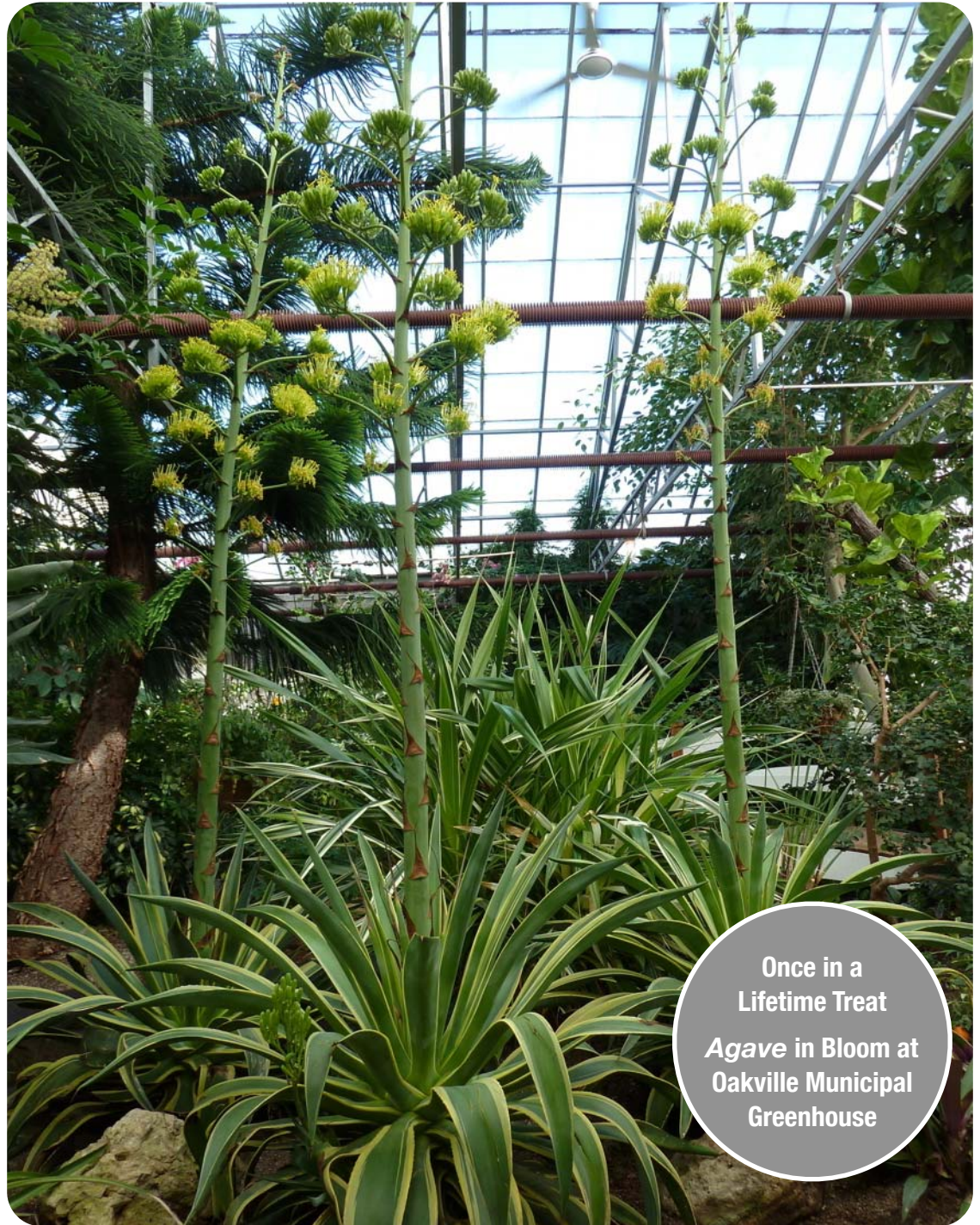




Newsletter



Once in a
Lifetime Treat
Agave in Bloom at
Oakville Municipal
Greenhouse



NEXT MEETING:

Monday, February 11, 2013, 7:30 p.m.,
doors open at 6:30

Location: Knox Presbyterian,
MacMillan Hall
89 Dunn Street

Speaker: Russell Boles
Topic: Versailles & Monet's Gardens

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President's Message

This morning was so cold, the surface of unfrozen Lake Ontario was steaming, creating a layer of lake fog. These frigid temperatures are too cold to do any tidying out in the garden, let alone just walking about there. Thankfully, we do have alternatives to satisfy our garden soul.

My favourite is to wander over to the OHS Junior Garden. It may be snow-covered, but the Municipal Greenhouse beside it provides a tonic to any frozen gardener. Entering the doors and getting that wonderful scent of flowers with undertones of soil is enough to make you forget what is on the other side of the glass. With your coffee in hand, you can travel the world from cacti at the entrance to the lush tropical rainforest and then onto the more temperate zone. If you cannot wait for the daffodils in your garden, the very early varieties will be making their appearance soon. I often take my camera to capture the colour — the tropicals seem especially bright and vibrant in the depth of winter.

Further afield is the Royal Botanical Gardens. Inside the RBG Centre, there are demonstrations of living walls of *Philodendron*, *Schefflera*, *Ficus elastica*, and *Phalaenopsis* orchids. These walls improve indoor air quality in our tightly sealed homes. Past the indoor displays is the Mediterranean Garden. Where else can we visit the gardens and plants of the Mediterranean Basin, Cape Province South Africa, south and southwest Australia, central Chile and southern California? Such a treat.

If you're off to Toronto why not visit the six greenhouses at the Allen Gardens Conservatory. You'll find tropical orchids, bromeliads, begonia and gesneriads, to temperate camellias, jasmine and the historic palm house with a thriving collection of varied palms, bananas and tropical vines.

And then, as Sonja is quick to point out, there are the local nurseries. As the sales of the holidays wrap up, spring will be creeping back into the displays.

In the spirit of enjoying gardens without buying a plane ticket, our guest speaker Russ Boles, will transport us to the gardens of Versailles and Monet.

Coming soon are the flower shows, beginning with Successful Garden Show, February 21–24, at the International Centre, featuring the OHA Floral Design and Plant Competition. This show promises to be packed with blooming ideas.

As you can see there are many options to help us through the winter months.

Stuart Gough

Events & Notices

Successful Gardening Show "Let's Grow Together"

February 21-24, 2013 International Centre

Tickets: \$15 Adults, \$12 Seniors

www.internationalhomeandgardenshow.ca/the-successful-gardening-show/

Stratford Garden Festival

February 28 - March 3, 2013 Stratford Rotary Complex

Tickets: \$9 per person

www.stratfordgardenfestival.com

Orchid Society Spring Show and Sale

March 2-3, 2013 Royal Botanical Gardens

Tickets: Free with admission to the RBG

www.osrbg.ca

Canada Blooms "The Magic of Spring"

March 15-24, 2013 Direct Energy Centre

Tickets: \$20 Adults, \$17 Seniors

www.canadablooms.com

Halton Eco Festival

April 6, 2013 Glen Abbey Community Centre

London Spring Home and Garden Show

April 19-21, 2013 Western Fair District, London

OHA District 6 Spring Workshop and Flower Show

April 20, 2013 Haldimand Horticultural Society Hosting

Toronto Island Spring 2013 Garden Tour

May 25-26 Noon to 5 p.m.

<http://www.torontoisland.org>

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The Oakville Horticultural Society Newsletter is published 10 times a year from September to June. All photographs and articles are produced by the Editor unless otherwise noted. Articles and photographs should be sent to the Editor Barbara Phillips-Conroy at ohs.editor@oakvillehort.org. Deadline for submission is the 3rd Thursday of the month.

Should the Oakville Horticultural Society Become a Registered Charity?



Photo Sam Stuart

For the past year, I've been looking at ways for the OHS to bring in more money in addition to our on-going fundraising activities. One avenue I'd examined was our becoming a registered charity. Aside from giving us the ability to issue tax receipts to those companies who provide us with donations, we'll be able to get our HST and GST payments rebated. Other horticultural societies within the Ontario Horticultural Association have also taken this route. And, after speaking with the treasurer of the Lindsay Horticultural Society, I'm convinced that the effort required to make the application and do the administrative component (1 hour/year) is absolutely worthwhile. Because this is a major change to the Society, we'll be bringing this to our members for a vote. In order to make an informed decision, I've put together a Pros and Cons chart in order to assist you in your decision-making process.

Fred Teng

The Pros and Cons of Charitable Organization Status

PROS	CONS	NOTES
Fundraising through issuing tax receipts -CRA rules are very specific about how to issue receipts. Changes are expected in July 2013.	As a registered charity, if our organization ends or we don't fulfill our obligations to file on time and issue tax receipts correctly, we will need to give all our assets to another registered charity.	OHS has been around since 1957. If our organization ends, we would likely give our assets to the Ontario Horticultural Association, a registered charity.
Eligible to receive gifts from other charities and foundations.	Must file an annual return (T3010-1). No annual audit process. The CRA will audit us when necessary.	A much simpler to complete form than the one required by OMAFRA. Very similar information asked.
Increased credibility in the community. Issued a charitable registration number and designated as a charity by the CRA.	\$500 for not filing on time.	Must be completed April 30 (within 6 months of year end) and we are already submitting to OMAFRA by Feb 1st.
Can claim a partial rebate for the GST/HST: 50% of GST and 82% of HST. This would have represented \$700 last year. Bookkeeping updated to track GST/HST.	5% penalty on receipts with incomplete information.	We can verify tax receipts at the board meetings prior to issuing.
We qualify for charity status due to benefitting the community. (Verified by the CRA)	Only two ways gifts allowed: 1. to another registered charity 2. within our charitable activities conducted under the charity's direction and control.	Purchasing a tree at a school is part of our charitable activities. We cannot give blankets to homeless people, although a charitable activity, this is not our society's charitable activity.
We are not a GST/HST registrant and do not have to collect the GST/HST since we are a small supplier (less than \$250,000 revenue and sell less than \$50,000 in taxable supplies).	Suspension of tax receipt issuing privileges if adequate books are not maintained.	Must keep track of revenue and expenditures and keep source documents that support the information in the records - which we already do.

IMPROVED BLUE BOX PROGRAM: The Town of Oakville will be collecting plastic plant pots and trays in the Blue Box program starting April 1st. And, the scheduled yard waste pick-up begins earlier in March to coincide with our earlier spring cleanup.



Bob Clarke Photo

Out on a Limb

I couldn't believe my eyes when I took Stuart's suggestion to visit our local municipal greenhouse and discovered four *Agave* in bloom. In the wild this can take 100 years, in Oakville, according to Tim Rivers, Head Gardener, it took less than 10. These beautiful plants began their Oakville life as median plantings 6 years ago. Over the summer he kept them in the polyhouse in their pots and began to see the beginnings of the mast - the flower stem. He moved them, pots and all, into the greenhouse and then sat back to watch them grow. *Agave* are monocarpic which means they bloom, set seed and die. And as they die, little 'pups' begin to grow at the base. Tim has very kindly offered some of the pups to us to raffle off in the coming months. As he said to me, "They're dead easy. You don't have to do a thing to them - not even water for weeks, and they're such a good looking plant." I know I'm going to be sure to buy a raffle ticket.

The Race Against Time for Trees

I had the good fortune to hear Dr. Hannah Mathers, Professor of Ohio State University speak at Landscape Ontario Congress. She has worked with the Canadian Ministry of Transportation on tree planting projects (HWY 401&427) and is leading a program in the US to fill the 60 million acres of land along U.S. highways with trees. There is urgency to this work as she told us, "in 2030, at the current rate of cutting, only 10% of mature trees will remain." And, for the math challenged, "That's only 17 years away."

While we can see that these are underutilized pieces of land, we've also seen that the biggest problem with urban and highway trees is survival. Often there is a budget for planting, but very little or none for maintenance which explains why so few make it any further than their seventh year. She's looking at optimal planting methods so that the trees are able to survive with no further help from us. She and her team have discovered several things. First, rather than plant a tree here and there as an embellishment to a landscape, she wants us to get our heads around growing forest fragments - creating ecosystems rather than little landscapes. It is essential to use nurse trees, natives and understory plantings. Younger specimens are less vulnerable and recover faster from transplant shock. The best plants for these projects are grown in retractable roof greenhouses and have a survival rate of 60%, compared with 13% for bare-root.

Soil preparation is key. No gentle shovel turning here. The ground is so compacted it must be ripped by giant machines in a cross pattern so that the roots are able to start to spread. Soil compaction is the most important factor in killing new trees - not salt surprisingly. She showed us photos of trees planted last year in Ohio - we all remember how hot and dry last summer was - but some of the trees were still standing in water mid-summer because the soil was like concrete.

The highway sites are downright unpleasant. There are winds created by cars, high levels of pollution, salt runoff, heavy metals and at the junction of the 401 and 427 there is an added level of pollution from aircraft. Working at the site, people were physically ill after an hour - another reason to find trees that can make it on their own. In spite of all this, they are having some success using a combination of *Plantanus occidentalis* (Sycamore), *Gleditsia* (Honey Locust (seedless)), *Acer rubrum* (Red Maple), *Quercus palustris* (Swamp/Pin Oak), *Celtis occidentalis* (Hackberry) and other bottom-land species. And, history may be on their side as far as being able to continue with their success. Recently Dr. Mather learned that they are repeating what landscape architects did over a hundred years ago, planting a combination of plants which left us with these marvelous old giants after 150 years. With more research and more areas planted, I'm hopeful that there will be some new old giants living next to our roads for our children's children.

To read more about Dr. Hannah Mathers and her work see: <http://basicgreen.osu.edu/>

Barbara Phillips-Conroy
<http://barbarasgardenchronicles.blogspot.ca>

NEW MEMBERS	LIBRARY	SET-UP 9:00AM	REFRESHMENTS
Please welcome new members Allan & Wendy Schmidt Earl & Nancy Schmidt	Veronica Heiderich	Lisa Kruitwagen Mila Golochtchouk Norma Kirkpatrick	Godwin Kruitwagen Mila Golochtchouk David Marshall Forenda Tingle