

Trillium

*Keeping Ontario Beautiful*TM

Ontario Horticultural Association Newsletter

Spring 2009



Inside this issue:

Free Software
for Societies

The Fine Art of
Seed Swapping

Pretty but Dangerous!

Convention News

Woodstock
Celebrates 125 Years

Landscape Ontario's
'Green for Life'

Our Partners

Editor:

Linda Hugli
181 Garson-Coniston Rd.
Garson, ON
P3L 1G3

Phone: (705) 693-2476
Fax: (705) 693-5057

E-mail:
editor@gardenontario.org



In the garden of Carol Dunk, 2nd Vice President
nominee. Read about Carol on page 4.

Message from the President

This January 26th, a million plus people living in Canada rang in the Year of the OX, with bright lights twinkling, firecrackers and fireworks blasting, and all having a great family feast. In Chinese, Korean, Vietnamese, and other Asian traditions, New Year's festivities begin at the new moon and end at the full moon 15 nights later (that being February 10th this year).



This July 10th - 12th, 2009 plan to attend the 103rd OHA convention in Peterborough, Ontario. **Remember Yesterday - Protect Tomorrow** is the theme of this convention to be held at Trent University. District 4 will also have a Youth Camp. What better place to take a boat cruise through the Lift Lock along the Otonabee River. Why not take a bus tour to Petroglyphs Park, Lang Pioneer Village or the Canoe Museum! Viewing private gardens is also a crowd pleaser.

District 4 has lined up some interesting speakers such as Martin Galloway, Cathy Dueck, Mark Peacock and Vicki Taylor-Scott. The *one price covers all* package is too good to miss. This includes all meals, parking, use of facilities, and a bedroom to boot. What more could one ask for? So pack your bags and we will see you in Peterborough, July 10th.

At this time I would like to welcome Janet Moyser, our new OHA Secretary. I am sure you will give her a warm welcome when you meet her. On behalf of the officers and the Board, I extend a big thank you to our retiring Secretary Marlene Bruckhardt. Marlene has been a Director as well as our Secretary for many years. Thank you Marlene. I look forward to visiting district meetings and Spring AGMs. Keep up the great community work that you do and continue Keeping Ontario Beautiful. Take time to enjoy your garden, visit our partners, and have a sense of humour in all that you do. Most importantly, say thank you to your volunteers.

Ken Fink
OHA President

From the Secretary's Desk

Greetings from snowy Kincardine! As a recap, our winter issue of Trillium contained forms which should be completed by all societies and mailed to District Directors. The **Society Annual Report** is used to update our Trillium mailing list, as well as providing your society with votes to be used at the Peterborough Convention. This information also provides insurance coverage for your society. Completion of the Society Volunteer Hours form is also required. Applications for the **Special Project Grants, Resolution Form, and Horticultural Service Certificate** were also enclosed along with **Convention competition guidelines**.

Your society may nominate members to be honoured with special awards at the convention. Information on the various awards offered to societies by Ontario Horticultural Association is in your Awards Booklet which can also be found on our website at www.gardenontario.org, under Resources. Please contact your District Director for more details. All of these forms have a deadline date.

Included with this mailing is detailed information about the Peterborough Convention along with a registration form. The convention is being held at Trent University, in Peterborough, July 10th-12th. The theme is **Remember Yesterday -Protect Tomorrow**. It is advisable to register early, especially if you are interested in taking part in the exciting tours that are being offered. The Registrar and Treasurer greatly appreciate registrations which are received well before the deadline!

Thank you to all the societies for completing the forms required, and nominating someone to be recognized and honoured for the work that they have done within their societies. And a big *thank you* to all of you who have been so understanding, informative, and supportive as I learn the roles and responsibilities of the OHA secretarial position.

No matter how long the winter, spring is sure to follow!

Janet Moyser
[secretary@ gardenontario.org](mailto:secretary@gardenontario.org)
519-395-0227



Hi Linda

Thanks for putting me on the Trillium e-mail list. I look forward to the next issue. How times have changed! I remember the secretary saying, 'The Trillium is here. Feel free to take it and read.' Of course the meeting would be adjourned and we got to visiting. Guess what? On arriving home I realized I never did read it. Now with a click of the mouse I can retrieve it at any time and reread those articles which might come in handy when making my gardening plans.

Linda Campbell
Harriston and District Horticultural Society
Past President and Chairperson of our Annual Garden Festival (first Saturday in June)

Receive your own electronic version of each issue of the Trillium. This free e-subscription means you will always be the first to see the latest edition. Email Editor Linda at editor@gardenontario.org

Our Partners and Associates

Since 2005/2006, we have recognized the need to partner with other related gardening/environmental groups who share similar goals to support and enhance our societies.

The relationships developed with other organizations are maintained on a regular basis through frequent communication with the partner relations representative of the OHA to ensure a healthy and agreeable relationship for both parties. We invite our partners to bring greetings at the conference, use booth space if available at the annual conference, as well as offering space at shows (e.g. Successful Gardening, CNE) if available.

Our Provincial Partners

These organizations support and promote our Association:

Communities in Bloom-Ontario (CiB)

This programme promotes and encourages beautification and community involvement, environmental issues, and community pride, to mention a few benefits throughout our province. Visit www.cibontario.ca.



We promote and support this organization and they support us. We're invited to bring greetings from our Association and are given booth space to promote our societies.

Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG)

The Gardens are pleased to join us in the promotion of horticulture and our societies. They offer programmes for youth, bus trips for members, environmental initiatives from time to time (World Biodiversity Day), opportunities for video-conferencing classes, and access to an instructor in Horticultural Therapy. Horticultural Judges are accredited through RBG after an intensive training course. A meeting will be held in March to discuss opportunities for this year. Visit www.rbg.ca.



Conservation Council of Ontario (CCO)

This is a natural fit for our Association. As a member of CCO, our association has the opportunity to partake in many of their programmes and connect with conservation groups who are also members of CCO. Visit www.weconserve.ca and www.greenontario.org (interesting to note the latter website name was an option

when we were creating the OHA's new website "gardenontario.org" in 2004/5). This is a great resource for our Conservation and Environment Committee.

Other supportive and recognized organizations:

Master Gardeners of Ontario Inc. (MGOI)



The relationship between MGOI and OHA was renewed recently and we support and respect one another. This is no surprise, since many MGs are also horticultural society members. OHA and OMAFRA worked together years ago in the development of the MG programme. Where convention space permits, we invite MGOI to hold its AGM during our conference and extend an invitation to bring greetings at our opening ceremonies.

Garden Clubs of Ontario (GCO)

The GCO is a similar organization, yet unique in that one is invited to join. We strive for the same goals. The individual clubs do wonderful work beautifying the communities where they live. Design Judges are accredited through GCO. Many GCO members are also members of their local horticultural societies or garden clubs. We invite GCO to attend our Annual Conference to bring greetings from their organization.

Ontario Association of Agricultural Societies (OAAS)

This is our sister organization. We are under the same Agricultural and Horticultural Act and receive grants from the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. Annually we invite one another to bring greetings to the annual conferences. The OAAS holds its conference annually at the Fairmont Royal York Hotel in Toronto, around the 3rd week in February.

Visit www.ontariofairs.org.

Landscape Ontario



We have worked with Landscape Ontario for many years and they've always been supportive of our Association. Landscape Ontario donates trees for plantings at annual convention locations, in addition to other assistance offered from time to time. They're always willing to support and assist.

Visit www.landscapeontario.ca.

Liisa Wolfram
Long Range Planning Chair

Nominating Committee Report - 2009

It is with great pleasure that the OHA Nominations Committee forwards a full slate of officers for election at the upcoming convention in Peterborough in 2009.

Kees Stryland, OHA 1st Vice President, has consented to let his name stand and move up the ladder to President and **Vickie Wiemer** has consented to stand for election and move into the 1st Vice President's role.

At the time of writing this message, one nomination has come forward for the position of 2nd Vice President. The committee is very pleased to announce that **Carol Dunk**, District 16 Director, has been duly and properly nominated by the Barrie Horticultural Society. Read about Carol below to find out why she has received her society's nomination.

Jim Mabee,
Nominating Committee Chair



Meet Carol Dunk...

I am a retired teacher. Prior to 1972, I taught public school in Ottawa. From 1976 to 1997, I taught business and computer courses at Georgian College in Barrie.

When I retired, I had time to spend on my favourite pastime: gardening. I trained and became a Master Gardener in 1999. I teach gardening courses at Georgian College in Barrie and often speak at local horticultural groups about my gardening experiences, gardening ideas, soil care and reduction of pesticides. I was a seminar speaker at Ontario Horticultural Association Conventions in 2003 and 2004. In 2004, I was also one of the plenary speakers at the convention. For two years, I did noon-hour sessions on a local television channel and from those shows became known around Simcoe County as Master Gardener Grandma Dunk!

I am past-president of Barrie's Garden Club and published the monthly newsletter for that group for 6 years. Currently I am the Director for OHA District 16. I am also a member of the Simcoe County Master Gardeners and a past Zone Director of MGOI. Currently I am the Chair of the Education Committee of Master Gardeners of Ontario.

As a director for the OHA, I chair the Conservation and Environment Committee. Last year that committee produced the *Roll Out The Barrel* booklet which is being reprinted this year to be available to attendees at Canada Blooms. This year, we have created a new website to add to the OHA site: <http://conservation.gardenontario.org>.

Carol Dunk
www.caroldunk.com

An Important Message to our Supporters

The Ontario Horticultural Association places a high value on our relationship with you, our donors. Without your support we would not be able to achieve our mission, *Keeping Ontario Beautiful*. We thank you for your commitment to us.

We believe that transparency and accountability are essential to our success. With this in mind, we have recently joined **Imagine Canada's Ethical Code Program**.

The **Ethical Fundraising and Financial Accountability Code** lays out a set of standards for charitable organizations to manage and report their financial affairs responsibly. By adhering to these standards, we are complying with generally accepted practices for soliciting and managing donor dollars. This is important because you, our supporters, are entitled to transparency and the greatest impact possible for your investment in us.

If you have any questions about our adherence to the Ethical Code please feel free to contact **OHA Treasurer Sharon Hill**, treasurer@gardenontario.org. You can visit the Canada Revenue website for a copy of our official government assessed financial statements. You can also download the Ethical Code itself by going to www.imaginecanada.ca.



Landscape Ontario's 'Green for Life'

What happens when the green industry 'takes back' green? Despite the news releases from large oil companies, metal mines and other Canadian industries, one of the few truly green industries is comprised of the 2,000 plus members of Landscape Ontario. By introducing the 'Green for Life' program, Landscape Ontario reestablishes the connection of how green our gardens really are.

From cooling our cities to removing pollution and improving our quality of life, green spaces with trees and other landscape plants make a difference. Shade trees reduce the need for air conditioning and plants help cool the air temperatures through evaporative cooling.

Landscape Ontario is North America's premier horticultural trades association. Our mission is to raise awareness for the environmental, economic, and lifestyle benefits of gardens and green space. Our goal is to landscape Ontario and help others to do the same. "Our members grow, plan and nurture true 'green'. We felt this was a good time to talk with consumers about the real benefits of spending more time outside." says Tony DiGiovanni, executive director of Landscape Ontario. "From the growers with nurseries that grow our landscape plants to the garden centres, the designers and the landscape service providers, we help green the province."

Outreach will include a new consumer website to be launched in spring 2009. The website will showcase hundreds of award-winning member designs to help inspire consumers to better use their outdoor living spaces. The new program includes outreach to consumers with signs for landscape contractors' trucks, store signs and banners for garden centres, as well as public relations activities.

"Green for Life will inspire with hundreds of award-winning images of designed outdoor spaces. The website will connect the public to our amazing landscape and nursery professionals." says Denis Flanagan, Landscape Ontario's public relations manager. "Our province is blessed with some of the best designers in the world; when you see the magic designers create in an outdoor living space, you begin to understand our excitement regarding the consumer outreach program. Connecting the public to the outdoors is what we do best."

For more information about 'Green for Life' and please contact Denis Flanagan at Landscape Ontario, 800-265-5656, ext. 303 or dflanagan@landscapeontario.com or Lee Ann Knudsen at Landscape Ontario, 800-265-5656, ext. 314 or lak@landscapeontario.com.



Garden Seasons

The winter snow is blowing
The days are dark and cold,
The gardeners grow so anxious
Their garden tools to hold.

So anxious for the ground to thaw
And for warmer days of spring,
To see those yellow daffodils -
Their faces the sun will bring.

For spring begins another year
Of planning and of planting,
The happy gardeners once again
Are beautiful gardens imagining.

Oh how good it feels to us
To once more work the soil,
To anticipate the pleasure
Of all our work and toil.

Soon spring becomes the summer,
And a whole new set of flowers,
Coneflowers, Lilies, and Beebalm
Now reflect those planning hours.

And all too soon the fall is here,
Now starts the pruning and raking,
The sedums now are in full bloom,
A new garden look they're making.

For any Canadian gardener
The seasons go so fast,
Wishing those warm and sunny days
Much longer would they last!

**Loni Earhart
St. Thomas & District
Horticultural Society**

Memorial Period at the Convention

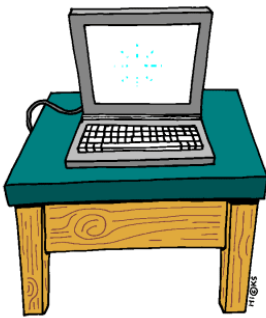
Each year at the Convention we take time to remember our friends in horticulture who are no longer with us. If your Society has lost a member in the past year and would like to have that person's name recognized at the Peterborough Convention, please send the name (or names) to the Association Secretary, Janet Moyser at secretary@gardenontario.org before July 1st.



Free Software for Horticultural Societies and Garden Clubs

You do not need to spend hundreds of dollars buying software. Very sophisticated software is now freely available if you know where to look. The free software has improved tremendously over the past few years and the vast majority is very intuitive and easy to use. Do not be afraid to try out tasks with the software tools. You will not break anything and it will not cost you anything. It will do some very useful things to enhance your society's basic management tasks or just do fun things to make your regular meetings more interesting. This article describes some of the applications that are useful for a society. These are all free and from reputable sources.

Google Documents.



Entirely free software for word processing, power point style presentations, spread sheets etc. Google documents software is all web based. This means you do not have to download any software to run on your computer. You use the software when you log onto your account and your documents are stored on a

server somewhere on the web. This also means you can use any computer anywhere in the world that is connected to the Internet and access your account and your document. You can also choose to let other people access your documents as well. The latest buzzword for this type of service is **cloud computing**.

To access Google Docs., you need to create a Google account. **Creating a Google account** is very simple. Go to Google home page. Top left hand side of Google home page you will see – **WEB IMAGES MAPS NEWS VIDEO MAIL MORE**. Click on **MORE** and from the pull down menu select documents. You are then taken to the Google Documents home page. Go to the **Don't have a Google account** and click the **Get Started** button. Just follow the instructions to create your account.

If you are a volunteer who does not own a computer but want to help your society you can use the public library computers to create your account. First you need an email address. **Google Gmail** is free and you sign up for it in the same way as opening a Google account. You can have as many Gmail accounts as you need - one for personal use and the other for society use. Once you have an email and Google account you have access to some very powerful software.

Remember the information you put into the library computer is not stored on that computer but on a secure server on the web. You can now access your Google accounts from **any** computer **anywhere** to do whatever you need for your club.

Word Processing

Google Documents has word processing. If you are the club secretary then this will be very useful for you in taking board minutes. Once you have created the minutes you need to circulate them to all board members. Google Documents makes this easy. On the top right hand side is button **share**. Click this button and a screen will appear. Enter the email addresses of your board members and type your message to accompany the minutes. If the minutes are just a draft and you expect others to suggest amendments, Google Documents has a neat feature that helps you. Select the **edit** bullet under the list of email addresses and all your board members will have the option of applying changes to the document. This saves you as secretary making the changes. Once the changes have all been made you can send out another email with the **view** bullet selected and the document cannot be altered.

Google Spreadsheet

The Google spread sheet is an invaluable tool for societies and has many applications. Membership secretaries usually create a spreadsheet with members' names and contact details. Simply access the Google Spreadsheet as you would do for word processing. Create the spreadsheet with the names, addresses, emails and perhaps tasks that members would consider volunteering to do.

You can share the information you have compiled on the spreadsheet with all the other board members using the same technique as described for circulating minutes. Sharing the information between other club members is done by increasing the circulation list. However be sure that if you do give it a wider circulation your membership is OK with this policy and you have the members' permission to share these details. It is possible to publish this to the web. **Never ever do this** as once it is published on the web it is freely available to anyone, anywhere.

Tracking **volunteer hours** is always time consuming. Solution- Create a Google spreadsheet with the volunteer tasks and invite your membership, via email, to enter the hours they have volunteered. You then have it for the OHA year end reports

Another application of Google spreadsheets is volunteer sign up for events or tasks. District 2 had to organize many volunteers for Ottawa's Blooming Lawn and Garden Show over 4 days with many activities in 2 hour slots. A Google Spreadsheet was created with the tasks and the time slots and then the access to the spreadsheet was emailed to all the District 2 contacts. Individual societies then accessed the spreadsheet and entered the details of who wanted to volunteer for each task and the time they could do it. The spread sheet was available 7 days a week 24 hours per day therefore it was easy for anyone at anytime to update. This saved the District 2 Director many phone calls.

Google Presentations

You have been invited to give a talk at the next club meeting. Google Presentations is similar to earlier versions of Powerpoint, It does not have the same level of sophistication of the latest Powerpoint but you can create a very good presentation with the tools available. It even has a presentation template surrounded by grass - an ideal gardening theme. You can import pictures from your own collection, add backgrounds, and emphasize text by changing fonts. You can also select your bullets, format, etc. Like the other Google applications, as this is web based, you can share your presentation with others. This can be particularly helpful if you are not skilled in making up presentations. You can share your presentation with someone else and they can help you create the presentation.

If you have high speed internet you can also use another neat feature of Google Documents. If your colleague is on line at the same time as you accessing the document you can send him an instant message while editing the presentation.

If your society has access to a digital projector for its monthly meetings then creating a presentation outlining the meetings agenda, presenting details of upcoming events and giving members tuition on things like planting seeds, pruning shrubs etc. Having a slide presentation for your monthly meeting really helps to focus on the topics and makes sure that the meeting is well prepared.

Other Free Office Software Tools

You just bought a new computer and it has Vista operating system installed. You may have bought Microsoft Office or Wordperfect for your old computer and find that it no longer works on the Vista operating system. Upgrading to the latest versions will cost you money. You might want to consider Sun Microsystems Open Office. It is a full suite of software that you can download and run on your computer at no cost. The suite covers word processing, presentation, spreadsheet, database, and drawing. It has gone through a number of revisions and is now a very stable group of products for general office features. Download the suite of software from <http://www.openoffice.org/product/> and install it on your computer.

You can do pretty well everything you do with Microsoft Office or Wordperfect with this suite of software. You can also save your documents in Microsoft compatible files so that you can send them to anyone who uses Microsoft software. Just to prove that it is really that simple this document was created using Open Office with no training.

Own a Digital Camera?

Many gardeners are now taking advantage of the ease of use of digital photography but you soon end up with many many pictures. Google has come to the rescue with **Picassa**. Although this is a Google product you do need to download the software onto your computer. When you do

install Picassa it will automatically catalog all your pictures wherever they are stored on your computer. Once you have your pictures in the library then you can start having fun. Some pictures may not be exactly to your liking and you may want to do some editing. Picassa has some of the most common photo editing tools such as cropping, removing red eye, straightening, etc. Simply click on the picture you want to edit and you have a very simple set of tools shown on the right hand side that you can apply to the photograph.



If you want to show your photographs to the rest of your gardening friends, create a slide show with music. It's very easy to do within Picassa. Select all the pictures you want to show. Then select Movie Maker. You have options to add music to accompany the presentation. To add the music you need to have a file with some digitally encoded music in an MP3 format. Get this from your youngsters' Ipod sources or just download something from the internet. Classical music is good to accompany garden pictures and many computers now come with sample music files you simply load into your Movie Maker folder in Picassa. When you have your pictures in the correct order to be displayed then click *Make Movie*. Picassa will then make a slide show with all your pictures plus music to accompany it. You can then display the presentation on the computer or upload it to *You Tube*. Again, if your society has a digital projector you can show the complete slide presentation at your next society meeting. Our society (KMHS) welcomes members' presentations which we play as people are arriving or at coffee break.

For the Society Treasurer.

Do you know that Quickbooks makes available free accountancy software for non-profit organizations. The Ottawa Botanical Garden Society found this when researching what needed to be done to update their bookkeeping. Any society treasurer who wants to start electronic bookkeeping of the society's accounts would be wise to check this out before spending a couple of hundred dollars on accountancy software.

David Davidson

New Conservation Website



While surfing the net, have a look at the new site of the OHA's Conservation and Environment Committee. The site contains ideas for "greening" up your life. Visit <http://conservation.gardenontario.org/> and return often.

OHA's 103rd Convention

Remember Yesterday – Protect Tomorrow

District 4 is putting out the welcome mat and we are looking forward to your visit! With a new facility at Peterborough's Trent University and lots of natural beauty throughout the area, you will not be disappointed. The 103rd Convention takes place **on July 10th, 11th, and 12th, 2009.** All of the convention activities are within a short walk so you can park your car when you arrive and not have to drive until you leave us on Sunday.



Stay at **Gzowski College**, named after famous CBC broadcaster and former Trent Chancellor Peter Gzowski. This facility is a new 250-bed air-conditioned hotel-style residence with elevators, some accessible rooms and Internet access. You will need to bring an Ethernet wire to connect in your room but wireless access is available in other areas of the University. *All you can eat* buffet breakfasts and lunches include vegetarian and non-vegetarian choices. They will be served in the Gzowski College Cafeteria. Vendor space is also available in this building.

The Youth Camp will be held on campus at Otonabee College, which is adjacent to Gzowski. There will be lots of activities to inform and entertain the campers.

Friday's Plenary Session will be held in Wenjack Theatre, which is located in Otonabee College right next door. Wenjack is a tiered theatre style facility. Our speaker will be **Cathy Dueck**, Manager and Co-founder of Peterborough's Ecology Park. Her topic will be *Beyond the Backyard: The Growing Need for City Trees*. The competition area will be located in the cafeteria area in Otonabee College. Be inspired by the creative efforts of OHA members.

On both Friday and Saturday afternoon, a range of seminars will take place in the state-of-the-art meeting rooms located at Gzowski. Our speakers have been chosen for their knowledge of a variety of subjects.



In addition, there will be two bus tours each day. Three of these tours will take us to local garden centres as well as private gardens. On Saturday, one tour will travel to the Ecology Park where Cathy Dueck and her staff will conduct a guided tour and a number of workshops.

To spend an afternoon on the water, take one of the cruises, which will originate at the

University. Travel down the Trent-Severn Waterway, experiencing traditional locks and the Lift Lock, a lift of more than 65 feet. The cruises go rain or shine and there are refreshments and washroom facilities on board.

On Friday evening, enjoy the walk across the bridge to the Great Hall for an informal evening of fun. If you prefer, you can drive. There is parking near the venue and your parking pass is good for the entire weekend in all of the University parking lots. Enjoy a barbeque, bid on some of the beautiful items in the silent auction, or take your chance on the penny auction. Take some time to visit with friends and enjoy the evening's entertainment.

On Saturday morning, we move to the Athletic Complex where we will have the opening ceremonies. This is the site for both Saturday and Sunday's Plenary Sessions and Saturday evening's Awards Banquet. Saturday's speaker will be **Mark Peacock**, Director of Watershed Services at the Ganaraska Conservation River Authority. He will be speaking about the Oak Ridges Moraine.

On Saturday evening, our Awards Banquet will be held in the gym in the Athletic Complex. Always entertaining, our speaker for the evening is **Martin Galloway**. For four seasons, Martin was a segment presenter/writer on the popular Canadian television series Harrowsmith Country Life. He owns Chalk Lake Nurseries near Uxbridge, which supplies plants to gardening centres in Southern Ontario and is host of The Secret World of Gardens.

On Sunday we return to the

Athletic Complex for the remaining business of our Annual General Meeting, including elections and installation of officers. Our speaker, **Vicki Taylor-Scott**, will wake us up with her energetic delivery that is sure to entertain.

Registration will be a little different this year. Depending upon your choice of accommodation there are two paths for registering.

If you are staying in the Residence at Trent, you will be required to:

- Contact Trent University Conference and Hospitality Services by phone 1-866-290-6491 or complete the Accommodation/M meal Package form. (This package includes all meals including the banquet) **and**
- Complete the Convention Registration form for convention registration and excursions only. **DO NOT SELECT MEALS ON THIS FORM!**

If you are staying off campus, you will be required to:

- Complete the Convention Registration. Select meals and excursions.
- If you decide to stay off campus, there are many hotels, B&Bs, inns and campgrounds in the area.

To Help the Environment:



Lug-a-Mug

Although the University foodservices use biodegradable products, we strongly suggest that you bring your own coffee mug. Each morning, along with the early bird prizes, a prize will be awarded to a delegate carrying a mug in the meeting room.



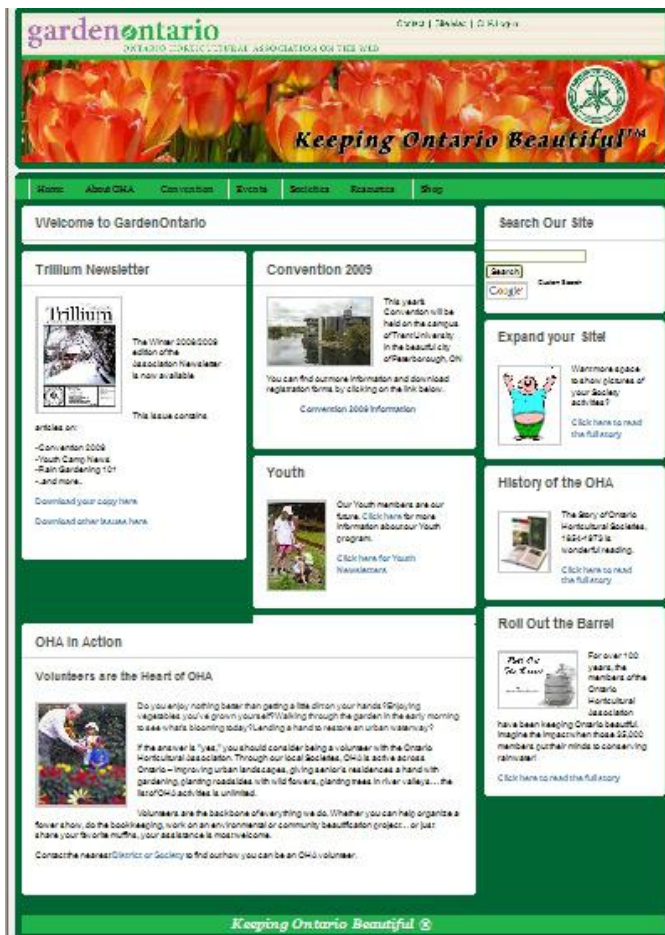
In addition, be aware that many people have allergies and/or sensitivities to fragrances. Delegates are asked to refrain from wearing fragrances in consideration of others who may experience discomfort. Please be kind and leave those scents at home.

**Dianne Westlake
Organizing Committee**

Registration Forms are now available at gardenontario.org!



Gardenontario Has a New Look



Visit the OHA website to explore its new fresh and friendly home page. Return often as the site continues to evolve over the coming months. Webmaster Don Matthews and his team welcome your comments.



Organic Elegance

When you design a garden or a fundamental landscape there are a few ideas to keep in mind.

Put in some raised beds. Raised beds drain well, deterring diseases encouraged by waterlogged soil. Vegetables produce better in a raised bed's loose soil.

Put the right plant in the right place. Choose plants that are suited to your climate and the sun exposure your garden receives. Select varieties that are resistant to pests and diseases common in your area.

Diversify your plantings. Mixing vegetables, flowers, shrubs, trees, and herbs helps to attract a variety of beneficial insects and helps to keep diseases from wiping out entire plantings.

Practice crop rotation. Rotating crops according to families wards off some plant diseases and keeps the soil from being depleted of nutrients.

Grow cover crops. Cover crops (such as grasses or legumes) grown in empty garden beds prevent soil erosion and return nutrients to the soil. They also help to keep weeds from taking over the bed.

**Kees Stryland,
1st Vice President**



Landscape Ontario to Create Plastics Recycling Program

Landscape Ontario is working to create the first nationwide post-consumer horticultural plastics recycling program in the world. A movement is underway to restrict plastic containers. To date, water bottles and plastic bags are the most visible targets in the discussion. Other items that are targeted include plastic garden pots, trays, tags, irrigation pipes and greenhouse poly. The partnership will include recycling companies, pot manufacturers, garden centres, nurseries and growers. Pots, trays and tags would be collected directly from consumers at centres right across Canada. Landscape Ontario is investigating funding for the recycling program.



**March 13-15, 2009
Hamilton Convention Centre**

Newly launched for 2009, two of the most popular home and garden events from the Hamilton/Burlington area have fused together to form one colossal show filled with fabulous exhibits and interactive features. Be sure to mark March 13th -15th, 2009 on your calendar!

Eager to provide attendees with a more complete home improvement experience, the highly successful **Ontario Garden Show** will join forces with the **Designs for Living Home Show**. "This is an exciting year for both shows," says Paul McNair, Show Manager. "We've combined the best in home design and renovation with the region's largest gardening event and placed it all under one roof."

From renovation tips to design and garden trends, the **Designs for Living Home & Garden Show** offers the complete indoor-outdoor experience. Since its inception 27 years ago, the Home Show has featured leading renovation and design experts in the Hamilton, Halton and Niagara region. Joining us in its 13th year, the Ontario Garden Show promises an enhanced shopping experience and adds a dynamic new level of excitement for everyone — from industry experts making new contacts, to avid gardeners seeking the best spring bulbs, and design junkies looking for fresh inspiration.

Shop from the best local boutique shops and discover one-of-a-kind impossible-to-find items, all under one roof! Make sure your home is feelin' fine in '09 by consulting with certified renovation experts and decor professionals while exploring over 200 exhibits.

REMAX will be on site again at the show to promote their **Smart Reno Program**, created to help homeowners maximize their property's resale value. REMAX will have a large pavilion and agents onsite to help with your buying and selling needs. In conjunction with our partners, the Hamilton-Halton Home Builders' Association, a number of initiatives are in the works, with fresh builder-focused programs, consumer attendance growth plans and many new features to create excitement and interest.

For more details contact **Kate Dobrucki** at **905-634-8003 ext.335** or kdobrucki@townmedia.ca.

The Fine Art of Seed Swapping

Every February my dining room table becomes a makeshift seed library. Scattered across its gleaming surface are various seed exchange directories, my favourite Canadian and American glossy seed catalogues, a stack of empty coin envelopes and, of course, my collection of seed packets I have amassed over the years. Midwinter is the best time to sort through my leftover seeds and take stock of my horticultural wealth, so to speak.

A member of **Seeds of Diversity Canada** (www.seeds.ca), I have been saving seeds for the past ten years or so, ever since I became aware of the need to help 'conserve the gene pool of traditional Canadian plants' - those open pollinated varieties that huge multinational companies such as Monsanto have not been able to snap up as of yet. With most of the world's entire seed market in the control of just three companies, it is imperative for gardeners like you and me to become engaged in the process and ensure that those strains that have become adapted to our local growing conditions do not die out and fade into history.

To that end, I have made it a point to participate in seed exchanges with various plant societies that are committed to the preservation of heirloom seeds which are 'the ones that gardeners before us chose to grow for their vigor, delightful flavour, ruggedness, and ability to grow from seed.' Because they are open-pollinated, they bear offspring that are similar or identical to their parents, unlike hybrids which do not.

If you have never swapped seeds before, the process is fairly simple. Look through your leftover or unopened seed packets or jars of flower or vegetable seed you collected last year and choose your freshest seed. You can download seed envelope templates from the Internet such as the one below from the Blossom Swap website - www.blossomswap.com/envelopes.html.



Alternately, you can invest in some coin envelopes which are small and leak proof. Put about 20-25 seeds in each, depending on the size of the seed.



Add a blank label and using a waterproof pen or Sharpie, print the name of the plant, the variety, the number of seeds enclosed and the date stored on the front. If you wish to add a description, specific growing instructions or additional

notes, add this info to another label and place on the back of the envelope. If there is room, I sometimes clip out a picture from a catalogue and paste it on as well.

Don't forget that for seeds to maintain good germination rates, they need to be stored in a cool, dry, and dark location which may be a basement, cold room, or the lowest shelf in your fridge. Place your labeled seed envelopes inside a wide mouth glass jar along with a silica gel packet or a pouch of powdered milk (fashion one from a coffee filter or Kleenex and an elastic band) to keep the seeds dry and then seal the jar tightly.



You are now ready to participate. Most national seed-saving organizations such as **Seeds of Diversity Canada (SoDC)** require that you be a member in order to trade seeds with other seed savers so be sure to buy your membership at the start of the calendar year. In May you will receive a form that you can fill out with the listing of seeds you would like to offer in the January Seed Exchange Directory.

Start small and choose seeds from growers who have similar growing conditions to your own to ensure success. While the seeds may be free, members are required to submit \$2 or \$3 (cash, cheque, loose stamps, Canadian Tire money, or money order) for each and every variety requested from an individual grower to help cover the cost of postage and packaging. The money or postage is returned if he or she runs out of seed. If you do plan to offer seeds, be sure to pad your seed envelopes in bubble wrap before inserting them into their mailing envelopes so they arrive intact and not mangled like some I have received. You are not obliged to reciprocate with an offer of seeds for the ones you want but remember that you will be expected to re-offer any seeds you do get from other members the following year, barring unforeseen circumstances. As Seeds of Diversity points out, 'This is not a seed catalogue - it is a preservation tool.'

According to a UK Seedy Saturday organization, 'Saving seeds might not seem much of a revolutionary act, but in a world increasingly dominated by corporate power, swapping my *Lazy Housewife* French beans for some exotic yellow tomato seed really does feel like you're sticking two green fingers up to those who control the world's food chain.'

Suzanne Hanna
Assistant Director, OHA District 13
Editor – News in Bloom (Sault Ste. Marie Horticultural Society's newsletter)

Conservation Landscaping

There are a number of benefits of **Xeriscaping**.

Xeriscaping is all about conserving water through creative landscaping. It emphasizes drought-resistant native plants (or plants from a similar climate) whose natural requirements suit the local climate. Equal care is taken to avoid losing water to evaporation and runoff.

You won't need to buy fertilizers or pesticides, since native plants thrive in their native environment; eliminating the need for chemical supplements. You'll be providing a habitat for local wildlife, because indigenous plants, shrubs, and trees offer a familiar but varied environment. Perhaps best of all, xeriscaped gardens are very self-sustaining, so there isn't much to do except occasionally prune and weed and enjoy your surroundings.

It may also seem counterintuitive that a searing drought may, in the long run, improve your garden. A drought and water ban will teach you which plants survive with less water. Your flower borders become stronger after a drought because the plants that died are replaced with more drought - resistant annual plants such as asters, cosmos, salvias, and drought-resistant perennials such as lilies, larkspur, coneflowers, and ornamental grasses.

Eco-Options: If you decide to xeriscape your garden, you can reduce your landscape water use by 50% to 75%.

There's a recent trend towards 'turfing' the grass and planting alternative groundcovers which do not need as much care or water.

Some of the choices or possibilities are:

White clover: blooms in early summer and needs no mowing, withstands light foot traffic and is drought-tolerant, soft under bare feet and spreads easily.

Creeping thyme: thrives in full sun and loose, well-drained soil and has tiny pink-purple flowers. Blooms in early to mid-summer and the leaves have a lovely scent.

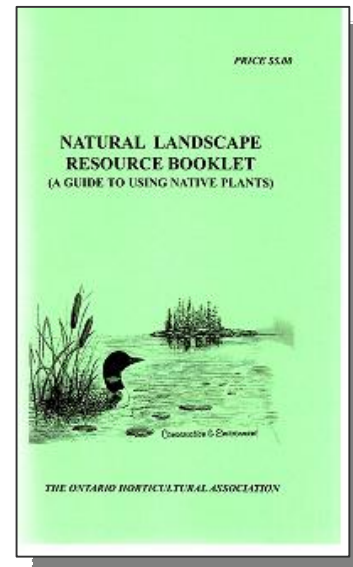
Sweet woodruff: plants form a spreading clump of small, green leaves with clusters of tiny, white, fragrant blooms in mid-to late spring.

Japanese spurge: forms a neat, uniform, evergreen groundcover. This plant thrives in light to full shade and moist, well-drained soil. It grows to 15-20 cm high and produces delicate flowers in spring.

As you can see, there are many choices available to the individual who wants to garden while conserving water.

Kees Stryland
Conservation Committee

New Items available from the Supplies List...



Planned and Memorial Giving

Remembering the Ontario Horticultural Association through a planned gift in your will is a wonderful way to ensure that OHA's mission lives into the future. You may direct gifts to any OHA program or to the ongoing work of OHA. Family and friends may make memorial donations in the name of a loved one, whose name will be inscribed in OHA's leather-bound memorial book. This book is displayed each year at the Association's Annual Convention. Planned and memorial gifts are acknowledged through the OHA Garden Circle, unless you choose otherwise.



Oh So Pretty, but Oh So Dangerous!

We check the rules, we plan for days, and then we bring our specimens and floral creations to the competition. But have we really done enough research? Have we checked to see if any of the plants are toxic or can cause dermatitis? Are we sure our entry will not put someone at risk? How well would a design place in a competition if the judge picked it up to take a closer look and ended up with blistering red welts?

The problem of toxic plants is compounded by the fact that many plants don't affect everyone the same way. In fact, the toxicology warning in botanical books often reads 'May cause skin irritation in some people'. The person placing the entry may not be affected, but that does not mean that the other participants in that class or the judges and the show stewards won't be sensitive to a plant's ill-effects.

What's the old saying? 'An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure'. Common sense dictates that the best solution is to avoid using plants in a horticultural show or competition if they have these warnings associated with them. A perfect example might be any of the *Euphorbia* (spurge) cultivars. These foliage plants make a wonderful filler in an arrangement. However, their thick milky sap, called "latex", can cause skin rashes and, if it reaches the eyes, severe inflammation. If swallowed, the latex can cause nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. A floral design should have impact, but not for those reasons.

Some plants are so toxic that even the water they sit in can become contaminated. *Aconitum* (monkshood) is an example. Could such a pretty plant be so bad? Definitely! All parts of this plant are toxic. The toxicity of this pretty plant is a defense mechanism against herbivores that might happen upon it while grazing in a meadow. This ensures its survival, but it also means it needs to be treated with caution in a garden setting. It is recommended that hands be washed thoroughly after handling it to avoid possible ingestion. Here are the symptoms, as listed on the Toronto Botanical Garden's web-site, associated with swallowing the sap of this plant: ***Tingling and burning in mouth, throat, face, followed by numbness and constriction in throat. Speech may be impaired. Nausea, vomiting, vision disturbances, and cardiac rhythm disturbances may follow. Fatalities have been reported where large doses were ingested.***

We also need to be wary of look-alike plants. For instance, confusing the members of the Umbelliferae (or Apiaceae) family could be dangerous. The rash causing *Heracleum*

maximum (cow parsnip or hogweed) looks very similar to its pretty and usually harmless cousin *Daucus carota* (Queen Anne's Lace or wild carrot). It would be a mistake that likely wouldn't be repeated, since the scars from a blistering rash would be a constant reminder. And some people are even sensitive to the Queen Anne's Lace.

Conium maculatum (poison hemlock) is another member of the Umbelliferae family and, as its common name suggests, ingesting it could be deadly. Similar in appearance, but less dangerous is *Pastinaca sativa*. The parsnip has become somewhat weedy in fields and roadsides and outside of the garden is referred to as wild parsnip. Its chartreuse umbels are colourful in an arrangement, but for some people the foliage can cause phytophotodermatitis – a condition where the skin is hypersensitive to ultraviolet light.

That is not to say that we should avoid growing poisonous plants – indeed our landscapes would be pretty sparse if we removed everything that had the potential to cause irritation or stomach upset. Not to mention the important role many of these plants play in providing habitat and food for beneficial insects. Instead, I suggest we learn to identify plants, know their effects, and be careful in sharing them with others. The websites listed below are a good place to start.

Remember, OHA judges and show

volunteers don't get danger pay. Make their jobs safer by avoiding toxic plants at public shows. As for flower show spectators, of course there is a *Look but don't touch* rule at all flower shows. However, not knowing if someone did their toxicity research before placing their entry would be another good reason to have a hands-off policy.

REFERENCES:

www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca/mastergardener/PoisonousToxicPlants.shtml

www.cbif.gc.ca/pls/pp/ppack.list?p_sci=comm&p_type=all&p_x=px

www.ontariopoisoncentre.ca/

**Mary Ann Van Berlo
Gloucester Horticultural Society
Master Gardener of Ottawa-Carleton**



Edna Litt Celebrates her 90th

A little birdie told Secretary Irene Judge that Edna Litt would be celebrating a special birthday on June 1st. Everyone would surely have a favourite tale to share of the life and work of Edna Litt. The Society will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2010, and Edna continues to be one of our most dedicated and committed volunteers.

Edna was appointed as a director, has held the position of secretary and vice-president, and was in office as the president at the turn of the century. She worked on the program committee, as well as press and publicity, and provided lunch after the meetings. She donated crafts for sales, helped with public planting, and to this day helps to maintain the flower beds at the cemetery across the road from her home.

Edna arranged bus trips, canvassed for new members, and offered them the opportunity to work towards civic improvement and beautification of the village of Clifford. Edna entered flower shows and held the title 'Best in Show' more than once. Back in 1994, she created a quilt patch of the Society rose for a quilt for the OHA convention. Edna received a Horticultural Service Certificate in 1996 and was chosen as the Senior Citizen of the Year in 2005. Her deeds are many.

Another gifted horticulturist, Ruby Bell, once said, 'There is no recreation which brings so much happiness and brightens people's lives like the recreation of horticulture.' It is Edna who brings joy and sunshine to the people who know her and beauty to the Horticultural Society of Clifford. We are grateful for her endearing ways and devotion to the village.

Bonnie Whitehead



Irene Judge (left) presented Edna Litt with a flowering plant in honour of her 90th birthday at the Clifford & District Horticultural Flower Show held May 27th, 2008 at the Community Hall in Clifford.

Hardy Plant Sale

Sunday, May 3, 2009

at

Toronto Botanical Garden
777 Lawrence Avenue East
(Lawrence & Leslie)



Unusual Shrubs & Perennials
Hardy Ontario-grown plants
Alpine & rock garden plants
Shade & woodland plants

Sponsored by the
Ontario Rock Garden &
Hardy Plant Society

www.onrockgarden.com

Trillium



Newsletter Subscription

\$15.00 per year (4 issues)

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ ON _____
Town Postal Code

Make your cheque payable to the **Ontario Horticultural Association**, and mail to the OHA Treasurer, Sharon Hill, at PO Box 595, Bracebridge, ON P1L 1T8
Tel./Fax: 705-645-3552

Note: Please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope if you wish to receive a receipt.

Harold Bentley Receives Meritorious Service Award

On Wednesday, November 13, 2008, **Harold Bentley** of Napanee was presented with the prestigious Meritorious Service to Horticulture Award. Harold was honoured for his outstanding contribution as a volunteer in the community. The award was presented by Phillip Kennedy, Director of District 3 of the Ontario Horticultural Association, at the annual meeting of the **Lennox and Addington Horticultural Society**.

Harold, his wife Jean and their family have been active members of the Lennox & Addington Horticultural Society for many years. Jean plays the piano at our annual Christmas parties and Harold has been president of the Society since 2001. Harold is an entomologist and is known for his presentation called *What's Bugging You* complete with live specimens in jars. His very well-written articles about bugs are always welcome additions to the Society's newsletter *Bittersweet News*.

The Napanee District Secondary School has an excellent greenhouse program. Students grow annuals for the Society's plant sale using seeds, soil mix and trays that Harold has ordered. They count on Harold to help in the greenhouse on busy weekends or provide advice if something has been nibbling plants' leaves.

Harold's own garden is lovely. He has even developed his own Zinnia, *Beneden Gold*, with its bright yellow multi-layered flower. Seeds are quickly snapped up whenever Harold brings them to Society meetings. He contributes to the life of his community in many ways. For example, he is a Napanee Fair Board member and judges flower and vegetable competitions at the Fair. He is a member of the Pasture Board and has helped restore the vegetable and herb gardens at historical Macpherson House in Napanee. With all of his volunteer activities it's a wonder Harold had time to work full time. Before he retired, Harold was a Ministry agricultural representative for the area. Needless to say his specialty was bugs and pest control.

Harold, your contributions have made a difference in our community. Thank you.

Gail Knowles



125 and Counting...



Mayor Harding & Woodstock Society President Gord Piggott

The year 2008 marked an impressive milestone for one Ontario society. Celebrating 125 years since the first Town Hall meetings of the **Woodstock Horticultural Society**, current members held a three day display in that same building – now a National Historic Site Museum. The museum's Grand Hall was decorated with all the things talented gardeners produce. An abundance of historical materials covered several tables. Posters from junior school classes filled one wall. Each school received a framed trillium picture plus individual pupil thank you cards.

Opening ceremonies on May 8th brought greetings from OHA President Jim Mabee, District 10 Director Anna Peterson, and city horticulturist Dan Major. That same day the Woodstock Sentinel Review surprised us with a front page spread that included a large coloured peony, our floral emblem...the city's too.

A float in a rainy windy 24th of May parade depicted the theme *Past, Present, and Future*. At our community's City Beautiful Awards in July we received a framed document from Mayor Harding. This was to be hung in City Hall, acknowledging the society's commitments and contributions.

Each month at general meetings a part of our history geared to the evening's topic was displayed and presented orally. In September the peony was celebrated with speaker Reiner Jakubowski of Waterloo. He left us with the suggestion that a peony named *Woodstock* might be forthcoming. The October planting of a White Oak in Southside Park now stands as our 125 year marker.

Closing out the year with a pot luck supper and a novel tea tasting experience, several Board members were saluted for service ranging from 21 to 53 years!

We all cheer for many more years ... *Keeping Ontario Beautiful*.

Mary Yeoman

Getting the Jump on Spring



Mary Audia of the North Toronto Horticultural Society demonstrates *Cheap and Cheerful Spring Flowers* at **Get the Jump on Spring**, at the Toronto Botanical Garden, on February 21st. The first garden show of the year featured speakers, vendors, and more than thirty garden and environmental groups. An annual event for many years, this year's show was a joint effort of the Toronto Botanical Garden and OHA District 5, marking the beginning of a partnership that we expect will grow. (photo by Andy McCraw, North Toronto Horticultural Society)

Do You Remember?

A significant portion of the history of our organization is preserved in the names of the trophies that are awarded to the winners of our various competitions. The memory of founders, past-presidents, and benefactors are often preserved by trophies bearing their names. But unfortunately, sometimes that memory isn't quite as long-lasting as we'd like it to be. Such is the case in District 5, where one of our Annual Flower Show trophies is named after **Larry Glass**. The trouble is we have no idea who Larry Glass is. The trophy, given to the society with the most points in the show, was first awarded in 1973. There's very little documentation from that time period still around, and, so far, we haven't found any of our members who remember Larry.

As a last-ditch attempt to put a memory to the name, we're hoping that someone out there, perhaps a former member of a District 5 society who has moved to another part of the province, will be able to give us some information. If you have any information about Larry Glass, please **contact Malcolm Geast at district5@gardenontario.org, or 416-429-4719.**

Insurance Queries?

Contact:

Brian McCartney
Law Insurance,
14900 Yonge Street
Aurora, ON L4G 1M7
1-800-529-2235
oha@lawbrokers.com

Helen Scutt, Agriculture Organization Specialist

Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs
Economic Development Branch,
1 Stone Road West, 3rd Floor SW,
Guelph ON N1G 4Y2
Tel: 519 826-3115 Fax: 519 826-3567
E-mail: **helen.scutt@ontario.ca**