

# March 2015 Newsletter

"March is a month of considerable frustration - it is so near spring and yet across a great deal of the country the weather is still so violent and changeable that outdoor activity in our yards seems light years away."

- Thalassa Cruso

## From the President's Pen

We are on the cusp of our next season. Thoughts of spring light our way after such a long cold winter. We can dream of opening our gardens and taking away the blanket of winter leaves. Seeds wait patiently for us to plant as our dreams of beauty and nature twinkle in our heads. How fortunate we are to have such a common

passion of enjoying nature and watching plants push their way through the earth ready to grow into beautiful flowers. Let us all share with one another so together we can learn from some and teach others with our knowledge and experience. It is March madness - let us embrace it.

Jane Law

## Upcoming Meetings

The planned speaker for the **April 14** meeting will be Joanna Kowalczyk informing us on "The Art and Science of Pruning."

For the **May 12** meeting, the speaker is Olly Chuchryk presenting "Dancing Dahlias."

## PDHS Secretary

We are looking for a Secretary to take minutes at the general meeting as well as Executive meetings. If you are interested, please contact Jane Law (our new president) at shorehaven93@yahoo.ca.

## Junior Gardener Program

Our 2015 Junior Gardener Program is in "desperate need of volunteers". If you want to encourage our future gardeners and be rewarded with their enthusiasm, please contact Nancy Wiseman or Robin McIntosh...ASAP! It requires a 6-week commitment of one scheduled hour per week at a designated elementary school in our district.

We continue to require strawberry containers; tuna cans (**NOT** salmon cans), large yogourt containers and potted plant cuttings!



Lanark Orchid

Renals

Perth & District  
Horticultural  
Society

P.O. Box 494  
Perth, ON, K7H 3G1  
www.gardenontario.org

District #2 of the  
Ontario Horticultural  
Association

President: Jane Law • Newsletter: Irene Hofmann • ihofmann812@gmail.com

It would be appreciated if you donated your Canadian Tire money again this year as it helps defray the expenses. Everyone has been very generous in the past!

If you would like to make a personal donation towards our Junior Gardener Program – Yes! & Thank You!

We have a wonderful supportive Society for our Junior Gardener Program. Thank you and looking forward to another successful program for 2015!

Nancy Wiseman – newfinances@hotmail.com

Robin McIntosh – robinandsteve1@gmail.com

## Monthly Financial Statement

January 31, 2015

Ledger Balance January 1, 2015 **\$4,914.20**

### Receipts -

Misc. Donations Gen. Fund	\$ 35.00
Membership	130.00
Non-members	6.00
Yearbook	<u>300.00</u>
	\$471.00

### Expenses -

Youth Activities	\$ 14.81
Yearbook	494.38
Meeting Expenses	564.86
Social	10.44
Misc. Donations	50.00
Miscellaneous	<u>790.65</u>
	\$ 1,925.14

Ledger Balance January 31, 2015 **\$3,460.06**

Reserve fund – GIC matures July 18, 2016 -  
\$2,553.92 (invested) + interest(\$41.96 Nov. 4,  
2014)

## District 2 2015 Photo Competition

The District 2 competition will take place at the 2015 District 2 Annual General Meeting on April 25, 2015 in Petawawa.

Entries will be accepted in digital format or print format. They can be mailed to Linda Bartlett, 1060 Ford Road, Perth, Ontario K7H 3C3. Digital photos will also be accepted by email as attachments (one photo per email) to district2photos@gmail.com – Subject line: D2

Photo Competition.

For classes, rules, entry deadlines and further information, visit the OHA District 2 website: [www.gardenontario.org/site.php/district2](http://www.gardenontario.org/site.php/district2)

## D2 AGM Petawawa

Pembroke and Petawawa Horticultural Societies are pleased to host the 2015 Advisory Council and Annual General Meeting of OHA District 2 on Saturday, April 25, 2015. We would like to extend an invitation to all District 2 Society members to come and enjoy a day in late April in the Upper Ottawa Valley. The day starts at 8:30AM and ends at 3:00 PM. Cost is \$20.00 per member and this includes catered lunch.

We have prepared a day that is certain to inform and entertain – all in the name of horticulture and our theme “Sustainability”. The morning will begin with a demonstration by Kevin Nieman, a local florist / musician / raconteur who will keep everyone interested as he demonstrates his take on the theme. Before lunch but following the Advisory Council, we will have the D2 Photo competition results and hear from a well-known horticulturalist, Jay McLaren, who now teaches at Algonquin College. After the AGM in the afternoon, the guest speaker, Mike Johns, will tackle the subject of Sustainability from a manufacturer’s viewpoint. Silent Auction items too numerous to mention have been promised including a piece from a local blacksmith valued at \$100.

Please see Barb Smith at the meeting on Tuesday to register or for more information.

## Shrubs for all Seasons

*by Helen Halpenny,  
Lanark County Master Gardeners*

Shrubs, like trees, provide the bones of the garden. Even in winter their branches and bark add height and interest. They are truly the work horses in the garden, useful as specimens, foundation plantings, hedges and features in a mixed border. After their first year they likely won’t require water, staking or dividing as perennials will. Just a light pruning to shape and most shrubs are good to go.

It is vital that you choose the right shrub for the space, light and soil conditions. Always

check the mature size the shrub will become when fully grown. Many shrubs will provide at least three seasons of interest- flowers in spring, berries in summer and fruit in fall. Evergreen shrubs also give structure and colour in winter. Given our severe winters, do provide a wind break or wrap burlap around evergreens that are subject to desiccation. Shrubs come in many shapes – mounding, vase-shaped, pyramidal, etc. and all sizes from miniature to large.

Here are my ten favourite shrubs. Spirea has a huge variety of cultivars. Most have white or pink flowers. 'Gold flame' leafs out with mottled copper and orange leaves, which turn green, then pink flowers in June and colourful foliage again in late fall. It grow 2-3 feet and responds well to a good hair cut.

Boxwood (*Buxus sempervirens*) does well in Canadian gardens if it has a reliable snow cover. Otherwise, wrap some burlap loosely around it. Being evergreen, its branches can be clipped any time of year for foliage in floral design.

Japanese barberry is becoming popular. Usually low growing, varieties can have rosy, burgundy or golden foliage and are well suited to foundation planting or low hedges. Their branches have spines so deer aren't fond of eating them. In fall their foliage seems to glow in the sun. 'Rose Glow' is my favourite variety.

Forsythia is the first shrub in spring to put on a spectacular show. My 'Northern Gold' variety is very hardy and I cut some branches each spring to force indoors so I have yellow bells to brighten my day weeks before it blooms outdoors. If this shrub needs a pruning to keep it within bounds, do so right after it flowers.

The family of Lilacs have to be loved for their wonderful fragrance. My all-time favourite variety is 'Sensation', deep magenta flowers with white edging. 'Charles Joly' bred in 1896 is very fragrant and enduringly popular. Lilacs seem to grow well everywhere, in every soil, in all exposures.

Every garden needs a hydrangea. The big ball 'Annabelle' or the Peegee type with conical flowers provide summer-into-fall blooms. Many new cultivars are now available. 'Quick Fire' is true to its name, blooming early and the pink blooms darken with age into the fall. Hydrangea 'Endless summer' blooms pink in alkaline soil. I want blue blooms, so I add aluminum sulphate to the soil to make it acidic.

*Euonymus alata* or winged euonymus has superb fall colour, turning brilliant scarlet. Easy

to care for and very hardy, it earns a place as a specimen or in foundation plantings. If you want a small shrub, look for 'compacta'.

The viburnums are a likeable lot. Interesting flowers in spring followed by colourful fruit and foliage in fall make them winners. The berries are a source of food for birds. I grow 'viburnum trilobum' (highbush cranberry) for its white flowers in May and scarlet red fruit.

Mainstays in my yard are junipers. They are not showy or brightly coloured but they are reliable, and provide much needed winter interest. Most are pyramidal plants in various heights. My 'Wichita blue' junipers are hardy to -40 degrees, Junipers can also be spreaders, or ground covers with yellow, grey- green, or bluish foliage. Deer do not seem to like them.

Lastly I will include dogwood, the 'Silverleaf dogwood' is very commonly used in landscapes for a good reason. It is decorative, with variegated foliage. Its reddish twigs stand out against the snow in winter.

Visit our website [www.lanarkmg.blogspot.com](http://www.lanarkmg.blogspot.com) for more gardening information.



## PDHS April Flower Show

### Section I: Horticultural Specimen

- Class 1** African Violet – any colour  
– single flower
- Class 2** Best potted plant in bloom – other than violet – named if possible
- Class 3** Best potted foliage plant – named if possible
- Class 4** Narcissus – any cultivar, 3 scapes
- Class 5** Spring bulb – other than Narcissus  
– 1 stem

### Section II: Design

- Class 6** Novice Class: (*This class is for a person who enters a competition for the first time, or who has won no red ribbons in previous flower shows.*)  
"Eggs in a Basket" – a design in a basket, accessories permitted
- Class 7** "Easter" – an interpretive design
- Class 8** "Leafing Out" – a foliage design

## Why Buy Local?

Below is an excerpt from the Galletta Nursery newsletter that highlights the importance of supporting local growers and nurseries. Yes, you can buy cheaper plants at the “big box” stores, but at what cost?

*“We’ve been growing hardy roses on the farm for many years, and we believe that growing locally is the right thing to do. So do many of you, since we do have a very loyal customer base. It’s a loyal group of customers, but small... Our sales have dropped drastically over the past decade. The main reason: we can’t compete on price with the big-box stores. They bring in huge truckloads of roses from the USA, where growing conditions are much easier, the growing season twice as long, and labour much less expensive.*

*Many rose growers in Canada have simply given up. In the past year, three major commercial suppliers have closed, and one of the most respected Canadian on-line retailers - Pickering Nurseries - has announced that it is closing because of cheap US imports...The decline in support of local business is not, of course, restricted to rose growers. All small businesses are feeling the pressure of low-priced imported products. Of course, price is always a consideration in any purchase. By buying from a local grower like us, you are also making a bigger decision about the type of business – and about the type of society – that you want to support.*

## New Vegetables To Grow

*Dr. Leonard Perry, Extension Professor  
University of Vermont*

Five more new vegetables, including three herbs, have recently been awarded the prestigious All-America Selections (AAS) award. These include a basil, beet, broccoli, chives, and oregano.

Each year, the best of the new seed-grown vegetables are chosen as AAS winners after trials across North America. They must represent either a totally new variety, or one improved in some way over an existing one. This year there are a much larger number than usual of winners—19 vegetables, and with flower winners a total of 25. This is a 75 year record, the last year with so many winners being 1939. Another first is the three organically-grown herbs.

Basil Persian is a new, vigorous variety with

later flowers than most others. This is a bonus since basil is grown for leaves not flowers, and when the plant is flowering the leaves may develop a bitter taste. When flowering, though, bees usually flock to it so this makes it a good plant for pollinator-friendly gardens. It also may be known as Thai or sweet basil, and grows about 15 to 18 inches high and wide. It makes an attractive ornamental with silvery green leaves and purplish stems. Figure on about 75 days from sowing seeds to harvesting leaves.

Beet Avalanche is, as you might guess from the name, a beet with white roots. Unlike many beets, this has no earthy taste nor bitterness, but instead is mild and sweet. It is an easy vegetable to grow, and quick, taking only 50 days from sowing seeds to harvesting roots. Avalanche has good resistance to a key leaf spot disease (Cercospora) of beets. You often see this late summer under high temperatures, humidity, and leaves staying wet into the night.

Broccoli Artwork is a new hybrid, often called a sweet stem broccoli. It starts out as the usual heading type but, once harvested, tender and tasty side shoots develop late into the season. This hybrid resists “bolting” (flowering prematurely) during hot weather better than other stem types. Now you can grow this gourmet broccoli from seeds at home, a type only available before in gourmet markets, restaurants, and specialty farm stands. Allow enough time and start seeds indoors early, as it takes 85 days from sowing to first harvest.

Chives Geisha is a garlic chives, with some of this flavor. Leaves are slightly wider, flatter, and more refined-appearing than regular chives. These, along with the white flowers late in the season, make it an attractive ornamental as well as culinary herb. Butterflies like the flowers, too. Use it in stir-fries, soups, as a garnish, or in salads. Figure on about 75 days from sowing seeds to harvesting leaves although, like other chives, you can harvest leaves earlier.

Oregano Cleopatra is a compact, trailing plant (to about 10 inches wide) with silver gray leaves. It is unique from Greek and Italian oreganos, having a mildly spicy, slightly peppermint flavor. This makes it good used in Mediterranean dishes, soups, and sauces. You can dry the leaves for later use, too. If starting these rather than buying plants, sow seeds indoors early as they need 100 days to harvest from sowing.

More All-America Selections, both flowers and vegetables, and seed sources can be found on their website ([www.all-americanselections.org](http://www.all-americanselections.org)).