

OHA Convention & AGM

July 12-14, 2024

Speaker Program



KEEPING ONTARIO BEAUTIFUL®



Plenary Speaker

Friday, July 12 – 11:00

The Green Legacy Programme

Rob Johnson

The Green Legacy is the largest Municipal tree planting programme in North America. Rob Johnson has worked in the field of environmental restoration for 26 years. Rob has been with the Green Legacy since its inception in 2004.

Rob will give an overview of the Green Legacy Programme that gives out 175,000 trees a year and in 2022 went over 3 million trees.

The Green Legacy has two nurseries in the County of Wellington that have over 20,000 volunteer hours logged each year. Rob will Outline the Green Legacy Programme's and discuss how trees can be utilized on the farm to increase crop yield, sequester soil carbon, and recycle nutrients within the system.



Friday, July 12 - Seminars 1:30 - 2:30



Field of Lavender Dreams – Julie Thurgood-Burnett of Hereward Farms went from a marketing maven to a lavender queen where she discovered her true passion and built a thriving business. Her journey has been nothing short of a fairytale, blossoming from the marketing world to a flourishing lavender farmer in merely three years. Her core values stem from an unwavering commitment to sustainability, a nurturing sense of community and a potent desire to empower individuals. Truly, she does it all, proving that dreams can grow wildly, just like lavender in a field. ***Vendor**



Tree Trust – Fighting the climate crisis one tree at a time - Toni Ellis is a long-time environmental activist who believes that change happens from the ground up. She is Executive Director of Tree Trust, which she founded in 2018 to focus on the care of mature, legacy trees – true climate champions. Tree Trust helps citizens protect and enhance their tree canopy. There are currently 7 Chapters in Ontario. Join in for a truly inspiring presentation.



Judges' Update Session #1 Questions & Answer Session Kathryn Lindsay and Sharon Nivins both “Grow to Show” and “Show to Grow”. They love to be outside in their gardens and actively enter shows, demonstrate, and help others with horticulture and design. Today they will be, along with other members of the OHA Judging Committee, presenting a live Q&A. This is an opportunity for Judges to get answers to things that crop up at flower shows.



Garden Myths – Robert Pavlis is an experienced gardener with a degree in Chemistry and Biochemistry. He will present gardening myths, including myths about planting trees, natural pesticides are safe, hostas don't grow in sun, and weed barriers prevent weeds from growing. The topics will use plenty of pictures showing gardens and flowers to keep everyone interested. His books will be available for sale.

Friday, July 12 - Seminars 3:00 - 4:00



Honey Bee Research Centre – Problems and Solutions – Paul Kelly, Research and Apiary Manager The University of Guelph, apiculture research and education program, was established in 1894. Their mandate is to help bees and the beekeeping community thrive. The focus will be on the important role that bees play in food production. Hive health issues, and the solutions we are working on at the Honey Bee Research Centre, leads into a discussion about the initiatives everyone can consider to benefit pollinators.



TBD – Speaker and information to come



Why Horticultural Archives are Important – Aruna Panday Join us for this exciting talk where you'll discover the significance of your horticultural archives and learn how to store them properly. Aruna Panday will share her experiences and provide valuable insights and practical tips for best practices. This talk is perfect for everyone who loves and wants to protect their 'stuff'.



Planting Native Gardens in your Yard - The Good, the Bad and the Perfect Approaches – Rhea Hamilton Seeger hales from Huron County and has been writing a garden column for Rural Voice magazine for over 35 years. She has seen many changes in gardening styles. She will talk about the value of native plants and a series of good, bad and ugly approaches and how you can grow with new ideas. Trying to understand how to garden with native plants can be daunting. What can you grow and do you have to give up your hostas and peonies? And how will the neighbours react.

Friday, July 12 5:00 – 10:00 Evening Entertainment



Dinner will be a buffet, served at 6:00. Bar will open at 5:00. For more information, please see the menu flyer. You must purchase your dinner ticket at time of registration.

Friday Evening Entertainment

Silent Auction – active bidding of items will be completed in sections throughout the evening so don't miss out on the many local items that will be available.

Steve the Magician - will be doing a 45 min strolling close-up magic show during the buffet dinner on Friday night. - starting at 6:00. Then at 8:00, he will perform a 45-minute Magic Show.

Mike the DJ - The evening will be enriched with fabulous music.

Mike loves to get music requests from the audience. He will entertain us after dinner with great music and a dance floor will be there for those who wish to dance.

Plenary Speaker

Saturday, July 13 – 11:00

Exploration of the Bruce Trail and Significance of the Niagara Escarpment (as it runs through District 7 & 8)

Adam Brylowski – Manager of Conservation and Trail at the Bruce Trail Conservancy

Adam has worked for the Bruce Trail Conservancy (BTC) for 14 years. Prior to working for the BTC Adam worked as an Ecological Restoration Technician for the City of Toronto's Natural Resource Management program and in a similar capacity for an organization called Urban Forest Associates. This work involved the restoration of Toronto's degraded natural systems. Adam has a Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Studies from York University and a Certificate in Ecosystem Restoration from Niagara College.



Join Adam Brylowski, in an exploration of the Bruce Trail and the significance of the Niagara Escarpment in Southern Ontario. This talk will explore some of the varied habitats and species that can be found along the Bruce Trail as well as the work of the BTC in protecting and enhancing a conservation corridor along the Niagara Escarpment.

Saturday, July 13 - Seminars 1:30 - 2:30



Hydrangeas – Stephanie Fletcher – Types & How to Grow, Prune and Maintain (Grey County Master Gardener) Do you have or want to plant hydrangeas in your garden? Are you excited by the new varieties of hydrangeas in the garden centres but aren't sure how to care for them? Hydrangeas are a staple in garden design but often the most misunderstood. In this breakout group we are going to demystify hydrangea choice, care and pruning, so you can get your best hydrangea on!



Hostas and More!! - Shirley Koch and husband Allan, horticulture fanatics, have created one of the most unique and outstanding nurseries in the province, specializing in hosta, daylily, lilies, peonies, and heritage perennials, most of which are on display in their mature award-winning gardens at Riverbend Gardens and Nursery in Wroxeter. Shirley will share her lifelong passion for plants. ***Vendor.**



Butterfly Adventures – Thelma Beaubien has photographed and documented 70 butterfly species in her own garden and across the province from Windsor to Ottawa to share with us. As well, she will present a recap of her 2019 Mexico trip to four Monarch Sanctuaries (mountains) through images and videos. An audio-video show will conclude the presentation. Come and enjoy the stunningly beautiful butterflies.



Jewels Under the Kilt – Elisabeth Burrows - Nut Growing in Ontario

Elisabeth will give you a truly enlightening presentation of her journey of growing nut trees in Ontario. The production and expanding variety of nut trees is needed to fill her growing market of her truly delicious, roasted naturally flavoured Jewels Under the Kilt artisan nuts across the country. Don't miss this chance to learn about Ontario nuts. ***Vendor**

Saturday, July 13 - Seminars 3:00 - 4:00



Judge's Update #2 – Kiki Alwan Terrarium Demonstration Imagine having a tiny rain forest – and the calming scent of moss after rain – inside your home to enjoy, year-round! Join us in learning how to design, assemble and care for a terrarium. Self-enclosed ecosystems encased in glass, terrariums are living pieces of art that require little to no maintenance, and hardly any watering - just twice a year! Built properly, your miniature world will remain green and fresh year-round. Judge will give a 5-minute overview of judging terrariums. Kits available - \$25 - \$60.



Youth Update – Children Growing Knowledge, Community and Connections - Heather Newman The Ripley and District Horticultural Society's For Our Youth program has celebrated 10 years of promoting horticultural skills with as many as 30 children participating each year. Heather Newman, and her two daughters, Natalie and Jaclyne, will share planning, some strategies for success and some of the activities. Be ready for an interactive presentation with unique plants, a craft and some seeds of ideas to take home.



Pollination Guelph – Dr. Victoria MacPhail Come find out what this non-profit charitable volunteer group, dedicated to the conservation and development of pollinator habitat for current and future generations, has accomplished in the Guelph Community. They have transformed areas such as the former Eastview Landfill site into a pollinator habitat and entire lawns and boulevards into native and wildflower sites. Listen to their success stories and be prepared to learn how they did it.



Working with Municipalities – Paul Judge Horticultural Societies and Municipalities share common goals. Although demographics, geographies, and resources vary from one to the next, Ontario's cities, towns, and villages all take pride in their history, their culture, and their appearance. This is a look at the horticultural and related efforts of the Town of Minto, and their collaboration with the local Horticultural Societies, service clubs, businesses, and volunteers.

Saturday, July 13 5:00 – 10:00 Evening Banquet



Dinner will be served at 6:00. Bar will open at 5:00. For more information, please see the menu flyer. You must purchase your banquet ticket at time of registration.

Banquet Speaker – Jeffrey (Jeff) Stewart, Chef, Sommelier, BCom, MBA

Ripples: Celebrating the Enduring Legacy of Anita Stewart and the Power of Food Day Canada to Unite Millions Around a Shared Table



Jeff's culinary journey began in small town Canada, where he discovered his passion for cooking under the profound influence of his mother, Anita Stewart and his grandmother, Anne MacDonald. With a deep appreciation for education, local food, and community, his work has taken him to four different continents.

Building upon their mom's legacy, Jeff and his brothers, Mark & Paul, played a role in the official federal recognition of the Food Day in Canada Act. They have also established a national not-for-profit organization, Food Day Canada, based on their mom's life work. They continue to share her dream, to have at least one day where it is impossible to ignore the agri-food and culinary contributions of Canadians encouraging everyone to shop, cook & dine Canadian.

Awards presentations – following Chef Jeff's presentation

Plenary Speaker

Sunday, July 14 – 11:00

Arboriculture: Lessons Learned from the Canopy Serena Soucy

Serena is a certified arborist with the International Society of Arboriculture and has spent the past five years working with, around and in trees as an arborist.

Serena holds her Bachelor of Science in Natural Resources Conservation from the University of British Columbia and is a graduate of the Humber Arboriculture Apprenticeship program.

Chainsaws, climbing ropes, and pruning tools are as familiar to Serena as pen, paper and laptops are to most people in their professions.

When not climbing trees to prune or remove them, she's conducting tree inventories, examining roots to improve tree health, or planting young trees. Working outdoors with trees everyday is a passion for Serena and she loves to spread her knowledge of trees with others. Through volunteer organizations including the Canadian TREE Fund and Women in Arboriculture Ontario, Serena hopes to help educate more people about the wonders that the arboriculture industry has to offer and support those who are working hard to improve it.

