



JANUARY 2012

# OAKVILLE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY



*The society aims to further the knowledge of Horticulture, stimulating an interest in gardening in our community's youth and encouraging the beautification of both private and public properties since 1957.*

## January's Speaker – Sean James Hostas and their Companions

Sean James has been gardening professionally since the age of 16. He has been speaking to horticultural societies since 1991, and has been featured at the RBG, the TBG, the CNE and Canada Blooms. A graduate of the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture, he is a member of Landscape Ontario's Environmental Stewardship Committee, past president of the Milton Horticultural Society, and owner of Fern Ridge Landscaping and Eco Consulting in Milton



## Reminders

### Solitary Bee's Nests

Solitary bee's nests will be available at the January meeting for pick up or purchase at a cost of \$15. Please contact Cathy Kavassalis via email at [c.kavassalis@gmail.com](mailto:c.kavassalis@gmail.com) or by phone at 905-849-7581.



### Fun With Flowers

Don't forget to bring in your tins – salmon or tuna or cat food – for our Fun With Flowers event at Iroquois Shoreline Community Centre, which will take place on February 20 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

We need to collect 60 tins! Also, please let Linda Tock know if you are available to volunteer for the event.

### Mailing Address:

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### President:

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### Mailing:

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### Secretary:

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### Treasurer:

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### Website:

[www.oakvillehort.org](http://www.oakvillehort.org)

### Next Meeting:

Monday, 9 January 2012

7:30 pm

MacMillian Hall

89 Dunn Street

### Upcoming Meetings:

- February 13
- March 12
- April 9

*Where Gardeners come to flourish*

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings and welcome to the first OHS newsletter of 2012.

To start off, I would like to thank all those who have stood for election to our society's executive and board, to all those members who have stepped forward to lend their time and efforts towards these committees. It cannot be said enough times but if not for the volunteering by society members, the OHS would cease to run.

Secondly, I want to extend very special thanks to our out-going president, Catherine Kavassalis, who made the position of president look effortless with her smile and joy. Cathy's many accomplishments and endeavours stand as a testimonial to her tireless leadership of our society. And Cathy is also quite the writer. When I was editor of this newsletter, if I ever needed more material, I could always count on Cathy to prepare something that would be of great interest to our members. Her columns for President's Message always kept our members well informed not only about Society business, but about other events going on in the horticulture community. That's a big pen for me to pick up!

Next on my list of things to cover, volunteering. The clipboards will be circulating at the January meeting, looking for members to help with the set-up for the meetings, clerking at the monthly shows, helping with the library and refreshments, and at the Anderson Parkette. The Fun With Flowers event also needs your donations of salmon/tuna/cat food

tins. Coming soon will be the clipboards for the Plant Sale and Garden Tour.

Also this month is Award Night, when we honour the best of the Monthly Shows. There will be trophies to be awarded along with cash prizes for those who had a high tally of points from their entries over the past year.

Our speaker this month will be Sean James of Fern Ridge Landscaping. Margaret Larson is filling up our program nights with many more interesting speakers for our entertainment and education.

I'm starting to ramble so I will sign off. If you have any suggestions/comments/encouragements you can send me an email at [ohs.president@oakvillehort.org](mailto:ohs.president@oakvillehort.org).

*Stuart Gough  
President*



Clouded with snow  
The cold winds blow,  
And shrill on leafless bough  
The robin with its burning  
breast  
Alone sings now.

The rayless sun,  
Day's journey done,  
Sheds its last ebbing light  
On fields in leagues of beauty  
spread  
Unearthly white.

Thick draws the dark,  
And spark by spark,  
The frost-fires kindle, and  
soon  
Over that sea of frozen  
foam  
Floats the white moon.

*Walter de La Mare, Winter*

## MEDINILLA MAGNIFICA – WITH A BONUS

I was delighted to receive a stunning Malaysian Orchid, *Medinilla magnifica*, at the December Horticultural Society Meeting. This fabulous plant is native to the Philippines and Indonesia where it grows as a shrub or epiphyte.



Perched high in soil pockets trapped in rain forest trees, it can grow to 3 meters. With spectacular dangling inflorescences, it is sometimes called a Chandelier Tree. The complex tiers of long, drooping pink lanterns are made up of panicles of flowers hooded by showy pink bracts. The clusters of flower buds look like rose coloured grapes that slowly unfurl their five petals to reveal gold filaments with purple anthers. These are quite exquisite set against the long glossy leathery green leaves. Upon fertilization, vivid purple to black berries replace the fabulous flowers.



The *Medinilla* requires indirect bright light and should be kept moist and warm spring through fall and barely moist in the winter to mimic rainy and dry season conditions. As my specimen was forced to bloom in December, I will need to keep it moist by regular misting and well fed until it finishes blooming. Like other epiphytes that draw nutrients from the air, rain and debris, it should benefit from regular additions of dilute liquid fertilizer to my spray bottle. After blooming, I will cut it back to promote new growth and keep it a manageable size.



The structure of the branches and stems is unusual. They are quadrangular and compressed with distinct wings and hollows. There are regular nodes with tufts of brown stiff bristles. They look well adapted to collect moisture and nutrients and perhaps to house forest creatures. I think that is how a lovely female brown anole, *Anolis sargei*, arrived in my home. These little lizards have become quite common in Florida greenhouses and are sometimes found in shipments of tropical plants. It none the less was a surprise to see it scampering across the kitchen floor. While these excellent insectivores are often allowed to roam freely in commercial greenhouses as pest control (you can sometimes see them in the Mediterranean greenhouse at the Royal Botanical Gardens), my little visitor is now living in a beautifully planted terrarium.

Thank you to all.

Catherine Kavassalis

## CHRISTMAS POTLUCK AND AGM



President's Award presented to Margaret Jeffery  
Presenters Elizabeth Thompson, Cathy Kavassalis



President's Award presented to Sheelagh Rowland-Brown  
Presenters Elizabeth Thompson, Cathy Kavassalis



OHA Service Award presented to Sonja Tessari  
Presenters Celia Roberts, Cathy Kavassalis



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