



# 2020

Ontario Horticultural Association

*Keeping Ontario Beautiful™*



**Garden Ontario**  
KEEPING ONTARIO BEAUTIFUL™



June 30, 2021

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## THE ONTARIO HORTICULTURAL ASSOCIATION

**OUR VISION:** *The Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA) will create a supportive environment for gardeners of all ages. We will foster the growth of our member Societies/Clubs and encourage the use of eco-friendly horticultural practices to promote the production of food, the beautification of our communities and the conservation of our environment.*

The Ontario Horticultural Association is a volunteer, charitable organization whose mission is to provide leadership and assist in the promotion of education and interest in all areas of horticulture and related environmental issues in Ontario, through an expanding network of Horticultural Societies/Clubs dedicated to the beautification of their communities. The Ontario Horticultural Association pursues its mission by:

- Providing grants for trees and community beautification projects throughout Ontario.
- Developing programs in the areas of conservation and the environment, youth and horticulture.
- Providing support to its member Horticultural Societies/Clubs in the form of shared insurance plans, promotion, speaker lists, procedure manuals, volunteer recognition, projects, event and websites.
- Holding an annual general meeting at the convention and providing educational opportunities for members.
- Publishing items of a horticultural or environmental nature such as the Trillium newsletter, the Pollinator Brochure and the Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards.

The Ontario Horticultural Association depends on the support of its members and charitable donations to carry out its work. You are encouraged to support the OHA as a volunteer by joining an affiliated Horticultural Society/Garden Club or by making a charitable donation.

### **Societies/Clubs Are Keeping Ontario Beautiful™**

There are 271 affiliated Horticultural Societies/Clubs in Ontario hard at work *Keeping Ontario Beautiful™*. The projects include a wide variety of activities like beautifying local parks, planting boxes in downtown areas and creating and maintaining public gardens around government buildings, hospitals, health and hospice centres.

## 2020 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



2020 is a year that will go down in history. The world was declared to be in a pandemic called COVID-19. Societies/Clubs cancelled meetings, events, plant sales and membership declined. Societies/Clubs became silent and many areas of Ontario were in complete lockdown for months.

The total membership for the Ontario Horticultural Association was down by approximately 6000 members.

Slowly, Societies/Clubs began to look at ways to keep in touch with their members. Newsletters, phone calls and then Zoom, Microsoft Teams and WebEx were being used on a trial basis. The resiliency of members started to come forward.

Speakers from out of the province and country were found for various topics for virtual meetings. YouTube videos brought a wealth of information to those who attended virtually; and yet many could not attend because of lack of strong internet service. But those who were able to attend were happy to see close gardening friends without masks and were able to chat back and forth on the chat line of the virtual media.

Communities did suffer for lack of volunteers because of the lockdowns. Many Community Gardens, community parks and special projects were put on hold. For the first time in the 114-year history of the Ontario Horticultural Association, the annual convention had to be cancelled.

The Officers of the OHA continued with monthly meetings via WebEx and kept the Societies/Clubs apprised of all government regulations. The board also met virtually to continue the work of the Ontario Horticultural Association.

We welcomed a new Treasurer in the fall of 2020, Marian Heil, who has brought a wealth of knowledge to the position and has brought about new ideas to the Officers. We thank Marian and Secretary, Kelly Taylor for their tireless, excellent work in keeping the OHA up to date even in a pandemic.

I would also like to thank the dedicated 19 District Directors who volunteered their time to keep in touch with their Societies/Clubs and tried to calm the waters when things were getting pretty scary.

All Societies/Clubs in the OHA are incorporated with Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs. First Vice-President, Charles Freeman, spent many hours on the phone with OMAFRA personnel to have the yearly grants continued despite very little for the Societies/Clubs to report. His tireless determination to keep all Societies/Clubs afloat in this pandemic showed his dedication and passion for all members of the organization.

It has been a rough year in more ways than one and yet I am amazed at the determination and dedication of all the members, executives of Societies/Clubs, District Directors and their boards to find new ways to connect.

I have enjoyed my two years as your President because I have a good team to work with. I thank you all.

Our work is not done. We have a strategic plan to work on and many committee actions that need to proceed.

We are part of something special. More people are asking us questions on how to grow vegetables, annuals and perennials and how to do it in an environmentally responsible way. We are always looking to achieve our goals, mission and vision. We will come out of this pandemic changed in many ways and we must look to a wonderful, beautiful future for our organization and the communities in which we live.

**Do not follow where the path may lead. Go instead where there is no path and leave a trail. ~ George Bernard Shaw**

Katharine Smyth,  
Ontario Horticultural Association President 2018-2021

## EXECUTIVE AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2020

The President and Vice Presidents are elected by the voting delegates at the Annual General Meeting. The Secretary and Treasurer are hired by the board. The Past President remains on the board for one year.

### Officers

NAME	POSITION
Katharine Smyth	President
Charles Freeman	Vice President
Sharlene Desjardins	2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President
Kelly Taylor	Secretary
Jane Leonard/Marian Heil	Treasurer
Rose Odell	Past President/Past Presidents' Council Representative
Vicky Culbert	South/West Regional Representative
Anne Harbord	North/East Regional Representative



**Katharine  
Smyth**  
President



**Charles  
Freeman**  
Vice President



**Sharlene  
Desjardins**  
2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President



**Rose  
Odell**  
Past President



**Kelly  
Taylor**  
Secretary



**Marian  
Heil**  
Treasurer



**Anne  
Harbord**  
N/E Regional Rep.



**Vicky  
Culbert**  
S/W Regional Rep.

## OHA DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

The Province is divided into Districts as follows:

1. Dundas, Glengarry, Prescott, Russell, Stormont, the eastern portion of the city of Ottawa composed of the former municipalities of Gloucester and Cumberland and the municipality of North Grenville.
2. Lanark, Renfrew and the portion of the city of Ottawa excluding the former municipalities of Gloucester and Cumberland.
3. Frontenac, Hastings, Leeds and Grenville except the municipality of North Grenville, Lennox and Addington, Prince Edward
4. Haliburton, Kawartha Lakes, Northumberland, Peterborough,
5. Toronto East of Yonge Street, and York East of York Road No. 1 except Georgina East of Park Road
6. Brant, Halton, Hamilton, Norfolk and that portion of Haldimand known as Ward 1, Ward 2, Ward 3 and Ward 4.
7. Dufferin, Wellington
8. Bruce, Grey, Huron
9. Haldimand except Wards 1 & 2 & 3 & 4, Niagara
10. Elgin, Middlesex, Oxford, Perth and that portion of Lambton that is Lambton Shores
11. Chatham-Kent, Essex, Lambton, except for Lambton Shores

12. Territorial District of Cochrane, Territorial District of Timiskaming
13. Territorial District of Algoma, Territorial District of Manitoulin, Territorial District of Sudbury
14. Territorial District of Kenora, Territorial District of Rainy River, Territorial District of Thunder Bay
15. Peel, York west of Road No.1, Toronto west of Yonge Street
16. Simcoe
17. Durham and the portion of York that includes Georgina east of Park Road
18. Territorial District of Parry Sound, Territorial District of Muskoka, Territorial District of Nipissing
19. Waterloo

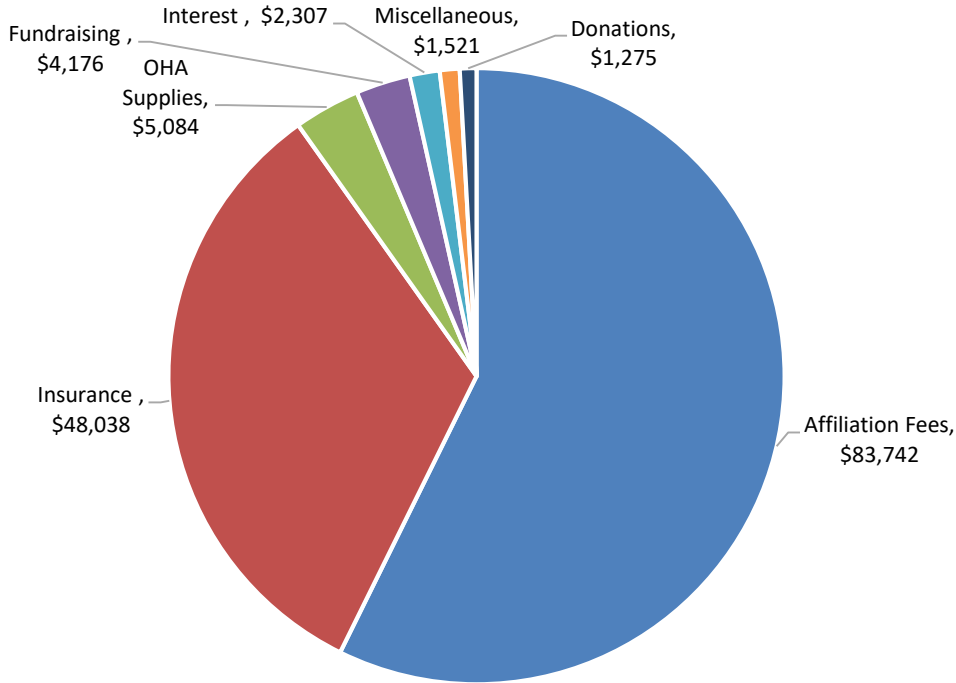
The Director of each District is elected by the affiliated Societies/Clubs of that District at a District Annual Meeting.

## District Directors

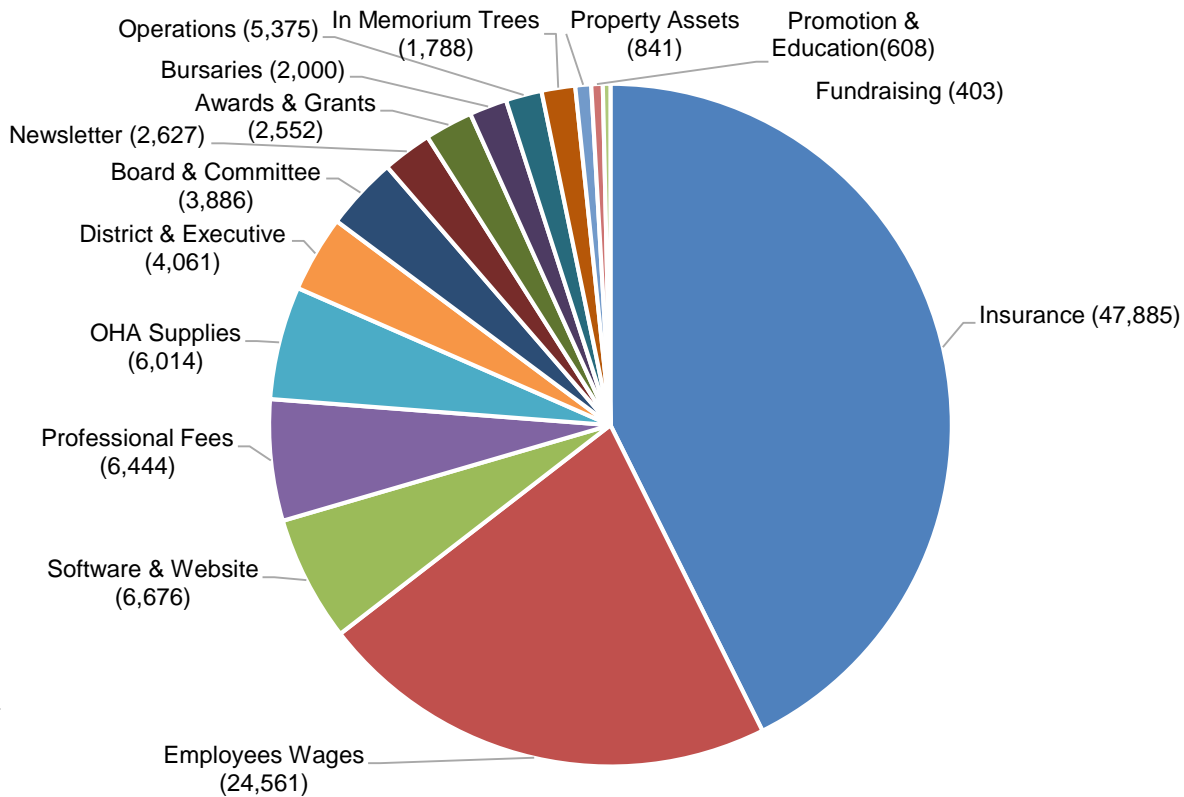
NAME	DISTRICT	NAME	DISTRICT
Candace Dressler	1	Marg Laman	11
Anne Harbord	2	Peggy McIntyre	12
Sue Carew	3	Christine Marsh	13
Patty Carlson	4	Sandra Mazur	14
Cindy Scythes	5	Barb O'Malley	15
Catherine McGill	6	Linda Forster / Barbara Collinson	16
Kathy Bouma	7	Rick Causton	17
Vicky Culbert	8	Carol Armstrong	18
Margaret Tanaszi	9	Bruce MacNeil / Kathy Pearson	19
Shelley MacKenzie	10		

# THE FINANCIAL PICTURE - 2020

## 2020 OHA Income



## 2020 OHA Expenditures





## VOLUNTEER HOURS

Through our local affiliated Societies/Clubs, the OHA is active across Ontario improving urban and rural landscapes, giving seniors' residences a hand with gardening, planting roadsides with wildflowers, planting trees and shrubs - the list of OHA activities is unlimited.

Volunteers are the backbone of everything we do. Joining our organization gives you the opportunity to meet new people, create friendships, develop new skills and share your love of gardening.

In 2020, 271 affiliated Societies/Clubs, District Executives and the OHA Board of Directors recorded 252,899 volunteer hours in community service across Ontario. This is an amazing achievement and shows the commitment and dedication of all members of the OHA, even in a pandemic!

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## BURSARIES

The OHA continues to provide two annual bursaries of \$1,000, awarded on the basis of financial need, to a second or third year student attending Lakehead University (Ontario Horticultural Association Bursary) studying Forestry, Biodiversity & Conservation, Plant Sciences, Botany, Biochemistry or Environmental Management and to a continuing student at the University of Guelph (Ontario Horticultural Association Scholarship) concentrating their studies in Horticulture Science.



Districts and Societies/Clubs have also continued tremendous support to students with over \$40,000 provided in grants and bursaries in 2020.

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## OHA PARTNERSHIPS

The OHA is working in partnership with the following organizations:

- Bee City Canada
- Garden Clubs of Ontario
- Landscape Ontario
- Lee Valley
- Ontario Gardener Magazine
- Ontario Invasive Plant Council
- Ontario Ministry Agricultural Food and Rural Affairs
- University of Guelph Arboretum
- W. H. Perron



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## OHA OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Outreach programs, through their directors and members, maintain contact with organizations and events in Ontario. OHA representatives attend events or serve on the boards of other organizations.

- **Ontario Invasive Plant Council**
  
- **DISTRICT 4**
  - Peterborough Garden Show, Peterborough (cancelled for 2020)
  - International Plowing Match – Kawartha Lakes – Lindsay (cancelled for 2020)
  
- **DISTRICT 5**
  - Canada Blooms, Toronto
  - Get the Jump on Spring, Toronto Botanical Garden, Toronto
  
- **DISTRICT 6**
  - Hamilton Gage Park Mum Show, Hamilton
  - Royal Botanical Gardens Plant Faire, Burlington (cancelled for 2020)
  
- **DISTRICT 10**
  - Western Fair District (cancelled for 2020)
  - Western Fair Go Wild, Grow Wild Event, London (cancelled for 2020)
  
- **DISTRICT 15**
  - Canadian National Exhibition, Toronto (cancelled for 2020)

# OHA GRANTS

## Tree Grants

Starting January 1st each year, the OHA distributes \$200 grants for the planting of a tree or trees by affiliated Societies/Clubs on public land.

- Eganville & Area – District 2
- Madawaska Valley HS – District 2
- Perth & District HS – District 2
- Georgetown HS – District 6
- Stoney Creek GC & HS – District 6
- Clifford & District – District 7
- Durham & District – District 8
- Tavistock & Area – District 10
- Thorndale & Area – District 10
- Amherstburg Fort Malden – District 11
- Essex & District – District 11
- Wheatley – District 11
- Sarnia – District 11
- Tilbury HS – District 11
- Thessalon – District 13
- Midland HS – District 16
- Cannington HS – District 17

## Special Project Grants

To assist affiliated Societies/Clubs in meeting the objectives of the Ontario Horticultural Association, the board will provide a Special Project Grant to a maximum of \$500 for each project.

- Williamstown HS – District 1
- Chesley HS – District 8
- Midland HS – District 16

## Community Garden Grants

The OHA encourages its member Societies/Clubs to create or contribute to community gardens whether urban or rural. OHA will award a grant of \$500 to assist in the funding of a new community garden or the upgrading of an existing community garden.

- Eganville & Area – District 2

## Pollinator Grants

The OHA will provide grants of \$200 each, annually to eligible affiliated Societies/Clubs, to create habitat in the form of pollinator friendly gardens or nesting sites on public land.

- Brighton HS – District 4
- Leaside HS – District 5
- Delhi & District – District 6

# THE IMPACT COVID-19 HAD ON THE OHA, DISTRICTS AND SOCIETIES/CLUBS

The year 2020 started with the usual request to have all Societies/Clubs submit their Annual Information Reports to the OHA and also to OMAFRA. Everything was moving forward as plans were made, worked on or finalized for all of the usual Spring activities.

January 25th, 2020 saw the first reported case of the Novel Coronavirus in Ontario and by March 17th, 2020, a State of Emergency had been declared. With that came the fall of most of the plans for Spring and, as time went on, for the year.

The effects upon the Societies/Clubs and the OHA were seen across the province as most of the activities came to a halt. The financial ramifications were obvious and immediate. The negative effect of all of this was most noticeable in the morale of the members as their desire to contribute to not only their Society/Club but also the local community was curtailed by the restrictions of Federal, Provincial and Local Health Units. At the same time, the OHA was forced to cancel its Convention and AGM which had been the cornerstone of the organization since 1907. Again, the impact upon activities, finances and morale were immediate.

The negative side of the COVID-19 pandemic is reflected in the facts that membership across the province was reduced by approximately 6,000 members; almost all Societies/Clubs lost significant income, as did the OHA and the number of volunteer hours contributed across the province by the members fell dramatically. Gone were the plant sales, garden tours, visits to schools, community initiatives, face-to-face monthly Society/Club meetings, as well as the Society/Club AGMs and the District AGMs.

From every downfall, there are upswings and this is true with the COVID-19 pandemic. OMAFRA stepped up and, after many conversations, the Minister allowed membership numbers from 2019 to be used for the Annual Information Report thus all Societies/Clubs were able to receive their grant money in the Spring. Also, the OHA was able to simply move the Convention for 2020 to 2021 and the ripple effect of moving the following two (2) Conventions was also accomplished.

The most important upswing was the effort that most Societies/Clubs and the OHA put forth as we all navigated the newly imposed virtual world. Yes, there were some Societies/Clubs that, for various reasons, could not utilize the technology associated with virtual activities and meetings but for the most part, the innovative ways that were found to still contribute to the effectiveness of the Societies/Clubs and their effects on the local communities was rewarding. Societies/Clubs held virtual meetings, virtual competitions, virtual AGMs, plant sales, garden tours and did their best to keep their communities beautified.

In short, did COVID-19 have a dramatic negative effect on Societies/Clubs, Districts and the OHA? Yes, it did! Will the effects be felt for some time? Yes, they will be, well beyond 2020/2021 especially at the grass roots level of Societies/Clubs. Will the Societies/Clubs, Districts and the OHA be able to continue contributing to the local community and the province? Yes, they will! The ingenuity of so many members will ensure that Societies/Clubs, Districts and the OHA get back to as close as possible to those “normal” or “we usually did it this way” times before COVID-19 in whatever ways are possible and safe.

At all levels, we must and will concentrate upon that which we can do safely and how we can do it and innovatively continue to serve our local communities and the province.

Charles Freeman  
Vice President, Ontario Horticultural Association

## OHA INTRODUCES YOUTH PROGRAM STANDARDS AND POLICE CHECK GRANTS

The OHA created a new Youth Program Standard for Leaders to ensure the safety of all of the participants and leaders. One of the changes in the new standards is a recommendation to have yearly Police Checks & Vulnerable Sector Checks. The OHA understands the financial implications associated with the acquisition of annual Police Checks & Vulnerable Sector Checks. These checks afford Societies/Clubs protection for not only the children/youth and/or vulnerable sector individuals they interact with but also for the Society/Club members who dedicate their time and effort to activities involving children/youth and/or vulnerable sector persons.

In an effort to lessen the financial impact on Societies/Clubs and/or those who interact with children/youth and/or vulnerable sector persons, the OHA has initiated a process whereby reimbursement of some of the cost of the checks can be applied for by use of this form.

Any such Society/Club, in Good Standing with the OHA, may apply annually for this grant. The grant shall be used to offset the annual costs incurred by the Society/Club and or its membership to acquire Police Checks as is recommended by the OHA Policy and Procedure related to such Police Checks. Police Check Process and Reimbursement Information can be found at: <https://gardenontario.org/wp-content/uploads/Police-Check-Process-and-Reimbursement-Form.pdf>

# OHA MAKES YOUTH HELP GRANTS MORE ACCESSIBLE

We listened to you and heard that our old Youth Help Grants were too restrictive so it was rewritten and now any OHA Youth Group/Club or Society/Club can apply. This program was developed to provide financial support to Societies/Clubs who are working with youth. Any Society/Club in Good Standing with the Ontario Horticultural Association, which is working with youth, may apply for the grant. The grant may be used for programming, seeds, special events, supplies, youth start up, etc. for the Society/Club applying for the grant.

The first 50 Societies/Clubs working with youth to apply will receive a grant of \$75.00, provided the Societies/Clubs dealing with youth have complied with the requirements

It is first come so get your application in early! Applications can be found at: <https://gardenontario.org/wp-content/uploads/2020-youth-help-grant.pdf>

# OHA SPONSORS YOUTH TO ATTEND MOTHER EARTH YOUTH SUMMIT

The OHA has made a commitment to youth by agreeing to support up to 4 youth aged 14 - 20 years to the Mother Earth Youth Summit, which is held every fall.



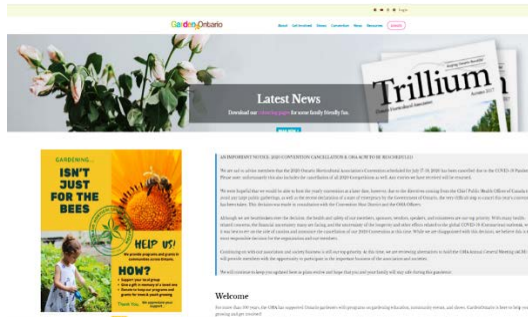
As with many events this past year, this one had to go virtual with the youth developing a peer network of young environmental leaders, learning conservation and reconciliation, understanding the importance of working across cultures, indigenous rights & interests, all with the goal of sharing what they have learned moving forward and forming Eco groups in their communities. In 2021, the OHA will support more youth to attend this event due to it being solely virtual, which has a lowered cost per youth.

As you can see, we have prioritized the youth in the work we are doing as they are truly our future. The OHA has also been working on a few items to keep children busy and engaged. We have created colouring pages available to youth of all ages. These are printable colouring pages showcasing native birds, plants, bees and trees. These can be found at: <https://gardenontario.org/wp-content/uploads/gardenontario-weplant-colouring-pages.pdf>

# COMMUNICATIONS

Several tools are used to communicate within the OHA to keep in touch with our affiliated Societies/Clubs and to increase our exposure within the general population.

- The OHA website, [www.GardenOntario.org](http://www.GardenOntario.org) continues to be our major source of communications and transmission of information.
- In 2020, the OHA and its Districts used virtual means to communicate with Societies/Clubs such as Zoom, WebEx and Microsoft Teams.
- The quarterly publication, the *Trillium*, is emailed to a majority of affiliated Societies/Clubs and donors, with a hard copy mailed to those requiring it. All issues of the *Trillium* are posted on the [www.GardenOntario.org](http://www.GardenOntario.org) home page. Past issues are archived on the website.
- Many District Directors generate their own newsletters and communicate important information to the Societies and general membership. All affiliated Societies/Clubs have access to OHA material for distribution.
- The OHA offers promotional items to Districts, affiliated Societies/Clubs and members through the virtual Garden Shop and through the GardenOntario Vista Print Store where items such as Pins, Certificates, T-shirts, Sweaters, Mugs, Hasty Note Cards, the *Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards* booklet and a variety of free promotional materials are made available.
- Publicity and promotional pieces are developed and circulated to various locations and are available at our outreach events.
- Normally, the Annual Convention of the Ontario Horticultural Association includes the Annual General Meeting of the organization. At this meeting, affiliated Societies/Clubs receive necessary financial and business reports. Election of the Officers for the coming year takes place. Networking, attending workshops and speaker sessions, as well as fostering social interaction are just some of the important benefits of attending the Annual General Meeting of the OHA. In 2020, the OHA Convention and AGM was cancelled due to COVID-19.
- The Ontario Horticultural Association Officers and Board Members met four times last year via virtual means using WebEx technology and teleconference calls. Decisions made at those meetings were made by the members of the board which they considered to be in the best interest of the affiliated Societies/Clubs they represent. The OHA Officers met monthly via WebEx and teleconference to continue the business of the Association.



# SUPPORT THE ONTARIO HORTICULTURAL ASSOCIATION



The Ontario Horticultural Association is a volunteer, charitable organization whose mission is to provide leadership and assist in the promotion of education and interest in all areas of horticulture and related environmental issues in Ontario, through an expanding network of affiliated Societies/Clubs dedicated to the beautification of their communities.

The OHA pursues its mission with the volunteer support of its members and depends on charitable donations to fund a number of its key activities. Support the OHA with a charitable donation.

Your donation supports OHA grants for trees and community beautification projects throughout Ontario or programs in the areas of conservation and the environment, youth and horticulture.

You may also be interested in the OHA's In Memoriam Program. The Ontario Horticultural Association "In Memoriam" book is an opportunity for gardeners in the Province of Ontario to be remembered by their peers, affiliated Societies/Clubs or individuals who have devoted their lives to the joys of tending their own land, and, in many instances, public gardens.

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## LEGACY GIVING

Remembering the OHA in your will is a wonderful way to continue to foster and support eco-friendly horticultural practices and continue to promote "Keeping Ontario Beautiful™".

The Planned Legacy Giving Program simplifies the charitable giving experience by handling administrative tasks (i.e. issuing cheques, record-keeping, grant reporting and tax receipts) for each account.



The OHA encourages you to speak with your family and your professional advisors to learn more about the benefits of a Charitable Giving Program or Legacy Giving.

For more information on donations and legacy giving, please visit:

<https://gardenontario.org/donate/>