



Keeping Ontario Beautiful

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

March 2024

OHA SPRING BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS AND INFORMATION



As all of the Districts around the province prepare to welcome their Societies/Clubs to the District AGM's, I would like to take a moment to thank all of you for your hard work and dedication every year in keeping your communities and Ontario beautiful.

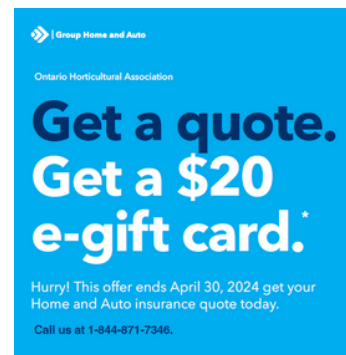
On March 22nd and 23rd of 2024, the Board of Directors met via WebEx to conduct the business of the Association for the benefit of all members. In this report, I would like to share some of the results of the meeting as we continue to move the Association forward in a positive direction.

GardenOntario Family Scholarship

The NEW OHA Family Scholarship will be open for applications in the Spring of 2025. Applicants must be a member or a child, stepchild, grandchild, or step-grandchild of a Society/Club member in good standing within the OHA. This new Scholarship will provide \$1000 to the successful student pursuing an education in the field of horticulture or horticulture related studies. Stay tuned for more details!!

Cooperators Insurance Quote Incentive:

Cooperators Insurance is running a home and auto insurance incentive offer for all OHA affiliated members which is on now and ends on April 30th, 2024. Anyone receiving a quote during this time will receive a \$20.00 e-gift card. Please ensure you let them know that you are with the Ontario Horticultural Association to be eligible for the offer. Please call 1-844-871-7346 for a quote.



OHA at the CNE:

The OHA will again have a booth at the CNE which runs from August 16th to September 2nd, 2024. If you attend the CNE, please stop by to say hello. In 2023, we had over 2000 visitors to the booth and hope to exceed that in 2024.

Benefits of Belonging and What is the OHA:

Our benefits of belonging document has been updated to include new items. Alongside this document is a new "What is the OHA" document which talks about who we are as an organization, what our mandate was in 1906 and how we are staying true to that mandate in 2024. Both documents are available on the Resources page of the GardenOntario website. You can find them under the Manuals and Guides header.

Accessibility Statement

A new accessibility statement has been created and is available for viewing at the bottom of both the Home page and the About page on the GardenOntario website. Check it out!

OHA Strategic Planning and SWOT Analysis

The Association is currently following our SWOT, S(strengths), W(weaknesses), O(opportunities) and T(threats) template and working on ways to improve the Association. This will be reviewed and updated at every October Board Meeting so in moving the Association forward, we continue to have fresh and new ideas and goals, and previous ones are completed in a timely manner.

OHA 50/50 Draw

The OHA 50/50 raffle is in full swing with another draw to be held on July 14th, 2024, the Sunday morning of the OHA Convention and AGM. A wonderful way to top off a fantastic weekend of bus tours, speakers, fantastic meals and money spent at vendors alley would be to be driving or flying home with extra cash in your pocket, but you can't win if you don't have a ticket. Please consider purchasing a ticket to support the Association. All money raised from the sale of the 50/50 tickets goes back to the Societies/Clubs in the form of grants, bursaries and other assorted informative and educational sessions. Tickets are available at: <https://www.rafflebox.ca/raffle/ontario-ha>



Updated Constitution and Bylaws and Code of Conduct

The OHA is once again encouraging all Societies/Clubs that do not yet have a Code of Conduct to create one and have it approved by your general membership at your AGM or a special meeting called for that purpose if your Constitution/By-laws allow it. Please also consider reviewing your Constitution/By-laws and amending or creating them, if necessary. They must be approved by your membership with the minutes of the meeting reflecting the approval. Districts must have their Constitution/By-laws approved by the general membership. A District Code of Conduct need only



be approved by the District executive. A good rule to follow is that your Constitution should be your outlying document and items that change more frequently should be held in your By-laws.

Document and Records Retention Recommendations

It has been recommended that Societies/Clubs keep all documents and records in perpetuity so that the history of the Society/Club can be preserved. Registered charitable organizations must keep all documentation for a period of 10 years and all other financial records must be kept for at least 7 years.

Scanning documents to a USB key would be an inexpensive way to store all information in a very small space. For those Societies/Clubs that have an abundance of information, high school students requiring their 40 hours of community service could be utilized to do scanning for you.

OHA Media Consent, Grant, Release and Indemnity Form

Although the OHA had a media consent release form, we had concerns come forward and a request from individuals and Societies/Clubs to seek legal opinion. We did as requested and sent our previous form to Carter's legal firm with detailed instructions on what we needed the form for.

The new form, which was sent to all Societies/Clubs and Districts is the form that will be used for any media at the Association and District level. Anything sent to the Trillium Editor will require this consent form. Should Societies/Clubs choose not to utilize this new form, no guarantees can be made that our insurance company would pay legal fees if the society was to be sued.

OHA/Dubois Relationship Update

Our relationship with Dubois Agrinovation is now live and we are very excited to see it come to fruition. Information packages were sent out to all Societies/Clubs and Society codes as well as a written guide and how to video have been posted to the GardenOntario website in the login area.



We hope that this will become a profitable relationship for both the Societies and the Association. There are individuals available to come and speak to your Societies/Clubs and Districts and provide more information and an example of some of the items available for purchase. Dubois will also be attending the OHA convention in July should you wish to stop by their table for more information. Check out the Dubois Website at: https://duboisag.com/ca_en/

Planned Event Slip, Trip and Fall Prevention Assessment Form

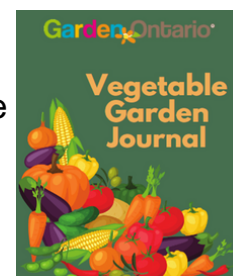
OHA Society/Club and District Liability Insurance Program Incident Report Form

These two forms have been sent out to all Societies/Clubs and Districts for your use. The assessment form is to be completed for any Societies/Clubs hosting garden tours or other types of events. This form is used before an event to assess the grounds to make sure there are no tripping hazards, steep terrain, that hand railings are in place, garden hoses are neatly coiled and put away etc. It is part of the Society due diligence in advance of an event and we hope that everyone will take advantage of completing it as it is to your benefit should an accident or injury occur.

The Liability Insurance Program Reporting Form should be readily available at any event hosted by the Society/Club in case of an injury or accident that may occur. It should be filled in immediately after the accident or injury occurs and a copy should be sent to Cooperators outlining the event, the type of incident that occurred and any details, witnesses etc. These two forms are for the benefit of the society and it is strongly suggested that they be utilized as often as necessary.

GardenOntario Vegetable Garden Journal

The OHA is preparing to launch a new fundraising initiative by way of creating a Garden Journal which will be available for sale this coming Fall. The book will be 8.5" x 5" in size and will be coil bound with a thicker cover and pocket inside the covers. It will include informational pages as well as templates and fillable documents, tips and tricks and blank pages for your notes, among other things. It will be a two-three year journal and will be focused on vegetable gardening. This journal would make a great Christmas gift! Stay tuned for pre-order information.



Awards and Grants

All award winners for 2024 will be announced at the Saturday evening awards banquet on July 13th, 2024 at the OHA Convention. Please note that over the next year, all forms, the booklet and all scoring sheets will be updated.

Starting in 2025, there will now be a 25 year special anniversary certificate given out along with all the regular special anniversaries. Also, please remember that if you wish to apply for a Seedy Saturday/Sunday grant, the deadline to submit your application form is November 15th, 2024. It is a long way off, but planning ahead is always prudent.



As a reminder, lovely OHA certificate folders with the logo embossed in gold on the front are available for purchase from our Garden Shop for \$5.00 each. Check out our Garden Shop at <https://gardenontario.org/gardenshop/>. If you have any questions pertaining to Awards, please reach out to the Awards Coordinator at awards@gardenontario.org

Convention 2024



The 2024 Convention and AGM will be held at the Guelph Delta Hotel July 12th to 14th. This promises to be a weekend full of fun and adventure with a variety of vendors, exciting bus tours, interesting speakers, magic, dancing and mingling on Friday night, excellent food, competitions in a variety of categories, awards banquet on Saturday evening and let's not forget the business of the Association. Early bird registration is currently open and all details can be found on the GardenOntario website at <https://gardenontario.org/convention/>. Please join us for an amazing weekend!

I hope the Easter Bunny was good to everyone and you all spent a wonderful holiday with family and friends. The warm weather is coming and gardening season is close.

Enjoy your outdoor activities and have fun! I hope to see you all in Guelph for Convention 2024!

Yours in gardening,

Sharlene Desjardins
OHA President

