

Annual General Meeting Planning Guide



OHA Thames-Valley District 10 consists of 22 Societies

Aylmer, Belmont, Dorchester, Dutton-Dunwich, Glencoe, Grand Bend, Ingersoll, Kirkton, Lambeth, London, London-Fanshawe, Parkhill, Port Burwell-Bayham, St. Marys, St. Thomas, Stratford, Strathroy-Caradoc, Tavistock, Thorndale, Tillsonburg, West Lorne and Woodstock.

GET THESE IN PLACE AS EARLY AS POSSIBLE:

1. BOOK YOUR VENUE AT LEAST 1 YEAR IN ADVANCE!!!! (see VENUE section - pg 3)
2. DETERMINE THE DATE. Traditionally the AGM is held in APRIL on a SATURDAY. Date may be determined by availability of venue. Avoid booking the AGM on a holiday weekend (ie: Easter).
3. BOOK YOUR CATERER (see LUNCH AND REFRESHMENTS - pg 3)

COMMITTEE

1. Establish a committee to organize the event
2. Keep the committee small in order to get everyone at all meetings
3. Responsibilities include Chairperson, Registrar, Speakers, Theme, Gift bags, Decorations, Volunteers, Door prizes, Vendors, and Signage.
4. Your Society President, Secretary and Treasurer will be quite involved throughout the planning.
5. KEEP MINUTES of all committee meetings, circulate before the next meeting. Determine "Actions" and highlight in the minutes on who will follow up on items that are brought up at meetings.
6. Plan for meetings every six weeks for 8 months or so.
7. Decide on a theme and how you are going to use it in the event
8. Establish with the venue, a time on the DAY BEFORE to be able to get in to decorate and set up for the AGM
9. Decide if you will have Vendors/ Marketplace, where they can be accommodated, and if you will charge them to attend or ask them to supply door prizes.

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BUDGET

1. Determine a budget

- Your Society should have funds set aside for hosting the AGM.
- District 10 provides a donation of \$500 to the Host Society to assist with some of the cost for hosting.
- considering the costs: venue including kitchen/tables/dishes/cutlery (if not included), caterer, refreshments, other rentals (audio-visual, microphone), cost of speakers, decorations, additional signage.
- considering the income: from registrations, Vendors fees, donations from local businesses
- Determine your minimum number of attendees to have a “break even” event. (ie: 180 attendees @ \$25 each =\$4500. If your costs are equal to this amount, the event will break even. More attendees show a profit and fewer will show a loss.)
- Ask for donations from local businesses / garden centres in exchange for advertising

2. Clarify who is paying for what. Confirm with the District that responsibilities have not changed as listed below:

District 10 pays for:

- Official Photographer
- District 10 Board registration and mileage costs
- Flower Show Convenor
- OHA certified Flower Show Judge
- OHA Judges School Representative
- Lunch for OHA representative (OHA pays mileage)

Host Society pays for:

- Venue
- Caterer
- Speakers
- Equipment rental (kitchen/audio/visual/screen, if not included)

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- Lunch for special guests/dignitaries/ speakers.
- Additional directional signage (District 10 provides some signage)
- Miscellaneous costs (decorations, tech support, etc)

VENUE

- Reserve a meeting place which will accommodate 180-250 people.
- Sufficient parking for about 100-150 cars.
- This room will also need audio visual equipment and large screen for slide presentations, microphones for Speakers.
- A locked room for Flower Show exhibits and judging or have a security guard posted outside the room for the day.
- Society Display Tables (4X4 tables are to be provided by host Society)
- Is the set up of tables and chairs included by the venue, or do you have to do that?
- Kitchen rental: use of dishes, cups, cutlery, coffee maker, etc. included? Ask the caterer what they will need to access (fridge /stove, etc.)
- All halls have restrictions regarding food, so learn as much as you can in this regard.

LUNCH & REFRESHMENTS

- Book your lunch caterer well in advance. Prices vary a lot, but try to keep the price of food to 3/5 of your registration costs
- Consider the following issues for serving lunch
 - Coffee and muffins in the morning as part of the catering or will they be supplied by the host society? Consider coffee makers take some time to perk, have the coffee ready when people arrive.
 - Hot/cold buffet or box lunches – what's most practical and available in your town / city
 - Is water available during the day? How will you keep it cold?
 - Can you avoid using Styrofoam and plastic plates and utensils?
- Invite the Speakers, OHA guest and Head Table to get their lunch first.

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DECORATIONS

- Determine how your theme will be reflected in the decorations.
- How much of your budget is to be used on decorations
- Determine your gift bag for attendees and what will go in it. Ask for donations from local businesses for items such as catalogues, gardening books, brochures, pencils, notepads, seeds, plants, etc. Keep in mind that registration will increase as the event draws nearer, and so will the need for more gift bags. Have enough on hand for everyone.

SIGNAGE

- Determine what directional signs you will need and project a cost for this. The District has some signage available for your use, but you may require more.
- Design signs for the interior of the building to direct attendees to the Main Hall, Society Display Area, Vendor Areas, Flower Show Room and Washrooms.

REGISTRATION and THE REGISTRAR

- Appoint a Registrar. The logical choice is the Secretary and/or an Assistant to the Secretary. (SHOULD NOT be the Chairperson/ President, they'll have enough to do)
- Determine the cost of registration – (2018 was \$25 per person)
- Determine seating, if you need to put a cap on the maximum of registrations allowed per Society (especially for smaller venues with limited seating).
- District board members will be registered and paid for by the District. They are not included in the maximum cap for their home Society.
- Keep track of those who do not register but will be there for lunch like speakers, special guests, tech support.
- Keep a list of all Societies invited in order to ensure that you receive a response from each one.
- Determine the last date to register. This should be at least 2 weeks before the event and close to the end of a month to allow all Societies to have a meeting before they send in the registration. (Expect many emails and phone calls regarding added names of people who were not able to register with the others. – away on holidays, not at the meeting, etc.)
- Decide if you will implement a waiting list and how that will be done.
- Registrar to pick up the mail, keep track of numbers, and make name tags.
- Provide a copy of the registration list to the District 10 Secretary

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- On the day of the event, make available an Agenda of the day at the Registration Desk OR place one or two copies on the tables.
- Registrar and assistants to collect name badges at the end of the day (announce to have people drop them at registration on their way out.)

REGISTRATION PACKAGES: Who does what: (Host) – host or (DS) - District
Have someone else proof your documents to ensure they are error free.

- Registration Packages will be sent out in early January to the Societies (these are emailed to the Societies by the District Secretary).

To be included in the registration package:

- The Invitation - a letter or flyer inviting Societies/ delegates to attend with highlights of the day. (Host to provide)
- Map of how to get to the venue and where to park. (Host)
- Registration Form. (to be filled out by the Societies and will be dropped off or mailed to the Host Society along with their registration fee by the deadline. One cheque to pay for all registrants from each Society. (DS supplies forms, Host collects registration forms and fees).
- Request Bulletin. (Details on the Society gift, display table info, electronic filing of Society Reports, what to bring). (DS)
- Agenda of the day (Host prepares an outline, works with the District board to complete final details.)
- Flower Show Schedule and Rules (Flower Show Convenor). The schedule and rules are set out by OHA each year, and may not be available by early January. This will be sent to the Societies as soon as it becomes available. (DS)
- Society annual report forms (DS)

SPEAKERS

- Make a list of possible speakers, and how they will support your theme
- Determine your budget for speakers
- Contact the speakers early to book, determine the topic, and the cost of a presentation (45 min + Q&A)
- Send a confirmation letter to the Speakers with details of their part in the day. Contact them not less than 3 weeks prior to confirm the booking and ask if they have any special requirements (in audio-visual equipment, cords, etc)
- Do not charge the speakers for their lunch, ensure they have seating in the meeting room. Collect Biographical information and determine who will introduce and thank them from your Society

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VOLUNTEERS

- Make a list of jobs for the day of the event and solicit people for the jobs.
- Registrar - needs 2-3 people on the day of to assist - check off names/ hand out name tags/ voting ballots
- Greeters welcoming people at the door, directing them where to go
- 5-6 "able-bodied" helpers at the door - help to carry items for table displays/ banners/ presentation items/ gifts. (it's an ideal volunteer job for students)
- Introducing speakers, thanking speakers
- Help with the flower show
- Help to distribute the gift bags at the end of the day.
- Assign a person to be a "good host" to the OHA representative, ie: welcome them at the door, introduce them to others at the table, make sure they have a lunch companion. They will appreciate the effort to make them feel welcome.

VENUE SET UP

- Determine how your venue will be set up and how many people will that take or if set up is part of the cost of the venue. Arrange to set up the day before.
- Reserve head table seating for the Speakers, the OHA representative/s, Special Guests (Mayor, other dignitary), Photographer, District Director, Past District Director, District board, members of your Society in key positions. District Secretary will require hydro outlet for computer notes.
- You'll need tables and chairs set up for the meal. Tables set up for the registration, refreshments, door prizes (Host Society), Society gifts, flower show (suggested 14 8' tables), any Vendors, 4X4 tables for the Society displays, OHA supplies and draws.

CONTACT WITH THE DISTRICT DIRECTOR / District 10 board

- Keep the District Director (DD) and the Assistant Director (AD) for your County informed of your plans and progress. They can provide a wealth of information to help you.
- Ask any questions and get clarification on who pays for what.
- Have a delegation of your AGM Committee meet with the District board to go over and finalize the AGM agenda.
- The District Director chairs the Annual General Meeting. The host Society President will provide open and closing remarks, and throughout the day as pre-arranged with the Director.

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- Host Society introduces and thanks Speakers, provides stretches/exercises, etc.
- Registration packages will be sent electronically to Societies by the District Secretary in early January for an April AGM. (see Registration - pg 4&5)
- Keep the D10 Director and D10 Secretary informed of the registration count. The District Secretary will require a copy of final Society registrants for their records and to do roll call at the AGM.
- Contact the District board whenever further advice is required /or something arises that is not covered in this guide.

As a thank you for hosting the AGM, the District will provide \$500 to go towards costs. A tree will be planted to commemorate your Society for hosting.

Tips

- Collect all the paper work from previous AGM event/s to help you with some of the details.
- Make notes to help the next hosting Society.
- Be organized!
- Don't sweat the small stuff.
- Relax and have fun!

Refer back to this guide OFTEN, to keep your committee on track and to ensure that you haven't forgotten anything.