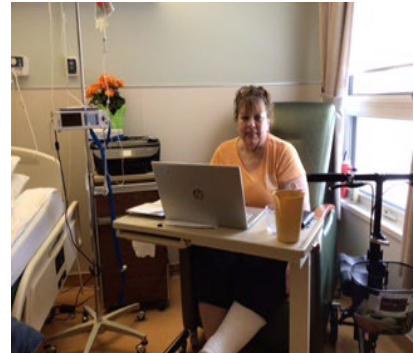




Sandra Mazur, Nominated for Vice President

I have been nominated by the Dryden Horticultural Society and accepted the nomination for the position of Vice President of the Ontario Horticultural Association with joy!

Last August marked 50 years of my volunteering within my community. Volunteering becomes a way of life when you enjoy meeting people. This past year has shown a different commitment for me. In November, I was admitted to the TBRHSC for surgery on my ankle. Unfortunately, I had a bad infection and needed IV antibiotic treatment before they could proceed with yet another surgery due to the infection. I had to remain in the hospital during this treatment. I was filling in my journals quickly and after a couple of months, I asked my husband to bring my printer into the hospital. From November until April I worked on my volunteer work from my hospital room. It has been a long and often difficult and painful road. However, the good news is that I am going home in a couple of days. I may be going back to the hospital in the future but this time it will be as a volunteer, as many are needed within the acute and long-term care wards of my local hospital.



I joined the Thunder Bay Horticultural Society in 2004, and I held a position on the Executive of the Thunder Bay Board for many years helping to organize and plan events. I sat as the Outreach Chair and loved attending events in public to promote our society. For 6 years I held the District 14 Directors Position. Like everything else in the world, it was a difficult path to navigate through the Covid pandemic, but we made it. As with many societies and aging members, the challenging task has is to get the younger generation interested in joining. That is one thing that Covid gave us a boost with, as so many of the younger generation began to garden due to food shortages, empty shelves, and price increases. This uncertainty continues today with the new Trade War between our country and the USA. The uncertainty about job security will encourage the younger generation to garden this year even more. We now need to invite these new gardeners to join our organization and let them know that we as long-term members have so much to share with them. These new younger gardeners are the future to ensure our societies continue to thrive.

After living in Rural Thunder Bay most of my life, I moved from Kakabeka Falls to Dryden and while there I joined the Dryden and District Horticultural Society where I have enjoyed my time visiting gorgeous gardens and listening to fascinating new speakers. They have a unique 2-day plant sale where members get a 20% discount on Friday night, then the sale continues Saturday at regular prices open to everyone. It sure encourages the community gardeners to want to be a member, so they get that generous discount. I continue to be a member of Dryden Horticultural Society but have now made a move to the small nearby town of Atikokan, Ontario. Atikokan is known as the Canoeing Capital of Canada. It is the gateway to outdoor adventures in Quetico Provincial Park and the White Otter Wilderness Area surrounded by beautiful lakes. My goal in the future is to eventually get a garden club going in the new community. I see vegetable gardens in many yards in the community.

As the Past District 14 Director, I have held a variety of committee positions on the Provincial Board. For 8 years I have been on the Competitions Committee and held the Chair of Creative

Writing. I enjoy reading everyone's submissions before I pass them on to be judged. I was so saddened to hear of the passing of a long-time contributor Tracy Bosley this year. My condolences to her family. While I never met Tracy in person, I feel like I knew her as a friend as we often communicated about the creative writing categories or questions concerning it. That is how our circle of friends grows within our organization. The new Chair of the Competitions Committee, Ursula Eley, is working hard to find a way to give you the opportunity to still be able to have Competitions in non-Convention years. I look forward to working with her to see how we can make that happen. I also sit on the Donation, Fundraising and Sponsorship Committee and we have been working hard to increase our fundraising and find corporate sponsors to keep our budget balanced. In the past, I chaired the Conservation and Environment Committee and now watch as they soar, under the new chair bringing you exciting speakers and new business cards directing you to the Grow Me Instead page. I also sat as the North-East Representative on the Officers and Finance Committee. For the past two years I have been your OHA 2nd Vice President participating in Officer and Finance Committee and the Awards Committee Meetings. In addition, I worked with a team to finalize the New Scholarship for OHA Members and Family Members. Since it began, I have worked with Marian Heil on our 50/50 Draw. Marian has now retired however she remains as a support. I look forward to working with Joy, our new OHA Treasurer. I wish Marian the best as she enjoys retirement years and hope that Joy and I can find ways to reach our 50/50 Draw out even further across our province. We desperately need public support as the funds from the lottery fund many of our grants and educational opportunities. I ask each of you on Facebook to please share our draw page. Even if you are not purchasing a ticket, the opportunity of having you share our draw with others is certainly appreciated as it extends our outreach.

I have been married to my husband Fred for 47 years, and we have a daughter Jennifer, and two sons Jacob and John. We have three biological grandchildren but our grandchildren number "is many" as we gained in over 18 years of fostering. We still have wonderful relationships with many children and their families today. During the years our children were growing up, I supported and advocated for them and their interests. I sat on Parent-Teacher Committees and Parent Fundraising Committees for school play structures, class trips and microwaves for the children to heat their lunches. I also assisted with Hockey Tournament Committees over the years. Additionally, I spent 23 years with Girl Guides of Canada as a leader in Sparks, Brownies, Guides and travelled and partnered with our Path Finder Unit. Holding positions at all levels, I finished a term as the Guides Canada Public Relations Chairwoman for Ontario. My volunteering also extended to the Hymers Agricultural Society where I held many positions but was so proud to accomplish the "restructuring" of a Volunteer Lounge for our volunteers to take their breaks out of the hot sun. I became President for 3 years, chairing the board and organizing their fall fair. I have been a member of The Royal Canadian Legion Branch #225 for over 20 years and spent many years volunteering in various positions within the legion and on the board. I continue to sit as a Director/ Secretary with the Legion Seniors Apartment Complex in Kakabeka Falls.

I have been passionate about gardening since childhood but have recently had to change to raised beds to enable me to continue gardening. I have planted new fruit trees and berries that will be beneficial in my pickling, preserving and jam making.

I look forward to continuing to work for you in the position of Vice President and assist our organization in moving forward with membership and other initiatives I have committed to.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra Mazur,
OHA 2nd Vice President (current)