



Ontario Horticultural Association Committee and Outreach Reports 2009-2010

Competition Reports 2010

Some competition chairs are finding entries are down from last year....publications by 25%.

The Web competition is much increased because all web sites across the province were judged. Thank you to Jeff for organizing, and to Malcolm Geast, for the task of judging.

The competitions chairs would like to thank Carole Dunk and her committee for the arrangements they have made for the smooth operation of the movement of exhibits.

This past week I was visiting the flower show of one of District 18 societies. A member was guiding me through the photos displayed of the history of the society. When she got to a public garden that her brother, now deceased, had cultivated she became too emotional to continue. She was able to tell me that she had written about her brother and submitted an entry to the creative writing competition. This encounter made me realize that there is a story behind every entry that comes to the convention. Please take the time to appreciate the entries at the Barrie convention.

Each of the first prize winners in each category will receive an invitation to be in the competition area between 3 and 4 on Saturday afternoon. It is our hope that many will attend and be able to learn from the best with their exhibiting knowledge.
Betty Morrison, Competitions Chair

Art

The cut off date for the Art Competition is August 6th. Up to August 4th we had 6 artists entering 11 different pieces of art.
Vickie Wiemer, Chair.

Creative Writing

We had five entries in the Ode competition, five in the Ballad competition and six in the Story competition. While the number of entries are down from last year, all the entries were excellent. We had some new names added to the entries as well as some repeats. I had a former school teacher mark the entries and she did an excellent job. She scored the entries as if they were in school and wrote comments for every entry. The 1st place Ballad was picked for "Best of Show".
Dorelene Anderson, Chair

Flower Show

Unlike in previous years, this year we attempted to put the majority of the show organizing into the hands of local people. We are looking forward to being located in the same facility as the majority of the convention activities and that there will be many who come to see the show, with hopes that they will be inspired to hold shows at their own societies. To date (July 22/10) we have a nearly full registration for the Design Section and we are looking forward to a wonderful display.
Celia Roberts, Chair

Photography

There were 369 photographs submitted, 342 judged with 27 DNMS. Out of the DNMS (Does Not Meet Show Standards) there were 8 not matted (same person), 9 pictures that were displayed with a 5 x7 inside opening with 8 x 10 matting (not the 5 x 7 outside matting size required) (two people) and 10 not monochromatic in a class where it was required (out of 37 entries in that class). There were a few new competitors this year. Out of the 14 classes, each with three winners making 42 ribbons, there were 23 different people who won ribbons. I was very pleased with the judge whom I selected, we worked well together and I liked the careful consideration and the care taken in selecting winners. The judge found it difficult to choose only three winners and wondered about the possibility of having ribbon only for 4th and 5th. The judge made the observation that there were many good quality entries.
Jennifer Plaus, Chair

Publications

We received wonderful Publication entries with very creative and informative information. The entries for the competition are down by about 25% this year and some classes had no entries. It would be a good time for the classes to be reviewed and changed accordingly.
Marj Larson, Chair

Web site Competition

All OHA Society web sites were judged by Malcolm Geast. Please see his comments below. Please communicate relevant comments back to your societies. Society web shells that are very much out of date will be deleted after consultation with the affected society and their district director.

Initial comments about the OHA web shells on the gardenontario site, 2010, By Malcolm Geast

On the gardenontario site, there are 176 societies that use the shell, 62 that have external sites, two that have a page on their district's site, and 41 that have no web presence at all.

- | Of those 176, 36 either have nothing of value on the site, or have information that is so old that it is worse than nothing.
- | Another 40 have information that is either of minimal use (e.g., nothing more than "we meet on the third Thursday of the month at the Legion Hall at 123 Main Street") or is missing vital information (e.g., a 2010 meeting schedule that doesn't include the location of the meetings).
- | About one-third the shells contain enough information to be a significant benefit to their society.
- | Web sites are a powerful tool that can be used to provide information to members and to welcome prospective members. The best sites were those that utilized all of the sections available in the shell, and organized their information in such a way that it can be easily found by the user.

Jeff Blackadar, Chair

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Annual Report

We're working on the 2009-2010 edition and will have it ready for the October 2010 OHA Board Meeting.

We believe the ideal to strive for would be to have the Annual Report ready for the Convention each year similar to the business world where corporations have their Annual Reports ready for the annual Shareholders' Meeting. Unfortunately, timing doesn't always cooperate! We're going to look carefully at this to see if and how we can get next year's Annual Report out earlier.

For this issue, we've received all of the Society reports we asked for and thank all of the District Directors for their efforts in putting their material together.

We will be including certain OHA Committee reports and statistics, and photos, of course, as has been the case in the past. Nancy Serrick, Chair, and Malcolm Geast, Advisor

Archive & History Book Report

Work on the history book continue, albeit somewhat slowly. Hand-in-hand with research for the book, items in the OHA archive (Annual Reports, newsletters, photos, assorted files) being sorted, and cataloging will begin soon. In addition to information received from individual societies regarding their own activities and history, several new items have been obtained, including convention photos and programmes not previously a part of the archives.

Responses to requests for historical information were also sent to a few societies celebrating anniversaries. In each of these cases, locally-available records of the society's early history were sparse or non-existent.

A presentation was made to the Westway Horticultural Society, briefly describing the early history of the OHA, and telling the full story of the Westway Horticultural Society. Malcolm Geast, Archivist

Conservation & Environment

The Roadsides project is off the ground. The first pilot was done in Barrie this spring. The 20ft by 10ft plot is located on Coulter St. in Barrie quite close to a new community garden. The Pollinator Patch should complement the community garden and raise awareness of the necessity of pollinators to gardens. A blog and a picture gallery of the making of the patch were created. Funds from the Biodiversity Education and Awareness Network helped us to complete the project.

So that others can create their own Pollinator Patch, a guide has been compiled in time for the 2010 Convention. This guide is free to download. Both the blog/gallery and the guide can be viewed from the Conservation website:

<http://conservation.gardenontario.org> Carol Dunk, Chair

Constitution Committee

Report is the published Resolutions for voting. John Sellers, Chair

Funding Committee

The members of the committee for 2009 –2010 are Carol Spraggett, Rose Odell, Suzanne Hanna and Sandy Rakestrow. We did a lot of discussing on the computer but felt that we needed a face-to-face meeting. This was held one evening during the Board Meeting in March. It was a very worthwhile and interesting meeting. The brochure James Graham was working on to give to potential donors was modified slightly. It was discussed that we should also have a brochure to give out to new Society members describing the Ontario Horticultural Association itself. It was felt very strongly that it is necessary to find some sort of sustainable funding. We also discussed having another sale of bulbs. The general consensus was that we should sell large Alliums. Vickie Wiemer, Chair

In Memoriam Registry

As of August 2, 2010, there are 646 names recorded in the Registry. Marilyn Cox, Chair

Judges’ Registry

Currently, all of the OHA Certified judges are listed on the website by district.

One of the reasons that some of the Eastern Ontario districts do not have any judges listed, is that there were a number of judging schools held in past years in other districts, and judges from the surrounding area attended these schools. The certified judges are listed under the district where they took their training, not in their own districts. If you are searching for a judge in your area, please check the lists for surrounding districts. In the Toronto/Hamilton/Oakville/Burlington /Hamilton areas, the Garden Clubs of Ontario (GCO) have held training sessions for judges as well. Many people from these areas have attended the GCO courses, but have not attended the OHA courses, so they are not listed on the OHA website. In Northern Ontario, there are greater distances between the societies, and they do not have the same opportunities to attend training and workshops as members in the southern part of the province.

The Board of OHA will review this situation to try to make the system more user-friendly. Ann Finlayson, Chair

Long Range Planning

Committee members:	Wilma Wood	Past president
	Sharon Hill	Board member, treasurer
	Celia Roberts	Board member, DD #6
	Barb O’Malley	Registrar/Society member at large
	Liisa Wolfgram	Past president/chair

The purpose of this committee of course, is to plan our future vision, our long range and short-term goals. One important key is to be self-sustaining. If we stop and think about it, we have been self-sustaining since our \$19,000.00 annual grant from OMAFRA ended in 1992. Our main source of income is member dues. There are other options we believe can be managed fairly easily:

“Passive Funding” –

- Planned Giving – such as estate requests
- “Donate Now” or “Canada Helps” button on website, or “Other ways to support OHA” on a donation page
- Convention
- Merchandise
- In Memoriam (donations)
- Special Fundraising efforts every few years, (e.g. Tulip bulb project).

Communication - Directors must continue to make a conscious effort to improve the information flow from board meeting to district societies and to society members where applicable. E-mail is very efficient for directors to report the latest news from the board table to their societies, District newsletters and presidents’ meetings as well.

Education –Longer orientation sessions for new directors, and retiring directors must be ready and willing to provide as much information as possible, including all records, so the new director has some idea of what’s ahead of them. They should also be available to mentor the new director for at least one year. Perhaps conference calls can be arranged for new directors on a monthly basis for their first year.

- We must have educational opportunities for societies to assist them in running an efficient and thriving society. Workshops for treasurers, secretaries, show convenors, presidents. These can be held at conventions or district meetings.
- Annual educational workshops for OHA certified judges at the convention.
- Horticultural education will be enhanced with Associate plant society members submitting articles to the Trillium and perhaps giving workshops about their specific plant family.

Promotion – Our committee recommends money be available in the budget for printing of promotional material for society use. The bookmarks and postcards were popular with societies. A suggestion for newly created promotional material is that one joins a horticultural society to *learn more* about gardening. Perhaps it’s time to shift the OHA focus somewhat to meet today’s needs and interests, such as environmental issues or vegetable gardening.

Partners - this is a common trend these days and also acts as a promotional tool, with benefits to both parties. We maintain regular communication with our partners and value the relationships.

Conservation Council of Ontario
Communities in Bloom – Ontario
Royal Botanical Gardens.

Associate members - We’re pleased to report 5 plant societies have joined us.

Toronto Cactus & Succulent Society
Ontario Hosta Society
Hamilton & Burlington Rose Society
Brueckner Rhododendron Gardens
Huron Rose Society

Liisa Wolfgram, Chair

Merchandising

This year, the convention is selling a limited quantity of Bee Hotels to encourage our declining bee population to nest in our yards. Marj Larson, Chair

Social Marketing

The donor brochures have been printed and will be available at the Convention in Barrie. They have been modified and “tweaked” with consultations from the fundraising committee. Seminars were given on membership at Fort Erie and Newstead this past spring.

In March 2010, Bruce Drewitt of OMAFRA spoke to the OHA Board on Diversity in today’s society. James Graham, Chair

Speakers' Registration

There have been very few requests for individuals to be placed on the Speaker Registration area of the website. Don Matthews, Past President

Supplies

I would like to thank the societies and directors who make use of the OHA supplies. We have a good supply of history books and OJES. The financial portions of the supplies are listed in Sharon Hill's financial statements. Don Matthews, Past President

Trillium Newsletter

The circulation of the e-Trillium continues to grow with more than 170 electronic subscribers, each of whom receives the current edition by email. A hard copy of each back issue has been donated to the Canadian Agricultural Library, with plans to add this organization as well as the National Archives to our Trillium mailing list for future issues. The electronic editions are also archived on gardenontario.org, thanks to webmaster, Jeff Blackadar.

Directors and societies are encouraged to suggest new features they would like to see in Trillium. The continued support of the Board, societies, and individuals is much appreciated! I am especially grateful to Secretary Janet Moysen for her efficiency in getting the Trillium out to societies and subscribers so promptly.

The content of our newsletter is important...please keep me 'in the loop' so that our newsletter provides interesting and informative articles. Linda Hugli, Editor

Volunteer Hours

In 2009, all societies reported a total of 389,797 volunteer hours, with the Board reporting 12,109 for an OHA total of 401,906 volunteer hours. The total number of volunteer hours for 2008 was 387,383 hours which is an increase of 14,523 hours spent "Keeping Ontario Beautiful". Ann Finlayson, Chair

Web Site

The committee consists of the following: Chair: Jeff Blackadar, Members: Mike Dunk, Malcolm Geast, Brenda Heenan, Don Matthews.

Web site redesign:

The web site redesign project was approved by the OHA board in March 2010. Unfortunately, the project has not moved ahead. The person engaged to do the work cannot proceed due to legitimate reasons. The web committee will look at alternatives. No money has been spent on this project yet.

Other Committee work

The web committee carried out support of users of the web site and the posting of content. Since the 2009 OHA convention these items were added to the garden Ontario web site: a search function, enhanced menus, a Future Conventions page, and an enhanced side navigation bar. A presentation about web shells was made to District 4 and an article about web shells was published in the Spring 2010 Trillium.

E-Mail address review

The status of all gardenontario e-mail accounts was tested and reviewed. 21 e-mail addresses were corrected. All Society email contacts were reviewed in the Fall of 2009.

District web pages

A number of Districts have made excellent progress in the past year enhancing their web pages. Districts 1,3,4,5, 8,11,13,14, 16, and 18 have all made visible progress since the last convention.

Goals

- That each Society have a web page accurately describing when and where public meetings are held and how to join.
- That in 2010 each Society board discusses how to make the best use of their web site.
- That each District have a web site to communicate district activities to member societies.

The OHA web committee can help if you have questions about web sites: email us at webmaster@gardenontario.org. Jeff Blackadar, Chair

Youth Report

The Youth Committee has implemented changes to help youth leaders.

The Youth Manual is now available on the Garden Ontario web site (www.gardenontario.org) and may be printed in whole or part as required.

All youth forms are also available in the same manner, making it easier for leaders to report to the youth chair as required (Activity Report by June 1st each year, a must).

Leaders can send the estimated number of entries they have for each class for the Convention, to the Competition Chair, so plans can be made to accommodate all entries at the Convention.

The Youth Newsletter is now smaller and will be sent by e-mail, unless a leader request mail by Canada Post. This method saves considerable money and paper, as with the e-mail version a leader can print only the parts that pertain to their group. The Youth Newsletter will also be posted on the web site, for anyone to read and use at anytime.

To help youth leaders; a "Youth Club Requirements" sheet is available to use as a guide,

a "Permissions Form" for Parents and Guardians to fill out for the protection and welfare of the child.

And last but not least a Youth "Help Program" Grant available to OHA Youth Groups, similar to the "Tree Grant" program.

The form will be available to fill out and send to the OHA Secretary after January 1st.

All forms mentioned above will be available on the web site in (.pdf) or (.doc) and will also be sent out with the Youth Newsletter and possibly Trillium.

Anna Peterson, Youth Chair

OUTREACH REPRESENTATIVES

Canada Blooms, March 17-21, 2010, Direct Energy Centre, CNE, Toronto

New location. New look. Lots to see and do. Thousands of people. That about sums it up.

Our OHA booth was right on one of the main aisles at the end of another main aisle at 90 degrees so we had an absolutely ideal spot. We were grateful that Canada Blooms placed us and Master Gardeners of Ontario side by side so we complemented each other nicely. Anyone who came to hear their speakers throughout the day, passed our way which was really helpful.

We had a large team of wonderful volunteers who answered questions and talked up the OHA, all of which we think will have resulted in new memberships for many of the horticultural societies in the province. People did come from all over and we pushed for them to contact their local District or Society as much as we could. If we had specific society brochures, we handed them out where applicable and many interested people said they'd follow up at their end.

A short distance away from us, Canada Blooms set up a section of 10 booths, free of charge, for specialty societies and OHA societies on a first-come-first served basis. They also experienced the same passing crowds as we did. What a wonderful opportunity to spread the word about the advantages of belonging to a horticultural group!

The show has definitely changed from what it was years ago, but then, why wouldn't it? Nothing ever stays the same. There weren't as many display gardens as there used to be but there were other things to compensate. This time we were all on one level which was fabulous - no going up and down long escalators any more, and parking was convenient, either in the building itself or nearby outside.

There were gardens to view, lots of vendors to choose from, Martha Stewart on Saturday afternoon, and, of course - us! Nancy Serrick

CNE, Agriculture Section - Our representative attends two administrative meetings a year-- May and October. In addition he is chair of the Flower and Vegetable Show at the CNE with prize money exceeding \$13,000. each year. Also included in his responsibilities are Flower Containers and Youth competitions. In 2009 the total CNE attendance was 1.32 million and surveys indicate that 64% of the visitors look at the garden show. If this holds true, then 845,000 visitors viewed the garden show in 2009. Dave Money

Conservation Council of Ontario - OHA is a member of this organization and the Council is a partner of OHA. I was not able to attend the winter convention this year. Carol Dunk

Get the Jump on Spring, Saturday February 20, 2010, Toronto Botanical Garden

This was a huge success! But then, why wouldn't be when everyone is sick to death of winter and longing for the smell of damp earth and the glow of bright tulips? All of this was present, and much more, at this year's show.

This is a joint effort of volunteers from the TBG, OHA District 5, and Master Gardeners of Toronto, and the months of planning and hard work of those many dedicated volunteers clearly paid off.

There were lots of displays to wander around in, wonderful garden items to buy, great speakers to listen to all day long, and door prizes given out every hour.

We're eagerly looking forward to 2011! Nancy Serrick

Horticulture Building - Ottawa's Horticulture Building at the old exhibition grounds at Lansdowne Park was opened as part of the Doors Open Ontario event. We had a District 2 banner up as well as a historical display. Some Ottawa members greeted members of the public and gave out society brochures. Over 500 people came to the building. Jeff Blackadar

Master Gardeners of Ontario - The Master Gardeners of Ontario in their Constitution have given a seat on their Board to a representative from the Ontario Horticultural Association. It was my pleasure to be that representative this past year. I attended all the Board Meetings which were very interesting and involved a lot of discussions about various problems that MGOI has and are indeed similar to our own.

The Master Gardeners have just come off a three year plan, so I was most impressed that they set aside a Saturday in the fall, to investigate another three year plan. Helen Scutt of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food was the facilitator and did a superb job. By the time the day was finished, all four walls of the room we were meeting in were covered with large pieces of paper that were full of ideas. These were then condensed by various people and work is going forward on another three year plan. Vickie Wiemer

Ontario Invasive Plant Council – The OHA, through its President, was contacted by the OIPC and invited to have a position on their board. Because there is a connection between the introduction of some invasive species and the gardeners of Ontario, I was pleased to join. As a board member of this organization, I “attend” monthly board meetings. The “attend” in quotes relates to the fact that the board meets by teleconference. The meeting is usually about 2 hours long. Current discussion topics include the recognition and eradication of Giant Hogweed. Carol Dunk

Ottawa is Blooming - The Ottawa is Blooming show invited District 2, OHA to hold a flower show as part of Ottawa is Blooming. We did this in 2008 and decided to do it again this year. Ottawa is Blooming donated exhibition space to the OHA, Lee Valley Tools donated prize money in the form of gift cards.

The Show had entries from members from the majority of District 2 Societies and went well. Brian Carson of Manotick Hort. Society organized a district book sale and \$610 was raised. Several thousand people attended the show. Jeff Blackadar

Peterborough Garden Show - On April 9, 10, 11, 2010 District 4 set up a booth at the Peterborough Love of Gardening Show (now called the Peterborough Garden Show). At this venue the OHA backboard was set up and the District 4 roll up banner along with the District 4 cloth banner. The table was set up with an OHA district map of Ontario and brochures and yearbooks from all the societies in our district and the postcards from the OHA. (Gardening is Fun)

The booth was manned by the executive of the district for the weekend show and was well received by the public. Many societies had new members sign up shortly after this event and Peterborough alone had 22 new members sign up.

A Flower Show competition is also part of this event and is organized by the Omemee Society members.

Beautiful colour is added throughout the show and lobby with arrangements created by Rachel Burrows, Peterborough Master Gardeners. Rose Odell

Royal Botanical Gardens - Once again this year, we were supportive of the R.B.G. in a new effort to obtain a Trillium grant for the ‘Veggie Village’ initiative. We are pleased to report that the application for a grant was successful and we have been offered space on the signage as a result.

The April Garden Show is hard to gauge – successful or not successful. However, we participate with the R.B.G. with great enthusiasm and thank all of the volunteers who man the ‘booth’ for the duration of the show. The members of Mt. Hamilton Horticultural Society are of great help in setting up and taking down of the booth on behalf of the district and the O.H.A.

This was the first year, after several years of having a marketing company hold the show, that the R.B.G. has taken over the management of their own show.

Many people are more excited about visiting the R.B.G. now that they are on a very positive track. It is a pleasure to see visitors in large numbers. Celia Roberts

Successful Gardening- 18th Annual at the International Centre, Mississauga

It was another “successful gardening” OHA show and the committee continues to come up with new ideas each year to keep the flower show and events fresh. Due to the economic times and conflicting dates with Canada Blooms, our show space was moved into Hall 3 of the International Centre. We were the first exhibit area that visitors experienced when they walked into the show, and they got an eyeful!

The show committee extends a thank you to Showcase Marketing, Paul Newdick, president, and all his staff for the 5620 square ft. of space, skirted tables, curtains, carpeting, special lighting including the extra space across the aisle to accommodate show classes and the OHA booth, to mention just a few of the courtesies extended to us during the show. We thank them as well for hosting our judges’ luncheon. We extend our gratitude for \$2672.00 in exhibitor prize money and our demonstrator honorariums. We were very proud of our demonstrators, who encouraged the audience to make their own floral designs at home or to create their own spring planters. Show management received very positive responses from visitors once again.

A thank you and recognition to the publicists, Linda Crane Communications and Kim Graham and Associates, for including us in the press packages and encouraging the media to visit our show area. This year, they arranged for interviews with society members, both new and experienced gardeners. This was to promote joining your local horticultural society. Articles appeared in the National Post and local community newspapers.

We appreciate all of our volunteers who offered to sit at the OHA booth promoting our societies. It seemed to me they all enjoyed the experience very much. This event is much like a family reunion. Great to talk with old friends once again, from other districts too!

Congratulations are extended to all of our exhibitors and the show committee thanks everyone for their support

We encourage you to visit the show, and encourage you to take part, represent your society by entering the show. We promote all societies in our Association! Liisa Wolfgram, Chair.

Summer Flower and Vegetable Show, District 2, July 24 2010

Ottawa Horticultural Society hosted this for the District. It was a standard show, held at Elmwood School. All members from District 2 and neighbouring districts were invited and we had visitors from District 1. The public was invited with poster, newspaper and radio publicity. We had refreshments, a book sale, plant sale and Master Gardeners on hand to answer questions. This was the first District Summer Flower and Vegetable show we've had in 3 years and it went off very well. Jeff Blackadar

Western Fair Farm Show, held in March 10 – 12, 2010, Western Fair Ground in London

As in pasted several years the London Horticultural Society, under the leadership of Sheila Shearing and Archie Graham and their many helpers again put together a great display. The Booth has been for many years, organized, constructed, manned and taken down and stored for another time by the London Society. This year the newly elected District 10 Director, Roland Craig, helped construct and man the booth.

The theme this year was “Starting your own plants from seed”. A light stand and different types of starter trays were available for visitors to look at and ask questions about. Information on starting our own seeds was also available. A Free Draw prize ticket for decorations in the form of spring pots was available to everyone visiting the booth. Anna Peterson.