



President's Message

November's general meeting is usually a very busy one, with great speakers, our annual presentation of scholarships to post-secondary students, and also our Annual General Meeting (AGM). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we cancelled our spring garden show which meant that we also did not offer any scholarships. 😞 We are not required to complete our AGM at this time for the same reason, so we will postpone it until we are able to again meet in person.

November's meeting is also usually the time that we pause to THANK all of our BOARD MEMBERS who generally do so much toward the smooth running of our society. This year has been so different in so many ways, but it has meant a time to pause and reflect from all of our busy work. I have to report that I spent much more time outdoors this past spring, summer and fall, instead of spending the time in front of my keyboard. I do look forward to the time that we can meet in-person again, but until then, I'm enjoying the opportunity to take a step back and do the proverbial "smell the flowers" routine, and I hope the same is true for each one of you.

Our October newsletter seemed to have hit a chord with members, as many of you contacted us to let us know that you enjoyed the articles and the different theme and format. Thank you! We're hoping to hit that chord again with this November issue. How did we do?

Thank you all so much for your continued support of our endeavors for the Society. On behalf of the Board of Directors, I wish you all the safest and happiest holiday season.

❖ **MJ Pilgrim, President**

Farm Manager position available: Lakefield College School

Northcote Farm is a property belonging to Lakefield College School, about 5 km north of the school's main campus. It has not operated as a farm in several years, but they are seeking to start a small (.5 acre) vegetable operation there in 2021 that would serve as an educational and service opportunity for their students. Deadline: November 30, 2020.

For full details, visit: <https://farmsatwork.org/job-internship/farm-manager>

October Trivia Contest Winners

Congrats to **Ruth Hillman, Jill Staples and Donna-Marie Fennell** for their high scores in October's PHS Trivia! With over 100 quiz submissions, these 3 topped the leaderboard with an impressive 9 out of 10. They each received a \$25 gift certificate from Garden Style in Bridgenorth, one of our amazing garden show vendors.



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facebook: Peterborough Horticultural Society & The Peterborough Garden Show **twitter:** @PtboHortSoc & @PtboGardenShow

Falling Leaves Keep Falling

Our sunset maple shed its last leaves a week ago. I raked them into piles and my husband mulched them with the mower. They were all gathered into baskets. I tucked them under small bushes, roses, and well-loved perennials. All done! Or so I thought. My neighbour's maple is still shedding hand-sized leaves and they've all floated onto our front lawn, with many having blown up the side of the house too! So, today, we repeat the raking, mulching process again. This is so unfair!

❖ **Shaun Pyper**



Autumn Art



An adorable photo submission that combines our first love, flowers, with an Autumn love, pumpkins! I call these "Flor-umpkins"! A Fall Forest Photo where you can almost hear the crunch of the leaves and smell the mulch of the forest floor. Finally, a tired summertime hosta turns to Golden Splendor in its final days of the season.

❖ **Anita Clifford**

Lest We Forget

I feel November is the month dedicated to the beloved poppy. It reminds us of losses nearly every Canadian family endured during wartime and still endure to this day. On November 11th, after we place our poppy on the grave of a family member or at the city Cenotaph, we tend to forget this cheerful little flower until Springtime, when it starts to poke its way up through the rich dark earth in our gardens. It then blossoms in the early summer months, bringing a smile to our faces and a sense of hope to our hearts. Then there is the poppy's medicinal side: one species, *Papaver somniferum*, is the source of the narcotic drug opium, which is the source of powerful medicinal alkaloids such as morphine. It has been used since ancient times as an analgesic and narcotic medicinal drug. All in all, the Poppy is beautiful, symbolic, and useful ... a pretty well-rounded plant we'll never forget!

❖ **Donna-Marie Fennell**



Christmas Gifts for the Green-Fingered

It's not too early to think of Christmas gifts for the special gardeners in your life. Every gardener has a long list of things they wish they had because many of these items will make their gardening hobby just a little bit easier. Also, **most of them will rarely treat themselves**. Hopefully, the following suggestions will help you to surprise the green-fingered folk in your life.



1. Plants! A small succulent planter, a unique and weird looking cactus, a fancy orchid, an amaryllis bulb or an African violet for indoors can spruce up a cold winter.
2. Basic Garden Tools. Who among us doesn't need another/new garden tool?
 - a. Lee Valley Root Knife (my go-to weapon, need a few of these)
 - b. A new pair of secateurs (pruners). My choice is the Felco #6, great for smaller hands.
 - c. A padded garden kneeler or good quality set of knee pads
3. Salves and Soap, Especially for "Working Hands". There are many items like garden salves and soaps with hydrating formulas & great scents that will always be appreciated by anyone unwrapping them on Christmas Day.
4. For our Feathered Friends. A good squirrel-proof bird feeder or a birdhouse, and some good quality birdseed will go miles to attracting useful, pleasant-sounding visitors to your yard all winter.
5. GLOVES! My favourites are the nitrile Gardena brand -- stretchy but grippy. I go through several pairs of these each season.

Whatever you decide, buy local and buy Canadian wherever possible. Our local retailers are often our friends and really are struggling to make it through this challenging year. Happy Shopping!

❖ MJ Pilgrim

CONGRATULATIONS!!

Please join me in congratulating Beth Westby of Thomas A Stewart SS in receiving the Olive Isaac Award and \$100 bursary from the PHS. Beth is a horticulture student who has shown interest in growing and propagating plants, which fits nicely with this award.

This award is presented by the PHS in memory of Olive Isaac. Mrs. Isaac was a long-time member of the PHS, and an intelligent, dedicated gardener who managed to produce a lovely garden even in a place like Elliot Lake where the cool weather and rocky soil really challenges gardeners. She packed her garden full of all the flowers she loved -- both annuals and perennials. She loved what she did and grew flowers just for the love of gardening. She was also very involved with the Girl Guides of Canada. Mrs. Isaac was a long time Society Board member, the Society Treasurer for several years, and she assisted in the earliest Society shows, including the first one held at Morrow Park in 1980.

❖ Donna O'Brien

Borrow a Backdrop

"Good artists borrow; great artists steal". Pablo Picasso may have said this, or did he borrow it from T. S. Eliot? I'll allow the reader to decide if shakkei (a Japanese word) is a human invention, East Asian, Chinese or other? (I thought I discovered it myself, while designing my front garden to shield the noise and the view of Armour Road traffic by incorporating the ever-changing land and sky scape of Nichol's Oval Park.)

The concept: borrowing a landscape to complement one's own garden.

So far in my ten years here, borrowings have occurred to the west, north, east, and south:

- Nichol's Oval provides year-round vivid sunsets, majestic snow-covered pines, the fall beauty of aged maples and a fabulous solitary Ginkgo biloba.
- luxurious Virginia Creeper and an uphill slope provide a forest of trees from Sand Cherry and lilacs to a little-leaf Linden (aka Basswood) and monster Maples. The trees house Cardinals, Woodpeckers, and Finches, and the scent of Linden brings pollinators while small rodents find their preferred eco-system in the beechnut trees.
- to the east I have sunrises and the overstory highway shelters squirrels and social gatherings
- my neighbour's 6-foot-tall cedar hedge acts as a privacy screen to the south

City life invites incorporating the best of other properties into the gardener's refuge, while blocking the unlovely.

<https://realjapanesegardens.wordpress.com/2016/01/20/a-modern-concept-of-shakkei/>



◆ Claire Sullivan

καλά Χριστούγεννα! (Merry Christmas! in Greek)



Pasta flora, or Apricot Shortcake, is a Greek dessert staple in my household at this time of year. (actually, who am I kidding, we make it all year around, and it never disappoints!)

I remember as a small child my mom would take out her coloured Pyrex bowls, and the butter would be unwrapped sitting in the yellow one waiting for room temperature, eggs, and vanilla extract in the smaller green one, and 1 1/2 jars of apricot jam in the orange one with a splash of brandy, rum or ouzo. I also remember shoving my face into each bowl and inhaling deeply as a little girl, mom would bring a stool over so I could reach the counter, and I could help, as much as a 5-year-old could....

Mom would hand me the pastry cutter and my job were to mash the butter into the flour, with a bit of the sugar, some of the flour would end up on the counter, but mostly it would land on my ruffled apron. When mom would slide this, what

seemed to be a giant round tray of perfection into the oven, I would sit in front of the oven waiting for the kitchen to fill with this aroma of vanilla apricot buttery-ness goodness! It was divine!

So, as holiday time approaches, I would love to share with our membership a family tradition Pasta flora, I hope next year I can make it for you all to enjoy at our seasonal celebration!

½ lb unsalted butter	1 tsp the best vanilla
4C cake and pastry flour	1 1/2C sugar
3-4 large eggs lightly beaten	1 ½ 500g jars Apricot Jam
1 tsp baking powder	1tbsp brandy, rum, ouzo, or whatever booze you have in your pantry (optional)

Combine the flour, ½ of the sugar and room temperature butter, mix with a pastry cutter, or you could process in a food processor until the butter is pea sized, and when you touch the mixture, it will hold together. Stir together, apricot jam and booze, set aside. Add beaten eggs, vanilla into the flour, sugar, butter mixture and combine thoroughly until sticky. Set aside about ¼ of the dough, with the balance of it, press it into a 14" x 1 ½" deep round pan (no need to butter your pan) spread the jam mixture on top. With the remaining ¼ dough, roll it into strips to create a crisscross design on top of the pasta flora. Bake in a 350-degree oven for 20 min. Let it cool thoroughly before cutting....if you can wait!

Enjoy!

◆ Elane Kalavrias

Orchids Make the Winter Brighter!

As much as I love the garden and the great outdoors, I've never been much of a house plant person. Don't ask me why, this is just one bug I never caught. The one exception to this rule is orchids. I have a windowsill full of orchids in my kitchen, and I have to tell you that they bring me a lot of joy, especially in the winter when the world outside is white and snowy.

I always thought that orchids were difficult to keep and hard to get to reflower and while this is true of some varieties, it's not always the case. The regular grocery store variety (most commonly Phalaenopsis) are very easy to keep, bloom again and again (if kept properly), and come in a wide variety of beautiful colours. Their delicate flowers are always a joy to behold.

Here are a few tricks that seem to work for me:

1. Find a window that they like. Orchids like a bright window but don't like too much direct sunlight. They also seem to benefit from being in a



cool window in the winter and they don't appreciate being too close to a heat source like a rad or hot air vent.

2. For watering, I like to soak mine once a week but ensure that they are fully drained after watering (not sitting in water). They like to fully dry out between waterings so I find once a week in about perfect.

3. Buy an orchid fertilizer and fertilize every month or two according to the directions on the product.

4. Keep an eye out for those all-important spikes: these are the stems that produce the flowers! When you see them start to shoot up, gently stakes them upright. Be careful doing this as the stems are delicate and you don't want to break them.

5. If at all possible, try to have several orchids are various stages.... Some in bloom and some not. I find each plant blooms about once a year and can stay in bloom for a month or more, so if you're lucky you can time it so there's always one or two in bloom while the others are in between!

Good Luck and enjoy!

♦ **Mary-Rose Daigle**



OUR CHRISTMAS DONATIONS

The Christmas Season is fast approaching and COVID has made it impossible for us to have our meetings. I feel this year our AMAZING MEMBERS will remember how good we felt when we saw our tables overflowing with mittens, hats, scarves, and warm socks. I know we will make a conscious effort to donate in this challenging time. All grocery stores take donations of non-perishables that eventually end up at Kawartha Food Share, and we can donate the mittens, socks, etc. to the Salvation Army, Brock Mission, YES shelter, One Roof, and you may know of others I have not mentioned. So, Anita Clifford and I will say THANK YOU, THANK YOU, and please remember those less fortunate. How many of you are getting set to wear a new Christmas Mask??? Maybe a few will even have a string of battery lights on them???

We wish everyone a Merry Christmas. Enjoy this time with Family, even though this year may be different for many of us.

♦ **Ann English**

World of New Flowers



Many years ago I found a unique geranium that had red and white bi-coloured petals. I liked it so much that I started to take cuttings off it and rooting 'babies' so I would have enough to fill my window boxes for the next summer. I discovered though that when some of them came into bloom one plant would have three different solid coloured blooms on it as well as the bi-coloured! The science of cross pollinating, hybridizing and grafting plants is quite interesting, but I just wanted to multiply the bicolour blooming plants! So, I decided to go 'high-tech', and I started to use coloured twist ties, wrapping them around the stalks of the bicolour blooms and only rooting those cuttings. I would then cut off the single coloured stalks. I have had a pretty good success rate over the years but I still find some of my older, 'mother plants', go 'rogue' once in a while and revert back to giving me three different separate coloured blooms as well as the bi-coloured. It got me to thinking about how they are just like us

humans that are often told to change how we do things, and how we look, and we don't always cooperate with the suggestions given!

I have since developed an appreciation for these rogue members in my planters and admire their resistance to their genetic programming and just break out in their original colours and still share the same plant with the bi-colour generation. It is nice to revisit our origins and yet, still have appreciation for all that is new in the world of flowers.

♦ **Laura Jack**



SOS! From the October newsletter:

In my pesticide free yard, I have had this terrible low-growing creeper (photo above) taking over my grass. This is obviously the worst patch, but it is spread throughout my rather large yard. This year I have been cutting and bagging for disposal any affected areas to prevent its spread by the lawn mower. Short of that I have no idea how to control it. I have a friend in town with the same situation so I know it must be a common complaint. Any suggestions from our very knowledgeable membership base?

ANSWER FROM Sharleen Pratt TO THE CREEPING CHARLIE PROBLEM HERE?***



"Pat, the image of your SOS makes it a little difficult to see clearly, but I think you might be dealing with Creeping Charlie or Ground Ivy (*Glechoma hederacea*). It is a very difficult weed to eradicate and one that is a curse to many lawns. It does prefer shade, but if happy will grow in sun. It has leaves that are opposite with scalloped edges and a hairy upper

**November's
Trivia...**

**10 more great
questions to be
released on
Wednesday,
November 25.**

Watch for it!

surface, a very small blue violet flower and a square stem that is common with plants in the mint family. It is interesting that in England it is desirable and often grown as a ground cover.

Unfortunately it spreads both by seed and primarily by creeping stems which root at each leaf node so that it forms dense mats. Leaving even one tiny piece behind will enable it to continue its aggressive growth.

At the moment, there are no provincially approved herbicides to combat this invasive weed, but you can keep it under control. If you don't have too large an amount, you can try to rake aggressively in the spring after it rains and start pulling. This process will likely have to be done more than once. Your soil may be quite compacted so this would be a good time to aerate the area and over-seed with a good quality grass seed. I like to include Dutch white clover seed into the mix.

If it's a large infestation, you may have to do soil solarization by covering the whole area with a thick clear plastic in the heat of the summer to kill the top layer. This would take at least six weeks.

Or you could consider getting rid of the lawn and turn it into another garden bed 😊

Do YOU have a gardening question that you'd like to have answered by our members? Submit your question to us. Ptbohortsoc@gmail.com
We'd love to hear from you.

If anyone is interested in watching a couple of informative "HOW TO" videos, make a cup of tea, grab a cookie and click on the following YouTube links posted for us by the **Gananoque Horticultural Society**. Nothing beats a "Reality Gardening Show" (Not even "The Bachelor"!)

"How To" series: Making a layered spring flowering bulb planter in the fall

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=48kfBCw9jdU>

"How To" series: Seed saving and storing solutions with Penny

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53XubrlSLv0>

