on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m. 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 Avenue Garden.

November is the AGM and social with activities, snacks and prizes.

### April:

- April 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> — Sarnia Home Show at the Clearwater Arena
- **\*April 17<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m.** — meeting of SHS at the Navy Club on Lougar Avenue. The speaker is Terri Dent with a presentation on ‘Mature Gardening’. She will give tips on how to make physical time in our gardens more comfortable and enjoyable
- Saturday April 20<sup>th</sup> – Annual General Meeting of District 11 being held in Essex at the Legion
- **\*Sunday April 28<sup>th</sup>** from 1-3 p.m. — clean up at College Avenue Garden. Please bring your own garden tools

### May:

- May 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Garden Club of London presents ‘Only One Earth - Flower Show’ at the Civic Garden Complex, 625 Springbank Drive, London. There will be speakers and presentations
- **\*Saturday, May 11<sup>th</sup>** – annual SHS plant sale, 8-2 p.m. at 1515 Lakeshore Road
- **\*Wednesday May 15<sup>th</sup>** is our annual picnic at 5 p.m. at College Avenue Garden. A potluck picnic with hamburgers and hotdogs provided by SHS. Doug Chaytor has been our BBQ chef.

### June:

- **Saturday, June 1<sup>st</sup>** – 9a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday, June 2<sup>nd</sup> – 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. is the open garden and plant sale at the McCurdy Botanic Garden, 28443 Centre Rd., Strathroy. Admission is \$5.00. The garden is owned and operated by the Fanshawe College Horticulture program
- **June 12 – June 14** - The 116<sup>th</sup> OHA Convention will be held in Guelph, sponsored by Districts 7 and 8. Theme: The Heartland of Gardens Growing and River Flowing

### July & August:

- **\*Wednesday, July 17<sup>th</sup>** – 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. – garden tours in Sarnia
- **\*Wednesday, August 21<sup>st</sup>** – 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. – garden tours in Bright’s Grove

If you have any suggestions for possible gardens for the tours, either for this summer or next summer, please let Mary Rastall (519-869-2003, [rastalls@gmail.com](mailto:rastalls@gmail.com)) or Lyn Coulthard (519-869-8811) know. Thank you.

*NOTE:* DeGroot’s Nurseries has garden events during the spring and summer. Take advantage of discounts at the garden centres with your membership (see back of card).

## REMEMBERING

***“Time cannot steal the treasures that we carry in our hearts  
Nor ever dim the shining thought our cherished past imparts  
For the memories of the ones we loved still cast a gentile glow  
To grace our days and light our paths wherever we may go.”***

**Author unknown**

Several members have lost loved ones over the past several months:

David Hughes – Mother , Caroline

Barb Toye – Brother, Bruce

Holly and Doug Chaytor – Daughter, Melinda

Nora Boyd – Husband, Malcolm

Joan Fullerton – recently learned of her death two years ago. An avid gardener and active in SHS. She was secretary and newsletter editor before moving to Kelowna, B.C. in 2012.

## SPRING IN THE GARDEN — *Marilyn Rawson*

The spring equinox occurred on Tuesday, March 19<sup>th</sup> at 11:06 p.m. The equinox occurs at the same moment world wide.

On the March equinox, the Northern and Southern Hemispheres receive roughly equal amounts of sunlight. The amount of daylight each day will continue to increase until the summer solstice in June.

### **Special Event for 2024 on April 8<sup>th</sup>.**

A total solar eclipse will cross North America passing over Mexico, United States and Canada. The moon passes between the sun and earth. The sky will darken as if dawn or dusk. A great location for viewing this year is in Niagara Falls.

### **Spring Poem by Author, Sheila Smith**

*It's flower time again*

*Time to think of bulbs and seeds*

*Of potting so and pesky weeds*

*It's flower time again*

*It's flower time again*

*The lilac buds will swell anew*

*And daffodils are peeping through*

*And all our dreams are coming true*

*It's flower time again*



**“To plant a garden is to believe in tomorrow.”**

## Earth Day:

The 54<sup>th</sup> earth day will be celebrated on Monday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Visit: [earthday.org](http://earthday.org) as the website unveils how to do Earth Day 2024. The theme this year is 'Planet vs Plastics'. No matter how you choose to honour nature, make it positive. We need a healthy planet earth to thrive and planet earth needs us.

*Make every day EARTH DAY!*

## The Colour Orange:

Communities in Bloom invites everyone to plant **orange** in honour of our Indigenous communities as we celebrate the many ways plants love you.

**Orange** in the garden will add freshness, energy and a vibrant glow. There are numerous **orange** flowers to choose from. Some popular ones include roses, gerber daisies, lilies, tulips, marigolds and sunflowers. **Orange** pairs well with various colours such as green, yellow, red and purple.



## Plants For 2024 – from the Ontario Horticultural Society Website:



The **Hosta** for 2024 is HUDSON BAY. The leaves are of heavy substance, exhibiting good slug resistance in the landscape. It forms a large mound of attractive foliage with near white flowers on white scapes in early summer. The leaf has a bright blue margin.

Every year there are many new hostas available. Above The Clouds, Silver Bullet and Alanas Laugh to name a few. Other new hosta names and plants can be obtained on the internet.

- **Flower** of the year is the PEONY. Peonies are symbolic of love and romance, good fortune and prosperity.
- **Perennial** plant of the year is garden PHLOX – Jenna with it's lavender pink flowers.
- The **Plant** for 2024 is the PHILODENRON. There are two types, climbing and non-climbing. They have waxy green leaves and are a beautiful addition to house plant collections.

To view the OHA newsletter visit [gardenontario.org](http://gardenontario.org). The website is full of information from the Ontario Horticultural Society.



## THE SOCIETY'S SPRING PLANT SALE — *Martin Borrow*

The spring plant sale will be held on **Saturday, May 11 at 1515 Lakeshore Road.**

The 2023 plant sale was a huge success due to the generosity of members who donated plants and other gardening items for the sale and the hard work of numerous volunteers who helped set up tables and organize plants for the sale. A big call out to the volunteers who worked at the sale and to the folks that helped clean up and take down the tables. And last but not least, thank you Monika for storing the tables!

This year we are asking members who may be dividing perennials or have plants or other gardening items to please donate these items for the sale. You may drop off your donations at 1515 Lakeshore Road any time from Saturday, May 4<sup>th</sup> through to the morning of Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup>.

Also for the 2024 plant sale we will need volunteers to help set up tables and organize plants etcetera for two to three hours on the afternoon of Thursday, May 9<sup>th</sup> and again on the afternoon of Friday, May 10<sup>th</sup>.

## COLLEGE AVENUE GARDEN — *Martin Borrow*

### Dormant Season Pruning:

Late winter or early spring, before the buds start to swell is one of the best times to prune many of our woody landscape plants. Because plants are dormant, pruning cuts can be made with little risk of pests and pathogens entering into the plant through the pruning wound.

Dormant season pruning is typically performed to remove dead, dying wood or crossed branches as well as branch stubs and branches injured by disease, insect infestation, animals, storms, or other mechanical damage. Crossed branches are removed to prevent the branches from rubbing against each other and developing wounds which allow for disease and pests to get under bark and into stems, causing rot and disease. Because deciduous plants have dropped their leaves, it is easier to see the branching structure and remove branches to improve the form of the plant, open the canopy to improve airflow and shape the plants.



*Martin Borrow (L) Frank van Delft and arborist, Erich Maxfield, not shown, worked many hours in the park.*

The next time you visit our College Avenue park you may notice that many of the woody plants had been pruned in February. The junipers were cut back and much of the dead wood removed. While a lot of work was done there is still a significant amount of cutting back of perennials, light pruning and spring clean up to be done later in the season. The Russian olive

was removed because most of the main stem was rotten. The tulip tree was reduced to a single stem. And pruning work was done on the Japanese maples, woody hydrangeas, lilacs, butterfly bush, prunus shrubs, crab apple, mock orange, serviceberries, smoke bush, barberries, flowering dogwood, viburnum, burning bush, paperbark maple, and some beautyberry. On April 28, please consider coming out to the park to help out with the spring clean up.

## COFFEE GROUNDS FOR THE GARDEN — *Heather Ashe*

I have been sprinkling used coffee grounds onto the soil of our society garden for several years and I've been very pleased with the results. I don't put them right on plants, but between them. Recently, I decided to see what the internet had to say about this – is it really a good idea or not? There are a lot of opinions out there.

First, the coffee grounds I'm talking about are the leftovers after ground fresh coffee beans have had boiling water passed through them. That hot water washes out water-soluble components in the fresh beans that then end up in the coffee cup. Some of those components are acidic, so the grounds become much less acidic - they are typically neutral on the pH scale. Caffeine is also water-soluble, especially in hot water, so coffee grounds become decaffeinated, to some extent, during the brewing process. Coffee grounds are organic material, containing mainly carbon and some nitrogen. That nitrogen is not like the nitrogen in fertilizer in that it is released very slowly.

Used coffee grounds are typically disposed of in the coffee shop's garbage and they pay for their disposal. So, diverting them to our gardens is doubly beneficial. Typically, the grounds I receive contain coffee filters – after the coffee is brewed, the filters and the grounds together are dumped into a bag for disposal. I remove the filters when I sprinkle the grounds because I've found they decompose slowly and are unsightly on the ground.

I have been using used coffee grounds to benefit the soil and to feed the worms. Our soil is full of big, fat worms. I recall a society member, a teacher, saying her class kept a worm collection and fed them coffee grounds.

I think we have another use for the grounds. Last winter one of our burning bushes died. An observant visitor mentioned that he had seen telltale signs that a rabbit had been gnawing at the bush's trunk. I found internet articles saying that rabbits (and other rodents such as squirrels and chipmunks) don't like the smell of coffee grounds – their sense of smell is very acute and they don't like anything with a strong smell (for example, alliums, garlic, lavender, blood meal). As well, rodents don't like to get coffee grounds on their paws. So this year I am spreading used coffee grounds around the bases of any bushes and small trees that might look tasty to a rabbit. The grounds are also useful for spreading on areas where tulip bulbs are quietly spending the winter, to discourage hungry squirrels.

So, in summary, I'm really happy with this investigation. Sprinkling coffee grounds in the garden is a very good idea and has several benefits: feeding worms, protecting tulip bulbs and preventing rabbits from chewing the bases of our bushes and small trees.

## MATHEMATICS OF GARDENING — *Marilyn Rawson*

Last fall at an SHS meeting, speaker Denise Hodgkins from London gave an excellent presentation entitled *Gardening 101*. We do add, subtract, multiply and divide in our gardens.

### **Adding:**

- We may want to increase our flower or vegetable garden or add more urns to our patios or balconies.
- We may want to add new plants and more colour and variety to our gardens. Each year new plants are coming out in the nurseries.
- We add seeds, bulbs, plants and bushes. These may be obtained from nurseries, plant sales or friends.
- We enrich the soil and add mulch and water when needed.

### **Subtracting:**

- We work to rid the garden of weeds, diseased plants and invasive plants.
- We get rid of plants we do no longer want and make room for new ones.
- We move plants to more or less sunny areas.
- We deadhead plants and trim bushes

### **Multiplication:**

- Plants grow and spread. You may want to control this.
- Share your plants with neighbour's and friends and give to plant sales.

### **Division:**

- Plants need to be divided. You can establish new plants from division, rooting cuttings and collecting seeds.

The mathematics is ongoing and the result is the lovely garden you want.

## OAK WILT — SARNIA PARKS AND RECREATION

Oak wilt is a vascular disease caused by a fungus that grows on the outer sapwood of oak trees restricting the flow of water and nutrients through the tree. Oak trees can die within weeks of infection. The disease is spread by beetles but also through grafted tree roots. Fresh wounds on trees can attract beetles that are one of the culprits responsible for spreading the wilt.

**Found in Canada for the first time in 2023 in the Niagara Falls area of Southern Ontario.** Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry experts are concerned because it has spread across Michigan and is on Belle Isle in the Detroit River between Windsor and Detroit.

Follow these steps to prevent the spread of oak wilt:

- Do not prune oak trees **April through July**.
- Do not move firewood.
- Use weed trimmers and mowers cautiously near trees.





## GARDENING FOR BEGINNERS



**1. Start with a Small Space:** A good size for a beginner's vegetable garden is 6x6 feet.

**2. Grow What You Love to Eat:** Select up to three plants of five types of vegetables.

**3. Choose the Spot for Your Garden:** two basic requirements that your location needs to meet for the best success: *water and light*.

- **Light:** The fastest-growing vegetables need **6-8 hours of sun** a day — tomatoes, cucumbers, beans, basil, dill, and rosemary. In **partial shade**, plant lettuce, kale, chard, spinach, chives, cilantro, parsley, and thyme. At least **4 hours of direct sunlight** a day plant carrots, radishes, and beets.
- **Water:** Water frequently during the first few weeks. Once your plants are established, give your garden a long drink every few days vs a daily sprinkle.

**4. Plan Your Vegetable Garden Layout:** Choose either row cropping or intensive cropping.

- **Row Cropping for larger garden:** Place plants single file in rows at least 18 inches apart so you can walk easily between them and easy weeding. Tall plants such as peas, cucumbers, and beans grown on vertical supports (trellis) do well on the north side of the garden.
- **Intensive Cropping:** Increase productivity by spacing two or three plants close together in a bed about 4 feet wide and placed so that their leaves will barely touch at maturity. This method uses almost every square inch of the prepared soil.

**5. Start Plants in Rich Soil:** You want soil that is dark, crumbly, and literally full of life.

- **Sandy soils:** Are very porous, so adding compost helps retain both moisture and nutrients.
- **Clay soils:** Hold moisture but do not allow much air space for plant roots. Once again add compost which will loosen and improve the soil.

**6. Be Ready for Pests and Diseases:**

- **Stop Weeds in Their Tracks:** Keep them to a minimum by applying clean straw, mown grass or compost. Use a hoe to discourage any weed seedlings that do pop up.
- **Keep Animals Out:** Deer – 8 foot-tall fence. Rabbits and burrowing critters – a fence needs to extend six inches beneath the soil.
- **Deter Destructive Insects:** Handpick off large insects and caterpillars ( not the monarch or swallowtail butterflies on dill and parsley) by dropping them into a bucket of soapy water. Also insecticidal soap sprays can be bought at most garden centres.
- **Fight Fungal Diseases:** Water the soil, not the leaves of the plants. If you use a sprinkler, do it early in the day so the leaves will dry by nightfall. If a plant falls prey to a disease, promptly remove it and throw it in the trash; don't add sick plants to your compost pile. Additional disease preventatives include growing vegetable varieties listed as disease-resistant and changing the location of your plants each year (crop rotation) to reduce disease-causing microbes from building up their populations.

Enjoy and happy eating!



## 2024 SHS EXECUTIVE and DIRECTORS

**President:** David Hearn

**First Vice-President:** David Hughes

**Second Vice-President:** Doug Chaytor

**(Hospitality Coordinator)**

**Treasurer:** Monika Deleersnyder

**Secretary:** Nora Penhale

### **DIRECTORS:**

**Advertising/Program Coordinator** – Barb Toye

**College Avenue Garden Coordinator/Historian** – Heather Ashe

**Membership Coordinator** – Jan Casbourn

**Plant Sale Coordinator** – Martin Borrow

**Frank vanDelft, Marlene Jackson, Grace White, Audrey Carr, Nelly Hyde and Mike Tanner.**

The Board of Directors meets four times a year to plan activities and events, speakers, budget the finances for the year, delegate donations to support groups for horticulture and regulate finances for insurance.

Other duties covered by the Board are advertising and publicity, looking after the deed and title papers for College Avenue Park, distributing seeds, planting bulbs, flowers, trees and shrubs and promoting green practices for the environment.

The society belongs to District 11 to which we pay dues as well as to (OHS) Ontario Horticultural Society.



**Front Row: L-R** Mike Tanner, Nelly Hyde, Barb Toye, David Hearn[Pres.], Audrey Carr, Nora Penhale [Sec.], Monika Deleersnyder [Treas.]

**Back Row:** Jan Casbourn, Doug Chaytor, Grace White, Marlene Jackson, David Hughes [1<sup>st</sup> Vice]

**Missing:** Heather Ashe, Martin Borrow, Frank vanDelft

## MEMBERSHIPS — Jan Casbourn

Memberships for 2024 are now being issued. The great prices remain at \$12 (single) and \$20 (couple). Memberships are available at a monthly meeting or a more convenient method is to pay using e-transfer. The email address for our treasurer Monika is [monikadeleersnyder@yahoo.ca](mailto:monikadeleersnyder@yahoo.ca) and then you will receive your card by mail. The previous practice of mailing or dropping off at Jan Casbourn's will continue...559 Lakeshore Rd., Sarnia N7V 2S6.

President David Hearn suggested that the Society recognize and honour members who have actively contributed to the organization for more than 20 years with a Life Membership. The following individuals received certificates and will no longer pay for a membership; Doug Chaytor, Teresa Cotton, and John and Ann Vanden Hoven, Eileen Zinn, Pam Hansen, Roland and Sandra Papineau, Lena Dekeyser and Linda Manicom. Congratulations everyone!



**President David Hearn presented lifetime memberships to active and long standing members Eileen Zinn (left) and Pam Hansen.**



**President David Hearn presented a lifetime membership to active and long standing member Linda Manicom.**



**President David Hearn presented lifetime memberships to active and long standing members Sandra and Roland Papineau (left) and Lena DeKeyser**

### 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.

### EXCITING NEWS FOR THE FALL MEETINGS...STAY TUNED!

If you wish to submit any articles for the next newsletter late July/August then please submit to Jan Casbourn at [jcas@cogeco.ca](mailto:jcas@cogeco.ca) or Marilyn Rawson at [mrawson1@cogeco.ca](mailto:mrawson1@cogeco.ca).

Thanks to Mary Rastall for all her notices, announcements and newsletters sent throughout the year.

## SARNIA HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM 2024

Jan. 1, 2024 – Dec. 31, 2024. Single membership \$12, couples' membership \$20.

### Please complete the following information:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please include your email to receive e-newsletters, updates and meeting reminders.

Submit to: Jan Casbourn, 559 Lakeshore Rd., Sarnia, ON, N7V 2S6 519-337-9139,  
[icas@cogeco.ca](mailto:icas@cogeco.ca)

If you would like your membership card mailed to you please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

If you are paying with a cheque, please make it payable to “The Sarnia Horticultural Society”.

If you are paying by e-transfer, send you payment to treasurer Monika Deleersnyder at [monikadeleersnyder@yahoo.ca](mailto:monikadeleersnyder@yahoo.ca) Auto deposit is not available for these payments so use the question “which tree” and the answer is “crabapple”. Jan will send your membership card by Canada Post.

This newsletter was prepared by Marilyn Rawson, Jan Casbourn, and Mary Rastall.
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