

Keeping Ontario Beautiful

Trillium

Ontario Horticultural Association

AUTUMN 2026



OHA President's Message

As summer colours fade and fall approaches, we are finishing our lake trips, preserving the harvest, and preparing our gardens and flower beds for the cold season. I am deeply honoured by the trust you have placed in me as your new President. We enjoyed a wonderful Convention at Durham College in Oshawa, and I sincerely thank Robin Burns and Debi Foster of District 17, Dennis Miluck of District 4, and their dedicated volunteers for making it such a success. I am pleased to welcome Cat McGill as Vice President and Karen Redmond as Second Vice President. We also extend our thanks and best wishes to Sharlene Desjardin, our Past President, who will continue as Chair of the Awards Committee, and to Vicky Culbert, who will remain on the board as Past President. I welcome our new board members and encourage anyone interested in volunteering to consider taking on a role with their society or club. Even helping with one task can make a meaningful difference.

As we move forward, please support our fundraising efforts. The funds are returned to our societies through grants and awards and help us create additional grant opportunities.

This year's scholarship was awarded to Matthew Smith, a member of Thornhill H.S. in District 15. His award will be presented soon, and a photo will appear in the next issue of the Trillium.



I recently returned from Winnipeg, where I visited the factory of our new partner, Equinox Desert Planters. The building's exterior features a beautiful display of planters filled with trees and flowers, enhancing the neighbourhood while showcasing the styles and colours of the pots they produce. I also met with our representatives, who asked that members include "OHA" in the subject line of email requests so they can be addressed promptly. I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to Linda Fraleigh, who originally approached me with the possibility of this fundraiser/discount program for the OHA. If you have any worthy ideas, please feel free to reach out to me. I am here as your representative. As you plan next year's gardens, please keep in mind that Communities in Bloom has announced its 2027 theme: "O Canada." This theme celebrates the landscapes, people, and places that make communities across Canada unique. Whether you are creating red and white floral displays, planting trees and regionally appropriate plants, enhancing community landscapes, celebrating local heritage, supporting environmental action, or beautifying public spaces, every project helps share your community's story and strengthen our connection to the places we call home.

Until next time, regards,

President
Sandra Mazur

*Cover photo by Debi Foster,
Judges Choice, Photography
Competition*



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Ontario Horticultural Association

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The Trillium is the quarterly online newsletter of the OHA where you'll find the latest gardening news.

The Trillium welcomes contributions from members of all Horticultural Societies and Garden Clubs across Ontario, in every district. If your Club or Society has a special project to share, we encourage you to submit a story along with photographs.

Articles and opinions included in this issue are those of the authors. They are shared to encourage learning and conversation, and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Ontario Horticultural Association.

Deadline: The deadline for the next issue is **December 1st**, but submissions are welcome at any time.

Articles: Please email in Word, PDF, or plain text format.

Photographs & Graphics:

Submit as separate files (not embedded in Word or PDF). Minimum resolution: 1000 × 800 pixels; full-size originals are preferred.

Include signed waivers from the photographer or artist.
<https://gardenontario.org/wp-content/uploads/Media-Release-and-Indemnity-Form-2024-01-26.pdf>

Provide the author's name and photographer's name(s) for proper credit.

To avoid illegal copyright issues, please do not submit articles, artwork and photographs copied from the internet or elsewhere unless written, signed permission from the writer, artist or photographer has been given.

Special Note: For images featuring minors, signed parental permission is required.

Send all articles and photographs to:

editor@gardenontario.org

Submission dates for 2026:

March 1	Spring Issue
June 1	Summer Issue
September 1	Autumn Issue
December 1	Winter Issue

Editor's Message



Autumn gives us a chance to slow down and take stock of everything we've accomplished during the summer. After months of planting, tending, weeding, learning, teaching, and celebrating, it's a good time to look back on what our gardening community has achieved together.

This edition reflects a province that has been busy, not only growing gardens but also strengthening societies, welcoming new members, and finding creative ways to support local communities. You'll read about fall fairs, youth programs, pollinator projects, and public-space plantings that will continue to thrive long after the summer heat has passed. You'll also see how many societies are already looking ahead, planning next year's initiatives while celebrating this year's successes.

I attended the 2026 Convention in Oshawa, where I enjoyed meeting people from across the province, hearing inspiring speakers, and touring beautiful gardens. The competition entries showcased an impressive range of creativity. The Awards section in this issue reflects the warmth and excitement of the weekend. The stories of this year's Award recipients, including their leadership, persistence, and generosity, remind us how much of the OHA's strength comes from individuals who quietly do extraordinary things. Their contributions strengthen societies, districts, and communities, leaving an impact that extends well beyond one season.

Don't forget to enter the Harvest 50/50 raffle, which supports grants, education, environmental programs, and youth engagement across Ontario. It is one of the ways we continue to invest in the future of horticulture, even as the growing season winds down.

The Trillium is a place for our community to learn from one another. Every article, photograph, and update offers a glimpse into the ideas taking root across Ontario, from creative projects to practical lessons learned along the way. Thank you to everyone who contributed to this issue and helped create a collection that can inform, inspire, and spark new conversations among our members.

Wishing you crisp autumn days, a chance to enjoy the gardens' last burst of colour, and time to appreciate the season's changing beauty.



David St. Amand
editor@gardenontario.org

To Subscribe to the Trillium

The online Trillium is free – just sign up and it will show up in your inbox 4 times a year. To subscribe today, email a request to – **The Trillium Distributor:**

secretary@gardenontario.org

The Trillium is also available on the OHA website:
<https://gardenontario.org>

A promotional poster for the Garden Ontario Harvest 50/50 Raffle. The background is a vibrant autumn scene with sunflowers, pumpkins, and fallen leaves. The Garden Ontario logo is at the top, with the tagline 'KEEPING ONTARIO BEAUTIFUL'. Below it, the word 'Harvest' is written in a large, stylized yellow font. The text 'Your Chance to Win this Fall' is in a white script font. A green banner with '50/50 RAFFLE' in white capital letters is centered. Four leaf-shaped callouts display ticket options: a green leaf for '700 tickets for \$75', a red leaf for '300 tickets for \$50', a red leaf for '60 tickets for \$20', and a yellow leaf for '10 tickets for \$10'. A brown box shows the raffle number 'RAF 1333331'. A yellow box states the draw date 'Draw: October 18, 2026'. A brown box says '50% Goes to the Winner!'. Text below indicates 'Proceeds support Garden Grants and Education in Ontario'. A yellow box urges 'Get Your Tickets Today!'. A QR code is positioned next to a pumpkin. At the bottom, the website 'https://www.rafflebox.ca/raffle/ontario-ha' is listed.

Garden Ontario®
KEEPING ONTARIO BEAUTIFUL®

Harvest

Your Chance to Win this Fall

50/50 RAFFLE

700 tickets for \$75

300 tickets for \$50

60 tickets for \$20

10 tickets for \$10

RAF 1333331

Draw: October 18, 2026

50% Goes to the Winner!

**Proceeds support
Garden Grants and Education
in Ontario**

Get Your Tickets Today!

<https://www.rafflebox.ca/raffle/ontario-ha>

Tickets will be sold beginning at 12:00 PM on July 27, 2026, and ending at 11:59 PM on October 17, 2026. All tickets purchased between July 27, 2026 at or after 12:00 PM and October 17, 2026 at or before 11:59 PM will be entered into the grand prize draw. Draw to take place on Sun. October 18, 2026 at 11:00 AM.

Licence # RAF1333331

For your chance to win, visit

<https://www.rafflebox.ca/raffle/ontario-ha>

Your ticket purchases for the OHA 50/50 Draw not only helps us keep Ontario Beautiful, but it supports education for youth and adults. It also supports environmental programs, awards and grants assisting with pollinators, tree planting and community beautification.

2026 Award and Grant Recipients

By Sharlene Desjardins

Photos by Merle Cole

Every year, the OHA has the privilege of recognizing people who give so generously of their time, talent, and energy to their societies, clubs, and communities. As always, we celebrate not only this year's award recipients, but also all nominees, and the many volunteers across Ontario whose dedication helps us continue our shared mission of Keeping Ontario Beautiful®.

Community Improvement Award

This plaque, presented by the Ontario Horticultural Association, recognizes an individual, organization, or company that has enhanced the beauty of a landscape and improved the quality of life in a community through a horticultural project.

This year's Community Improvement Award honours **Don Boucher** from the Agincourt Garden Club in District 5, who has devoted more than 20 years of service to both his society and his community. Year after year, he leads a team of volunteers in creating and planting community gardens throughout the town, building partnerships with local schools, churches, a community centre, and a retirement home to make each project possible.

Don typically oversees three gardens each year, carefully planning each one from start to finish. He works within budget, selects and purchases the plants, coordinates planting dates with volunteers, and ensures the society is able to reimburse the costs once the work is underway.

What makes his contribution especially remarkable is the consistency and care he brings to it. He returns to the gardens throughout the season to prepare the beds, complete the planting, weed, water, and work alongside each host site to make sure the gardens continue to thrive over the summer months.

The impact of this work reaches far beyond appearance alone. These gardens beautify spaces that might otherwise go without, while also improving soil health, helping prevent erosion, cleaning the air, and creating valuable habitat for pollinators such as bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insects.

Just as importantly, these projects bring gardening knowledge, beauty, and pollinator support into neighbourhoods that may not otherwise have the funding, labour, or expertise to create these spaces on their own.

Congratulations, Don!



Technical Award

This plaque is given to an individual who has been an invaluable technical resource for a Society or District, whether as an advisor, coordinator, webmaster, or virtual meeting support, helping others connect, communicate, and thrive.

This year's Technical Award recipient is **Shane Hodge** from the Norwood and District Horticultural Society in District 4. He has been a trusted source of technical support and guidance for the Norwood and District Horticultural Society for many years. In addition to that service, he also served as President in 2017 and 2018 and is currently the Society's Treasurer.

When the COVID-19 pandemic disrupted in-person gatherings, he quickly helped the society adapt by connecting with a local church to access a Zoom platform so board meetings and guest presentations could continue without interruption. Thanks to that initiative, the society now has its own Zoom account and can offer meetings in a hybrid format, making it easier for both members and guest speakers to participate from near or far.

Shane also improved the meeting experience by researching and securing a microphone system for members who had difficulty hearing presentations, along with a laptop, projector, and screen to better support society events and guest speakers.

His contributions have gone well beyond meetings alone. He created the society's Facebook page and continues to co-coordinate it, supports annual reporting for both the OHA and OMAFA through TPON, and provides training each year for the incoming President.

Shane has also helped modernize the society's day-to-day operations by introducing tools such as Google Docs and Excel spreadsheets for membership tracking and budgeting, and by expanding payment options to include e-transfers for memberships and events like the annual plant sale.

Congratulations, Shane!



Award of Merit

This certificate is presented to individuals who have made notable contributions to the programs of the Association, a District, or a Society or Club. This year, we are proud to honour three deserving recipients.

The first Award of Merit recipient is **Lisa Taylor** from the LaSalle Ambassador Horticultural Society in District 11. She is currently in her ninth year as a dedicated and highly respected leader within the LaSalle Horticultural Society and has gone above and beyond in supporting community beautification, championing pollinator-focused plantings, helping secure grants, and inspiring young people through horticultural education.



As the current Vice President, she is a visible, hands-on ambassador for the society. She promotes its work wherever she goes, whether she is chatting with residents near local pollinator gardens or encouraging community members through everyday conversations around town.

Her horticultural design work has been especially impactful, particularly in the thoughtful selection of pollinator-friendly plants. One outstanding example is the pollinator garden she designed on town-owned property next to the local library, a space chosen to be both easy to maintain and highly effective as a public educational and ecological feature.

Lisa is also an exceptional communicator. Through a youth program called "Pollinator Pathways," she introduced young people to the importance of pollinators and the plants that support them. Her warm, clear, and engaging teaching style kept participants interested and confident, right through to the moment they helped plant the very garden she had designed.

Congratulations, Lisa!



The second Award of Merit recipient is **Michelle Lynch** from the Oro-Medonte Horticultural Society in District 16. Michelle has been a member of the Society since 2012. From the beginning, she has brought energy, dedication, and expertise to every aspect of floral design, flower shows, judging, and encouraging others to participate.

A graduate of the District 16 Judges' School, she has chaired the flower show committee for nine years, overseeing four annual flower shows from start to finish. From writing schedules and organizing entries to arranging judges, awards, and certificates, she brings both expertise and care to every detail.

She has also helped create learning opportunities for members through workshops on floral design, taking part in planning, arranging presenters, and often co-presenting sessions herself.

Since graduating in 2014, she has served on the committee for the District 16 flower shows held at both the spring AGM and the fall seminar. She is consistently among the first to arrive, helping exhibitors with their entries and supporting the judges with generosity and professionalism.

Michelle has also served on the District 16 Judges' Committee since its beginning, helping organize the twice-yearly updates that strengthen design and horticultural judging across District 16 and beyond. In addition, she leads the flower show at the fall Coldwater Fair, a large and impressive event.



Her credentials reflect the depth of her knowledge. In addition to being a certified OHA judge, she is an accredited floral design and horticultural judge with the Garden Clubs of Ontario, an agricultural judge, and an accredited judge with the Canadian Rose Society. Michelle is also a board member of the Huronia Rose Society, where she chairs the rose sale, handles publicity, and co-chairs the flower show.

A University of Guelph horticulture graduate, she spent her career running her own landscaping business, with a special love for restoring overgrown gardens and bringing them back to life.

Her warmth, charm, and knowledge have enriched every project she has taken on. Just as importantly, her encouragement of both new and experienced exhibitors has helped inspire a new generation of gardeners and floral designers.

Congratulations, Michelle!



The third Award of Merit recipient is **Ann Atzori** from the Orangeville and District Horticultural Society in District 7, where she continues to be a valued and influential member. During her time as President from 2022 to 2024, she helped the society grow stronger by continuing successful programs while also introducing fresh ideas, new activities, and renewed energy.

One of her first initiatives was to introduce both the bargain bench and the draw table at monthly meetings. With donations from local businesses and members, these additions created a fun and practical way to share unused garden items, raise funds, and add new energy to society gatherings. She also launched "Facts in Five," giving members a chance to share their knowledge in brief, engaging presentations.



Community outreach flourished under her leadership. She listens carefully to members' ideas, values the diversity of skills and interests within the society, and turns that collective energy into meaningful new initiatives. Her enthusiasm is contagious, and she makes a point of ensuring new members feel welcomed, included, and encouraged from the moment they arrive.

Ann also leads by example, entering flower shows, attending workshops, and motivating fellow members to do the same. Her thoughtful improvements, including a photography station and display enhancements, helped showcase floral work beautifully and encouraged even greater participation.

During the challenges of COVID, she guided the society with care, helping keep members safe while still ensuring they could enjoy inspiring speakers and meaningful presentations through Zoom.

Her generosity has also been evident in countless practical ways, from contributing plants to the spring plant sale and speaking at the December awards night, to caring for saplings at her home during the District's Canadian Trees for Life initiative until members could collect them.

An enthusiastic photographer, she has often excelled in society photo contests, with one best-in-show image even appearing on the yearbook cover. Yet perhaps her greatest gift is the way she honours and encourages others. Her commitment to sharing recognition and creating space for more members to shine reflects the inclusive spirit she brings to everything she does.

Congratulations, Ann!

OHA Honour Roll



This recognition is presented to individuals who have made meaningful contributions through horticultural service, outstanding dedication, or support for the development of horticultural practices at the Society, District, or Association level. Each recipient receives a certificate and pin, and this year we are pleased to celebrate two recipients.

The first Honour Roll recipient, **Barb Smith**, has been a member of the Elmira & District Horticultural Society in District 19, also known as the Woolwich Gardeners, for more than 21 years. Since joining in 2004, after retiring from teaching, she has been a steady, enthusiastic, and deeply valued part of the society.



Accepting the award on behalf of Barb is District 19 Director, Christine Webb.

Barb first stepped into a leadership role with the society's bus trips in 2005, 2006, and 2007, even opening her own beautiful garden for others to enjoy along the way. Since then, she has continued as the garden tour coordinator and, at one point, held three board roles at once, including Garden Tours, Christmas Candlelight Tour, and representative for Elmira's Business Improvement Area.

In 2009, she took on the annual garden tour and helped turn it into one of the society's most successful and enjoyable fundraising events. Through regular meetings and personal outreach, she invites homeowners to share a wonderful range of gardens, from charming small spaces to expansive landscapes, accessibility gardens, and country properties. She often adds creative touches like scavenger hunts and local business coupons to make the experience even more memorable.

She is also a dedicated volunteer beyond the tours themselves, helping with events such as the spring plant sale and spending 15 years as a town planter, planting, watering, and weeding one of the society's public gardens alongside another board member.

Congratulations, Barb!



The second Honour Roll recipient is **Shelley Elmanskie** from the Orono Horticultural Society in District 17. Shelley has devoted more than 37 years of service to the Orono Horticultural Society and, for decades, has been a cornerstone of the Society, offering leadership, encouragement, and unwavering commitment in countless ways.

For 18 years, she has been an active member of the Beautification Committee, including eight years as chair. In that time, she has helped shape major projects such as the relandscaping of the cenotaph and improvements to public gardens at the park, library, and village entrances.

Her commitment to horticulture is extraordinary. She has donated hundreds of packets of self-saved seeds to welcome new gardeners at membership drives, published horticultural show results in the local newspaper for many years, and for the past 12 years has been the familiar and friendly voice of the phone committee, keeping members informed and connected.

For 36 years, she has served on the Programme Committee, regularly bringing forward fresh ideas and opportunities for learning. She brings energy and joy to every event, whether appearing in costume for the society's 100th anniversary AGM, cheering on new exhibitors, or helping with flower show records when needed. Her encouragement creates a sense of fun, belonging, and confidence for everyone around her.

Beyond her own society, she has built strong connections across the District by attending Presidents' meetings, District AGMs, and OHA conventions, and by generously sharing her knowledge as a guest speaker. A hands-on seed propagation demonstration and a gardening question-and-answer panel are just two examples of how she has inspired others.

Shelley's community spirit extends to the society's relationships with local businesses as well. Each year, she secures discounts for members from ten merchants, helps collect donated prizes, and even collaborated with a local Day Lily Farm to create a special fundraiser honouring the society's 100th anniversary.

For more than 36 years, she has embodied the very best of horticultural service through her leadership, mentorship, community spirit, and genuine love of helping both plants and people thrive.

Congratulations, Shelley!



Trillium/Silver Fir Award

This award recognizes an individual for outstanding service to Horticultural Societies or Clubs, and/or to the Ontario Horticultural Association, over an extended period of time. The Trillium Award is presented as a silver brooch in the shape of a trillium, and the Silver Fir Award as a silver lapel pin. This year, we are delighted to honour two recipients.

The first Trillium Award recipient is **Carol Bailey**, a long-standing member of the Orono Horticultural Society in District 17 whose 25 years of dedicated service began in 2001. Since then, she has contributed in countless ways, serving on the Board year after year and taking on leadership roles including President, First Vice President, and Second Vice President.

Her leadership on the Beautification Committee helped make Orono the town "Where Flowers Grow." Beginning in 2001, her organization, dedication, and hands-on care transformed public gardens and planter boxes throughout the community and helped build the town's well-earned reputation for beauty.

Since joining the Show Committee in 2006, she has played a leading role in shaping summer, fall, and Christmas shows that are welcoming, balanced, and encouraging for exhibitors of all experience levels. She is generous with her knowledge, approachable in every setting, and always delighted to celebrate the success of new participants.

Since 2004, she has also served on the programming committee, helping bring in knowledgeable and engaging speakers on topics ranging from tree care and pollinator health to bulbs, annuals, perennials, and vegetable gardening. More recently, she helped introduce an off-site August program hosted by a local garden centre for society members.

Carol is always looking for new ideas and better ways to support her society. During COVID, she adapted quickly to Zoom and even used her own phone to help fellow members stay connected. When she learned of the growing needs at the local food bank after the pandemic, she suggested the society step in to help. That idea became a highly successful food drive, complete with donated prizes and a silent auction, raising \$1,745 and collecting 463 pounds of food.

As President during the society's 90th anniversary, she challenged the society to reach 90 members in honour of the milestone, and under her leadership, they surpassed that goal with 96 active members. She also helped plan the society's 100th anniversary in 2021, which included a native tree dedication, a garden tour, and a tea marking the creation of a new public garden at the north end of Orono.

Her contribution can be seen in the everyday life of the society, in its operations, its committees, its celebrations, and its challenges. Through steady leadership, mentorship, and community spirit, she has helped ensure the society continues to flourish.

Congratulations, Carol!



The second Trillium Award recipient, **Kathy Reid**, has devoted 31 years of service to the Norwood and District Horticultural Society in District 4, joining in 1995 when she moved to the area. Over those three decades, she has served with dedication, leadership, and a deep commitment to both the society and the wider community.



Her work in pollinator gardening has had a meaningful impact in the community. Through a partnership with the Asphodel-Norwood library, she helped support the creation of a pollinator garden at the Westwood library, contributing donated plants, helping design and install the garden, and securing mulch to help it thrive. That project was formally dedicated in 2025.

Kathy also played an important role in preparing the grant application and final report for a District 4 project supporting a pollinator-friendly garden at Norwood United Church. That garden became both a valuable habitat and a living educational space. As part of the project, 35 children took part in an after-school program developed in partnership with the church and the society, and she helped design the activities and guide the children as they planted native wildflowers.

Her communication and promotional work has also been invaluable. She prepares materials for the annual plant sale, manages news releases and social media, and creates and installs the society's display for the Norwood Fall Fair. She was also active in promoting and fundraising for District 4's fall seminars in 2006 and 2014, as well as the District annual meeting in 2014.

Each month, she writes a gardening article for the Havelock Rail, a local news magazine, thoughtfully including information about the society's guest speakers and how visitors can attend a meeting. Those articles have helped welcome new members into the society.

In addition to all of this, she became an OHA-certified judge in 2016 and an accredited judge with the Canadian Rose Society in 2024. She researched and wrote the society's 30th anniversary booklet, "Memorable Moments of the Norwood and District Horticultural Society," and has completed major reviews of the society's Constitution and Bylaws in 2017, 2021, and again in 2025.

She is a dedicated and vibrant member of the society whose service has strengthened both its work and its connection to the broader community.

Congratulations, Kathy!



Silver Medal Award

This is the Association's highest honour, presented for outstanding work in advancing horticulture in keeping with the mission and goals of the Ontario Horticultural Association.

This year's Silver Medal recipient, **Bev Silk**, was a member of the Grafton Green Thumbs Horticultural Society in District 4 for more than 28 years. Although she moved in 2024 and joined the North Bay Horticultural Society in District 18, she leaves behind a remarkable legacy in Grafton, along with lasting friendships and a deep impact on the society she served so faithfully.

Throughout her years with Grafton, she worked tirelessly to promote horticulture not only within the society, but wherever she went. Even after moving north, she honoured her commitment to both the Grafton society and District 4 by continuing to serve as secretary and travelling back from North Bay for meetings through the end of 2024 and beyond.

Alongside John Liptay, a Past President of the Grafton Society, she played an instrumental role in creating Grafton Heritage Park. Once the park was established, she became its administrator and the convenor of the committee responsible for its upkeep, maintenance, and financial management. Her contribution is permanently recognized on a plaque in the park itself.

Bev also introduced a "memory tree" program, through which native trees were planted in parks and other public and private spaces to honour deceased life members. Those trees have flourished and brought lasting beauty to the hamlet. At her suggestion, benches were also purchased and placed in several locations around town, including St. Andrew's United Church, Haldimand Court, and the Post Office, adding both comfort and charm to those garden spaces.

She was also one of the organizers of the "100-mile diet," an initiative that encouraged people to eat food grown and produced within 100 miles of home.

Bev was a passionate advocate for public education about invasive plants and made that work highly visible in the community. Each year, she staffed an information table at the arena after the Canada Day Parade, helping residents better understand the challenges invasive species create. That outreach also inspired many new members to join the society.

She also introduced and championed practices such as lasagna gardening and no-till, no-dig gardening, while consistently promoting the values of reducing, reusing, and recycling.

One of her most meaningful contributions was the creation of the GO-GO Grafton Gardeners program for elementary students at the Grafton Public School. Through weekly after-school sessions held in the school greenhouse, she taught children how to grow plants from seed and propagate them from cuttings. She also created raised beds on the school grounds, where vegetables were grown and later donated to the local food bank. She cared for those gardens throughout the summer, and she proudly shared the junior gardeners' scrapbooks at conventions for years to come. In 2012, she was recognized with the Youth Leader Award, and many of the children she mentored have carried their interest in horticulture into adulthood.



She has consistently been at the forefront of promoting horticulture and has been a strong and enthusiastic advocate for the OHA and its member societies. She will be deeply missed as a regular presence at Grafton meetings, but her relationship with the society continues as both a consultant and life member. At the same time, the North Bay Horticultural Society is now fortunate to benefit from her experience, knowledge, and energy. She has given extraordinary service to horticulture, has provided leadership in community beautification, and has had a lasting influence on generations of gardeners.

Congratulations, Bev!



The OHA Membership Trophy, originally donated by Fines Flowers of Ottawa, is a trophy to be awarded to the District with the highest percentage membership increase overall for the year.

This year, the trophy goes to **District 18** with an increase of 13.5% and a total membership of 791 in 2025. Congratulations!

Each year, the OHA offers grants in many different categories to financially assist societies and clubs in beautifying their communities. It is a pleasure to present the recipients of the grant program for 2026.



Tree Grants

Williamstown HS	D1
Maxville & District HS	D1
Perth & District HS	D2
Whitewater Gardeners HS	D2
Carleton Place & District HS	D2
Bath HS	D3
Wilmot HS	D19

Paris HS	D6
Chesley HS	D8
Woodstock HS	D10
Belle River & District HS	D11
Wheatley HS	D11
Bruce Station HS	D13
Stoney Creek GC & HS	D6

Special Project/Environmental Grants

Whitewater Gardeners HS	D2
Glen Morris HS	D6

Wasaga Beach HS	D16
Huntsville HS	D18

Community Garden Grants

Cornwall & District HS	D1
Whitewater Gardeners HS	D2

Ripley & District HS	D8
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Technical Advancement Grants

Nepean HS	D2
Almonte & District HS	D2
Ayr HS	D19

Thunder Bay HS	D14
Nobleton & King City HS	D15
Chesley HS	D8

Accessibility Garden Grants

Whitewater Gardeners HS	D2
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LaSalle Ambassador	D11
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Pollinator Project Grants

Martintown & District HS	D1
Kemptville HS	D1
Whitewater Gardeners HS	D2
Bath GC & HS	D3
Glen Morris HS	D6

Ripley & District HS	D8
Grimsby HS	D9
LaSalle Ambassador	D11
Midland HS	D16

Seedy Saturday/Sunday Grants

Haldimand HS	D6
Essex & District HS	D11
Kitchener HS	D19

Orono HS	D17
Sprucedale & District	D18
Sudbury HS	D13

Youth Help Grants

Kanata-March HS	D2
Petawawa HS	D2
Lake Simcoe South Shore HS	D5
Glen Morris HS	D6
Harriston & District HS	D7

Ripley & District HS	D8
LaSalle Ambassador	D11
Pickering HS	D17
Wilmot HS	D19

Youth Project Grants

Bancroft HS	D3
Tweed & District HS	D3

Glen Morris HS	D6
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OHA Sponsors and Contributors

The OHA would also like to sincerely thank all of our sponsors and contributors. Your generosity makes these awards and grants possible, and your support helps strengthen the work of horticultural societies and clubs across Ontario.

50/50 Draws

We would also like to thank everyone who has purchased, and continues to purchase, tickets for the 50/50 draws. In 2025, more than \$11,000 in proceeds helped support grants and education. Your participation is making a meaningful difference, and we are truly grateful for your continued support.

Congratulations to all of the extraordinary volunteers who give so much to communities across our province. I encourage you to continue nominating deserving individuals within your societies, and groups within your communities, whose dedication and hard work help keep Ontario beautiful.

2026 Creative Writing Competition Results

Class One: Song Lyric

1 st	Nancy Gordon	Garden Hamilton MHHS	D6
2 nd	Libbi Hood	Pine Ridge Garden Club	D17
3 rd	Joyce Hopkins	Parry Sound & District	D8

Class Two: Poetry

1 st	Sally Rajah	BW Garden Club (Whitby)	D17
2 nd	Nancy Gordon	Garden Hamilton MHHS	D6
3 rd	Andrea Hester	Orono Horticultural Society	D17
HM	Debi Foster	Oshawa Garden Club	D17

Class Three: Narrative

1 st	Andrea Marci	Mount Hastings Society	D6
2 nd	Joyce Hopkins	Parry Sound & District	D8
3 rd	Nancy Gordon	Garden Hamilton MHHS	D6
HM	Sylvia Grant	Guelph Township Society	D7

Special Awards:

Judges' Choice	Andrea Marci	Mount Hastings Society	D6
Best in Show	Nancy Gordon	Garden Hamilton MHHS	D6

Song on the Wind by Sally Rajah

I walk through my garden alone, yet not alone
Sleepy beds are awakening, now Winter is gone
As the first warm rays of a new Spring
Trace its radiating signature across my skin
A pulsating tremolo rises on the air
Above, on the branches still bare
Sits a feathered avatar, an airborne drop of life
Greeting the day with all its melodious might

Not a care for the world's strife
Its notes ringing true and clear
Every refrain ending with, cheer, cheer, cheer!
I stop mid-stride with paused inhalation
Listening in fascination
Everything feels right; nothing wrong
The day has been celebrated,
By one little Cardinal's song

Song Lyric by Nancy Gordon

Verse

Oh, the weather's too warm to stay indoors
And the heat just might last till some rain pours, but
Outside a garden patch beckons to me
And it's certainly somewhere I'm longing to be

Chorus

Here, in my beautiful garden
Lovely as lovely can be
Nowhere on earth would I rather
Spend a day weeding with thee

Verse

Splendid promise the garden is showing
In its bounty my heart's overflowing
With buzzing of bees as I sink to my knees
And the birds singing softly high up in the trees

Chorus

Here, in my beautiful garden
Lovely as lovely can be
Nowhere on earth would I rather
Spend a day weeding with thee

Verse

All the flowers and veggies are calling
For the 'barrow we use for the hauling
But I'd rather linger with memories of you
And the laughter we shared in this garden we grew

Chorus

Here, in my beautiful garden
Lovely as lovely can be
Nowhere on earth would I rather
Spend a day weeding with thee
Lovely as lovely can be

To the tune of: 'Oh What a Beautiful Morning'

Narrative by Andrea Macri

Didi knelt in the dirt and set down the box of tools she'd been carrying. She was glad to be relieved of her burden. It was heavier than she'd expected.

Her garden had always been her sanctum. It was a beautiful place, especially now, as spring was transforming the bare brown dirt of winter into hopeful patches of green. She loved this time of year. Soon, the promise of renewal would come wafting on the soft scent of hyacinth, lilac, and lily of the valley.

It wasn't just the beauty of her garden that delighted her. There was something about pushing her hands into the dirt, scooping it up, or tamping it down around a fledgling plant that gave her peace. The connection to Mother Earth permeated and calmed her. She had often retreated here when life with her husband, Dale, had pushed her to her breaking point.

She had finally pushed back. Or had she? She still couldn't remember.

She closed her eyes. Images from that night came flooding back. Dale in the doorway. Shards of broken glass.

Eyes still closed, she swayed under the weight of these memories, then spread her fingers and placed her hands in the moist soil before her. As she pressed her palms into the dirt, she regained control of her thoughts and tried again to remember.

She'd come home late. He'd been waiting, drunk, in front of the television.

As soon as she was in the door, he was hurling insults. In their entire marriage, he had only hit her once. It had surprised them both. He'd never needed to touch her to hurt her. His words worked well enough.

She'd gone to the kitchen, where she'd found the grocery bag full of his clothes on the table. Grinning like a maniac, he'd explained he was leaving. He had their life savings, in cash, in the bottom of his makeshift 'suitcase', and he was going to split.

She had been filled with relief.

She'd crossed the kitchen, heading for the basement. She had seedlings to tend to instead of him. He'd cut her off, blocking the doorway. As she'd turned to walk away from him, he'd grabbed her wrist.

Even now it was hazy, had she wrenched her arm from his grip or had she pushed? Either way, he'd tumbled down the stairs and landed with a crack, beer streaming from the broken bottle. She'd stood there staring down at her husband in a heap, then closed the door, and went up to bed.

Looking back, she supposed that she'd been in shock.

The next morning, she'd gone about her day. Before she'd realized it, a week had passed. Dale's bag was still on the table. The basement door was still closed.

Dammit. Her seedlings needed her.

Years ago, she'd gone to see an *Amorphophallus Titanum*, one of those Corpse Flowers, in full bloom. It had smelled exactly as Dale did. Horrible. That clever plant had nailed it.

She'd come to the conclusion that going to the police was not going to go well for her, so she'd taken matters into her own hands and Dale to the chest freezer.

Now she was here, in her garden. In a way, Dale was too. In the dead of night, she'd hauled him here in her wheelbarrow and buried him. Her garden had kept her sane. From here on, it would keep her secret.

When she'd finished planting her seedlings, she closed her eyes again, and saw the possibilities for her life open in front of her like the petals of a tulip in the spring.



2026 Arts Competition Results

Class One: A Child's Garden

1 st	Marian Heil	Stoney Creek Society	D6
2 nd	Marg Munro	Cannington Society	D17
3 rd	Deena Errampelli	Grimsby	D6
HM	Karen Munding	Cannington	D17

Class Two: A Community Garden

1 st	Deena Errampelli	Grimsby	D6
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Class Three: The Colours of the Garden

1 st	Debi Foster	BWGC	D17
2 nd	Mary K Hardy	Orono	D17
3 rd	Deena Errampelli	Grimsby	D6
HM	Trish Rybski	Pelham	D9

Class Four: The Changing Light in the Garden

1 st	Tami Lyons	Thorold Garden Club	D6
2 nd	Mary K Hardy	Orono	D17
3 rd	Marian Heil	Stoney Creek	D6
HM	Anita Jackson	Pine Ridge Garden Club	D17

Class Five: The Music of the Garden (no entries)

Class Six: Birds in the Garden

1 st	Marg Munro	Cannington	D17
2 nd	Ursula Eley	Greater Toronto Bulb Society	D5
3 rd	Fern Lackenbauer	Pelham	D9
HM	Trish Rybski	Pelham	D9

Class Seven: My Garden Memories

1 st	Ursula Eley	Greater Toronto Bulb Society	D5
2 nd	Rose Scales	Thorold Garden Club	D9
3 rd	Cathleen McGill	Haldimand HS	D6
HM	Elizabeth Scheicher	Burlington	D6

Class Eight: Flora and/or Fauna of the Forest

1 st	Robert Foster	Oshawa	D17
2 nd	Sandra Cruz	Pelham	D9
3 rd	Bruce Martin	Thorold	D9

Class Nine: Perennials

1 st	Ursula Eley	Greater Toronto Bulb Society	D5
2 nd	Deena Errampelli	Grimsby	D9
3 rd	Trish Rybski	Pelham	D9
HM	Janice Wagler	Garden Willmot	D19

Special Awards:

Best in Show	Tami Lyons	Class 4	Thorold Garden Club	D9
Judges' Choice	Deena Errampelli	Class 2	Grimbsy Garden Club	D9



Photos by Ursula Eley



2026 Flower Show Results

Patty Carlson Show Co-chair (Bobcaygeon and District Horticultural Society)

Sherry Howard, Show Statistician (Brooklin-Whitby Horticultural Society)

Bonnie Lynn Murphy Co-chair of Show (Richmond Hill Garden and Horticultural Society)

Thanks to everyone on the Flower Show Committee and exhibitors for making this an outstanding show.

Summary Statistics

17 Exhibitors – 16 Societies

Section A - 20 entries

Section B - 51 entries

Section C - 13 entries

Section D - 9 entries

Section E - 11 entries

Design - 33 entries

Special Exhibits - 5 entries

Total entries - 142



Here Come the Judges Photo Credit: Merle Cole

HORTICULTURE DIVISION CONVENOR: Bonnie Lynn Murphy (Richmond Hill HS)

Section A - ANNUALS and BIENNIALS (20 entries)

Class 1: Coleus, 1 cultivar, 1 stem

1 st	Angie Andrus	Uxbridge HS
2 nd	Gloria Broks	North York HS
3 rd	Angie Andrus	Uxbridge

Class 2: Cosmos, 1 cultivar 3 stems

1 st	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS
2 nd	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS

Class 3: Marigold, 1 cultivar, 3 blooms with own foliage

1 st	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS
2 nd		
3 rd	Angie Andrus	Uxbridge HS

Class 4: Petunia, single, 1 cultivar, 3 stems

1 st	Shelley Ethanskies	Orono HS
2 nd	Angie Andrus	Uxbridge HS
3 rd	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS
HM	Shelley Ethanskies	Orono HS

Class 5: Petunia, semi-double/double, 1 cultivar, 3 stems - no entries

Class 6: Salvia, 1 cultivar, 3 stems - no entries

Class 7: Snapdragon, 1 cultivar, 3 stems

1 st	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS
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Class 8: Zinnia, 1 cultivar, 3 stems

1 st	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS
2 nd	Ainsley Gillespie	Beaverton HS

Class 9: Any other annual or biennial not listed above, 1 cultivar, 3 blooms, stems, spikes or sprays

1 st	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS
2 nd	Shelley Ethanskies	Orono HS
3 rd	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS

SECTION B – PERENNIALS, BULBS, CORMS, RHIZOMES and TUBERS (51 entries)

Class 10: Dahlia, Ball type, 1 stem

1 st	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS
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Class 11: Dahlia, Decorative (formal or informal), 1 stem

1 st	Angie Andrus	Uxbridge HS
2 nd		
3 rd	Angie Andrus	Uxbridge HS
HM	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS

Class 12: Dahlia, Cactus type, 1 stem - no entries

Class 13: Dahlia, Waterlily type, 1 stem - no entries

Class 14: Dahlia, any other type, 1 stem

1 st	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS
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Class 15: Echinacea, 1 cultivar, 3 stems

1 st	Marie Decker	Oakville HS
2 nd	Ainsley Gillespie	Beaverton HS
3 rd	Heinke Thiessen	Credit Valley HS

Class 16: Gaillardia, 1 cultivar, 3 stems - no entries

Class 17: Heuchera/Heucherella/Tiarella, 1 cultivar, 3 leaves

1 st	Shelley Ethanskies	Orono HS
2 nd	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS
3 rd	Shelley Ethanskies	Orono HS

Class 18: Hosta, 193 sq. cm to less than 413 sq. cm (30 sq. in to less than 64 sq. in), 1 cultivar, 3 leaves

1 st	Shelley Ethanskies	Orono HS
2 nd	Ainsley Gillespie	Beaverton HS
3 rd	Marie Decker	Oakville HS

Class 19: Hosta, 39 sq. cm to less than 193 sq. cm (6 sq. in to less than 30 sq. in), 1 cultivar, 3 leaves

1 st	Shelley Ethanskies	Orono HS
2 nd	Gloria Brooks	North York HS
3 rd	Marie Decker	Oakville HS
HM	Ainsley Gillespie	Beaverton HS

Class 20: Liliium, 1 stem (no more than 1/3 of stem to ensure future growth of the plant)

1 st	Shelley Ethanskies	Orono HS
2 nd	Ainsley Gillespie	Beaverton HS
3 rd	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS

Class 21: Phlox, 1 cultivar, 3 stems

1 st	Shelley Ethanskies	Orono HS
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Class 22: Rudbeckia, 1 spray

1 st	Marie Decker	Oakville HS
2 nd	Heinke Thiessen	Credit Valley HS

Class 23: Sedum, low growing, foliage, 1 cultivar, 3 stems

1 st	Angie Andrus	Uxbridge HS
2 nd	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS

Class 24: Sedum, upright, flowering, 1 stem

1 st	Angie Andrus	Uxbridge HS
2 nd	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS
3 rd	Shelley Ethanskies	Orono HS

Class 25: Any other perennial, bulb, corm, rhizome or tuber not listed above, 1 cultivar, 1 stem, spike, or spray

1 st	Shelley Ethanskies	Orono HS
2 nd	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS
3 rd	Ainsley Gillespie	Beaverton HS
HM	Angie Andrus	Uxbridge HS

Class 25B: subdivided Class 25

1 st	Sherry Howard	Brooklin-Whitby HS
2 nd	Angie Andrus	Uxbridge HS
3 rd	Shelley Ethanskies	Orono HS

SECTION C - ROSES (13 entries)

Class 26: Rosa, grown for fragrance, 1 specimen bloom

1 st	Marie Decker	Oakville HS
2 nd	Gloria Broks	North York HS

Class 27: Rosa, David Austin, 1 specimen bloom

1 st	Gloria Broks	North York HS
2 nd	Marie Decker	Oakville HS

Class 28: Rosa, Modern Shrub of Canadian origin (Morden, Parkland etc.), 1 spray

1 st	Gloria Broks	North York HS
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Class 29: Rosa, Miniature/Patio, 1 specimen bloom

1 st	Marie Decker	Oakville HS
2 nd	Marie Decker	Oakville HS

Class 30: Rosa, any other (Grandiflora, Polyantha, etc.), 1 spray

1 st	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS
2 nd	Gloria Brocks	North York HS
3 rd	Marie Decker	Oakville HS

SECTION D - POTTED PLANTS (9 entries)

Class 31: Anthurium (Flamingo flower) in bloom, 1 cultivar, 1 pot - no entries

Class 32: Cactus, any cultivar, not grafted, 1 cultivar, 1 pot

1 st	Michelle Goff	Fergus HS
2 nd	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS
3 rd	Heinke Thiessen	Credit Valley HS

Class 33: Orchid, 1 cultivar, 1 pot - no entries

Class 34: Succulent, other than cactus, any type, 1 cultivar, 1 pot

1 st	Angie Andrus	Uxbridge HS
2 nd	Heinke Thiessen	Credit Valley HS
3 rd	Heinke Thiessen	Credit Valley HS

Class 35: Any other plant grown principally for decorative foliage, 1 cultivar, 1 pot

1 st	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS
2 nd	Heinke Thiessen	Credit Valley HS

Class 36: Any other plant grown principally for bloom, in bloom, 1 cultivar, 1 pot - no winner

SECTION E - COLLECTIONS (11 entries)

Class 37: Grasses, minimum of 3 different cultivars, 2 stems of each, named. - no entries

Class 38: Mixed cut garden flowers excluding branches or vines, minimum of 7 different cultivars, 1 stem of each, named. No additional foliage to be included

1 st	Heinke Thiessen	Credit Valley HS
2 nd	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS
3 rd	Ainsley Gillespie	Beaverton HS
HM	Angie Andrus	Uxbridge HS

Class 39: Cut herbs, minimum of 5 different cultivars, 1 specimen of each, named

1 st	Angie Andrus	Uxbridge HS
2 nd	Marie Decker	Oakville HS
3 rd	Sophie Felleiter	Kingston HS

Class 40: Cut garden foliage excluding branches, minimum of 3 different cultivars, 1 stem of each, named

1 st	Heinke Thiessen	Credit Valley HS
2 nd	Angie Andrus	Uxbridge HS
3 rd	Marie Decker	Oakville HS

DESIGN DIVISION CONVENOR: Barbara Twiner (Pickering Horticultural Society)

Design (33 entries)

Class 41: Eat your Veggies

1 st	Sandra Williamson	Georgetown HS
2 nd	Marie Decker	Oakville HS
3 rd	Lil Taggart	Georgetown HS

Class 42: Moon Garden

1 st	Rose Scales	Thorold HS
2 nd	Sandra Williamson	Georgetown HS
3 rd	Debi Foster	Oshawa HS

Class 43: Sunshine and Rainbows

1 st	Sandra Williamson	Georgetown HS
2 nd	Lil Taggart	Georgetown HS
3 rd	Marie Decker	Oakville HS

Class 44: Rainy Day in the Garden

1 st	Michelle Goff	Fergus HS
2 nd	Catherine McGill	Haldimand HS
3 rd	Sandra Williamson	Georgetown HS

Class 45: Canadian Rail Trail

1 st	Sherry Howard	Brooklin-Whitby HS
2 nd	Sandra Williamson	Georgetown HS
3 rd	Rose Scales	Thorold HS

Class 46: Before the Storm

1 st	Deena Errampalli	Grimsby HS
2 nd	Rose Odell	Waterloo HS
3 rd	Sherry Howard	Brooklin-Whitby HS

Class 47: After the Storm

1 st	Sherry Howard	Brooklin-Whitby HS
2 nd	Lil Taggart	Georgetown HS
3 rd	Debi Foster	Oshawa HS

SPECIAL EXHIBITS DIVISION CONVENOR: Barbara Twiner (Pickering Horticultural Society)

Special Exhibits (5 entries)

Class 48: Enjoying the Fruits of Your Labour

1 st	Deena Errampalli	Grimsby HS
2 nd	Marie Decker	Oakville HS

Class 49: Nature Walk

1 st	Michelle Goff	Fergus HS
2 nd	Sherry Howard	Brooklin-Whitby HS



Photo Credit: Merle Cole



Photo Credit: Merle Cole

SPECIAL AWARDS

Horticulture

Best in Show	Shelley Ethanskie	Orono HS
Judges' Choice	Angie Andrus	Uxbridge HS



Design

Best in Show	Sunshine and Rainbows	Sandra Williamson	Georgetown HS
Judges' Choice	Canadian Rail Trail	Sherry Howard	Brooklin-Whitby HS



Photos by Ursula Eley

Special Exhibits

Best in Show	Spice of Life	Michelle Goff	Fergus HS
Judges' Choice	Nature Walk	Michelle Goff	Fergus HS



Photos by Ursula Eley

ONTARIO JUDGING AND EXHIBITING STANDARDS

FOR FLORAL DESIGN AND HORTICULTURE

Are you and Exhibitor at Flower and Vegetable Shows? Or would you like to be? This book is what the judges use when choosing the best! If you are a volunteer to set up the shows, choose categories or just an observer, the information in this publication is invaluable. Get your copy from the OHA Garden Shop for only \$12.00 each.

2019 Ontario Judging and Exhibiting Standards
FOR FLORAL DESIGN AND HORTICULTURE
(OJES 2019) \$12
<https://gardenontario.org/gardenshop>

2026 Publications Competition Results

YEARBOOK

Class 1: Yearbook Cover

1 st	Georgina-Brock HS and Garden Club
2 nd	Lakefield Horticultural Society
3 rd	Parry Sound & District Horticultural Society
HM	Oro-Medonte Horticultural Society

Class 2: Yearbook

1 st	Gananoque Horticultural Society
2 nd	Leaside Garden Society
3 rd	Cannington Horticultural Society
HM	Minden & District Horticultural Society

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Class 3: Special Event Poster

1 st	Oro-Medonte Horticultural Society
2 nd	Vankleek Hill & District Horticultural Society
3 rd	Cannington Horticultural Society
HM	Chinguacousy Garden Club & HS

Class 6: Newsletter over 10 pages

1 st	Ottawa Horticultural Society
2 nd	Oro-Medonte Horticultural Society
3 rd	Newmarket Garden Club
HM	Oshawa Garden Club

Class 4: Society Brochure or Pamphlet

1 st	Chinguacousy Garden Club & HS
2 nd	The Newmarket Garden Club
3 rd	Norwood & District Horticultural Society
HM	Elora & Salem Horticultural Society

Class 7: Bookmark (2026)

1 st	Cannington Horticultural Society
2 nd	Leaside Garden Society
3 rd	Pickering Garden Club (Pickering HS)
HM	Vankleek Hill & District Horticultural Society

Class 5: Newsletter 10 pages or under

1 st	Brooklin-Whitby Garden Club (Brooklin HS)
2 nd	Chinguacousy Garden Club & HS
3 rd	Pelham Garden Club
HM	Schomberg Horticultural Society

SHOW SCHEDULE

Class 8: Show Schedule from Current Year

1 st	Schomberg Horticultural Society
2 nd	Ottawa Valley Gardeners
3 rd	Stoney Creek Garden Club & HS
HM	Pelham Garden Club

SPECIAL AWARDS

Best in Show	Ottawa Horticultural Society	C6
Judges Choice	Georgina-Brock HS and GC	C1

Photos by Merle Cole



2026 Photography Competition Results

Class 1: A Winter Scene

1 st	Tami Lyons	2 nd	Janet M. Houston	3 rd	Wade Pitman
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Class 2: Still Waters

1 st	Libby Hood	2 nd	Ruth Robinson	3 rd	Cindy Gauley	HM	Larry Chamney
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Class 3: The Beauty of Decay

1 st	Andrea Macri	2 nd	Pam Paylor	3 rd	Susan Whitley
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Class 4: Majestic Tree

1 st	Debi Foster	2 nd	Mary Rose	3 rd	Susan Merely
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Class 5: Leaves of a Different Shape (and Size)

1 st	Ruth Robinson	2 nd	Ana Shantz	3 rd	Pam Paylor
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Class 6: Road Side Flowers

1 st	Paula Brown	2 nd	Catherine McGill	3 rd	Tami Lyons
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Class 7: In the Beginning (Macro)

1 st	Paula Brown	2 nd	Jennifer Johnson	3 rd	Cindy Gawley
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Class 8: Living City

1 st	Gloria Broks	2 nd	Tami Lyons	3 rd	Shelley Etmanski
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SPECIAL AWARDS

Best in Show	Libbi Hood	C2	See below
Judges Choice	Debi Foster	C4	Front Cover



CONGRATULATIONS



The Tradewinds Photo Competition winner is Diane Clifford of the Ripley and District Horticultural Society. She received a \$100 gift certificate from Tradewinds. The winning photo was selected through ballot cast by OHA members attending the Annual Meeting and Convention in Oshawa. The bulbs featured in the competition were provided through the OHA Donations, Fundraising and Sponsorship Committee’s fall 2025 bulb fundraiser. The committee is now planning its next bulb fundraiser for late spring 2027.



2026 Youth Competition Results

At the OHA Convention in Oshawa this year, the theme was "Gardening For Life". The Youth Competition showcased this theme with numerous entries from Ripley For Our Youth, Wilmot Horticultural Society (Garden Wilmot), Elmira & District Horticultural Society (Woolwich Gardeners) and The Greater Toronto Bulb Society.

SECTION A - WRITING

Class 2: Life In Balance

Age B (9-11 yrs)

1 st	Hailey Thompson	Wilmot HS
2 nd	Aurora Bruner	Wilmot HS

Age C (12-14 yrs)

2 nd	Chloe Thompson	Wilmot HS
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SECTION B - ARTISTIC CREATIVITY

Class 3: Blossoms of Life

Age D (15-18 yrs)

1 st	Katelyn Cressman	Wilmot HS
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Class 4: Harvesting Ontario's Bounty

Age A (6-8 yrs)

1 st	Azariah Baer	Wilmot HS
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Age 9 (9-11 yrs)

1 st	Hannah Baer	Wilmot HS
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Best in Show Rosette" for Section B went to Hannah Baer (Wilmot)

Photo by Christine Webb

SECTION C - FLORAL DESIGN and SPECIAL EXHIBITS

Class 5: Seeds of Creativity

Age A (6-8 yrs)

1 st	Everett Eley	Toronto Bulb
2 nd	Payton Murray	Ripley
3 rd	Brooklyn Curran	Ripley
HM	Kate Scott	Ripley
HM	Lauren Wolf	Ripley
HM	Neil Woeijen	Ripley

Age B (9-11 yrs)

1 st	Hailey Thompson	Wilmot
2 nd	Hannah Baer	Wilmot
3 rd	Brian Wolf	Ripley
HM	Tori Miltenburg	Ripley
HM	Darcy Proctor	Ripley

Age C (12-14 yrs)

1 st	Gemma McKay	Ripley
2 nd	Brynn Arnold	Ripley
3 rd	Sarah Roth	Ripley

Age D (15-18 yrs)

1 st	Katelynn Cressman	Wilmot
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Judges Choice Rosette" for Section C went to Hailey Thompson (Wilmot)

Photo by Christine Webb

Class 6: The Essence of Flavour

Age A (6-8 yrs)

1 st	Samuel Gerber	Wilmot
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Age B (9-11 yrs)

1 st	Hailey Thompson	Wilmot
2 nd	Matthew Kuepfer	Wilmot

Age C (12-14 yrs)

1 st	Eliza Baer	Wilmot
2 nd	Chloe Thompson	Wilmot
3 rd	Tyler Thompson	Wilmot

Age D (15-18 yrs)

1 st	Katelynn Cressman	Wilmot
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Class 7: Backyard Treasures: An Exploration in the Yard

Age A (6-8 yrs)

1 st	Azariah Baer	Wilmot
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Age B (9-11 yrs)

1 st	Hailey Thompson	Wilmot
2 nd	Hannah Baer	Wilmot

Age C (12-14 yrs)

1 st	Chloe Thompson	Wilmot
2 nd	Tyler Thompson	Wilmot

SPECIAL AWARDS FOR YOUTH MEMBERS (Class 8 - 11)

Class 8: Nature's Unseen Allies

1 st	Chloe Thompson	Wilmot
2 nd	Hailey Thompson	Wilmot

SECTION D - PHOTOGRAPHY

William D. Clingersmith Youth Photography Award

This year's recipient was Hailey Thompson (Wilmot), who was recognized with a Best In Show Rosette, and prize money for Class 9 & 10.

(in memory of William Clingersmith, father of OHA Secretary Kelly Clingersmith-Taylor)



Photo by Christine Webb

SECTION E - FINE ARTS

Class 11: Pathways of Possibility

1 st	Katelynn Cressman	Wilmot
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(Donated by Harry Wyma, Ridgetown, District 11 Director 1983-1988, OHA President 1990)

SECTION F - HORTICULTURE

Class 12: Edible Harmony

1 st	Matthew Kuepfer	Wilmot
2 nd	Woolwich Junior Gardeners	Elmira & District
3 rd	Chloe Thompson	Wilmot

(donated by Catherine McGill, Youth Competitions Past Youth Chair)



Class 14: Maisie Bray Awards - Dandelion

1 st	Wilmot Junior Gardeners
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(in memory of Maisie Bray, Lion's Head, District 8 Director 1978-83)

SECTION G - SPECIAL AWARDS - Club Award

Class 15: Ruby Bryan Award

1 st	Rhonda Curran	Ripley
2 nd	Woolwich Junior Gardeners	Elmira & District

(donated by Ruby Bryan, Englehart, District 12 Director 1964-1969, OHA President 1972)

Congratulations to all participants at this year's Youth Competition! We realize that many societies throughout Ontario have programs for their youth and we continue to encourage participation at the convention level.

OHA Youth Competitions Committee

Class 13: Ruby Lobban High Points Awards" (highest point aggregate from awards in the OHA Youth Competition)

1 st	Hailey Thompson	Wilmot
2 nd	Hannah Baer	Wilmot
3 rd	Katelynn Cressman	Wilmot

(in memory of Ruby Lobban, a member of Owen Sound Horticultural Society and District 8 Director, 1970-83)



Photos by Christine Webb

2027 Virtual Competitions

ALICE IN WONDERLAND

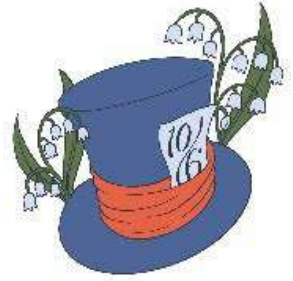
Submitted by Ursula Eley on behalf of the OHA Competitions Committee, artwork by Alexandra Eley



Watch for the competition schedules on the Garden Ontario website.

Photography, Arts, and Creative Writing Competitions
Opportunities for club members to get together and work on
Flower Show entries.

Loads of room for imagination in the Youth Competition.



There may not be an in-person Convention in 2027, but your Competition Committee did not want to miss out on the fun of holding competitions. We chose a theme that we felt would inspire lots of imagination, creativity, and enjoyment. All OHA clubs and societies are invited to join us in a salute to Alice in Wonderland.

We are planning a Photography Competition, an Arts Competition, a Creative Writing Competition, a Flower Show, and a Youth Competition. Winning entrants will receive emailed certificates.

Photography and Creative Writing will follow the same format as in Convention years, with submissions emailed to the coordinators.

For Arts, Flower Show, and Youth, the entries will be judged from photographs. For the Youth classes, adult help in taking and submitting the photos is encouraged.

An online session on How to Enter Virtual Competitions is planned for this winter. Stay tuned for more information in the fall. Simple hints about how to take photos of entries can make the difference between winning a prize or not. All members of clubs and societies are invited to attend.

Your club or society may want to include some of the classes in the Virtual Flower Show in your schedules. Entries shown at a club or society show, even if they have received a ribbon, are eligible to be entered in our Alice in Wonderland show. Clubs may even want to hold workshops where members can get together, create designs, and photograph them.

Great news for floral designers: design classes will be unlimited. Any member of an OHA club or society may enter any or all of the design classes.

The schedules for the Virtual Competitions will be posted on the Garden Ontario website, starting with Photography in September. The other competition schedules will follow by late October.

Winning entries will be shown during the online Annual Meeting next July. They will also be posted on the Garden Ontario website.

Let your imagination take you to the magical, whimsical world of Alice in Wonderland. We look forward to seeing your entries!

Impressions from the Convention

My Impressions from Convention 2026

Submitted by Catherine McGill, photo by Merle Cole

I'll start by saying that **I love conventions!** I've always treated convention as my vacation for the year, and after attending for more than 20 years, I certainly miss having them every year. That said, I completely understand the challenges. With the significant increase in facility costs following COVID, the OHA has done a remarkable job keeping convention costs as reasonable as possible, which means we can spend more of our money on plants!

As much as I would love the hotel experience and all the perks that come with it, finding alternatives is the best way to give our wallets some relief.

Oshawa — You Did a Great Job!



First, a huge **thank you to everyone involved in making Oshawa happen.** The convention volunteers were amazing, and most of the campus staff were friendly, helpful, and welcoming.

Now, I will admit that the distance some of the older and more “banged-up” bones had to travel this year was a little brutal! I logged around **10,000 steps a day**, and I’m pretty sure I didn’t burn off all the food I ate!

Yes, it was campus food. But honestly, my requirements are pretty simple: if it’s tasty, not burned, and I didn’t have to make it myself, I’m happy! It checked all those boxes. Yes, we waited in lines, but considering the cost, I think we got tremendous value. We would have paid considerably more for similar meals elsewhere.

And there was a bonus I certainly didn’t expect: I got myself into an exercise routine that I wasn’t sure I was going to survive, **and I did!** So, apparently, convention made me healthier too. For those who need a visual, I’m on the heavier side of healthy and for sure banged up!

Learning, Laughing, and Growing

Friday night's **Plant Trivia** was an absolute blast! The questions were wonderfully random, and having Master Gardeners, judges, and plant experts on any team didn't necessarily make us any smarter! We had a great time, laughed a lot, and learned quite a bit along the way. The Friday night auction brought out the competitor in many, as they staked out the items they wanted to take home. There was laughter as the winner of the rain barrel had to figure out if it would fit in the car with luggage and a passenger. The passenger almost had to come home in a different car!

The daily workshops featured amazing speakers who sparked plenty of thoughts, ideas, and questions, which, to me, is exactly what you want from a workshop or speaker.

The **Retaining and Growing Membership** session also provided lots of great suggestions and ideas. We learned not only what we can do to retain and grow our membership, but also some of the things we should not do when approaching members. It was a great reminder and gave us some practical tools to take home.

The Awards and Grants — Wow!

As the upcoming Vice President, I had the honour of announcing the Awards and Grants, along with the biographies of the recipients and information about what societies and clubs are accomplishing.

Wow. Just wow.

It was a little hard not to feel inadequate!

You think you're doing so much for your own society or district, and then you meet these people who have truly given their hearts, souls, time, and energy to their organizations. They were absolutely amazing and so very worthy of the recognition they received.

And seeing what societies across Ontario are accomplishing was incredibly inspiring. These groups are **NOT just planting a few pots or flower beds around town!** They are doing some truly remarkable things in their communities and for our damaged world.

A Challenge to Our Societies

This brings me to something I would really like to encourage all societies to consider.

Please consider putting a budget line in your bylaws to help members attend convention.

Maybe set aside \$1,000. You may not use it every year, or even use all of it, but having the option available for a member who wants to attend could make a huge difference.

Pay for that early-bird registration and send them to convention!

They will come home inspired. They will bring back ideas, connections, information, and enthusiasm that can benefit your entire society or club.

The speakers, the workshops, the networking, the conversations in the hallways, and simply hearing what other societies are doing are **invaluable**.

And One More Thing: The 50/50

Please share the **50/50** with your members. Maybe even consider doing a group purchase.

The more money we raise, the more grants we can provide, and the more funding we can return to your societies.

Not one penny of the 50/50 money is used for administrative expenses. It goes back to supporting our societies and the work they do.

That's something worth getting behind!

Until 2028...

Convention is more than just buying plants — although, let's be honest, that is a nice perk!

It's about learning, sharing ideas, meeting people, being inspired, laughing together, and going home with renewed energy for what we can accomplish in our own communities.

Thank you to everyone who made Convention 2026 possible. Thank you to everyone who attended, participated, volunteered, presented, learned, laughed, and probably bought more plants than they intended to!

Hope to see you all in 2028!

Catherine McGill

Vice President



CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to Carmen Lint of Oshawa, holder of ticket D-57239, who won \$6,652 in our summer 50/50 draw. She was delighted and noted that buying tickets really can pay off—she also won the \$500 early bird draw two years ago. Thank you to everyone who supported the draw by purchasing tickets and sharing it on social media. Each purchase helps fund the grants we provide to our societies every year. Our fall draw is now open, and tickets are available at <https://gardenontario.org>.

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Thunder Bay Horticultural Society

Submitted by and photos by Vickie Bureau

The Thunder Bay Horticultural Society was busy during the summer months with an excellent June meeting presentation, outreach events, and our community gardens.

Society members enjoyed a presentation on "Taking Care of Our Bodies" at our June general meeting, which was perfect as the growing season was starting to take off. Our volunteers for June were Susanne and Donna.

Cambrian Players showed their gratitude to our society for the work we do in their garden with two certificates of appreciation to our society. Also, at each performance at both Cambrian Players and Magnus Theatre, our society is acknowledged for our maintenance of their gardens.

We participated in the Canadian Lakehead Exhibition (CLE) and will be putting up a booth at the Hymers Fair on September 6th and 7th. Both of these events are excellent venues for passing horticultural information to the general public.



Society members have been busy in our six community gardens, despite the unusual weather. Mother Nature couldn't decide which season we were to have here in Thunder Bay, as temperatures went from hot to cold to hot, rain to lack of rain, and the smoke from the wildfires kept a lot of people inside and wondering what effects the smoke and ash would have on the gardens.



Our garden project for the year was applying 40 bags of mulch to the ORCC garden on a very hot day.

We unfortunately had to cancel our summer flower show in July due to safety concerns regarding accessibility to our members and the general public due to the road repairs on Oliver Road outside of the building. We will be having the fall flower show at our general meeting in September as accessibility has improved somewhat, with some of the parking lots being opened.



Rain Gardens Prevent Flooding

Handy in a Crisis: Rain Gardens Can Protect Your Home and Your Community from Flooding

Submitted by Eric Murphy, Climate Legacy

When most of us picture the impacts of climate change, we typically imagine rising temperatures and wildfires erupting from forests after a hot, dry season. In reality, though, the climate crisis can just as easily cause [extreme rainfall](#) and flooding. In the past decade, unexpected flooding in Canada driven by climate change has led to underwater streets in major cities, hundreds fleeing their homes, and, in some cases, entire neighbourhoods becoming [essentially unlivable](#). Even smaller-scale flooding carries its own risks, as the waters erode property and can carry pesticides, salt, or even sewage into communities and local water sources.

In light of this worsening threat, many gardeners are taking action in their own backyards by building **rain gardens**, a heavily absorbent feature brimming with native plants that can help floodproof your property and protect your community. The purpose of these gardens is to capture excess water and absorb it safely underground, rather than allowing it to wash over your property and further add to local flooding.



*A large rain garden planted outside of a public building in Calgary, Alberta.
Photo by Maureen Flynn-Burhoe ([CC by 2.0](#))*

So what exactly is a rain garden? It's a bowl-shaped garden made from resilient native plants planted in loose soil. To achieve that ideal absorption, gardeners dig a bowl-shaped hole to roughly 85 centimetres deep and fill it, leaving a slight depression for rain to gather in, with a mixture of compost and sand, then top it off with hardy, deep-rooted perennials. Ideally, the plants will be native and able to withstand long dry periods just as well as heavy rainfall.

We won't go too deeply into the step-by-step instructions for planting rain gardens since there are already amazing resources out there covering just that, including the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority's [Complete Guide to Building and Maintaining a Rain Garden](#). In this article, we simply wanted to extol the virtues of this clever piece of water management. However, there are some safety tips you should know upfront, such as calling your municipality about buried cables before you dig, planting your garden at least three metres from your home to avoid basement flooding, and avoiding planting them on a slope, which can worsen erosion.

Rain gardens are a truly clever way to play a part in protecting your garden, your neighbours, and local wildlife from one of the most rapidly accelerating climate threats. They're a garden-friendly and natural way to take action, and a reminder that even when the climate crisis seems far too large to manage, there are still small actions that each and every one of us can take to move the needle in the right direction.

Want to learn more about rain gardens? In addition to TRCA's guide linked above, we also found a useful introduction from Ontario Native Plants and blog tracking how one gardener created their own in ten clear steps. As always, if you have any climate-related questions, you can email us at climatelegacycanada@gmail.com.



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Kapuskasing Horticultural Society

A Small Northern Society with a Big Season

Submitted by and photos by Anne Jamieson and Sara Lauzon

Like many Societies across District 12, the Kapuskasing Horticultural Society is small in size but rich in activity, creativity, and community spirit. From late May through August, our members delivered a full season of workshops, tours, plantings, and events that brought colour and connection to our northern town.

Spring into Summer: Events & Community Projects

We began the season with two well-attended road trips. The first was a behind-the-scenes May tour of Maison Verte in Hearst, where members learned about year-round production of beefsteak tomatoes, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers for local grocery stores, and millions of seedlings grown for regional reforestation. This informative visit was followed by a lively outing to Val Gagné to explore the Mennonites' Forest Lane Greenhouse, Railside General Store, and Countryside Market. Members enjoyed meeting growers, discovering new plants, and sharing a day together on the road.



Our biannual Plant Sale on June 6 was another success, selling out by 10:45 a.m. and raising over \$1,000 to support our programs and community projects. A few days later, volunteers gathered at the Mini Park for our spring planting bee, refreshing the perennial beds and adding new annuals. On June 19, the Society planted a hardy 'Courageous' flowering crabapple to replace the aging tree that once stood in the park. It was a bright, hopeful addition to one of Kapuskasing's most visible community spaces at the main entrance to town.



June also brought District 12's Annual Meeting in Kirkland Lake, where Kapuskasing members placed in every photography category and in the creative writing competition, while our Society earned 1st place for our newsletter.

Workshops & Tours

July offered members of the community both a creative pressed-flower workshop and our self-guided Garden Tour. The afternoon of inspiration, colour, and community pride remains one of our most cherished events, celebrating real gardens in all their shapes, sizes, and stories.

95th Annual Flower & Vegetable Show

Our season culminated in the 95th Annual Flower and Vegetable Show on August 21 and 22. The show was well attended, with strong participation from long-time exhibitors, newer members, and enthusiastic juniors.

We are proud of every exhibitor who participated, from seasoned competitors to juniors trying their first entry. Their enthusiasm and creativity made the show vibrant and welcoming.



Looking Ahead

Kapuskasing may be a small Society, but our members continue to demonstrate what a dedicated group can accomplish through workshops, community plantings, tours, and a thriving annual show. We're proud to contribute to the horticultural spirit that keeps Northern Ontario blooming.



What We Can Do to Help Pollinators: Autumn

By Joyce Morgan, Member of the OHA Conservation and Environment Committee

There wasn't much research needed for this season. I have 64 garden seasons behind me. It started as a 'chore' while my younger sisters got to play with their friends, and I was pulling weeds and breaking up clods of dirt at the age of 10. It was hard work because there was a lot of garden.

At the end of each season, until I was in my early 50s, it was the same thing every fall. Pull everything out and throw it on the compost pile. Only then, we didn't use it or call it compost. We didn't know about returning the rotted plant material to the garden, and our leaves went out to the curb for pickup.

I learned more about beneficial gardening through a garden group at the University Women's group I joined. Shortly thereafter, I also joined the local Horticultural Society.

Boy, did I get an education. My garden was given over to perennials and shrubs. In the fall, everything stayed in the garden. Here's what I learned that was beneficial not only to my garden, but to the pollinators that had hovered over and on my plants all summer long. I was lucky. I had some ground-dwelling bees, so I kept a bare spot open for them because they became permanent residents.

I did take all my garden kitsch out and made sure to clean the bird and bee baths and the stones that made it easy for the butterflies and bees to drink or clean the dust off their wee bodies. I also had a couple of bee hotels that needed to be cleaned, just like a regular hotel, making them ready for the next guests.



Photo from Flickr, by F.D. Richards, CC BY-SA 2.0



Photo credit: Susan Whitley, OHA Photo Competition

The plants, and this is likely the most important part of this piece. There are two good reasons to cut or leave your plants until spring. Various grasses, which I had in both front and back gardens, I left as visual interest in the winter, and the seed heads provided nourishment for the winter birds, giving them a place to rest and something to nibble on. Most other plants, I'd leave at varying heights, again to act as a rest stop. Hollow stems for the plants that were cut closer to the ground became homes for insects, caterpillars and moths.

Now for the rest of my garden waste, I learned that putting it back into the garden provided much-needed nutrients for the soil. If I had planted annuals, I would leave the roots in the ground to provide much-needed nitrogen. The only garden waste that left my yard was oak leaves and that green grass that needs regular cutting. Leaves placed on and around perennial plants protect them for the following year. But more than just protecting all of the plants, leaves and plant cuttings provide homes for all manner of small life that overwinter in our gardens.

I'm all for making gardening an easy job to do. I'd much rather spend my time enjoying the garden and watching the pollinators do their work. Gone are the back-breaking days of pulling plants from the garden and moving them over to the yard waste pile, followed by turning the soil for another season's end. Let your plants rot in place, returning to the soil all the nutrients they needed over the spring and summer. I hope you've learned a little bit about helping our pollinators in the fall, as you get ready for the winter months.



Photo credit: Trish Rybski, OHA Photo Competition

SEEDY SATURDAY/SUNDAY GRANT REMINDER

Please note that Seedy Saturday/Sunday grant applications are due no later than November 15th.

Please submit all required paperwork to the Awards Coordinator on or before this date, as late applications will not be accepted.

Forms may be found on the www.gardenontario.org website under Resources.

If you have any questions, please send an email to ohaboard17@gmail.com.

Sharlene Desjardins
OHA Awards Coordinator

Port Dover and Woodhouse Horticultural Society

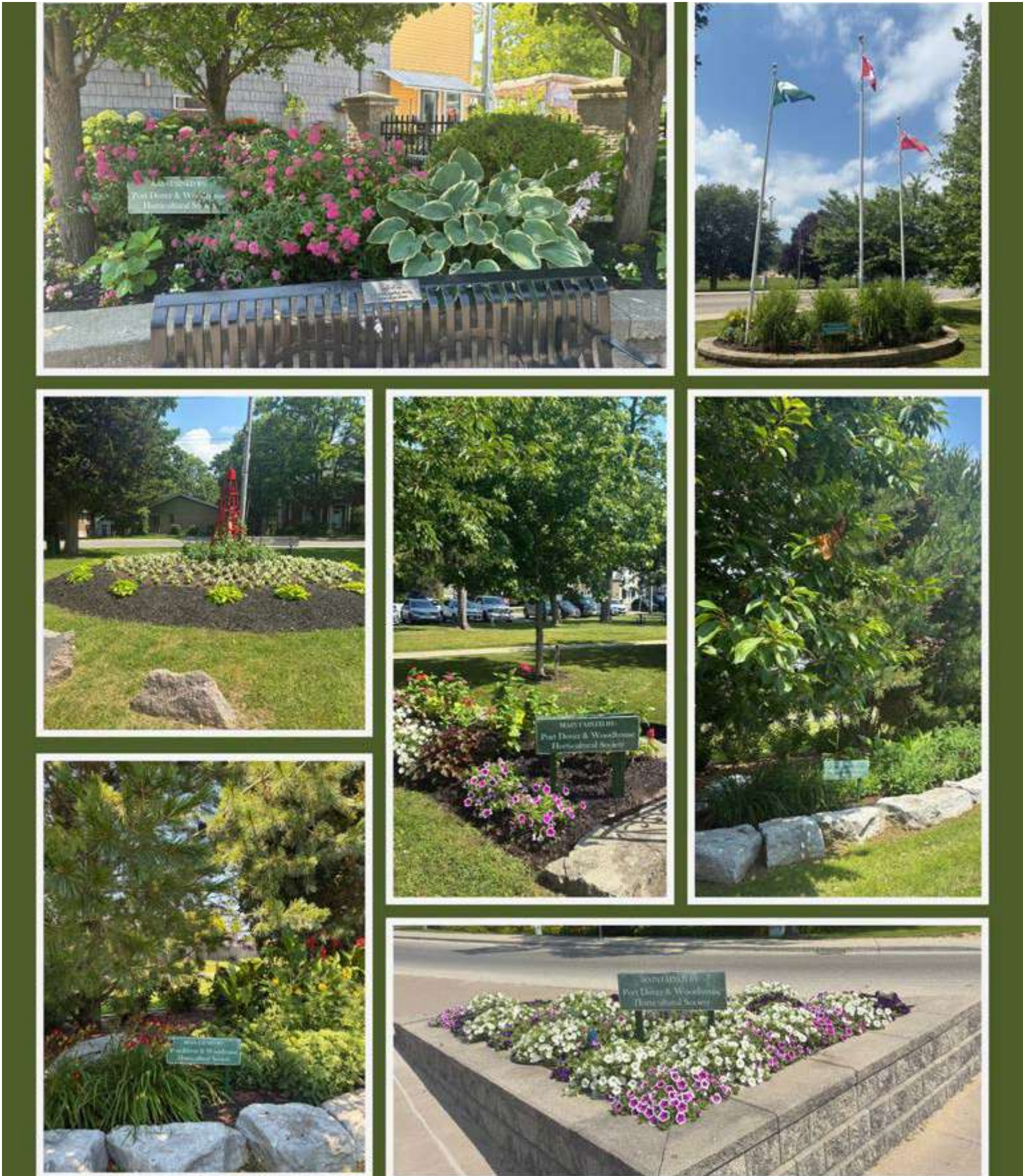
Submitted by Laurene Via. Photos by Laurene Via, Kathie Vysick, Patti Comeau and Deb Lamb-Green

Looking for something new to see before winter officially begins? Consider visiting beautiful Port Dover, home of the Port Dover and Woodhouse Horticultural Society. Port Dover offers an extensive hiking/biking trail at our fingertips, and lake or farm-to-table dining, try out our iconic perch snacks, for all price ranges. We have a lovely beach at our doorstep, with plenty of parking and a cute little downtown to satisfy all your shopping desires, ranging from local cheeses to fresh bread, hardware to pharmaceuticals, boutique apparel to local art, flower shops and, you guessed it, souvenirs, ice cream and coffee. And of course, we have a marina, pier, and lighthouse!

Best of all, our little town is decorated with beautiful floral gardens created and tended to by our very ambitious group of society volunteers, who lovingly maintain those gardens throughout the downtown area. These volunteers take turns watering and weeding the gardens, and we count ourselves very fortunate to have a watering supply handy, provided by the town.

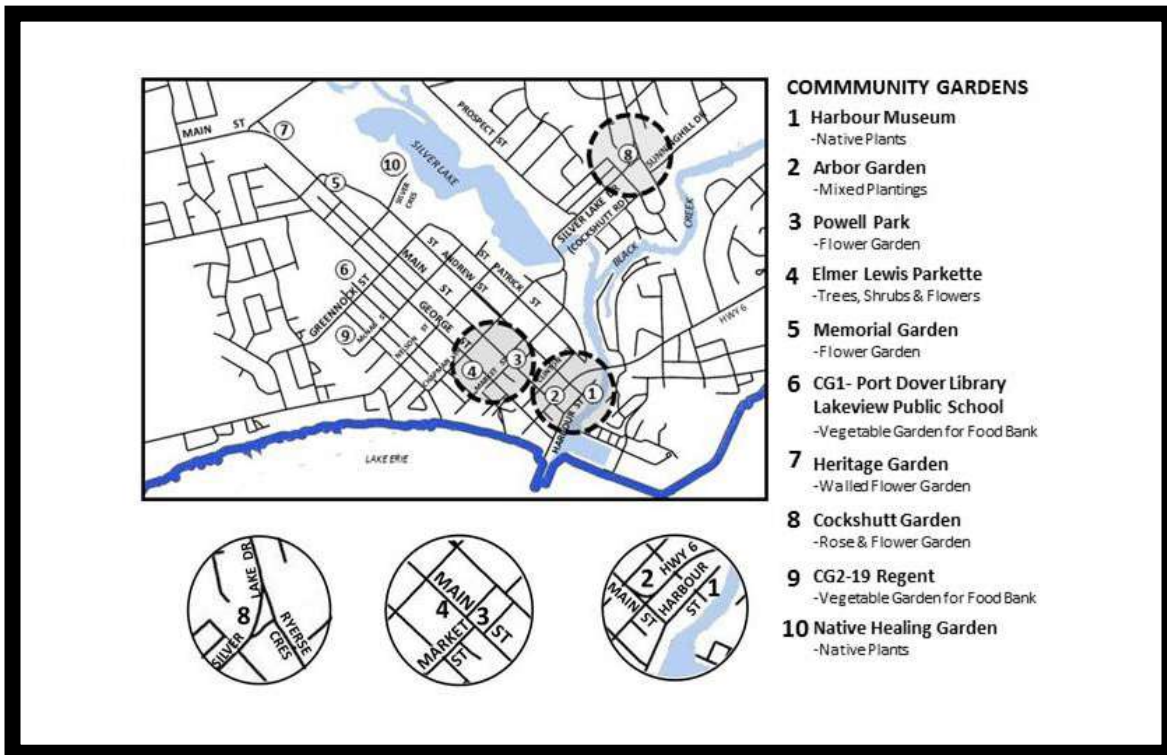


To pique your interest, here are some photos of the gardens taken throughout the summer (we are zone 6b) for you to discover.



Recently, the volunteer group met to simply enjoy some time together. Of course, there was much self-congratulating, admittedly, since our gardens are lush and enviable. But there was also mention of how many times visitors or residents have walked by a garden when one of the volunteers was tending to it and commented on its beauty or thanked the volunteer for “making my day better.” Or this posting on Facebook from an out-of-town visitor: “...admiring (your) Arbour Garden while waiting for the lift bridge.” Just like any other humble gardener, we cherish those comments!

Even better, the gardens are rather close to each other, so those of you who relish getting in your 10,000 daily steps will easily reach your goal.



Of course, our gardens are also the result of generous donations from our community, including soil from Harold Pepper and Sons Landscaping and 10% discounts from local nurseries.

Consider combining your self-guided garden tour with a visit to the annual Norfolk County Fair, October 6-12, and see our entry. Can't visit until you've put your own gardens to rest? Ours will be resting too, but if you can squeeze in one last opportunity to experience southwestern Ontario and Long Point Bay before the New Year begins, the Port Dover Santa Claus Parade, part of the annual ChristmasFest celebration, is scheduled for Saturday, November 21, 2026. Santa's traditional arrival by fish tug at the pier takes place at 1:00 p.m., with the parade starting right after at 1:15 p.m. Everyone is welcome! Hope you enjoy everything Port Dover has to offer.

Bancroft Horticultural Society

The Painted Lady Butterfly Project

Submitted by and photos by Lynsey Pickering

When the Bancroft Horticultural Society began planning its 2026 educational focus, one small but remarkable creature quickly came to mind: the butterfly.

Butterflies do so much more than brighten our gardens. They help pollinate plants, support biodiversity, and provide food for birds, bats and other wildlife. They are an important part of nature's delicate balance. But beyond their environmental value, butterflies tell a story of change, growth and transformation.

That story became the inspiration for our summer project.

Early in the season, we reached out to three elementary schools in Bancroft and asked if they would like to join us on a unique learning adventure. The response was enthusiastic, and before long, classrooms were preparing to welcome some very special visitors.

The Society provided butterfly houses and Painted Lady butterfly kits, giving students the chance to experience the butterfly life cycle firsthand. What began as tiny caterpillars would soon become beautiful butterflies, right before the children's eyes.



Our volunteers delivered the kits and spent time talking with teachers and students about what they could expect over the coming weeks. The excitement was immediate. Every day brought something new to discover as the caterpillars grew, formed chrysalises and slowly transformed.

The children became completely fascinated by the process. They checked on their caterpillars daily, watched for changes and learned how to care for them. What they were seeing wasn't just a lesson from a textbook. It was nature happening right in front of them.



Then came the moment everyone had been waiting for.

After about 17 to 20 days, the butterflies emerged. The students watched in amazement as the Painted Ladies unfolded their wings and prepared for flight. When release day arrived, there was a sense of excitement, wonder and even a little pride. The children had followed the entire journey from caterpillar to butterfly and now had the chance to send them off into the world.



The project was completed before the end of the school year, but the memories will last much longer. Through this experience, students gained a deeper understanding of nature and the important role butterflies play in our environment. More importantly, they discovered the joy of observing, learning and connecting with the natural world.

We are incredibly grateful to the schools that embraced this project and helped make it such a success:

- York River Elementary School
- Birds Creek Elementary School
- Our Lady of Mercy Catholic School

Their enthusiasm and support helped us spark curiosity, encourage learning and share the wonder of nature with the next generation.



Note: Parental waivers on file

Haldimand Horticultural Society

Trillium Fall Update

Submitted by and photos by Barbara Wilson

"Where has the summer gone? We are now in the "ber" months, so enjoy the Fall season ahead!"

Our society volunteers have had a busy summer. The Maintenance Monday program, which is in its 3rd year, saw members weeding, mulching and doing maintenance on one or two of our 9 community gardens each week, and on our 7 large pots situated in Caledonia, Hagersville and Cayuga. They add so much colour to our community, and residents of our county are very appreciative of our efforts.

The "Garden of the Month" was awarded in June to a property in Hagersville. Situated at the entrance to the town, it draws many an eye to its beauty.



Two members opened their gardens for viewing in June. Many thanks to the Beatties and Bernadine Lutes from Cayuga for sharing their beautiful properties with us.

Yearly bursaries are presented to graduating students at the three area secondary schools. A bursary was awarded to a student from McKinnon Park Secondary School in Caledonia in June. Cayuga and Hagersville Secondary School ceremonies are in the Fall, when students selected will receive theirs.

In July, an excursion was planned for members to visit the University of Guelph Rutherford Conservatory Garden. The head of the Ontario Agricultural College, John Cranfield, also spoke to us about his role at the University. We ended our day at the Arboretum with a walking tour. A very informative day enjoyed by all. Many thanks to Vice-President Kelly for organizing.

Each month, our Speaker Chair, Brenda Taylor, organizes interesting and informative speakers for members to enjoy. Speakers have included Jessica Durka from Southcoast Community Caring in June, and make your own flower bouquet with Catherine McGill at the August GM.

Our annual picnic this year, in August, was enjoyed by members. Many thanks to hosts Ian and Amanda Wagner for opening their home and beautiful gardens along Big Creek in Brant/Caledonia, which flows into the Grand River.



Upcoming Events:

- The HHS has entered the Group Display section, "Fireplace Mantle" at the Caledonia Fair in October, hoping to bring home a ribbon! The theme this year is "Quilts, Crops, Country Stops".
- We will be creating a new banner for display at the main corner of Hagersville for November 11th. Thank you, members who knit and crochet poppies for our various projects. We have created displays for cenotaphs in Caledonia, Cayuga and Jarvis.
- October General Meeting: our annual volunteer recognition evening. A meal is provided along with entertainment. A fun night for all.
- A "Fancy Farmerette Social" workshop is being offered in October, featuring the making of beeswax and tea light candles, along with honey tasting and sumac-honey tea tastings.
- In November, our popular annual urn and wreath workshops are being planned.

We thank all our members for their continued support. Our membership has grown to 145 members.

Happy Fall, everyone!

Bath Garden Club

2026 Pollinator Week Bioblitz – Expect the Unexpected!

Submitted by Kim Bonner

Photos by Kim Bonner, Don Taylor and Carol Cartier

This is our second year participating in the Pollinator Week BioBlitz, when we take stock of the biodiversity in our club's Pollinator Garden and Bugtel ("bug hotel"). That means taking lots of photos and uploading them to iNaturalist, where they become a valuable record for us and can also contribute to scientific research. One of the best parts of the BioBlitz is discovering things we never knew before, and this year's observations certainly didn't disappoint!



Mind-blowing fact: **mosquitoes are pollinators.**

Yes, the same insects that bite you also visit flowers for nectar. Both males and females help transfer pollen, making them unlikely contributors to healthy ecosystems. Thanks for the pollination, but we'd still prefer you kept your distance!



There's nothing miserable about the impressive "pollen pants" on this gentle, ground-nesting native bee resting on common milkweed, only its name, which is Miserable Mining Bee! Why it was given such an unfortunate name has been lost to history.



Another surprise was the Masked Bee seen here on evening primrose. Unlike most bees, masked bees don't carry pollen on their legs or underneath their abdomen. Instead, they collect pollen in a special pouch in their crop, a sort of "pollen backpack" inside their body, and transport it back to their nest, where they... spit it up!

And just when we thought fireflies only came out after dark, we spotted a pair of Say's Fireflies snuggling up on common milkweed in broad daylight! Did you know that fireflies are beetles, not flies, and that every species has its own unique flashing pattern to attract a mate?

We were kind of conflicted about this Common White-Cheeked Jumping Spider, as it's a pollinator but also hunts beloved bees. It's all part of the circle of life, but if we see the two come face to face, we're rooting for the bee.



The BioBlitz reminded us that even the smallest creatures can have amazing stories to tell. The more closely we look, the more we discover that our gardens are full of fascinating neighbours just waiting to be noticed.

Curious to see more creatures? So far in 2026, we've spotted more than 100 different species of insects, birds, and other wildlife! Visit our iNaturalist project to discover the amazing diversity at our club's Pollinator Garden & Bugtel:

<https://www.inaturalist.ca/projects/2026-bath-pollinator-garden-and-bugtel>



This Augochlorine Sweat Bee is a regular visitor to the garden, but this remarkable close-up caught it resting on the Bugtel in incredible detail. Look closely and you can even see the three tiny ocelli (simple eyes) on its forehead, a wonderful reminder of just how much there is to discover when we stop and take a closer look.



Behind the Baaa-th Gardening Club's Canada Day Flock

Submitted By Kim Bonner

Photos by Don Taylor

The Bath Gardening Club's flower-covered sheep began with a photograph that inspired Sue to imagine a flock advertising the "Baaa-th Gardening Club."

Creativity kept costs low: artificial flowers were purchased at 80% off, decorative mesh came from Christmas sales, recycled ice cream buckets became sheep bodies, and scrap wood formed the legs. Donated hydrangeas were spray-painted red for extra colour.



About 20 volunteers helped bring the float to life. At the June meeting, members added ears, eyes, embroidered faces, and colourful bows. Their efforts were rewarded with enthusiastic cheers as the flock travelled through Bath.

For the second year, Dave and Adam volunteered to tow the float. Dave joked that driving required watching the crowd, keeping an eye out for children, and trying not to run over the walkers in front. The smiles and Canada Day greetings made it all worthwhile.

Organizers Laurie and Diane were especially pleased to include six young participants: four handing out candy and two riding in decorated wagons. Their excitement captured the spirit of the day and offered a lovely reminder that gardening clubs grow communities as well as gardens.



Village Planting Update

Submitted by Kim Bonner

Photos by Don Taylor

The Village Planting is one of the Bath Gardening Club's longest-running and most recognizable community projects. Each spring, volunteers bring colour to the heart of Bath, filling barrels, planters, and public gardens throughout the village with flowers that will brighten our streets all summer long.



Elaine and Val in Centennial Park



Marnie and Pat at the Denys Mailhot Memorial Garden



Garden bed at Schell's Market Inc.

And this summer, all that effort certainly paid off! The gardens were beautiful, bursting with colour and creating welcoming spaces for residents and visitors alike. These photos capture just a little of what could be enjoyed throughout the village this season.

A heartfelt thank-you to everyone who helped with planting, watering, weeding, and all the little jobs that kept everything looking its best throughout the season. Your hard work and care truly made a wonderful difference!

Coming in spring 2027: a fresh look for the streetscape, featuring modern, Canadian-made Equinox Contour Desert Planters in place of the existing barrels.

Designed with a built-in self-watering system, the **new planters** feature a concealed water reservoir beneath the soil. Water is added through an opening at the top, allowing the reservoir to supply moisture to the plants as needed. Under normal conditions, the reservoirs only require refilling every two weeks, reducing maintenance while promoting healthier plants.

These new planters represent an investment in the future of the Village Planting program, ensuring that Bath's gardens remain beautiful, sustainable, and welcoming for many seasons to come



Garden bed in front of the Bath Post Office

Schomberg Horticultural Society

Submitted by Susan Zweep and Margaret Rudnitski

Photos by Shirley Miller, Eleonara Schmied and Susan Zweep

"We were honoured to follow in the footsteps of Barb Niemeyer, who organized Schomberg's garden tours for the past 20 years. As this was our first tour since her passing last year, we hope we did her memory proud."

~ Angela Rose and Beth Egan, Co-Chairs of 2026 SHS Garden Tour

Visitors from near and far were amazed and impressed by the outstanding 2026 Garden Tour. Over 39 volunteers were engaged, 9 gardens were open for display, and 200 tickets were sold. Many thanks to Eleonora Schmied for her leadership and involvement on so many levels as mentor, consultant, and helper.

The Schomberg Horticultural Society would like to express its profound appreciation to the garden, farm, and property owners who so generously opened their gardens to tour-goers, as well as to the garden tour committee, volunteers, Arts Society King artists, sponsors, and Goats in the City. We also sincerely thank the Campbells, who opened their beautiful home and garden for the Appreciation BBQ, which was well attended by volunteers, artists, garden owners and sponsors, as well as Mayor Pellegrini and Councillor Mary Asselstine.



Our sincere thanks to:
the GT Committee, the sponsors,
our incredible volunteers, the artists,
the garden/property owners,
'goats in the city', our supporters and
special guests.

Garden # 1 'California Dreamin' - Artist: Susan Walker Ing



Susan Walker Ing— Painter



Garden # 2 ‘Into the Woods’ - Artist: Wendy Emery



Wendy Emery—Glass Artist



Garden # 3 “Homestead’s Delight”—Artist: Brittany Lauren



Brittany Lauren
Acrylics, beeswax, & other
various materials



It is rare for a Society to have so many members step up to volunteer their help on a beautiful Sunday. Everyone came with good spirits, ready to do their jobs, from advertising, garden-sitting, selling tickets, setting up for the Appreciation BBQ, and erecting signs to direct visitors.

Perfect weather, stunning gardens, committed homeowners, good-spirited volunteers, cute goats, talented artists, proficient organizers, generous sponsors ... What a wonderful combination of community-minded hosts and guests!

Garden # 4 'A Community Growing Together' - Artist: Pat Earl



Patricia Earl—Water Colour

Special Guests: 'Goats in the City'



Goats in the City



Garden # 5 'His Haven, my Haven' - Artist: Veronica Meloche



Garden # 6 'Suburban Oasis' - Artist: Dorothy Tomaszewski



Dorothy Tomaszewski—Painter

Garden # 7 'Karin's Memorial Garden' - Artist: Donna Greenstein



Donna Greenstein—Water Colour



Garden# 8 'Whispering Wings' - Artist: Sylva Sroujian



Sylva Sroujian—Oil, Cold Wax & Acrylic



Garden # 9 "Botanic Beauty" - Artist: Catharine Somerville



Catharine Somerville—All Media



On July 11, 55 members and friends of the Etobicoke Horticultural Society came to Schomberg on a large coach bus. They visited several beautiful properties, shopped at local stores, dined at the Schomberg Pub, and enjoyed our warm hospitality.

We extend our appreciation to Eleonora Schmied, who attended the annual OHA Convention on behalf of the Society. The Schomberg Horticultural Society received First Place, out of 260 Societies in the OHA, in the Flower Show Schedule, and an Honourable Mention for our Newsletter. Congratulations to the Flower Show Committee, the Yearbook Committee, and the Publications Committee.

Karen Hollingshead gave a fabulous talk at our June meeting, sharing her wisdom and humour as she taught us multiple tricks and tips to preserve the harvest. Karen stated, "I'm passionate about good food, locally sourced," and this feeling came through during her presentation. You can follow her on Instagram: [hilltop.hygge.homestead](https://www.instagram.com/hilltop.hygge.homestead).

Our Flower Show judges were impressed with the talent shown by the local community, as well as with the number of novice entries.

Many of our members took the opportunity to appreciate local theatre as the King Theatre Company performed the thought-provoking production "The Pavilion" on a beautiful summer evening on the front porch of the picturesque Pine Orchard Farms.

We are looking forward to our next meeting, featuring Carly McDougall, speaking on the topic of "Sustainable Garden Hacks."

Carly, owner of Bounty from the Boonies in Uxbridge, experienced a life-changing event in 2014, after which she left her award-winning journalism career to focus on recovery. She credits plants with helping to save her life. We're looking forward to Carly sharing her wisdom and experience with us.

We hope that you have taken advantage of the summer weather to garden, visit family and friends, volunteer, read, and enjoy!



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OHA Fundraiser
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Experienced gardening enthusiasts from all around Ontario got together to plan and create this OHA Garden Journal just for you! Are you new to gardening? Are you experienced? Do you have bugs, critters, questions? How do you know what seeds to plant? How do you serve or preserve the bounty of your garden? Many of your questions will be answered as well as answers to questions you didn't know you had!

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Brantford Gardening Club

Submitted and written by Pat Veale, Publicity Director

Photos by Robin Brennan, President



By the time you're reading this, leaves are starting to turn colours and daylight hours are decreasing. But we want to take you back to the start of your calendar year. Brantford Garden Club (Brantford Horticultural Society) starts its fiscal year on October 1. After a yearly review, the Board implemented an annual plan for 2026 that included many points of interest involving our ever-growing membership of approximately 300.

Our library resource, Sherry Mercer, and our new volunteer, Master Gardener Alex Kucharew, along with past president Ed Hewitson, struck up our annual Seed Exchange. During the months of March and April, members had access to hundreds of annual and perennial seeds for both flowers and vegetables to implement outdoor winter sowing and indoor pot-ups. Many members could be found scavenging the tables during our monthly membership meetings. And so the enthusiasm of another tremendous garden season begins.



During the first quarter of 2026, the Brantford Garden Club presented four OHA volunteer pins. Our five-year pins were awarded to Lola Pridham, Robin Brennan, Barry Pridham, and Cathy Clarkson. These members contribute to the success of our Club by volunteering at monthly meetings, helping in our local Hospice and/or Lions Park garden, working at our May plant sale, and so on... and even being our president.

When a few members started inquiring about promotional material, the Board secured a local firm to provide us with Club T-shirts (long- and short-sleeved) that would include our logo, along with stamped tote bags. Sales commenced, with the shirts priced at \$16 and bags at \$10. Be sure to look for our members sporting their new shirts at many upcoming events.





Along with the Ontario Horticultural Association (Garden Ontario) and our local Society, we were pleased to recognize our Past President, Carol Sterkenburg, with the OHA Horticultural Service Certificate in April. (Insert #4 photo) Carol's list of achievements is long and extensive. Our thanks to Carol for her eight years of dedication to our Club, particularly in the area of our monthly horticultural and design competitions, our Summer Flower Show, the development of our youth program, and her years on the Board, which includes her recent tenure as President.

In April, two Board members, Maxine Byerlay and Wendy Schmidt, had the honour of attending the Undergraduate Award Ceremony at Niagara Parks School of Horticulture. At that time, they presented scholarship awards to two deserving students, Gabriel Arcuri and Bailey Birtch. Scholarship awards of \$500 each are given to two students selected by the College who are finishing their first year in the program. Our third \$500 scholarship was presented to Violet Lamont in May. Violet was enrolled at Brantford Collegiate Institute, and her scholarship was presented to her by our President and Membership Chair, as she will be attending Niagara Parks School of Horticulture in the fall to further her education in horticulture.



At the Brantford Garden Club, we recognize that it takes an army and then some to operate and fulfill our mission annually. As April is widely known as Volunteer Month, (Insert photo #7) this year we recognized and thanked these many volunteers. Our Board member Carrie-Ann makes us delicious treats each year to be enjoyed by all. These volunteers are known to provide snacks for social times, man our information tables, open their gardens to members' tours, welcome members to our monthly garden meetings, and much more. We sure appreciate every one of them.



Near the end of April, 17 members of our Club attended the annual District 6 AGM, which was held in Paris, Ontario. The 17 members who attended helped us when it came time to hand out an award for the Club with the most attendees. There were more than 150 people attending from 22 Horticultural Societies. The horticulture and design show had beautiful entries, with Brantford placing third in points, thanks to Irene Heltner, Sharon Garner, and Patty George's entries. Patty also won the Judge's Choice Award in Design.

When you think of May, I bet your thoughts turn to the many plant sales our different Societies put on. Brantford is no different. Except we have folks lining up at 7 a.m. just to be first in the door when they open at 8 a.m. What a surprise we gave them all this year. (Insert photo #9) Our volunteers really outdid themselves again. As you can see, there's something for everyone: vegetables, herbs, seeds, perennials, house plants, specialty plants, annuals, and more. This is our Club's primary fundraiser each year, and the profits came in at just over \$4,500.





These are some of the smiling faces you will find tending to our local Stedman Hospice Garden and our meeting-place Lions Park garden. Many start seeds throughout the winter and, when May comes around, they're trotting off to weed, dig, and plant. These gardens help Hospice staff feed patients and provide cutting flowers for residents' rooms.

All aboard the annual bus trip held this year on June 23. This year's excursion took us to the Wellington-Waterloo District where we visited three gardens and Meadow Acres Garden Centre. We all came away with many new ideas and plans to locate another favourite plant on the list. The weather came through for us, and now we're on the journey to plan next year's tour.

Well, we're halfway through our fiscal year, with lots more items on our agenda. Be sure to follow us in the winter edition of the Trillium as we share the events of the Brantford Garden Club.



District 2 - 32nd Annual Flower & Edibles Show

32nd Annual Flower & Edibles Show

Theme: "World Cup Comes to Canada!"

Submitted by Gay MacQuarrie, Chair, District 2 Flower and Edibles Show 2025

I had to smile when a visitor to the recent District 2 Flower and Edibles Show asked me, "Is everything in the floral designs edible?" I explained that "edibles" referred to vegetable specimens in the Horticulture Division. An honest mistake, I suppose, since the designs were the first things guests saw when they entered the show. Over 150 people viewed the exhibits, which we hope piqued their interest in gardening and possibly joining a society.

Town Crier Daniel Richer opened the show. Making the event extra special was the presence of our Member of Parliament, Jenna Sudds, and City of Ottawa Councillor Cathy Curry, who donated the beautiful public space where the show was staged. We were thrilled to have OHA President Vicky Culbert perform the cake cutting to celebrate Ottawa's Bytown 200 birthday.

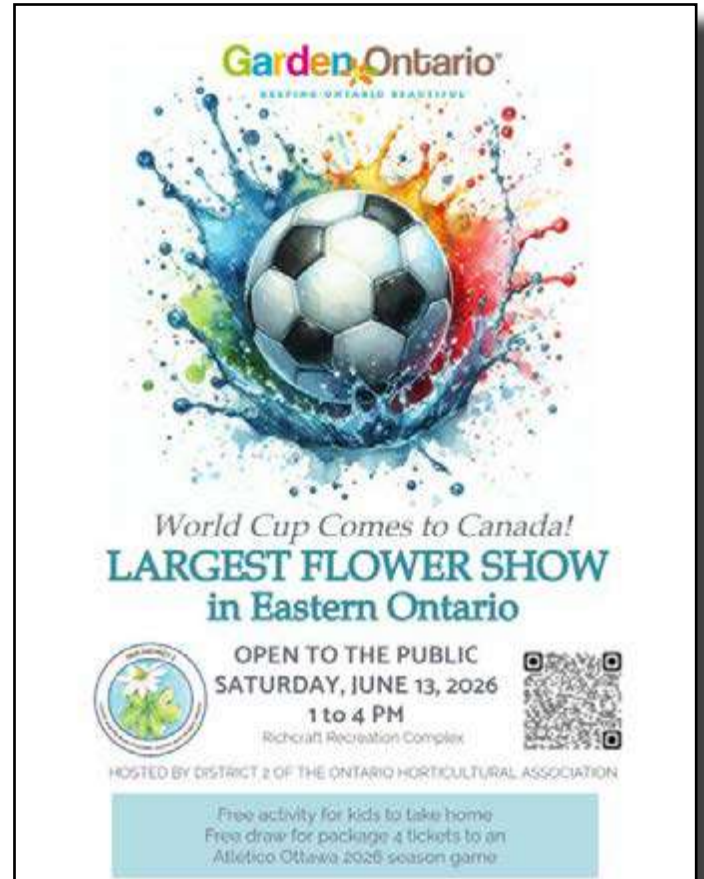


Photo by Jennifer Johnston

The youth activity was very popular, with approximately 50 children making either a fairy or dish garden, bug house or bee hotel to take home.

Seventy people learned some floral design tricks from accomplished designer Judy Fine. Two lucky individuals won an arrangement as a door prize.

To help educate the public, we developed a three-sided, free-standing, seven-foot-tall sign that describes what judges are looking for when they judge horticulture specimens and floral designs.

The corrugated plastic sign includes information on societies in District 2 and GardenOntario. It can be reused at future flower shows.

Find us on Facebook and Instagram.

Cold-Hardy Fruit

Submitted by Cynthia Lauer

With the right care and the right conditions, gardeners everywhere can harvest a bounty of fresh apples, cherries and plums. Yes, even in the coldest regions.

Is there anything more eagerly anticipated than a bountiful basket of summer-ripe apples, plums, cherries, or berries? Whether fresh, baked, canned, or preserved, no other crop packs as much taste, texture, and versatility. Harvesting your own fruit from trees and shrubs amplifies those pleasures. With today's cold-hardy cultivars, gardeners can enjoy the vibrant flavour of a homegrown apple, cherry or plum virtually anywhere in Canada.

When it comes to growing fruit, cold weather is an advantage. Canadian fruit has better colour and sweetness and fewer disease and insect problems compared to fruit grown elsewhere. Its health benefits are also enhanced. To protect themselves against extreme weather, plants produce more antioxidants. In their book, *Growing Fruit in Northern Gardens*, Bob Bors and Sara Williams note that, "what might be considered a superfood grown elsewhere becomes a super-duper food when grown in the north."

HARDY APPLES

Originating in Kazakhstan and central Asia, apples are believed to be the oldest cultivated tree in the world. A few species of crab apples are native to North America. The discovery of ancient forest gardens provides evidence that the apple was an important food source for many Indigenous peoples.

The key to successful fruit trees is choosing varieties that thrive in your hardiness zone. Since apples are typically grafted onto dwarf, disease-resistant, or hardy rootstock, it's necessary to check the cold-hardiness of both the rootstock and the grafted scion. Choose a tree that is

resistant to fungal diseases and pests that are prevalent in your area. These safeguards will ensure a healthy and productive tree for many years and will save the gardener both time and labour.

Choose a site in full sun. Apples are tolerant of most soils but do best in well-drained loam or sandy loam soil. A newly planted apple or crab apple can take up to two years to establish and may take as long as five years to begin producing fruit. Once it does, trees may drop their fruit. To avoid problems, plant your tree away from decks, patios, driveways and sidewalks. Keep the base of the tree free from grass and other plants. Competition from other plants can slow or stunt the growth of your new apple tree.



Image by fineststudios from Pixabay

For the first year or two, young trees need to be watered deeply at least twice a week during the growing season. Water new trees near the base, but as the tree grows, water them at the dripline where the feeder roots are located. Do not fertilize newly planted trees. It is safe to apply 2 cm of compost or well-composted manure and a thick layer of mulch, ensuring that they do not touch the trunk.



Images from Freepik

Apples come in a variety of colours and sizes, from small crab apples to large eating apples. Depending on the cultivar, they ripen anytime from late August to early October, an important feature to determine in advance.

In northern Ontario, the fall is not always long enough to harvest an apple that ripens in October. Summer-ripening apples such as the cultivars Heyer 12, Norland, and Prairie Sun, and early fall apples like Fall Red, Goodland, Norkent, and September Ruby, are suitable for these regions. Bob Osborne of Corn Hill Nurseries in New Brunswick recommends Carroll, Gemini and Norkent, all hardy to zone 2. The Parkland apple, also hardy to zone 2, makes an excellent tart apple for baking and sauce. Several varieties of cold-hardy and “ultra-hardy” apples can even be found in Canada’s most northerly nursery, Klondike Valley Nursery in Dawson City, Yukon.



Image by Oldiefan from Pixabay

One of Bob Bors’ personal favourites is Frostbite (zone 3). For Phil Beauchamp at Beautiful Field Farm near Sudbury, ON (zone 3b/4), the vote for favourite apple goes to Gemini and Red Sparkle. “They are great annual producers and have proven to be extremely hardy and disease free.”

Apples need to cross-pollinate with a tree of a different variety. With their overlapping bloom times, any two varieties are compatible. Crab apples are excellent sources of pollen. In order to attract pollinating bees, your garden should also include a diversity of native flowering plants.

HARDY SOUR CHERRIES

Like apples, cherry trees are typically grafted onto dwarf rootstock. Dwarf cherry trees remain relatively small, making them suitable for smaller gardens. The sweetest varieties are the self-pollinators—Stella, Lapins, Black Gold—while Bing and Rainier need cross-pollination. Montmorency, Evans and Surefire are deliciously tart in flavour.



Created using Copilot

they can yield 15 kg of fruit or more. Cupid and Juliet are the hardiest. Bors and Williams suggest trying them in zone 1a. Valentine and Carmine Jewel will grow in zone 2, while Romeo and Crimson Passion are best in zone 3.

Cherry shrubs are attractive plants with white blossoms in the spring and fruit-laden branches in the summer. Even though they are known as sour cherries, they contain almost the same amount of sugar as sweet cherries. For the best flavour and sweetness, pick them only after they've turned a rich, deep red. Their taste is a pleasant blend of sweet and sour, perfect for eating fresh or for pies, preserves, juice, and dried fruit. To preserve them long-term, they can be frozen, fermented, dehydrated, or canned.

Cherries do best in full sun. They are tolerant of most soils but do best in well-drained loam or sandy loam soil. They tolerate clay soil if the location is well-drained.

Like newly planted apple trees, cherry shrubs should not compete with grass or other plants at their base. Apply a thick layer of mulch in a donut shape around, but not touching, the base of the shrub. Keep newly planted shrubs moist for the first 2 to 3 weeks. After that, apply about 2.5 cm of water every week or so. Water new plants near the base, but as they grow, focus on the dripline. It is safe to apply 2 cm of compost or well-composted manure near the base of the shrub before applying the mulch.

Now that easy-care bush cherries are available, harvesting handfuls of deliciously ripe cherries is more feasible than ever. Developed at the University of Saskatchewan, the Romance series of multi-stemmed shrubs grow on their own roots, not on grafted rootstock. The fruit from the Romeo, Juliet, Cupid, Valentine, Carmine Jewel, and Crimson Passion cultivars rivals the size and taste of tree-grown cherries. Growing 2 to 2.5 m high, they produce fruit after four or five years. These cherry shrubs are self-pollinating. Since they do not require pollen from another variety to set fruit, you only need a single plant. In time,



Flickr - Photo by Valentin Hintikka, licensed as CC BY 2.0

HARDY PLUMS

Like the sour cherry shrubs developed at USK, plums grown in Canada are hardy to zone 2. Plums are not available with a dwarfing rootstock. They naturally grow to be trees of medium height.

Hardy plum trees are derived from three species, two of which are native to North America. Cross-pollination occurs readily between Canada plum (*P. nigra*), American plum (*P. americana*) and Japanese plum (*P. salicina*). Plums have highly specific pollen requirements. For successful pollination to occur between different varieties of plum, trees need to be within 30 m of each other and their bloom periods must be in sync. Note that some plum hybrids (such as Bounty and Norther) are sterile and do not produce fertile pollen. Once these details are taken into account, gardeners can select varieties that will result in fruit with both excellent flavour and cold hardiness.



Image by Freepik

Plums should be planted in weed-free, well-drained soil in full sun. Ideally, the soil should be a deep, fertile loam with a high organic matter content. After planting, generously mulch the young tree with straw or compost.

Site location is critical. Avoid low-lying areas that retain frost as well as sites that are soggy or exposed to wind. Wind can damage the buds and the developing fruit of a plum tree, cause water loss, and interrupt bee activity. Laurel Anderson of Prairie Gardens in Bon Accord, Alberta, advises that for a good fruiting plum tree, “the secret to success is picking the right variety for your climate, planting it where snow is late to melt in the spring, and using a wild Canada plum for pollination.” Planting a plum tree on a north slope delays bloom time and can avoid the impact of late spring frosts.

Annual pruning helps control the size of a plum tree and makes the fruit easier to harvest. Traditionally, pruning involves training the plum tree to have a single trunk with a few well-spaced main branches in a vase shape. Another option recommended by USK is to prune plum trees like apple trees with a central leader system. This will give your plum tree sturdier branches that are less likely to break with fruit load. In the end, it depends on the grower’s preference for appearance and access to fruit.

Susan Poizner runs Orchard People, a Toronto-based resource for fruit growers. From her perspective, “planting fruit trees builds a partnership with nature and creates abundance and plenty. Fruit trees embody generosity—and we could all use a little more of that in the world.” Fruit growers everywhere will surely attest to that truism.

Bio

Cynthia B. Lauer, PhD, is a member of Simcoe County Master Gardeners, and a retired sociology professor. She has been nurturing her passion for gardening since the 1980s. Her work is AI-free.

Leaside Garden Society

Submitted by Carolynn Beange, LGS Scholarship Chair

The Leaside Garden Society (LGS) is pleased to announce the 2026 winner of its Founders' Scholarship. James Marcucci is in his third year of a PhD program at the University of Toronto. His course of study is Urban Forestry at the Institute of Forestry and Conservation, Daniels Faculty.

According to the Ontario Professional Foresters Association, Urban Forestry is the sustained planning, planting, protection, maintenance and care of trees, forests, greenspace and related resources in and around cities and communities for economic, environmental, social and public health benefits.

The pressures from urbanization, development and the urban population negatively impact forests and the natural environment. The responsibility of planting and stewardship has shifted from the City of Toronto to community groups and non-profits through urban forestry grants and incentive programs.

James's PhD work is designed to address modern environmental challenges, and to help community-based organizations and private citizens preserve mature neighbourhood tree canopies, maintain existing character and increase greening opportunities through community engagement and education.

James is a leading data collector who has worked with the federal government, providing Urban Forestry leadership. He has done innovative work with tree cover simulations and stewardship. He has also worked on a joint proposal in Atlantic Canada hosted by First Nations and local NGOs.

James has a commitment to community service, education and ecological activities, which is directly aligned with the LGS mission. One of his references, Dr. Heather Macdonald from the National Research Council, summarized him this way:

"James is a social scientist. His work is focused on planting and quality of life, adaptation and mitigation, long-term solutions to reduce emissions and absorb carbon. All this supports communication about benefits from tree planting, including incorporation of strategies to increase resilience to wildfire."

We wish James continued success as he completes his PhD studies.



Photo credit: Wade Pitman, OHA Photo Competition

Tilbury and District Horticultural Society

Tilbury and District Horticultural Society celebrates its 40th anniversary with a garden tour and strawberry social.

Submitted by and photos by Jone Dalglish

To mark the forty years since the establishment of the Tilbury and District Horticultural Society, it was decided to host a garden tour. Planning for the tour began in June 2025 with a list of possible gardens. Committee members gathered information from other garden tours, including the tours held in Tilbury in the past.



Many committee meetings later, we were ready to present the tour. Sunday, June 14, was to be the day, rain or shine. (How prophetic that was to be!) Seven gardens were selected. The owners were so kind to volunteer their spaces and to showcase all their hard work and creativity. In addition to the seven private spaces, the gardens at Memorial Park were included. Society members volunteered to assist on the day: as registrars at our headquarters at the Royal Canadian Legion hall in Tilbury, as marshals at all the gardens, and as servers at the strawberry social.



Two nights before the date of the tour, all the garden owners and volunteers were invited to tour all the gardens and then to enjoy refreshments at the home of Doug and Kathy Smyth, past president of the OHA and one of the gardens included on the tour. As a mark of appreciation, the garden owners were each presented with a metal butterfly, designed and created by the shop class at Tilbury District High School.

At 9 am, Sunday, June 14, all was ready for our tourists. Unfortunately, the weather forecast was not promising. Still, we thought, perhaps the forecast was wrong and besides, aren't gardeners a hardy breed, able to withstand a few drops from the sky? The morning went well, with many ticket holders coming in to get the map of the gardens on the tour. Alas, the weather became more and more threatening. At 1:30, a tornado and severe thunderstorm alert was received and soon after the heavy rain began. This put an end to the tour for many people. Even so, there were a few who toured the gardens in the rain, armed with umbrellas and rain suits. The rain did stop and some went back outside to visit the gardens. Those who did brave the weather returned to the Legion to enjoy a generous serving of vanilla ice cream, cake, and fresh strawberries, and a chance to dry out.

Although the weather did not cooperate with our plans, those who did tour the gardens had many complimentary reviews. We thank all those who attended, and a very special thank you to the garden owners and all the volunteers. Better luck next time!



PHOTOS

by Joy Davis
Tilbury, ON



Monarch on tithonia



Tiger swallowtail in July



Monarch on purple ageratum



First visit from hummingbird



First swallowtail



Ameilia's garden



Nellie's garden

Midland Garden Club

Submitted by Cathy Ladouceur

Photos by Lynn Hiley

One would be hard-pressed to find individuals with more enthusiasm for their common interest than you will find in a group of gardeners, and the members of the Midland Garden Club are no exception. We are a group of hardworking people passionate about their gardens and eager to share their knowledge.

With deep roots in the community and celebrating 130 years next year, the Midland Garden Club remains a quiet but steady presence in the community, tending public flower beds, sharing horticultural know-how, and giving green-thumbed neighbours a reason to gather each month.

The first six months of this year were spent with our usual mix of education, hands-on workshops, and civic volunteering. During the cold winter months, we hold Zoom meetings so members can enjoy and learn from our speakers from the comfort of their homes. The club's monthly meetings brought in a rotating cast of expert speakers, starting with a March session on organic gardening



led by Isaac Fortune, followed in April by horticulturalist Sean James discussing how gardens can better manage heavy rainfall. Members also had the chance to sharpen their tools, literally, at a hands-on workshop led by Diane Greenfield, ensuring everyone's pruners and shears were ready for the growing season ahead. As the calendar moved into late spring, the club turned its attention to native plants and ecological stewardship, welcoming speaker Kathleen Patenode for a talk on gardening practices supporting the natural systems people depend on.

True to its mandate of civic beautification, members rolled up their sleeves for their annual Planting Day at the Town Dock on May 27, adding fresh colour to one of Midland's most visible public spaces. Our volunteers planted and then maintained 26 planters and three flower beds throughout the summer. In June, the club held its popular plant sale at the Midland Farmers' Market, offering locally grown perennials and annuals to residents. All funds raised were donated to the local food banks. Rather than putting specific prices on plants, we asked our customers to simply consider the price as a donation towards the food banks, and it was amazing how willingly people paid more than what the price of the plant would have been.

Last season, our group was approached by Julie Barker, a founding member of the Midland Community Gardens board who was also a long-time member of our club. We were asked to assist with some of the maintenance of the community garden. An agreement was made to rent a veggie garden bed and a pollinator bed. We also committed to revitalizing the main entrance perennial bed and the information bulletin board.



This gives the MGC an opportunity to promote vegetable gardening and provide hands-on experience for members to learn. As an extra benefit, the place has also become a valuable spot to have practical gardening workshops, such as our tool-sharpening workshop.

Another significant project was taken on with the local organisation Huronia TransitionHomes, a non-profit organization dedicated to ending violence against women and providing support, shelter, and advocacy for survivors and their children. HTM offers multiple services, one of which is Operation Grow, a social enterprise indoor hydroponic farm whose

vision is to help women build employability, increase their self-agency, and reduce social isolation through skills development. This operation is located within the town of Midland.

Operation Grow initiated a partnership with the Midland Garden Club to create a pollinator plant garden at the entrance to the site. The MGC then applied for an OHA grant to fund this new project. Our volunteers spent time clearing out the old vegetation, preparing the bed, and planting native plants designed to provide a succession of blooms from spring through fall. The ongoing maintenance of this bed will be taken over by the Operation Grow members.



Another very popular event is our annual members' garden tour. Members of our club graciously offer to show their gardens to us as we travel as a large group from garden to garden. This year's gardens were diverse and impressive. We ended the mini tour with light refreshments for all. It was, as always, a very enjoyable experience.

Beyond the scheduled events, the club continued its longstanding tradition of recognizing outstanding local gardens through its Garden of the Year award, a tribute to residents who put real time and care into their yards.



The club also produces an annual calendar for sale to our members and the general public. This year's monthly photos feature native plantings.

Lastly, it is so important to encourage youth involvement in safeguarding the environment for the years to come. This year, we were thrilled to be able to offer \$500 scholarships at each of the two local high schools for students pursuing post-secondary education in horticulture or environmental science.

Now, with our new year approaching, our members can look ahead to the fall season, when meetings resume and the club's calendar of speakers and workshops begins anew.

Follow us on Facebook

Contact information

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Barrie Garden Club

Barrie Garden Club summer road trip to Royal Botanical Gardens

Submitted by and photos by Kathy Dermott

Almost 60 members and guests of the Barrie Garden Club were recently delighted by the ever-changing gardens of the Royal Botanical Gardens (RBG) on their August field trip to one of Ontario's most treasured horticultural destinations.

RBG is Canada's largest botanical garden, with almost 3,000 acres of nature sanctuaries that span Hamilton and Burlington, and 130 acres of cultivated gardens. The garden club narrowed its focus to the David Bradley and Nancy Gordon Rock Garden, opened to visitors in 1932, and a guided tour of Hendrie Park, RBG's largest cultivated garden.



The Rock Garden, reopened in 2016 after a rejuvenation, is characterized by swaths of colourful and textural perennials. It is a gorgeous oasis featuring water, historic limestone steps, and showcasing 1,670 types and 112,543 individual plants.

Hendrie Park is home to, among others, the rose garden, with its display of roses and companion plants, and the Helen M. Kippax Garden, which features more than 135 native species displayed in plant community zones that represent several local habitats.

Hendrie Park also delighted the club with its current outdoor exhibition, ANCHORBALL: A Curious Art Journey, by artist and contemporary sculptor Ken Kelleher. A massive outdoor exhibition, it features 18 monumental sculptures ranging up to 12 feet, changing the garden into a brilliant sculptural landscape of bold characters and imaginative narratives.

Following the gardens and a lovely lunch at RBG, the club travelled to Northland Nursery in Waterdown, where members indulged in some retail therapy, inspired by the gardens of RBG.



Port Colborne Garden Club

Hello from Port Colborne in our 126th year

Submitted by and photos by Maggie Corner

We recently discovered, through OMAFA and the OHA, that in 2025 our club turned 125 years old, having celebrated our 95th anniversary in 2024! We were a few years out in our paperwork.

We will be commemorating this amazing achievement with a commemorative metal plaque and native geranium flower on a boulder in the City of Port Colborne Museum Gardens. The Hardy Geranium, or Cranesbill, is both the City's and our Club's flower. Our Port Colborne Garden Club tends the Museum Gardens. We will be celebrating this achievement in September with our Mayor, District 9, and Garden Club members old and new.

One of our highlights in 2025 was having Film Reflektor come and visit us and Museum staff in our Museum Gardens. Film Reflektor is a Montreal-based company that makes movies of all types of gardens. They were wonderful, very organized, and we had a lovely day. Please find "Some Time in the Garden" on [YouTube](#).

We have had a wonderful start to our year with our Movie and Popcorn night in February.

In March, we had a very entertaining presentation on bugs of all types from Natural Insect Control, and in April we heard about Species at Risk, including plants, trees, and turtles.

On a very wet and wild April 25th, 2026, we co-hosted the District 9 Spring Annual Meeting with the Ridgeway & District Garden Club. The volunteers from both clubs were absolutely amazing.

Working with another club was very collaborative and different tasks were undertaken by each club. We came together and had a wonderful day.

The event was held in the barn at the Maple Meadows Farm and Event Centre in Port Colborne. It was an absolutely splendid location, with the best hosts around.

We had 110 people present and had over 90 prizes in our penny sale, averaging about \$50 each. So many generous donors.



Our presenter at our meeting in May was Heather Swann, who stepped in at the last minute and gave an amazing presentation on Growing Smarter, Not Harder: Gardening in Raised Beds.

On May 30th, we had our annual fundraising Plant Sale. What a success this year, with members providing many plants from their gardens and helping set up and take down the event.



All remaining plants were sold at the Port Colborne Museum Open House the following day, with those funds raised going to the Museum.

In June, we had our annual Spring Flower Show. What a turnout, with more members submitting their flowers for judging. Quite an array of plants grown by our members. We also had a presentation from one of our members, who demonstrated some beautiful flower arrangements.

Our meetings return in September with our first-ever Fall Flower Show and our 125th Anniversary celebration.

In October, we learn about Fall Plant Splitting and Closing our Gardens, and we end our year in November with our Annual Meeting and Christmas Dinner.



We are a small but mighty group with an Executive and Board of 8 people and a general membership of approximately 60 to 65. We tend two public gardens and help out in other public spaces as requested.

Oro-Medonte Horticultural Society

Submitted by David St Amand

Photos by David St Amand, Suzana Wilmot, John Wilmot and Lynda Baxter

It's been a lively season in Oro-Medonte, with the Society active in nearly every corner of the Township. Our spring and summer schedule included meetings, workshops, garden tours, flower shows, and community events.

Our speaker lineup this year covered everything from micromeadows and permaculture to invasive species and garden design. Members really seemed to enjoy the mix of practical advice and inspiration. When our August speaker fell ill, our member, Janet Houston stepped in with a presentation of her own and reminded us why our group is such a great audience: attentive, warm, and genuinely curious. In September, fellow member Lynne Melnyk joined us as our speaker and took us on a wonderful tour of gardens in and around Rome

We also ran two hands-on floral design workshops: a Landscape Design session in June, led by Lynne Melnyk and a Hogarth Curve workshop in September led by accredited judge Ursula Eley. Members across District 16 participated.



And of course, our Spring, Early Summer and Late Summer Flower Shows brought out beautiful specimens and some very imaginative designs. Themes like *Wonders of Spring*, *Coast to Coast to Coast* and *Autumn Inspiration* encouraged members to play, experiment, and show off what's blooming in their gardens.



Despite cool, rainy weather, the Annual Plant Sale was a resounding success. Volunteers put in **180 hours** across potting, setup, and sale day, and the plants vanished quickly from the fairground field.



Velta Berzins Bush, Kathy Newman & Rhonda Hutcheson



OMHS also participated in the Barrie Public Library's Garden Expo, where Suzana Wilmot distributed seedlings, seeds, and gardening advice to enthusiastic visitors.

Canada Day brought OMHS to the Hawkestone Parade, where decorated hats, a pollinator themed car, and plenty of community spirit made for a memorable celebration.

The 2026 Garden Tour featured four unique properties, each reflecting the creativity and dedication of its owners. From market-style vegetable production to decades-old perennial borders, fruit trees, and pollinator-friendly plantings, members enjoyed an inspiring afternoon exploring the diversity of Oro-Medonte's gardening talent.

Our volunteers kept the Township's civic gardens looking their best. A few new helpers joined the team, and some beds, like the Ian Beard Garden, got expanded and refreshed. Our society has stewardship over six civic gardens.

Several of us attended the OHA Convention in Oshawa this year, and it was a great mix of speakers, tours, and conversations with gardeners from across Ontario. The highlight for OMHS was seeing **Michelle Lynch** receive the **Award of Merit**, a well-deserved recognition of her contributions to horticulture. We were thrilled to cheer her on.

Next year marks the **60th anniversary** of the Oro-Medonte Horticultural Society. We're already thinking about how to celebrate.



Suzana Wilmot at the Barrie Library's Garden Expo



Charlotte Leboeuf, Janet Houston, David St Amand, Gail & John Reid-Wilkinson (in car)



Lynne Melnyk, Michelle Lynch, John Lynch, Edna Caldwell & David St Amand at the OHA Convention.

Ancaster Horticultural Society

Beautifying Ancaster for 65 years.

Submitted by Rhu Sherrard

Photos by Rhu Sherrard



Our volunteers and Society members have been busy over the summer. We continue to maintain and are responsible for 4 municipal gardens in the community: Fieldcote, Millennium, Brandon Park and the Ancaster Town Square.

A big thank you to our Trillium Committee for their time and commitment to ensure the lovely gardens in our neighborhood are recognized and celebrated.

The Trillium Awards ceremony was held at the Old Town Hall, Ancaster, Ontario on August 17th, 2026, from 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM, with light refreshments and some time to socialize.

Trillium Awards entries were received from May 26 to June 7, 2026. Once again, the front gardens of the residents of Ward 12 were beautiful! Our 28 judges viewed approximately 200 front gardens and awarded 125 Trilliums this year. The cut-off score was 91/100. Several gardens were awarded special Trilliums: 3 residents received Diamond Trilliums for achieving 15 years of awards, 6 residents received Ruby Trilliums for 10 years of winning awards, and 10 residents received Gold Trilliums for achieving 5 years of awards. Thank you, Carol H. and committee members.

Jeanne R. and Teresa Z. attended the OHA Annual Convention. The event was informative, and various connections were made with gardeners throughout the various districts. A summary of the convention highlights was provided to our Society.

Our June 2026 Road Trip to Purple Haven Lavender Farm and Beth Powell's garden in Canfield, Ontario, were highly successful and well attended; over 20 members were able to enjoy a gorgeous summer afternoon exploring the farm and private garden. The information and inspiration were top-notch!

Betty H., our Society's speaker and events coordinator, provided the following summary:

"On Wednesday, June 24, 2026, 22 members and friends of the Ancaster Horticultural Society enjoyed a road trip to Canfield, Ontario, touring two amazing gardens. Mother Nature was very cooperative, and the sun was shining with a nice breeze. We started with a two-hour visit to Purple



Haven Lavender Farm. Kim Drew was our host and guide. We learned about lavender, the different varieties, and how to care for them. Wandering around the fields full of different lavender varieties was amazing. Kim's beekeeper was on hand and spoke to us about bees, their function, caring for them, and their habits. Afterwards, we enjoyed a refreshing drink of homemade lavender lemonade and frozen fruit treats on a stick. Purchases were made in her store, group photos were taken, and before you knew it, we were off to the second tour of Beth Powell's property. Upon arrival, we were escorted into Beth's gorgeous garden, where we all enjoyed our lunch seated at one of her many sitting areas. Beth and her husband, Ken, mingled with us and answered questions. It was wonderful to hear their stories. After lunch, Beth explained that our visit would be a self-guided tour around her multi-acre property. Their property is absolutely stunning and very whimsical. They have an amazing visual gift of seeing trash and repurposing it into beauty. She has incorporated bowling balls, bowling pins, satellite dishes, vintage watering cans, oil funnels, saw blades, bottles, metal headboards, springs, and metal mattresses, just to name a few, in her garden vision. The multiple seating areas are stunning, using chandeliers, old chairs, tables, billiard balls, birdhouses, and wooden and metal items. Around every corner was something awe-inspiring and lovely."

The Ancaster Horticultural Society members and friends enjoyed a self-guided tour of Creek View Acres Nursery and Orchards. The tour was originally booked on Tuesday, July 14, 2026, but a heat advisory and humidex in the 40s caused the tour to be rescheduled to Tuesday, July 21, 2026. The day got off to a rocky start as Mother Nature unleashed her fury with high winds, rain, and thunderstorms. But that didn't stop 14 folks from showing up and enjoying their evening at Creek View Acres, located in Brant County. The sun came out, and the tour started with Christi Garneau, who is running for the position of County of Brant Mayor, and her husband, John Basaillon, giving us a brief history of the farm, orchards, and buildings. Most date back to 1860, with the barn foundation built in 1880. Afterwards, some folks enjoyed sitting and taking in the peace and beauty, while others wandered the property admiring the buildings and gardens. It was a wonderful experience, and everyone enjoyed themselves.



Plant Sale Summary: Jeanne R. reported that over 1,000 plants were offered for sale, including 160 varieties. The sale of native plants and the toonie table went well and will continue. The new hours, 8 AM to noon, worked well, with most plants sold by 11 AM. The new potting location worked well, but there were fewer volunteers to do the planting. Eight gardens were dug up last fall and stored, but there were fewer volunteers to do the work.

Liz Martin reported on the tomato and pepper sales. Twenty-five percent of online sales went to new customers. All plants except 14 were sold, and those that were not sold were donated to a local hospice.

Upcoming Events:

September 15, 2026: Jennifer Henderson, Chair of the Dundas Turtle Watch, and Rosemary Horsewood, Dundas Turtle Watch Education Co-ordinator, will be presenting about the Dundas Turtle Watch mandate, turtle identification and handling, as well as the status of turtles in Ontario.

October 20, 2026: Irene Kicak and Veronica Tunzi, Fancy Farmerettes, "Growing with Hemp"

"A weed is but an unloved flower." Ella Wheeler Wilcox

November 17, 2026: Ancaster Town Hall, Holiday Party and AGM

Thursday, November 18th, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM: Christmas decorating at Fieldcote and Old Town Hall.

Music at Fieldcote has returned in 2026 and will continue with a new program for 2027.

"Plant and your spouse plants with you; weed and you weed alone." Jean Jacques Rousseau



Brampton Horticultural Society

Submitted and Written by Lynn Viau-Morin.

Photographs by Lynn Viau-Morin and Jim Caldwell.

Despite some dramatic weather, for the most part we've had enough sun and rain to keep our gardens happy.

When we pause to reflect on the year, it's often surprising to realize just how much has been accomplished. It has certainly been a busy and productive year for our Society.

Year-over-year membership numbers remain stable, and we were pleased to welcome 16 new members. On the volunteer front, we're fortunate to have no shortage of people willing to lend a hand at our events, and we were also able to fill several long-standing vacancies. We are particularly grateful to have found volunteers to take on the positions of Treasurer and Membership Chair.

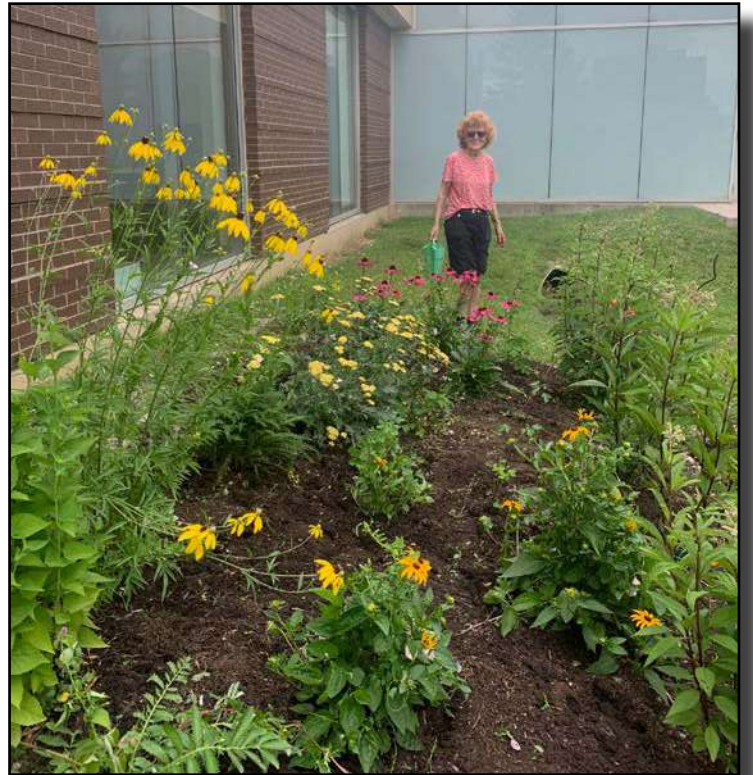
Before the start of our General Meetings, members once again had the opportunity to lead mini-workshops. Topics this year included "Lasagna Bulb Planting in Pots," "Creating a Decorative Design in a Vase," "Winter Sowing," and "How to Enter a Flower Show." These informal sessions are a wonderful way for members to share their knowledge and learn from one another.

As is typical, spring was a busy season. We are grateful for our ongoing working relationship with the City of Brampton, which continues to provide us with opportunities to share our knowledge and promote gardening in the community.

This year, we were once again asked to support the City's Backyard Garden Program by providing workshops on the basics of vegetable gardening.

The BOAA (Brampton Older Adults Alliance) brings together a variety of senior and older adult organizations. The City hosts meetings every couple of months, giving us an opportunity to exchange information with City staff and representatives from other organizations.

Our presentation to the BOAA in March generated considerable interest. As a result, we were invited by CARP to speak to their members in April. In June, we delivered a "Summer Garden Care Workshop" to approximately 50 enthusiastic participants.





In partnership with the City of Brampton, the 14th Annual Seedy Saturday took place on March 14. Once again, we were lucky with the weather, as you never know what March will bring! The event was a great success, attracting approximately 1,000 community members. All three speaker presentations drew standing-room-only crowds.

Our seed table was a hub of activity, raising more than \$700 toward the sponsorship of seeds through Seeds of Diversity. The packaged seeds, more than 1,100 packages in total, sold out.

An event of this size doesn't happen without a tremendous amount of volunteer effort. We are extremely grateful to our 32 wonderful volunteers, who contributed more than 500 hours to planning, organizing, packaging seeds, setting up, staffing booths, and taking everything down at the end of the day.

In March, we also held a Floral Design Workshop, where members learned some of the basics of floral design and had the opportunity to create a design of their own.

In April, we co-hosted the D15 AGM with our friends at the Chinguacousy Garden Club. More than 60 people attended, with all but one of our Societies represented. We had fun with the fundraisers and silent auction, as well as the edible garden centrepieces that were given away as door prizes. And, of course, we ate well, thanks to everyone who contributed homemade muffins, desserts, cookies, and fruit and vegetable trays!



Then came the Plant Sale in May, another great success! Weather is always the wildcard, but fortunately the rain held off until the end of the day. Volunteers came out for a series of "potting-up days" in preparation for the sale and helped with setup. On the day itself, a record number of volunteers turned out to lend a hand. Members of the public lined up around the building, eager to get inside and start shopping.



We also enjoyed two bus trips this year. In May, a group of enthusiastic gardeners headed to Oshawa for a spring garden tour, beginning with a visit to Pingles Tulip Farm & Market, followed by Vandermeer Nursery, where participants had the opportunity to browse, and purchase, a wide variety of quality and unusual plants.

The July bus trip took us to VanGo Strawberry Farm, Bonnieheath Estate Lavender & Winery, and finally Northland Nursery in Waterdown. Both trips provided a wonderful opportunity to explore new places, discover plants, and enjoy the company of fellow gardeners.

The pollinator garden established at Sheridan College in 2025 survived a tough winter and is looking great, thanks to a small but committed group of volunteers who continue to care for it.

At our traditional Strawberry Social meeting in June, we took the opportunity to recognize and thank our long-serving members for their many years of service and commitment to the Society.



This year also marked an exciting return for the Brampton Blooms Annual Flower Show. For 12 years, from 2005 to 2016, the show was held in the Atrium of Brampton's City Hall. It was subsequently moved to the Bob Callahan Flower City Seniors Centre. Although the Seniors Centre was a lovely venue, its lack of visibility resulted in a sharp decline in attendance.

With the support of City Council, the Flower Show returned to City Hall this year, coinciding with the opening of the Farmers' Market just outside the building's doors. The move made an immediate difference. By 2 p.m., approximately 740 members of the public had come through the show, and that was only a fraction of the total, as many visitors entered through other doors.

We were pleased to see an encouraging increase in the number of flower show entries. Participation in the Floral Decorative competitions, however, remained relatively flat. We'll be looking at ways to encourage more people to give this a try next year.

Our Photo Contest entries were on display. Members of the public were given the opportunity to select their favourites.



To round out a busy June, members enjoyed a guided tour of Brampton's Dearbourne Pollinator Garden. This park space, once traditional turf grass, has been transformed into a thriving native wildflower meadow, a wonderful example of how even familiar urban spaces can be reimaged to support pollinators and biodiversity.

Happy
Gardening!



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