



# The unflower

*The Smiths Falls Horticultural Society Newsletter!*

Volume 18

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April 2023

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*The Smiths Falls Horticultural Society meets every third Tuesday of the month through the months of February to June and From September to November. The meetings are held at the Smiths Falls Legion located on 7 Main Street East, Smiths Falls at 7:00pm.*



## Quote of the Month:

The first day of spring is one thing, and the first spring day is another. The difference between them is sometimes as great as a month.

Henry Van Dyke

Hi Everyone

Let's hope that last week's ice storm was winter's final "wave goodbye". With the temperatures expected this week, it looks like it was. It is unbelievable the damage to the trees that occurred. I hope the damage wasn't too great on your property. We spent much of the weekend with the chainsaw cleaning up downed branches and trees at our place.

The warmer temps this week are sure welcomed and will provide us with great weather for cleaning our gardens. Each spring I vow to do a more thorough job in the fall, and this spring is no exception.

As I was beginning my clean-up this weekend, I recalled a talk I attended given by the owners of Rideau Woodland Ramble. They mentioned that instead of composting or bagging up their trimmings, they cut them up smaller and let them fall right in the perennial beds. The clippings will deteriorate over the season, provide nutrients for the soil, and act as a mulch. For those that use another form of mulch, simply spread it over the clippings. Of course, be sure to avoid mulching with any diseased plant material – and you might want to avoid dropping any seedheads.

As you are doing your garden clean-up and discover unwanted plants, pot them up and donate them to our **plant sale** which is being held on **May 13<sup>th</sup>** this year. Also consider donating some of your extra vegetable or flower seedlings. Details on the next page.

Last month's meeting was held in the Legion's downstairs. We received very positive comments on the space, so have decided to hold our meetings there going forward. Join us this month for a talk by local Master Gardener, **Rob Stuart** who will be presenting suggestions of hardy perennials for all exposures that can provide "**Colour Through the Seasons**".

Finally, check out page 5 of this newsletter for Judy Wall's article on Rhubarb. Thank you Judy!

## Society News

### Plant Sale – May 13<sup>th</sup>

Plans are underway for our plant sale to be held **Saturday, May 13<sup>th</sup>**. It will be held downstairs at the Legion. You can drop off your plants at the back of the building starting at 7:30am (no parking there however). The plant auction will start at 8:45am and the sale will start when it is over. Historically, the sale is over, and clean-up completed before noon. We will need plants and folks to help out. It's a fun and hectic couple of hours!

As you are cleaning up your gardens this spring, pot up a few excess plants for the sale. It is our most significant fund raiser of the year, so every plant helps. If you have plants to donate, but can't make it to the sale, let me know ( [afrigan@xplor.net](mailto:afrigan@xplor.net) ) and we can make arrangements to get them there.

### “From Beginner to Winner” – May Flower Show

Our first flower show of the season will be held at our May meeting. We hope to have a lot of beautiful entries. Consider entering your first blooms of the season – tulip, pansy or another spring blossom; submit your early veggies – leafy greens, asparagus, radishes; or consider entering one of the design categories. A detailed list of all the classes is included in the 2023 Yearbook starting on page 9 and will also be included, in detail, in next month's newsletter along with the rules and some helpful hints.

The April workshop mentioned in our last newsletter is full. But other workshops are planned for June and September.

### Promoting our Society

We have arranged to set up tables for a couple hours at a few local garden centers on a Saturday in May. Our primary goal is to spread the word about our Society. We need a few volunteers to “man” the tables and hand out information about our group. The tentative date is May 6th from 2pm-4pm (will be confirmed). It's a great opportunity to get involved and share in the excitement of spring with fellow gardeners. Thanks to **Shari O'Driscoll** for all her hard work on organizing this new initiative. Send Laura Hunter an email if you'd like to volunteer. [laurahunter611@gmail.com](mailto:laurahunter611@gmail.com)

### Membership

Membership fees are still reasonable – \$10 for a single and \$15 for a family. Fees are due at the first meeting attended by a renewing member after September 1 and carry the member through until August 31<sup>st</sup>. A membership form has been attached to the email with this newsletter. For any questions contact **Ruth Anderson** [mruth8569@gmail.com](mailto:mruth8569@gmail.com).

New this year, at our November AGM, we will be recognizing the member who brings in the most new members. The membership form, attached to this email, now includes a space for new members to acknowledge who encouraged them to join.

### Membership Cards

Membership cards will be emailed to paid members sometime this week. If you'd prefer a printed card, they will be available at our April meeting.

Covid resulted in many businesses discontinuing their discount policies. **Jess Dahl** has contacted all of the local nurseries and the following ones will honour our membership cards with the discounts indicated below:

Garden Market – 10%

Reid Gardens – 10%

Rideau Woodland Ramble – 10%

Whitehouse Perennials – 10% on regular prices of plant material

In most cases, present your membership card in advance of making your purchase. If you are not familiar with the location of these businesses, they can be found on Google.

## Town Grant

Once again we would like to thank the Town of Smiths Falls for their generous grant of \$600. The funds will be used to offset some of the costs of our speakers and will go towards buying plants and supplies for the Legion, Library, and Foodbank gardens.

## TV Interviews

As mentioned last month, Laura Hunter, Madeline Archer, Steve Svarckopf and Debra Bellevue recently sat down with Kathy Botham in two separate interviews to discuss our Society and the Foodbank Garden. Steve and Debra's interview was recently posted to YouTube – here is the link [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWrhOIs\\_Bk4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CWrhOIs_Bk4). Also, here is the link to Laura and Madeline's interview – [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bzw9TdS\\_A6o](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bzw9TdS_A6o) You can also find both interviews on our Facebook page.

## T-Shirts

We have a supply of monogrammed T-shirts in sizes medium to x-large. If you need a different size, we have samples of small to XXXL. We are selling them at our cost - \$20 for XS-XL and \$25 for XXL+. If you order one, we ask that you pay at the time of ordering.

A big “thank you” to our member **Emily Morris** for her work on designing an updated monogram for our shirts. Thanks also go out to **Chris** at Grampy.ca (a local Smiths Falls company) for his advice and efforts in ordering and doing the embroidery work on the shirts.

## Next Meeting – April 18<sup>th</sup>, 7pm

Our speaker this month will be **Rob Stuart** who will be speaking about “**Colour Through the Seasons**”. He will be providing us with suggestions of hardy, locally available perennials. He has provided us with a chart of plants that will be emailed to each paid member.

Rob has been gardening since the age of ten when he had his own vegetable plot that turned into a weedy disaster. However, that didn't deter his interest and over the years he has had many vegetable and flower gardens. Since 2003, he has focused on alpine gardening and is an active member of the Ottawa Valley Rock Garden & Horticultural Society. He takes full advantage of their annual seed exchange and has tried to grow most of his plants from seed including trees, shrubs, perennials, and annuals. Lately he has explored other types of propagation via spores, cuttings, division and

layering. He has been in the Master Gardener program since 2016 and enjoys sharing his knowledge and experiences and learning from others.

### Photo Contest:

Congratulations to **Brian Bellevue** who took first place in our March contest – “Snow in the Forest”. Below are the entries that were submitted – beautiful!!

The theme for **April** is “**First Sign of Spring**”. Below are the themes for remainder of the 2023 season.

Month	Theme
May	A Spring Garden
June	Glorious Iris
September	Sunflowers Galore
October	An Autumn Tree

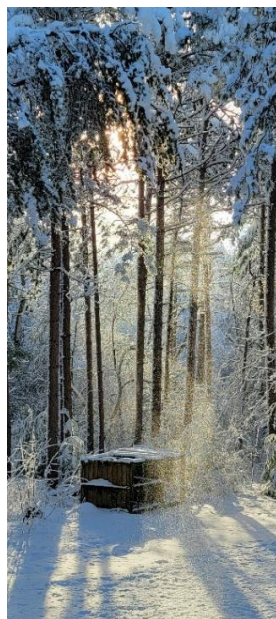
Photos must be first time entries, taken by the member, and submitted without visible ID. If you can't attend the meeting but would like to enter a photo, the entry can be submitted by a friend.



Brian Bellevue



Christine Nigelsky



Ruth Anderson



Carol Stanley

## Upcoming Events

### OHA 2023 Convention – “Rock Your Garden World”

Our District is hosting the upcoming OHA convention being held in Kanata at the Brookstreet Hotel July 21- 23, 2023. This is the 115<sup>th</sup> OHA convention and looks to be a fun weekend with several bus tours and other activities planned. The keynote speaker is Michael Runtz who will be speaking on “the importance of pollinators”. Check out this video outlining the weekend’s events -

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e8wEaeGTnPW>

Laura Hunter and Debra Bellevue will be coordinating the volunteers (thanks to them for representing our Society for this event).

### Rhubarb - Plant Once Harvest for Years

*Written by Judy Wall. Master Gardener with the Lanark County Master Gardeners.*

Early spring signs of rhubarb, when the plant starts to come alive poking through the ground, always excite me. Rhubarb is a perennial long lived plant, which requires very little from me each season. Add a little compost around the crown early spring, watch for stocks which hold large clusters of seeds which should be cut off before seeds form, puts the energy back into the plant so it can produce more rhubarb stalks. To harvest the rhubarb, you pull the stems holding them close to the ground and pull. Bring a large kitchen knife out to the rhubarb patch, to cut the leaves off and dispose of them (not in the compost) as they are poisonous. Then cut off the other end of the stalks. Take the rhubarb to a sink wash and cut into desired lengths. It seems to me the more you pick the more stalks grow, through to about mid-July when the leaves start to turn yellow and die, as it goes dormant until next spring when it reappears.

There is nothing nicer than homemade rhubarb/strawberry pie in early spring or any time of year. Rhubarb freezes really well. Chop the rhubarb into smaller pieces about 1” long and package them in plastic bags, measured to the qty. required for certain recipes such as:

Rhubarb muffins, rhubarb pie, rhubarb to go along with other fruits for a mixed fruit crumble, or rhubarb squares. Rhubarb stew preserved in jars is also easy if you don’t have much freezer space. It can be added to granola and yogurt for breakfast, and so many more uses for rhubarb.

Rhubarb harvested fresh has no chemicals/pesticides and is healthy for me.

Consider growing rhubarb in your garden if you don’t already. I call it my superfood. Easy to grow, easy to care for and easy to harvest. The American Institute for Cancer research society says: The edible part of the rhubarb plant — the stalk — contains anthocyanins, which yield its bright red color. Anthocyanins are a type of flavonoid found in foods such as berries, red onions, black beans, red grapes and black plums. They act as antioxidants in test tube studies, but in the human body, their protection seems more likely to come from their role in cancer-preventive cell signaling. Anthocyanins have demonstrated protective effects on blood vessels and blood pressure, and recent research suggests that anthocyanins may offer anti-cancer benefits, too.

<https://www.aicr.org/resources/blog/health-benefits-of-rhubarb/>

I am no doctor, therefore do your own research based on your health requirements. Dr. google has many a great recipe for this sometimes-overlooked vegetable. Yes, I said vegetable not a fruit, which many of us use it as. I learned recently of some sweet and sour condiment recipes which use Rhubarb, such as Rhubarb Mostarda, which I will be trying this season to expand my use of Rhubarb.

## Other News:

### Communication

Have you checked out our Facebook page “Smiths Falls Horticultural Society”? **Bonita Lucas** is taking over ownership of updating our site this year. The postings cover a wide variety of garden topics, both for “newbies” and more experienced gardeners. You can also find notifications of our monthly meetings and other events throughout the region. <https://www.facebook.com/sfHorticulturalSociety/> Be sure to “share” this information with all your Facebook friends to spread the word about our group. *(Did you know? You don't have to belong to Facebook to access the information on the site!)*

Our web site is: <https://gardenontario.org/society-listing/entry/283/> Here you can share tips on gardening, leave messages to SFHS, access our local District 2 website as well as the Ontario Horticultural Association website. Thanks to **Jess Dahl** for keeping our website up to date.

Please contact our President, **Laura Hunter** at 613-485-4206 for any information you may require about our horticultural society.

### 2023 Program

Month	Topic
<b>February 21</b>	Movie Night – <i>The Gardener</i>
<b>March 21</b>	Edible Trees and Shrubs
<b>April 18</b>	Colour Through the Seasons
<b>May 16</b>	Summer Bulbs
<b>June 20</b>	Ask a Master Gardener and Summer Social
<b>July</b>	NO MEETING
<b>August</b>	NO MEETING
<b>August 15</b>	Garden Tour – Perth
<b>September 19</b>	Bringing Your Houseplants Indoors
<b>October 17</b>	Scheuermann Vineyard and Winery
<b>November 21</b>	Annual General Meeting
<b>December</b>	NO MEETING
<b>January 2024</b>	NO MEETING

### SFHS 2023 Executive

Name	Position
<b>Laura Hunter</b>	President
<b>Debra Bellevue</b>	Vice President
<b>Debra Bellevue</b>	Treasurer (Interim)
<b>Ruth Anderson</b>	Secretary/Membership
<b>Madeline Archer</b>	Flower Shows
<b>Jess Dahl</b>	Garden Ontario Website
<b>Anita Frigan</b>	Newsletter/Bursary
<b>Kathleen Lang</b>	Director
<b>Gale McCormack</b>	Programming
<b>Steve Svarckopf</b>	Foodbank Garden