



DECEMBER 2011

# OAKVILLE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



*The society aims to further the knowledge of Horticulture, stimulating an interest in gardening in our community's youth and encouraging the beautification of both private and public properties since 1957.*

## December's Entertainment – En Route Quartet

Once again this year, the En Route Quarter will be providing entertainment at our AGM/Potluck dinner. The quarter is comprised of four singers from the award-winning Circle of Harmony Chorus. Tenor Carol Shields and lead Barbara Hodge are the chorus' co-directors. Assistant Director Margaret Fielding sings baritone, and Section Leader Kathy Withnell sings bass.



Come out to the Pot-Luck Dinner and AGM to vote for next year's board of directors, and for some good food and music. Don't forget to bring a dish for the dinner, and your own dishes, mug and cutlery.

If you are interested in booking the quartet for your own function, contact Kathy Withnell via email at [jazykati@sympatico.ca](mailto:jazykati@sympatico.ca).

## Upcoming Events

### Family Day Fun With Flowers Monday 20 February

Don't forget to bring in your fish tins – salmon or tuna – for our Fun With Flowers at Iroquois Shoreline Community Centre, February 20 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. We hope to fill at least 60 tins with floral oasis and hand them out as a base for flower arrangements. Linda Tock will collect them at the pot-luck dinner if you have any saved! Thanks to Peg Coleman, Gail Trenholm, Margaret Larson, Helen Thompson,

Stuart Gough, Lillie deSilva and Christine Lee for volunteering to help with this fun event!



Photo: Linda Tock

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### New Members:

Judy Bridges  
Anne Clark-Stewart



*Our hearts grow tender with  
childhood memories and love  
of kindred, and we are better  
throughout the year for  
having, in spirit, become a child  
again at Christmas-time.*

Laura Ingalls Wilder

*Where Gardeners come to flourish*

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT & ANNUAL REPORT

In November 2010, we marked the UN's International Year of Biodiversity with celebrated photographer and inspirational speaker, Freeman Patterson. We were able to raise almost \$15,000 for our sustainable gardens initiatives.



Photo: Dee McCauley

Our first such initiative has been the transformation of the Anderson Bridge Parkette into a water-efficient pollinator park. With a design generously created by Sean James of Fern Ridge Landscaping, we broke ground in the spring. OHS member David Hawley cleared the sod from the site and, under the coordination of Margaret Jeffery, volunteers removed plants from the former Forsythe Garden and planted over 630 drought-tolerant North American native species. We look forward to the formal opening of this wonderful garden in the fall of 2012.

Our society was also able to provide \$500 to support the Green Glade School sustainable garden bordering the Rattray Marsh in Mississauga. In conjunction with our transformation of the Forsythe Garden, this is part of our ongoing efforts to promote ecologically sustainable, site-appropriate gardens. These thoughtful, well-researched landscaping projects will advance the state of horticulture in our region.

A very different kind of activity, Fun with Flowers, was a new initiative our Society created this year for Family Day at the Iroquois Shore Community Centre. While expert floral arrangers Marie Decker and Celia Roberts demonstrated advanced

design technique, sixty children and their parents and grandparents were able to create festive bouquets under the guidance of Linda Tock. We are pleased to promote the fusion of art and horticulture through events like this as well as our monthly flower shows and biannual photography shows.



Photo: Linda Tock

We are very proud that Celia Roberts entered the triennial Wafa Flower Show in Boston, the World Association of Flower Arrangers. In addition, after many years of study, Celia, Marie, Mary Cameron and Elizabeth Schleicher have received their Horticultural Judging credentials. We are quite fortunate to have this expertise in our membership.

This year, our junior gardeners raised a variety of vegetables and flowers in their own garden plots at the Cornwall Street garden. This year a new butterfly bed was established to teach the children about gardens as habitats for wildlife. In addition, this year's experience was augmented by a special partnership with Whole Foods Market, as the children maintained a "pizza" bed near the Oakville storefront and were able to celebrate with a garden-fresh pizza party held at the end of the season. With special guest speakers like Gail Trenholm and Merleen Hall, this junior program was an exemplary educational opportunity.

It is easy to understand why Linda Tock, our Junior Garden Program coordinator, was presented the OHA Youth Leadership Award. She was among many of our members who received special recognition for their contributions to the community. Receiving 30-year Ontario Volunteer Service Awards were: Shirley Barrowclough, Allen Barrowclough and Anna Rettinger. Joyce Turner was recognized for 25 years of service, while Ivy and Wayne Curtis were celebrated for 20 years of contributions. Catherine Kavassalis was presented the Carolinian District Service Award as well as the Provincial Certificate of Achievement for Natural Heritage. OHA Service Certificates and President's Awards will be announced at the AGM.

OHS volunteers contribute to the community and horticulture in many ways. Our members participated in the following events: the OHA Annual Convention, OHA and District 6 workshops and meetings; the Ontario Garden Show, the Successful Gardening Show, Canada Blooms, Garden Expo, and the Gage Park Chrysanthemum Show. In addition to the programs described, we continue to organize invasive species education programs, and members participate in tree planting in partnership with the Town, Oakville Green, and the Biodiversity Education Awareness Network. We are grateful to all the volunteers who make the OHS such a vital organization in this community.

While doing all this, we have continued to maintain our tradition of providing excellent monthly speakers, informational newsletters, and our award-winning website. Our internal OHS events included a successful plant sale, although the attendance was down due to inclement weather resulting in sales below expectations. Weather also forced the cancellation of our garden tour.



Photo: Catherine Kavassalis

Our society will need to examine how we budget and fundraise in the years to come to address these kinds of shortfalls. I am sure we will rise to the challenge as we have consistently proven ourselves as a well-organized, forward thinking organi-

zation. We can be proud of our people, our programs and our support of horticulture in our community.

At the close of the year, we will see several retirements from the executive. Our thanks are due to Valerie Westwood for her service as secretary, and to Helen Thomson for her valuable service on the board.

As I step out of the presidency, I want to express my gratitude to the fine team with which I have had the pleasure of working these past three years. On behalf of myself and the OHS board of directors, I wish to thank all of you who support our society through your membership and your time.

We wish you all happy holidays and ask you to join me in welcoming and assisting the new board as they work to make 2012 another great year for the OHS.

*Catherine Kavassalis*

## TREASURER'S REPORT

As I look out the window watching the beginnings of snow falling, I wonder how well the garden will do this winter. Did we get enough mulch down, will there be a good snow cover? And I wonder how it costs per member to run our society? (Well, I *am* the treasurer)

Last year was an extraordinary year for us. Our president, Catherine Kavassalis, made it look effortless as she lead that merry team of volunteers to create our Sustainable Garden Fund. Those monies raised will provide for the Anderson Parkette Garden and other suitable projects for some years to come. But as these amounts were raised for the sole purpose of creating our Sustainable Gardening Fund, we should not include these amounts in our considerations of what it costs to run our Society.

So, what *does* it cost per member? Let us take a look at our 2010/2011 results. I'm going to round off the numbers and list our membership at 230.

### Budgeted Amounts

Revenues	\$17,320		
Expenses	\$22,165		
Net Operations	-\$4,845	230 Members	Loss of \$21 per member

### Actual Amounts

Revenues	\$12,028		
Expenses	\$12,748		
Net Operations	-\$720	230 Members	Loss of \$3 per member

Looking ahead to our coming budget year 2011/2012, we are looking at the following costs per member:

### Budgeted Amounts

Revenues	\$11,600		
Expenses	\$18,170		
Net Operations	-\$6,570	230 Members	Loss of \$29 per member

Why the high predicted loss per member for the coming year? I have not included any possible revenue from a garden tour. And the possible revenue from the plant sale has been reduced. If our society were to hold both a successful plant sale and garden tour, our operating loss would be greatly reduced. But as we have seen, bad weather on plant sale day and a bad growing season can devastate these events.

These numbers give a quick summary of what it costs to run our society. With a successful year, we can operate at or near a surplus. We can continue to support the programs our membership enjoys. But if we do not have a good year, we will need to look at all of our operations to determine where and how to contain spending and how we might possibly increase our revenues.

Seems to have stopped snowing, think I'll check on the plants we have potted up for the plant sale.

*Stuart Cough*

*Treasurer*

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## OUT ON A LIMB

Can you believe what a mild fall we're having? It's as if our weather has shifted by six weeks. That cold spring we endured seems to have pushed warm thermal units forward into our fall season. Very odd.

The best part, of course, is that the kale is still terrific and the Christmas lights were a breeze to put up!

The worst is that the Brussels sprouts – Kevin's favourite vegetable – is still growing and producing. Although, in its defense, it does taste much better than those vile, green, puck-like cabbage heads they sell at the grocery store. But not quite good enough to keep its piece of real estate, especially when I see what's new for next year.

### 2012 All-America Selections

Once again, it's time to see the best of the best: the All-America Selections. These seed-grown treasures are available in seed catalogues now and will be available in nurseries next year.

The first is a very pretty, ballet pink Salvia called 'Summer Jewel Pink'. It grows 45cm high and 35cm wide.

It is a compact plant and blooms two weeks earlier than other pink salvias.

Like all salvias, it prefers a full sun location and can take a fair bit of drought once it is established. According to the literature, it is equally favoured by humming-birds as the red version. What I like is that it is an easy colour to blend with all of your summer favourites.



The first AAS Vegetable Award Winner is 'Pepper 'Cayennetta' F1, an easy-to-grow, mildly spicy pepper.

It provides a massive number of 10 cm chili peppers on very well branched upright plants that can be grown either in the garden or in pots.

It has good cold tolerance and handles the heat well. It produces peppers 69 days from transplant.



The second vegetable winner is Watermelon 'Faerie'.

If you've got some room – at least 3 meters for it to spread – you'll be provided with pretty red-fleshed fruit with soft yellow skins. Each melon weighs about 2.5 kilos and measures about 28 cm.

The fruit set starts early and continues throughout the season. It takes 72 days from seed to harvest.



The last award winner in the flower category is Ornamental Pepper 'Black Olive'. It has wonderful dark purple leaves and fruit that change from purple to a shocking red. The fruit is edible and very hot.

Not only is it attractive at the front of a border in full sun, it also does well as a cut flower in arrangements. It grows 35cm high and 20 cm wide.

Touted as a standout in the trial gardens, I'm thinking that this might be just the plant to edge out those Brussels from my garden next year.



See you in December!

*Barbara Phillips-Conroy*

[www.barbarasgardenchronicles.blogspot.com](http://www.barbarasgardenchronicles.blogspot.com)

Photos:

[http://www.all-americaelections.org/newest\\_winners.asp](http://www.all-americaelections.org/newest_winners.asp)