



Newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Ontario

Inside

MGOI

Welcome to the March edition of *Inside MGOI*, the Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc. (MGOI) newsletter. We hope you and your families are safe and well as we work our way through these trying times.

Our focus is on you, Master Gardeners! This is your vehicle for providing updates, insights and the inside scoop from MGOI Board & Committee members, Directors, and the 30 Master Gardener groups throughout Ontario. The Newsletter features member milestones, group projects and activities, short member profiles, upcoming events such as regional technical updates – anything about the functioning and happenings of our groups and our members. Please feel free to submit pictures – they are most welcome!

Contributions to future editions of 'Inside MGOI' may be sent at any time to the Newsletter Editor, Isabel Belanger, newsletter@mgoi.ca.

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MG Advice Clinic Manager for Canada Blooms: Christine Spence, Etobicoke
Manager of MG Participation in Canada Blooms: Adrienne Hanbidge, Toronto

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INSIDE MGOI

**Newsletter of the
Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc.**

March 2020

Editor: Isabel Belanger, Halton

Milestones

Algoma Master Gardeners

10 Year Anniversary

Sheila Campbell

Master Gardener Status Achieved

Cheryl Bayles



Rideau Thousand Islands

Master Gardener Status Achieved

Teresa Roseboom



Coordinator Astrid Muschalla, left presenting Teresa with her MG Certificate



Etobicoke Master Gardeners

Master Gardener Status Achieved

Leslie Ferguson

New Master Gardener in Training

Laura Legge



Stratford Master Gardeners

In Memoriam

Tom Ryan

Long-time Stratford Master Gardener and Coordinator Tom Ryan of Stratford passed away on February 23rd, 2020. A member since 1995, Tom was Co-Coordinator with the late Eric Hewison from 1997 to 2008. He is fondly remembered for his knowledge and friendship.

Member Profiles

Jim Fitzgerald & Don Farwell

Jim Fitzgerald, who served as Coordinator from 2008 until 2020 has recently retired from the post. He has done a wonderful job, leading by example and always willing to share his experience with members and the public at large. He is incredibly knowledgeable and has been an active volunteer at events. As a member since 2003 we are so pleased to know that he will remain active and continue to play a crucial role. Way to go Jim!



Leslye presenting Jim with a token of our appreciation

Don Farwell, who acted as Co-Coordinator with Jim, has taken on the role of Coordinator. Leslye Glover has taken on the role of Secretary and is playing a huge part in supporting our group. She is dynamite!



The President's Corner

by Claudette Sims, President MGOI

Information Related to the Covid-19 Pandemic

Volunteer Hours and Continuing Education Units (CEU) Requirements

Given the cancellation of many key events (e.g. Canada Blooms, Pollination Guelph Symposium) as well as events all around the province, and the uncertainty of future events, the requirements for volunteer hours (both administrative and advice hours) as well as CEUs are suspended for this year. Master Gardener volunteers are encouraged to continue tracking their hours for information purposes, but there will be no requirement to fulfill a specific number of hours or Continuing Education Units in 2020.

In Person Meetings - Cancelled

While Master Gardener groups have wisely cancelled all in person meetings, I'd like to stress that even the smallest of meetings (e.g. even 2 people) should be cancelled for the foreseeable future. If you'd like to schedule a virtual meeting using our GoToMeeting connection, please contact Suzanne Zacharczyk (gardensinthecity@rogers.com) and Director of Operations Pamela Dallaire (pameladallaire@hotmail.com) one month in advance. Suzanne and Pamela are starting to get a number of requests and can only schedule about two meetings per week. Pam has also shared these alternatives for groups to connect remotely:

Here is a list of free apps for video and voice connections: <https://dailyhive.com/vancouver/free-online-video-call-apps>.

Supporting Garden Based Businesses

Stokes Seed Company donated 14 boxes of catalogues for distribution at Canada Blooms and have also supported us with a generous \$1000.00 donation each year. Luckily, gardening is not cancelled, so we'd like your help in getting these catalogues out to the public - not with a paper copy, but with a virtual one. Please consider adding pertinent links to your website or sharing information on social media. This is important not only for Stokes, but for other garden suppliers who may be at risk financially due to the ongoing restrictions necessary to slow the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

Feel free to share any or all of these links:

- Stokes Seeds 2020 Gardening Guide: <https://www.pageturnpro.com/Stokes-Seeds/93512-2020-Canadian-Home-Garden-Catalog/sdefault.html#page/1>
- Semences Stokes - Guide du jardinage 2020 (French language version) <https://www.pageturnpro.com/Stokes-Seeds/92992-2020-Guide-du-Jardinage/sdefault.html#page/1>
 - (Order a free catalogue: <https://www.stokeseeds.com/ca/order-catalog>)
 - (Spring Gardening tips: <https://www.stokeseeds.com/ca/blog/2018/09/04/spring-gardening-tips/>) – **the Stokes website is now closed until April 3rd**

You can also link to this MGOI tab which has all of the above: <http://mgoi.ca/resources/stokeseeds.html>

Many seed companies are still able to do business online however be aware that many are currently experiencing high volumes and may not be able to ship for a few weeks. Here's a list from recent recommendations on the MGOI Facebook Group:

- [Urban Harvest](#) in Toronto ON
- [Matchbook Garden & Seed Company](#) in Caledonia
- [William Dam Seeds](#) in Dundas, ON
- [Hawthorne Farm Organic Seeds](#) in Palmerston ON
- [Veseys Seeds](#) in PEI
- [Wildflower Farms](#) in Coldwater ON



Although there is the uncertainty of when nurseries may be able to open, please feel free to share this [map of nurseries in Ontario](#).

Supporting Our Communities

Lorraine Johnson, one of our Honorary Master Gardeners recently posted this: “Dear Gardeners: for those of you who have the skills and the resources, please prioritize starting veggie seedlings so that as the weather warms you can:

- 1) devote more garden space this year to food production to donate to those in need; and
- 2) give the seedlings to people in need who have a balcony or community garden plot or some other place to grow veggies.

I hope that everyone who is able to will grow food for the many, many people who are in need. Please spread this message to all gardeners you know.



This photo is of a Victory Garden on Fleet Street in Toronto, May 9, 1940.

In these uncertain times, Master Gardeners are showing that they are able to adapt and support the gardening public in new & innovative ways. Thanks for your many social media posts, humour and continued dedication to gardening.

Cathy's Guide to Social Distancing

In closing, I'd like to include some ideas from Cathy Kavassalis' *Guide to Social Distancing* post on Facebook.



Photo: Dick van Duijn

Stay safe and continue gardening!



A Moment for Membership

by Pam Love, Director

Introducing Karen Sciuk, New Vice President MGOI

Karen Sciuk has been involved with Master Gardeners since she was recruited by the Durham Master Gardeners group (DMG) at the Oshawa Peony Festival in 2009. She held the role of Coordinator of DMG for fiscal year 2013 / 2014. She also was on the board of the Oshawa Garden Club, a Horticultural Society in District 17, as well as being the Manager / Buyer / Grower in the trees / shrubs/ perennials department of an Oshawa area garden centre. This experience enhanced her skills at interacting with the public and contributed greatly to her knowledge of horticulture. She loves to interact with the public, encouraging others to share her passion for gardening.



Moving to the Township of Wellesley near Waterloo in 2015, Karen became involved with the Kitchener Master Gardeners, holding the role of Co-Coordinator. She joined the MGOI board as SW Regional Co-Director in 2016, in addition to being the President of the Wellesley Horticultural Society and Assistant Director of District 19 Ontario Horticultural Association (OHA) since 2019. She is an enthusiastic organizer!

Currently, to satisfy her love of horticulture, Karen is a garden coach in her community and helps to maintain some private residential gardens. She continues to be an active speaker now in the Region of Waterloo and surrounding area, giving diverse talks for various Horticultural Societies

and other community groups. Her main passions are Pollinator Gardens and Soil Health that led to her role in helping Wellesley Township to be designated the 20th Bee City, and the Region of Waterloo to become Canada's first Bee City region.



Bee City



Karen, left – Kitchener in Bloom Panel

Welcome Karen!



Profiles – New Co-Directors of Education

by Pam Love, Director of Membership

Kate Sault and Inger Knudsen will share the role of Director of Education effective May 1, 2020.

Kate joined Halton Region Master Gardeners in April of 2014 after retiring from the Ecology and Evolutionary Biology Department at the University of Toronto (U of T). Gardening had always been a passion but there was never enough time while working.

The head gardener in the U of T greenhouse was a dahlia enthusiast which led to Kate's dahlia passion. The sizes, colours, and forms of the flower are amazing.

In the last few years, Kate has been turning a large part of her garden into a pollinator friendly, native plant garden as her lawn is being slowly eliminated.



Welcome Kate!

Inger Knudsen loves learning about plants, being able to share her knowledge of plants, and being involved in her community of Guelph Wellington.



She joined the Guelph & Wellington Master Gardener group 10 years ago. She was the Coordinator for three years and is presently the assistant Coordinator.

Inger studied horticulture and worked in nurseries in Denmark before coming to Canada in 1982 where she obtained her Horticulture Diploma and continues to learn.

Ingrid has tons of experience and a passion for gardening which she shares by giving many talks and enjoying the camaraderie with other Master Gardeners. At the Guelph Arboretum she is involved with the Roots and Shoots garden, a woodland garden with challenging soil conditions, where, over time, they have been able to create a beautiful garden/woodland for people to enjoy and from which to draw inspiration.

Welcome Inger!



Master Gardeners Out & About: Projects & Events

Prince Edward County Master Gardeners

Name: Seedy Saturday

Details: Seedy Saturday is always a great kick-off for the



MGiTs Marc de Leon & Sarah McParland
Photo by Carol Wilson

season. The enthusiasm from our new members has been a delight for all of us here in The County.

We had seven Master Gardeners at Seedy Saturday on February 29th and so many people dropped by to talk about their gardens.

Spring can't be far away!



L to R: MGIT Michael McCall, MGs Margo Rivers & Ren Duinker, Coordinator



Simcoe County Master Gardeners

Name: Annual Winter Social

Details: On December 4th, 2019 Simcoe County MGs participated in a tour and workshop at Petals Flower Co. in Shelburne, ON. While we were there to learn how to make a seasonal arrangement, we were lucky enough to be given a tour showing us their growing production area and explaining their process.



Simcoe MGs with our creations: Back Row, l to r: Charlotte Vorstermans, Susie Cosack, Gail Cocker, Anja Lowrance, Christine March
Front row, l to r: Amber (owner), Linda Peacock

Amber Swidersky and her husband Mike run a 100 acre farm in Melanthon where they grow flowers for fresh and dried use for weddings and floral events as well as raising cattle and sheep. Amber believes in natural and sustainable practices for her flowers and her husband Mike's focus for the entire farm is on soil integrity.



Amber showing our group the hoop house used in their production



What a pleasure to learn about a local farm that is committed to the long-term protection of our environment!



Amber showing us the rotating area for hardy annuals and perennials



London – Middlesex Master Gardeners

Name: March 7th Seedy Saturday, London's Garden Fest – a big success!

Details: We are feeling so sad about all the great events that have now been cancelled. What a difference a week makes!

Attendance at the gate went over the top – 1041! (up 68% over last year). Our main room was filled by 44 vendor booths and 26 community non-profit exhibits.



It helped that Mother Nature cooperated with a nice sunny day. Our 'headliner' and fellow Master Gardener, Sean James, was a big hit who drew a full house for his morning talk on 'What We Used to Kill'. Thanks again Sean!



Thanks to everyone for the hard work that made this a success!



Two other talks also filled the speaker's room – thanks to our own Julie Dorssers for a great job on 'For the Love of Trees' and to Brenda Gallagher of Upper Thames Conservation Authority for her talk on 'Invasive Plant Species'.

This was one big team effort – a committee of eight with 20 LMMGs members, Amy's little 'Hughman' plus eight friends and family volunteering that day.



Cancelled

by Isabel Belanger, Editor Inside MGOI

Canada Blooms, Toronto & Spring Tide Bulb Show, Hamilton

It was like a punch in the stomach when I heard that Canada Blooms was cancelled, although it was entirely justifiable in light of COVID 19 developments unfolding daily. But totally unprecedented. It was almost like spring had been cancelled.

Like a lot of people I like to complain that Canada Blooms has become too commercialized, that it opens too soon, that it doesn't belong with the National Home Show, yada yada yada. But the reality is that I look forward to it every year and can't wait for it to open. For many gardeners it's the official start of spring, a highly anticipated event for gardeners who travel to Toronto from all over Ontario (my friend's friend from Deep River had just arrived in Toronto to visit CB for the first time and was hugely disappointed over the cancellation).

The pictures posted on FaceBook were greatly appreciated. Thankyou Paul Gellatly

[https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10213697512632660&set=pcb.10213697516632760&type=3&theater\)](https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=10213697512632660&set=pcb.10213697516632760&type=3&theater)

and

https://www.facebook.com/pg/canadablooms/photos/?tab=album&album_id=10156858576616044 David Ohashi

for the inside scoop.

Landscape Ontario has posted a short video of what was to have been on YouTube:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2w6ehLPjXU>.

We can only look forward to 2021!

Spring Tide Bulb Show, the bulb festival in Hamilton's Gage Park Greenhouse was scheduled to run from March 13th to March 22nd. Spring Tide was also cancelled.

I am fortunate to report that the Hamilton Gage Park greenhouse is just beyond my backyard which gives me easy access.



I visited the Gage Park Greenhouse on March 14th to bask in the tropical Eden – greenhouse bathing as it were.



Button Quails

The greenhouse is a 14,000 square foot tropical paradise replete with birds – diamond doves and button-quail – who contribute to the greenhouse Integrated Pest Management (IPM).

Meet Kramer, a resident Arum titan (*Amorphophallus titanum*) or Corpse Flower.



When Arums are grown in captivity they are given names.



Young Arums as yet unnamed



Here are a few more residents of the greenhouse.



The large Banana Tree

The following pictures of spring bulbs planted amongst the tropicals show the promise of what Spring Tide might have been. Again we can only wait until next year.



A tropical planter with the promise of Hamilton spring



The Australian Tree Fern unfurling a frond



Calathea lancifolia with Pansies



One of the resident turtles



Daffodils peeking out from a few tropicals.



The next day the greenhouse closed to the public.

Of particular fascination for me is Gage Park's Dawn Redwood tree (*Metasequoia glyptostroboides*) – perhaps not in this locale since the dawn of time but here now. This is a deciduous coniferous tree rediscovered in China in 1944; Dawn Redwood has been growing on earth for at least 2M years. Note the red bark.



Why it's called the Redwood Tree

Of the over 2000 trees including 87 species in Gage Park there are a few huge old beech trees that have been fenced off to help preserve them. The estimate is that they are between 200 and 300 years old.



This is the trunk of the largest tree. It had rained on the day of the picture which is why the bark is so dark.



So now for the time being people have to be content to take a walk in the park and engage in forest bathing.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Northumberland Master Gardeners

Name: Let It Grow

Location: Port Hope Library

Dates: April 5th & April 19th

Details: Northumberland MGs will present a number of short talks on gardening. Topics include: Getting Your Garden Ready for Spring; Seed Starting; Choosing Perennials for Our Changing Climate; Garden Planning; and Pests in the Garden.

Master Gardeners of Ottawa - Carleton

Master Gardener Lectures – 2020 Series Lineup

This series has been **CANCELLED**.

We will do our best to reschedule later – when times are normal again.



Tuesday April 21

Our Gardens and Climate Change

Diane McClymont Peace

Tuesday May 5

Colour Through the Seasons

Candace Dressler and Rob Stuart

Tuesday May 19

Into the Night Garden

Judith Cox

Tuesday September 15

Another Gardening Year Behind Us

Mary Shearman Reid



Tuesday September 29

A Garden for the Birds

Julianne Labreche

Time: 7pm to 9pm

Location: Building 72, Central Experimental Farm

Cost: Individual lectures:

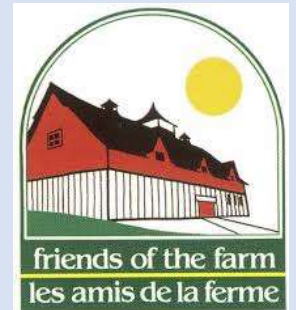
\$12 for Members of Friends of the Central Experimental Farm

\$15 for Non-Members

Purchase the series:

5 for \$50 for Members

5 for \$60 Non-Members



For more information please visit:

www.friendsofthefarm.ca

613-230-3276

info@friendsofthefarm.ca

Northumberland Master Gardeners

Name: Bus Trip to Montreal, Quebec

Dates: June 23rd to June 26th, 2020

Details: Highlights will include: Montreal Botanical Gardens; Les Jardins Michel Corbeil; Machal Gardens; and Chillane Gardens

Cost: \$580.00 per person based on double occupancy, \$820.00 per person based on single occupancy.

Contact: Christa Bisanz at bisanz@eagle.ca for details.

Name: 2020 Atlantic Master Gardener Conference – Cancelled until Summer 2021

Topic: Designing Adaptive Gardens in Atlantic Canada

Location: Truro, NS on July 8th & 9th, 2020

Keynote Speaker: Julie Moir Messervy, award winning landscape designer from Vermont and author of *Landscaping Ideas that Work* and other books, has indicated that she is willing to come next year. Registrants will have their money refunded ASAP.



Julie and internationally renowned cellist Yo Yo Ma, in collaboration with landscape architects from the City of Toronto's Parks and Recreation department, designed the Toronto Music Garden. One of her books, *The Toronto Music Garden: Inspired by Bach*, was about this experience.

MGOI Summer Workshop 2020 Cancelled until 2021

Details: Scheduled to take place from July 25th to 26th, this would have been the 12th annual MGOI Summer Workshop to be held at the Niagara Parks Botanical Gardens and School of Horticulture. Sessions would have included:

- Attracting Bees and Other Pollinators to the Garden – Chris Murphy
- What's Bugging my Trees and Shrubs? – Kris Mahoney

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Yvonne Causer, ycauser@hotmail.com, Kate Sault, saultkate@gmail.com, or June Streadwick, streadwick@sympatico.ca.

Stratford Master Gardeners

POSTPONED!! Technical Update

Information:

We asked you to save the date of October 17th, 2020 for our Technical Update, *Gardening for the Planet: Creating Biodiverse Habitats in Our Gardens*. As a result of COVID-19 we felt that we should postpone the event rather than leave people uncertain as to whether it would go ahead.

We will re-schedule as soon as the situation becomes clearer. We hope to see you there!

Halton Master Gardeners

Request you – SAVE THE DATE! Technical Update

Topic: Refugia: the future of gardening

Date: Saturday, October 24th, 2020

Location: Waterdown, ON

Cost: \$60; Early Bird \$55

Registration Information: Details coming soon

Speakers:

- Dr. Christina Davy, Research Scientist with the Ministry of Natural Resources
 - Catherine Kavassalis, Halton Region Master Gardener
 - Paul Gellatly, Director of Horticulture, Toronto Botanical Garden
 - Claudette Sims, President MGOI
 - Other special guests TBA
-

Name: MGOI Website

Details: If you would like your Master Gardener event posted on the MGOI website under the **News & Events** tab, please send details to our webmaster Jim Cook at webmaster@mgoi.ca.

Images need to be in .jpeg or .png format.



Of Possible Interest to Master Gardeners

2020 Shaw Festival Garden Tour

The Shaw Festival Garden Tour will take place on June 13th, 2020. Master Gardeners may be interested in "making a day of it in Niagara-on-the-Lake" by also attending the lunch-time play, taking in a backstage tour, and just enjoying the main street.

