



Newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Ontario

Inside

MGOI

Welcome to the September edition of *Inside MGOI*, the Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc. (MGOI) newsletter.

Our focus is on you, Master Gardeners! This is your vehicle for providing updates, insights and the inside scoop from MGOI Board & Committee members, Directors, and the 30 Master Gardener groups throughout Ontario. The Newsletter features member milestones, group projects and activities, short member profiles, upcoming events such as regional technical updates – anything about the functioning and happenings of our groups and our members. Please feel free to submit pictures – they are most welcome!

Contributions to future editions of *Inside MGOI* may be sent at any time to the Newsletter Editor, Isabel Belanger, newsletter@mgoi.ca.

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 MG Advice Clinic Manager for Canada Blooms: Christine Spence, Etobicoke
 Manager of MG Participation in Canada Blooms: Dianne Azzarello, Toronto

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INSIDE MGOI

**Newsletter of the
Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc.**

September 2020

Editor: Isabel Belanger, Halton

Milestones

Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton

Honorary Master Gardener

By Julianne Labreche, Coordinator

Richard Hinchcliff

Master Gardeners of Ottawa-Carleton received some good news last month when MGOI approved their recommendation that Ottawa resident Richard Hinchcliff be named an Honorary Master Gardener. The recognition by MGOI is well deserved because Hinchcliff has done so much over the years to document and preserve the rich legacy of Ottawa's much-beloved Central Experimental Farm, located in the heart of the Nation's Capital.

Hinchcliff is best known for his book *Blooms: An Illustrated History of the Ornamental Gardens at Ottawa's Central Experimental Farm* (Sanderling Press, 2016). In it, he describes the history of the Farm's Ornamental Gardens in carefully researched detail, chronicling the evolution of these historic gardens and the collection of important heritage plants and flowers found there.

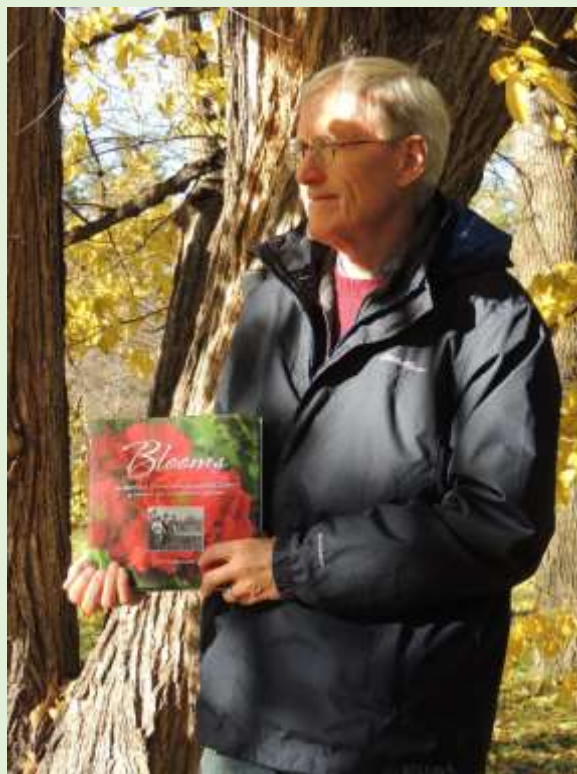
The Farm's history began in 1886 when a network of federally owned experimental farms was established in Canada. The book covers changes in gardening practices at the Farm across two world wars, shifts in priorities and a later political decision to abandon horticultural research altogether.

Included are details on the peonies of Percy Saunders, the explorer series roses of Felicitas Svejda, the lilacs of Isabella Preston, and other plant researchers. Among the beautifully illustrated pages are many photographs taken by Hinchcliff. It is an important and interesting book for Canadian gardeners and anyone interested in gardening history.

Hinchcliff is also co-author of the book *For the Love of Trees: A Guide to the Trees of Ottawa's Central Experimental Farm Arboretum*. As well, he volunteers his time as editor of the quarterly newsletter of the Friends of the Central Experimental Farm. Many members of MGOC also help at the Farm, volunteering with him.

Richard Hinchcliff has been so supportive of MGOC members over the years, assisting them when needed with research, photographs, and informative talks.

At a time when the Central Experimental Farm is under continual threat of losing land to developers and others, and when a national botanical garden to celebrate Canadian plants remains a dream, this honour could not have come at a better time.



Richard will receive a certificate and his profile will be posted to the Honorary Master Gardeners page of the MGOI website:

<https://www.mgoi.ca/about/mgoihonorary.html>

New Master Gardener in Training

Heather MacDonald

15 years service

Mary Ann Van Berlo

Master Gardener status achieved

Ruby Isaacs



Brantford Master Gardeners

15 Year Anniversary

Liz Stacey

Liz celebrates 15 years as a Master Gardener this year. Over the years she has volunteered at numerous MG events. Liz continually sits on various committees.

She also lends her design talent in creating beautiful flyers, brochures, and the BMG website.

She is very knowledgeable and shares this with our MG membership. Liz is also a member of both the Galt & Kitchener Horticultural Societies.



Congratulations Liz!



Halton County Master Gardeners

20 Year Anniversary

Donna Parker

5 Year Anniversary

Liza Drozdov

Master Gardener Status Achieved

Dar Corrigan



Muskoka Master Gardeners

25 Year Anniversary

Lynn McIntosh

Moira Payne

New Master Gardeners in Training

Noreen Williams

Cathryn Willard

Sequoia Henry

In August, Muskoka MGs were very excited to welcome these 3 new MGITs who successfully sat the MGOI eligibility test.



From left to right: Noreen Williams, Cathryn Willard, and Sequoia Henry



Peterborough Master Gardeners

5 Year Anniversary

Sharleen Pratt

Sharleen has earned her 5 year pin. Congratulations!



From left to right – Sharleen Pratt, Margaret Higgins (at table), Sue Flinders-Adams and Chris Freeburn

New Master Gardeners in Training

Anne Trudel-Inglis

Tamara Somes

Gillian di Petta

New MGIT Profiles

Anne Trudel-Inglis – Anne is passionate about landscape design. She has been a gardener for over 30 years and has actively volunteered for several organizations.

She is well versed in all Microsoft software, comfortable with public speaking and likes to be organized. Anne begins her courses at Guelph this fall.

Tamara Somes – Tamara is an organic gardener who grows vegetables and fruits. Her interests lie with permaculture and sustainability, and she is also interested in winter sowing.

Her career is in the financial sector, and her talents include video creation and public speaking. She will begin her Plant ID course this month with Guelph.

Gillian di Petta – Gillian is an organic vegetable gardener who enjoys cottage gardening, native plants, and ecological gardening. She has volunteered with many environmental groups.

She is also an avid photographer, enjoys writing and graphic design, and works as a greenhouse coordinator. She will be studying at Dalhousie.

Members Leaving

Peterborough MGs are sad to lose two of our members – Pat Freistatter and Calvin Stillman.

Pat is moving out to BC to be closer to her daughter.

We will miss Calvin's expertise as our Treasurer (and also his fabulous baking).



A Moment for Membership

Information Regarding A Motion to Change Volunteer Hours Requirements to Be Ratified by Groups at the October 17th, 2020 AGM

Pam Love, Director of Membership

Maureen Hulbert, Director at Large, August 21, 2020

The MGOI Board of Directors passed a motion changing volunteers hours requirements on July 23rd. We thought it was important to get the support of our groups for this particular motion as it is a fundamental change in policy, even though it is not part of the 2019/2020 fiscal year work of the Board that is usually ratified by groups at the AGM as it occurred after the MGOI fiscal year ended.

Volunteer hours requirements were suspended for 2020 due to the pandemic. If this motion is passed by the membership, the motion would take effect for the 2020 reporting year, for those who did track their hours.

By now Coordinators will have shared and discussed this motion with their members. Coordinators may forward any questions / concerns to their Regional Director or Delegate to the AGM.

We will ask groups to ratify the motion at the Virtual AGM on October 17th, 2020. **Here is Information about voting:**

- ▶ Each Master Gardener group has one (1) vote.
- ▶ Generally, the Coordinator holds the vote but a group designate can hold the vote.
- ▶ Groups not able to attend the AGM can name a proxy to vote for them.
- ▶ Voting arrangements for a virtual meeting are currently being discussed. TBA

Motion to be ratified by the membership:

“To replace the existing 2 categories of required volunteer hours described in our Handbook, e.g. advice time and administrative (admin) time (non-advice time) by a single category. Current descriptions of allowable activities would be blended to reflect this and any combination of allowable activities would fulfill the hours requirements.”

Current Policy:

Each volunteer is required to contribute a minimum of 30 hours of service each year – **20 hours of Advice time and 10 hours of Admin time.**

- The part in red would be removed, combining all activities into one category.
- Volunteers will still be required to fulfill 30 hours of volunteer time per year.
- All hours would now be tracked in a single category, in any combination/ratio of advice/admin.

Share the following with your Coordinator:

- What are your concerns?
- How would this impact you?
- Are you in favour of this motion? Or against?

Thank you for taking the time to review this important information. **For background information, current policy, rationale for change and what Members of the Board said please see Annex 1 on pg. 11.**



<https://thesaurus.plus/antonyms/ratification>



Master Gardeners Out & About: Projects & Events

Brantford Master Gardeners

Name: Monthly Meetings

Details: BMG continues to hold our monthly meetings via Zoom to keep our members engaged.

Name: BMG Website

Details: Several of our fellow Master Gardeners have written about 'What Value Is There in Being A Master Gardener'.

Here is a quote from MG Lynne Goulet-Smith:

"I love gardening! I have always been interested in expanding my knowledge in ways to care for my lawn, trees, shrubs, flowers and vegetable gardens.



I enjoy the camaraderie and friendship of others who share the same interests in gardening. I enjoy sharing my horticultural knowledge with other individuals and organizations within my community. Being part of community activities and the social aspect of being a Master Gardener is wonderful. It is a chance to meet new and interesting individuals.

Since I work in the horticultural industry, becoming a certified Master Gardener has added to my skill set and credentials.

It is not necessary that I have all the answers; it's only necessary that I know how to find them. The wide range of science-based resources available to a Master Gardener certainly allows for this."



Muskoka Master Gardeners

Name: Monthly Meeting

Details: On September 14th we held an early evening meeting at the River Mill Park in Huntsville. The weather cooperated and it was so lovely to spend time together, share our activities and start to plan for 2021.



Peterborough Master Gardeners

Name: Surviving COVID-19!

Details: Chris Freeburn, Peterborough MG Coordinator

"Who would ever have thought that 2020 would have turned out like this full of challenges in how we live our lives. The good thing is our gardens have had the most attention they have had in years! And on top of the pandemic, we dealt with heat, drought, and humidity, as well as an annoying number of pests and critters. Gardening is a humbling experience."

From the very beginning of the pandemic our members stepped up. Gary Westlake sent out to our group DAILY photos of the Westlake gardens from March until the end of August, bringing us such joy. Gary also put together a video of the member garden tour for our enjoyment and for those who could not attend.

In July ten members opened their gardens to the membership over three weekends on very short notice. We practiced appropriate physical distancing but still enjoyed some lovely gardens despite the drought and the heat!

On Saturday September 12th, our Peterborough MGs group met for the first time since February – outdoors under the gazebo in beautiful McNamara Park by the banks of the Otonabee River in Peterborough. Twenty-one of us enjoyed two hours of sunshine while coordinators Chris Freeburn and Sue Flinders-Adams caught us up on all there was to know (in between power boats and Seadoos riding loudly up and down the river!).



We were also excited to have our three new Master Gardeners in Training, Anne Trudel-Inglis, Tamara Somes, and Gillian di Petta, join us! Topics discussed included our weekly blog and public speaking training. And a special thanks to those that helped maintain the McNamara Pollinator Garden. Some photos of our meeting and our fabulous pollinator gardens follow.



MG Jennifer Guertin in front of the Pollinator Garden



*Late season Common Boneset (*Eupatorium perfoliatum*) and Helen's Flower/Sneezeweed (*Helenium autumnale*) blooming in the pollinator garden*

Simcoe County Master Gardeners

Name: September 15th, 2020 Live Meeting

Details: We were so happy to be able to meet in person for our September meeting, with social distancing and masks of course. The weather allowed us to meet at the raised garden beds behind the library in Creemore, where we enjoyed a self-guided tour before the meeting. It was a little chilly, however, our gardening spirit kept us warm!

Meeting in person enabled us to present our milestone markers to our members as well as name badges to our newest members. Thirteen of us were able to meet (including 2 who will be joining our group!).



(l to r) Linda Peacock presenting to Joan Nieman-Agapas, 15 years, Kevin Van Andel, 15 years, and Christine March, 10 years



Halton Master Gardeners

Name: Halton Master Gardeners September 2nd Meeting

Details: Like many Master Gardener groups HMGs have been meeting monthly via Zoom. This keeps us all connected and up-to-date on business.

HMG Claudette Sims introduced us to 'I Kahoot, she Kahoot, he Kahoot, they Kahoot - we all Kahoot!!!' We were able to try it out after the meeting and it was quite fun. Kahoot is continuing education made up of 10 questions that cover information that Ontario Master Gardeners might be asked at an advice clinic. Each question is accompanied by a full explanation. So fun and learning! The September challenge ended Sunday the 27th at midnight.

The group also watched a part of the Doug Tallamy talk "Nature's Best Hope: A New Approach to Conservation That Starts in Your Backyard".

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WY4aV5hgkxY>

As always Doug Tallamy was very enlightening. All in all it was a great meeting.



Name: Lunch and Learn Meeting with HVAC Systems - Johnson Controls

Details: Organized by Ayo Abiola, an engineer with HVAC Systems - Johnson Controls, HMGs Claudette Sims, Janet Mackey, Patty King and Isabel Belanger presented a virtual Advice Clinic using Microsoft Teams. This was part of the company's quarterly Lunch and Learn series.

On September 9th 50 employees of the company from across the province attended the virtual Clinic. Presenting virtually was a new experience for us and there were a few glitches that were quickly overcome.

Ayo stated: 'We believe that gardening is a great component of sustainable living/practices at home, fostering health, nutrition, clean air for the environment and making cities more livable.' Participants were particularly interested in good gardening practices and how to garden during prolonged drought conditions.

Our presentation covered good gardening practices, right plant right place, native plants and garden design featuring native plants, and climate change.



From top to bottom, MGs Janet Mackey, Claudette Sims, Isabel Belanger. Missing from the screen shot is Patty King.



Brantford Master Gardeners

Name: Interesting Websites

Details: Here again are the BMGs listings of interesting websites published in previous issues of *Inside MGOI*. Enjoy!

Bringing Nature Home-Catskill Nature Nursery

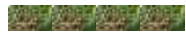
<https://www.facebook.com/266259994940/posts/10158103043124941/?sfnsn=mo>

The Growing Season

<https://growingseasoncanada.com/>

RBG At Home

<https://www.rbg.ca/athome>



Garden Making Magazine-Virtual Tour of Famous Gardens and Interesting Sites

https://gardenmaking.com/enjoy-a-virtual-tour-of-famous-gardens/?utm_source=mailpoet&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Newsletter+Apr+17+2020

Bird Song Opera

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMXD4h5w8D8>

Terra Greenhouses Workshops

<https://terragreenhouses.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5b994a7ca609d19fdd95ceeca&id=18a1d58804&e=8ca039d1a6>

<https://terragreenhouses.us8.list-manage.com/track/click?u=5b994a7ca609d19fdd95ceeca&id=e2b3c88cd9&e=8ca039d1a6>



Upcoming Events

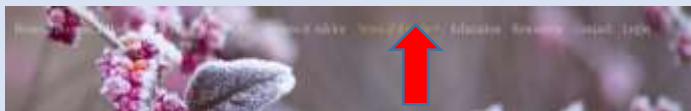
2020 Virtual AGM and Coordinators' Conference Saturday – October 17th, 2020

REGISTRATION INFORMATION WAS SENT TO ALL COORDINATORS on Sept 19

This year's conference will proceed virtually.
All groups are asked to register 1 member for the AGM and 3 members for the conference.
Ask your coordinator who is attending from your group – and volunteer if there is an open spot.

MGOI Website

Details: If you would like your Master Gardener event posted on the MGOI website under the **News & Events** tab, please send details to our webmaster Jim Cook at webmaster@mgoi.ca.
Images need to be in .jpeg or .png format.



Stratford Master Gardeners

POSTPONED!! Technical Update Information:

We asked you to save the date of October 17th, 2020 for our Technical Update, *Gardening for the Planet: Creating Biodiverse Habitats in Our Gardens*.

As a result of COVID-19 we felt that we should postpone the event rather than leave people uncertain as to whether it would go ahead.

We will re-schedule as soon as the situation becomes clearer. We hope to see you there!

Halton Master Gardeners

Postponed! Technical Update

Topic: Refugia: the future of gardening

Date: Saturday, October 24th, 2020

Location: Waterdown, ON

Speakers:

- Dr. Christina Davy, Research Scientist with the Ministry of Natural Resources
- Catherine Kavassalis, Halton Region Master Gardener
- Paul Gellatly, Director of Horticulture, Toronto Botanical Garden
- Claudette Sims, President MGOI
- Other special guests TBA

Name: 2020 Atlantic Master Gardener Conference – Cancelled until Summer 2021

Topic: Designing Adaptive Gardens in Atlantic Canada

Location: Truro, NS on July 8th & 9th, 2020

Keynote Speaker: Julie Moir Messervy, award winning landscape designer from Vermont and author of *New Landscaping Ideas that Work* and other books, has indicated that she is willing to come next year. Registrants will have their money refunded ASAP.



Annex 1 - A Moment for Membership, continued

Background Information:

Activities that can be used as Advice time

Current wording in the Policy Handbook:

Twenty (20) of these hours are to be spent doing activities directed to giving advice to the public such as (but not limited to):

- ▶ giving advice on a one-to-one basis in person, by phone or by email
 - ▶ lecturing to a group
 - ▶ writing articles for publication in newspapers or on websites (i.e. blogs)
- Each group will decide which activities it will offer. In general, advice activities should have an instructional component.

Note: There is no reference to social media although social media is an acceptable activity.

Activities that can be used for Admin (non-advice) time:

Current wording in the Policy Handbook:

Ten (10) hours must be contributed to administrative activities that aid in the management of the group or organization, such as (but not limited to):

- ▶ attending regular group meetings (one (1) hour of each regular meeting of an MG group can be counted as one (1) hour of non-advice time)
- ▶ serving on local Group committees or the local executive
- ▶ coordinating a group activity (arranging schedules, completing reports, etc.)
- ▶ preparing for lectures or clinics
- ▶ serving on the MGOI Board of Directors and/or MGOI committees
- ▶ participating as a registered volunteer in PlantWatch (the board recommends that local group policy allow one (1) hour per year for observing a minimum of two plants)
- ▶ a predetermined amount of travel time if permitted by the local group

Evolution of Volunteer Hours – Why change?

- ▶ Original volunteer hours policy was created by OMAFRA 30 years ago:
 - Advice time was limited to
 - Face to face and telephone
 - Advice clinics, presentations
- ▶ Volunteer Hours Today
 - Questions on Facebook (MGOI FB now has 9,000 members)
 - Pandemic has accelerated membership/questions on our social media platforms that are likely to continue even after the pandemic.
 - One part of Facebook involves approving/monitoring members and comments (admin) while answering questions on Facebook falls under advice.



- Virtual presentations, webinars, e.g. Zoom, Messenger rooms (FB)
- Email questions
- Messenger questions
- Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Websites
- ▶ Tracking 2 separate categories is challenging on social media/computer activities
- ▶ Categories are arbitrary/confusing
 - “preparing for lectures or clinics” is ADMIN, while “writing articles for publication in newspapers or on websites” is ADVICE. You CAN count the prep/research time for writing an article as advice, but NOT the prep/research for writing your PowerPoint!

Rationale for the motion:

- ▶ Survey: 70% of the Board felt both admin and advice hours were equally important.
- ▶ All volunteer hours support our organization.
- ▶ Recording of admin/advice hours is not uniform across groups despite descriptions.
- ▶ Tracking 2 categories is challenging when working on social media.
- ▶ Combined hours may help retain long standing/senior members who find advice clinics physically challenging by allowing them to fulfill hours by holding a position in the group or as mentors*, thus continuing to be valued.
- ▶ Combined hours would help retain our Master Gardeners in Training by offering more flexible alternatives to fulfilling volunteer requirements.
- ▶ A single category supports members in Coordinator/Board positions, which have a large admin component.
- ▶ Simplifies recording for our members and reduces bureaucracy, making our organization more inviting.

* The Board passed a motion to add mentoring as an allowable admin activity on July 23rd.

What Board members said in discussion: (paraphrased)

Arguments against motion:

“I think this is a serious mistake to remove our raison d’être.”; “Members won't choose to do advice time - slow drift away from it.”; “Time in front of the public is our mission. There are other ways of keeping older members.”

Arguments in favour of motion:

“Suggested change comes from concerns expressed in membership survey sent out in 2019”; “We are not trying to change our mission-we are trying to stop people from leaving because they cannot do both advice and admin in a 20 to 10 hours structure.”; “Less bureaucracy. Less trouble figuring out what’s what.”; “All my group wants to do is advice. This would not make them chose more admin hours.”; “Activities overlap. Workshops include material prep/set up/presentation/take down/travel. Difficult to track separately.”; “You could work on a conference for 300 hours and not fulfill your volunteer hours because you didn’t have advice hours.”; “Mandate of MGOI is advice. All tasks make it happen. May help encourage members to join the Board.”

