



# What's Growing On?

The newsletter of the Master Gardeners of Ontario, Inc.

Autumn, 2007

## Executive notes

... by James Lee

Excerpts from president's remarks, MGOI AGM, August 10, 2007

As you all know, MGOI is a volunteer-driven organization with all of your directors having very busy lives outside of MGOI. Your directors have gone well beyond the call of duty in carrying out the many tasks brought about by our successful Trillium grant.

MGOI's partnering initiative is one component of our future growth and knowledge base. To date MGOI has formalized partnerships with the Ontario Horticultural Association, Landscape Ontario (L.O.), Ontario Association of Landscape Architects and Communities in Bloom (CiB). Your partnering committee is also talking with other organizations across Ontario. The intent of this partnering initiative is outreach of Master Gardeners into various constituents as well as to provide new and effective means for our members to enhance their horticultural knowledge base and to be able to share this within their communities. MGOI worked very closely with L.O. for our April Coordinators Conference and L.O. design staff

is working to create and enhance our promotional materials. MGOI is also speaking with the delegates to the OHA conference and to the CiB conference in September in Woodstock.

Education for MGITs and continuing education for MGs is MGOI's key priority. Your Education Committee has been working very hard to deliver an effective, cost efficient and flexible training program for its MGITs. With our new educational program in place (see *What's Growing On?*, Summer, 2007), enhanced communications to our members and the public, the future of MGOI is very exciting and strong. It is planned that the MGOI membership will grow significantly over the next year or two.

There have been a considerable number of suggestions brought forth, and your board is seriously looking at many of these. With this in mind we need your help. MGOI needs more Zone directors and more members to the committees of the board. I encourage and welcome each of you to consider your role in making MGOI an ever stronger and exciting organization. Please indicate your interest by contacting me at [jflee@sympatico.ca](mailto:jflee@sympatico.ca).

The action plans of your board over the next 12 months are as follows:



*Garden tours were the highlight of the afternoon at the Niagara Technical Update in August*

1.To solidify the new educational program for our MGITs

2.Develop continuing education and summer programs for Master Gardeners

3.Enhance initiatives with our current partners and seek out new opportunities with others.

4.And last but not least, to develop new revenue streams for MGOI so it can deliver on the programs and training initiatives for all of its members across Ontario.

I also encourage you to read the minutes of board meetings, which are available on our website at [www.mastergardener.ca](http://www.mastergardener.ca); click on Minutes.

If you have any questions, I, or your Zone directors, would be only too pleased to address them for you.

Respectfully,  
James Lee  
President, MGOI

## Zoning in

... news from our 11 zones

### Zone 3

**Essex-Windsor** MG Alan Batke will be creating a PowerPoint presentation and CD including pictures of Essex-Windsor MGs' gardens, which will be shown at the group's Christmas celebration pot luck dinner in November.

During the annual summer picnic, members enjoyed a guided tour of several nineteenth and early twentieth century buildings at Southwestern Ontario's Heritage Village, followed by a delicious (as always) potluck dinner. The group is also in the process of planning an all day seminar in the fall of 2008, so watch for news in upcoming newsletters.

In June, the **Sarnia-Lambton** group toured the Dow Wetlands, which has been designed to create a habitat for a wide variety of plants, birds and animals.

The group's annual June garden tour saw about 130 people touring 11 gardens.

Instead of holding a meeting in July, the group enjoyed an evening at the home of a member, which provided a chance to see what other MGs have accomplished in their gardens.

### Zone 4

**Oxford County** MGs have been busy preparing for the Outdoor Farm Show, a major event of the year, as well as participating in the Communities in Bloom Awards Conference in September. The group is also assisting the Stratford MGs with their Technical Update in October.

**Stratford** MGs are preparing for one of its busiest functions: the advice booth at the annual four-day Stratford Garden Festival which takes place in March.

In addition, members share in writing a bi-weekly gardening column for a local newspaper, and give talks to local meetings on many topics.

### Zone 5

**Halton Region** Master Gardeners volunteered on Sunday afternoons at the Royal Botanical Gardens for the Tulip, Lilac, Iris & Peony and Rose festivals as well as at the Herb Fair.

Members also set-up information tables for the Joseph Brant Memorial Hospital garden tour, the Oakville Horticultural Society garden tour and the Hummingbird Festival.

The **Niagara** Technical Update on August 25 was well attended. It was a very hectic day

with two very good speakers: Dr. Allan Armitage and Robert Ritchie, and a tour of two gardens designed by Tom Laviolette.

Upcoming events include a presentation at the local public library on planting bulbs for forcing, and pesticides and integrated pest management at the Niagara Parks School of Horticulture.

### Zone 7

In September, **Prince Edward County** MGs took part in the Picton and Milford fairs.

### Zone 8

**Ottawa-Carleton** MGs welcomes two new MGITs: Gail Labrosse, who has been a gardener for more than 50 years, and Mary-Anne Borris, a home gardener who has helped out at the Central Experimental Farm in Ottawa. The group also welcomes Kelly Noel as Zone 8 Director.

The group's spring activities included weekly market advice clinics in May and June at the Carp Farmers' Market, Parkdale Market and Byward Market. This fall, the group will participate in the Library Lecture Series at the Gloucester North Branch of the Ottawa Library with three lectures, including Putting the Garden to Bed for the Winter, Climate Change in Your Garden and Planning for Colour Throughout the Seasons.

Gardening articles written by various Ottawa Carleton MGs have been published weekly in the Sunday *Ottawa Sun* since April 2004. They're available at [www.geocities.com/mgottawa\\_carleton/index](http://www.geocities.com/mgottawa_carleton/index) and click on "Articles".

### Zone 9

**Peterborough** continues to provide regular workshops as

part of its MGiT training program; these are also well attended by our MGs. The next two workshops will focus on edible gardening and roses.

The group held a tasting of heritage tomatoes at its September meeting. Among the favorites were Black Cherry and Cherokee Purple.

### Zone 11

A group of 13 members, the **Muskoka-Parry Sound** MGs have been busy over the summer attending local farmers' markets to offer gardening advice. Several members appeared on a local radio station question and answer show, which was extremely successful. The group has also contributed articles for a new free magazine, *Muskoka Gardener*. They have also held workshops at a few summer camps on making terrariums and one talk on pioneer gardening. Later in the year, the group plans to offer gardening workshops to the owners of Habitat for Humanity homes in Muskoka.

## News to use

... tips for Master Gardeners

Emeritus is not the end of the MG road

by **Valerie Liney**

Recently, the topic of emeritus status has been discussed on the MG-listserv. Perhaps now is a good time to look at exactly what it means and implies. (And to set the record straight, "emerita" would be the correct term for a woman who rises to these dizzy heights.)

The MGOI handbook (2005) clearly defines the term as follows:

"Master Gardeners who no longer feel they can meet the minimum requirements for volunteer hours".

Full membership privileges are retained but the specific commitment of 30 hours per year and membership fees are not required. Emerita/us status can be bestowed on a MG who has seven or more years of service. The process must be initiated by the MG concerned by sending a brief letter of request to the local co-ordinator. The local group also may recommend emerita/us status for an MG who has a strong, positive record. If the group approves, the application is forwarded to the provincial administrator for consideration at the next MGOI board meeting. If approved, a special certificate is sent to the group co-ordinator for presentation.

Master Gardeners who are emerita/us can still volunteer, but their hours are counted separately from those of the group. And, no service accumulates after emerita/us status is granted for purposes of awarding service pins.

So, if you elect to step down as an active volunteer, you are not considered put out to pasture. You remain greatly valued for your knowledge and expertise, and your mentorship, advice and support are encouraged. Your entitlement to refer to yourself as a Master Gardener continues, unlike those who have come and gone without fulfilling their commitments who are no longer entitled to refer to themselves as Master Gardeners.

### Cornell Veggies Database

Find out which vegetable varieties perform best at the Cornell Vegetable Varieties Database, [vegvariety.cce.cornell.edu](http://vegvariety.cce.cornell.edu). Gardeners across the continent have rated a host of popular veggies, including these top-rated tomatoes: Sungold, Brandywine, Early Girl, Stupice & Cherokee Purple.

## Going Beyond the Zones Plant Hardiness Project

by **Linda Hugli**

The Going Beyond the Zones Project is an initiative of Natural Resources Canada. Its aim is to go beyond the single general zone map that we're familiar with, to develop a range of specific maps for individual species of trees, shrubs and perennials, and to create a climatic profile for each.

Ontario's Master Gardeners can play a significant role in developing these profiles. As contributors to the project, all we need to do is identify which plants, from a comprehensive list, survive in our region. Once enough data is entered to develop a climatic profile, range maps are generated, posted and continually updated by Natural Resources Canada at [planthardiness.gc.ca](http://planthardiness.gc.ca).

It's easy to enter data: just register at the website and click on My Account, then Register and fill in the required fields, identifying yourself in the User Category Description as a Master Gardener. You will also be asked to specify your longitude and latitude. If you do not know it and do not have a GPS, visit [www.robogeo.com/latlonfinder/map.asp](http://www.robogeo.com/latlonfinder/map.asp) to determine the coordinates of your garden. Once registered, you may log in at any time to enter data.

For those MGs who have already been submitting data, note that the Plant Hardiness site has a new look and that map generation and query responses are much quicker. As of July, 1.8 million plant observations had been received, 1,545 species have potential range maps and 5,700 species names are listed in the database.

For more information on how your Master Gardener group

can contribute to this initiative, contact Linda Hugli, Zone 2 director, at lhugli@hotmail.com. *Adapted, with permission, from Natural Resources Canada.*

### Hosta Virus X

Ottawa-Carleton MGs have produced an informative fact sheet about Hosta Virus X that's available at [www.geocities.com/mgottawa\\_carleton/HostaVXFactSheet.pdf](http://www.geocities.com/mgottawa_carleton/HostaVXFactSheet.pdf). Cultivars thought to be infected with the disease are listed, including 'Breakdance', 'Eternal Father', 'Leopard Frog' and 'Lunacy'. Others with a high percentage of infected plants are also listed.

### Making Education a Priority

The Muskoka-Parry Sound MGs dedicates a portion of each monthly meeting to education. Over the summer, topics have included well-researched information on hosta virus X, plant propagation, soil deficiencies and companion planting. What a great idea!

## Tributes

... activities & achievements

### Lanark 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Formed in 1987, the Lanark County Master Gardeners recently celebrated its 20th anniversary at Rockwall Gardens, hosted by co-

ordinator Judy Wall. Original group members Helen Halpenny and Margaret Inwood remain active MGs, and received 20-year certificate and pins at the event.

### Mississauga Birthdays

Over the summer nonegenarian Philip Stewart and octegenarian Errol Falconer celebrated their red-letter birthdays at the English country garden of fellow MGs, the Pookes, in Georgetown.

### Ottawa-Carleton

Congratulations to Susheela Godbole who achieved Emeritus status and to Nancy Seppala who received her 5-year pin.

## Meet Our Three New Zone Directors

### John Crow, Zone 11.

John joined Master Gardeners in 2004 and became a co-ordinator the following year. In 2006, he helped organize a very successful Technical Update that raised almost \$2,500.

John has been an avid gardener for more than 60 years and his favourite indoor hobby is growing seeds under lights (at times he has grown more than 75 different varieties in a single season).

An honour graduate of the Landscape Architecture Certificate program at Ryerson University, John has served as president of the Markham Garden Society, assistant district OHA director and a past director of the Canadian Wildflower Society.

### Larry Lenhardt, Zone 9

Past-president of the Lindsay and District Horticultural Society, Larry is a founding member of Lindsay Master Gardeners. In 2007, he was elected as a director of the Organic Council of Ontario and president of Organic Food Conferences Canada Inc. A graduate of the Ontario Agriculture College, U. of Guelph, Horticultural Science, he has managed a diversified fruit farm, served as a Teaching Professor at Sir Sandford Fleming College's School of Environment and Natural Resource Sciences and is founding director of the Organic Crop Improvement Association Ontario. Larry has also volunteered for CESO in Ecuador, Hungary, Serbia, Boliva and China. In 2003 he was named to Canada's Expert Committee on Organic Agriculture and in 2005, he worked in Bolivia with the Department of Economic Development.

### Kelly Noel, Zone 8

Group co-ordinator of the Ottawa-Carleton Master Gardeners since 2004, Kelly Noel retired in 1998 after teaching high school mathematics for 34 years. She obtained her certificate from the independent study program at Guelph and joined the Ottawa-Carleton group shortly thereafter. She has participated in many volunteer activities, including writing articles for the weekly MG column in the *Ottawa Sun*, answering telephone and email help lines, giving lectures and answering questions at the various market clinics in the area and at the Ottawa Home and Garden Show.



Peterborough Service Award  
Congratulations to Laura Stockdale who has received her 15-year pin.

Prince Edward County  
Wishing a speedy recovery to MGs Pat Burry and Joyce Young.

Quinte-Tweed  
Nancy Newman, Master Gardener Emeritus, twenty-year member of the Quinte-Tweed group and co-ordinator during the 1990s, passed away on June 2, 2007 after a courageous battle with cancer. Nancy's love of gardening, her sense of humour and common sense approach inspired gardeners throughout the area. She was a great mentor to members of the group and was always ready with advice and guidance. Her greatest wish was to see Master Gardeners gain a more prominent presence in the community and was pleased with the direction the organization is taking. Although she will be greatly missed, heaven will now be a little greener.

Stratford  
Congratulations to MGITs Ginette Ouellet and Jim Fitzgerald who became full-fledged MGs this spring.

## On the wires

... the electronic MG

MGOI Website Up and Running!  
We now have our very own website at [www.mastergardener.ca](http://www.mastergardener.ca), which features a host of helpful menus. The Events Calendar logs group events and newsletters are available from the Newsletter Menu on the Home Page. The site also includes helpful Links, Education, MGOI Minutes and Hotline listings. The Donations menu defines the charitable tax exempt status of MGOI and how to make donations locally and provincially. Email addresses of all directors and board members are also listed in the MGOI Contacts menu. This is your site and it will only be as good as your input. Like a garden, it will always be a work

in progress. Contact Ron Rossini at [lon.rossini@imag.net](mailto:lon.rossini@imag.net) with your news and events.

Peterborough Website  
Together with the Peterborough Horticultural Society and the Peterborough Garden Show – For the Love of Gardening, the Peterborough and Area Master Gardens have launched a new website under the banner Peterborough Gardens. Come take a look at [peterboroughgardens.ca](http://peterboroughgardens.ca)!

## Calendar

... upcoming horticultural events

### October 20 Zone 8 Technical Update Kemptville

Climate Change in the Garden is the theme of this year's TU, which features three terrific speakers: Paul Egglinton talking about the impact of climate change, Ken Farr, a noted author and member of Canadian Forestry Services and Diana Beresford-Kroeger, scientist, author and gardener. Contact Barbara Baker at 613-989-1556 or email [bbb331@magma.ca](mailto:bbb331@magma.ca) to register or more information.

### October 27 The Delights of Diversity Toronto MG Technical Update Toronto Botanical Garden

Three inspired lectures, including Chris Graham on Twiners, Stickers, Clingers & Hookers; Sean Fox, U. of Guelph Arboretum on Rare Trees & Shrubs of Ontario; and Brian Bergman of the Ontario Regional Lily Society on Liliium – Known, Unkown & Future. \$25, public; \$20 for Master Gardeners. Optional lunch, additional \$15. To register, contact Katy Anderson at [katyand@sympatico.ca](mailto:katyand@sympatico.ca).

## Master Gardeners of Ontario Board of Directors

**President** James Lee [jflee@sympatico.ca](mailto:jflee@sympatico.ca)

**Vice President** Ron Rossini  
[lon.rossini@imag.net](mailto:lon.rossini@imag.net)

**Treasurer** Carol Dunk  
[carol@caroldunk.com](mailto:carol@caroldunk.com)

**Corporate Secretary** Vacant  
**Directors:**

**Zone 1** Ralph Bullough [ralph@tbaytel.net](mailto:ralph@tbaytel.net)

**Zone 2** Linda Hugli [lhugli@hotmail.com](mailto:lhugli@hotmail.com)

**Zone 3** Ron Rossini [lon.rossini@imag.net](mailto:lon.rossini@imag.net)

**Zone 4** Mary Beverley-Burton  
[marybb@sympatico.ca](mailto:marybb@sympatico.ca)

**Zone 5** James Lee [jflee@sympatico.ca](mailto:jflee@sympatico.ca)

**Zone 6** Valerie Liney  
[valerie.liney@sympatico.ca](mailto:valerie.liney@sympatico.ca)

**Zone 7** Nancy Cole [nancherb@istar.ca](mailto:nancherb@istar.ca)

**Zone 8** Kelly Noel [khoel@rogers.com](mailto:khoel@rogers.com)

**Zone 9** Larry Lendhardt  
[lpnhardt@nexicom.net](mailto:lpnhardt@nexicom.net)

**Zone 10** Vacant

**Zone 11** John Crow [jonbon@sympatico.ca](mailto:jonbon@sympatico.ca)

**OHA Director** Marlene Bruckhardt  
[bruckhardt@golden.net](mailto:bruckhardt@golden.net)

**OMAFRA Director** Denise Edwards  
[denise.edwards@ontario.ca](mailto:denise.edwards@ontario.ca)

**Provincial Administrator** Charlotte Vorstermans  
[cvorstermans@rogers.com](mailto:cvorstermans@rogers.com)

**Provincial Field Advisor** Edythe Falconer  
[edythelf@netscape.ca](mailto:edythelf@netscape.ca)

**MGOI website** [www.mastergardener.ca](http://www.mastergardener.ca)

**Internet co-ordinator** Ron Rossini [lon.rossini@imag.net](mailto:lon.rossini@imag.net)

**MG list-serv** Avalon Hamlin ([hamlin@ebtech.net](mailto:hamlin@ebtech.net))

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To submit news about your Master Gardener group, contact Lorraine Flanigan, editor at [lorraine.flanigan@sympatico.ca](mailto:lorraine.flanigan@sympatico.ca).