

PETERBOROUGH HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Volume 160 **October 2021** Number 8

Wednesday October 27, 7pm -- Zoom Virtual Meeting: Denise Hodgins, "Caring for Indoor Plants"



Denise is a former college instructor who particularly enjoys the opportunity to continue teaching through being a Garden Coach. Many homeowners are eager to learn more about their own gardens and how to care for them as well as how to take them to the next level. As a Garden Coach and Designer, she has over 30 years of design experience and has had the opportunity to work in many areas within the horticultural industry. She has done Historical Landscaping; has been the Head Gardener at Rosebank in Lambeth, Ontario; has been involved with greenhouse plant production; and has spent many years on residential and commercial landscape crews both in northern Ontario and in London, Ontario.

Denise is a graduate of Landscape Design at Fanshawe College and holds a Diploma in Horticulture from the University of Guelph. She is a certified Rose and Flower judge.

Denise will be speaking to us about caring for indoor plants. There are two main factors that people get wrong in taking care of their house plants: water and light. With tropical house plants, it is a good idea for us to imagine their natural environment and try to recreate it. What most people do wrong is give their house plants too much water and too little light. Tune in virtually to learn all about it!

President's Message

Greetings! Early fall is a very brilliant time on a grand colour scale. While you're driving, I'm sure that like me, you take note of the changes that autumn brings. I always marvel at the bright reds, oranges, and yellows that I see. I always thought that it was only the cool weather that brought on this colour streak, but I learned recently that it's also the shorter days and reduction in light that has an impact on the amount of chlorophyll that the tree produces. Who knew?



At this time of year, I'm encouraged by each new member that joins or existing member that rejoins and I appreciate the notes that we receive with positive comments about our society. It shows that we are on the right track! Keep those ideas and suggestions coming. Our gardens may be finished or almost finished for the year, but it doesn't mean that the gardening stops -- even if it's only in our dreams.

❖ **MJ Pilgrim**

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facebook: [Peterborough Horticultural Society](https://www.facebook.com/PeterboroughHorticulturalSociety) & [The Peterborough Garden Show](https://www.facebook.com/ThePeterboroughGardenShow) twitter: [@PtboHortSoc](https://twitter.com/PtboHortSoc) & [@PtboGardenShow](https://twitter.com/PtboGardenShow)

Mentionables:

Yearbook: We are starting to plan the yearbook for 2022 and would love to have some member participation. We are asking members to submit original garden stories, poems, or garden tips. If you have a story to tell about a garden you visited, an event that happened in your own garden or just a story of how your garden did this past summer, send it to us!

Free Gardening Books: Five boxes of gardening books have been dropped off at MJ Pilgrim's house in downtown Selwyn and they are looking for new homes. If you're in the area, drop in. The books are on a table on the front porch and will be there until October 30. They're mostly newer books and are in good shape. Many are on the topics of bonsai and water gardens. If you'd like to tour the garden as well, please feel free to do so -- beware of the massive Royal Empress in the front garden that has grown 20 feet in less than 2 years! **2034 Selwyn Road near Buckhorn Road; between Lakefield, Bridgenorth and Buckhorn in Downtown Selwyn.** 😊

Indoor Storage, anyone? As we're not certain about the future of the garden show as we've known and loved it for the past 20 years, we are hoping to repurpose/dispose of items that haven't been used in years to reduce the size of our "holdings". We currently rent a Sea-Can but it's costly. We are wondering if anyone would have an unused garage or dry barn that they might consider letting us use in the short term for the items that we're keeping? We can pay for this privilege. Size? About 10 x 10. Please do let us know.

Life members: The designation of 'Life Member' is used to recognize members who have contributed greatly to our society over the years. We are thrilled to have the following members as Life Members and would like to pay tribute to them again and always by listing them here:
Inge Buchardt, Rachel Burrows, Betty & Glenn Dahmer, Beryl Harris, Kathy Hewitt, Noreen Holder, Trudy Minicola, Claire Sullivan, Myrtle Wilson.

Trillium Deadline: December 1st, 2021 for the Winter issue. Email: editor@gardenontario.org

Membership 2022: If you haven't already done so, please consider renewing your membership now which will give you access to all our speakers and informative newsletters until the end of 2022. Membership fees are still the same –a great deal at \$20 for single and \$25 for a family.

[[Membership list as of September 10 2021](#)]

Instructions for online and print/mail renewal are at peterboroughhort.com/about-the-society

Garden Tongue Twisters for Autumn

Lemon leaves lift lazily on lawns.

Busy bees buzz busily by the buddleia bush.

Saucy squirrels scatter seeds secretly.

Happy humans hover over heavenly-hued hydrangeas.

❖ **Shaun Pyper**

Needed for the PHS: Two Financial Reviewers

We are looking for 2 members who'd be willing to review our financial matters for 2021-2022 in place of a formal audit. 😊

Please let us know if you're available as we'll need to make a motion at our November AGM about this. Thank you!
mjpilgrim@live.ca



ATTENTION: Invasive jumping worms found in Ontario

- Jumping worms (snake worms, crazy worms) refer to several species of invasive earthworms that damage gardens and natural landscapes.
- Previously rare in Canada, jumping worms have recently been found in gardens and ravines in Toronto, Hamilton, and Kent County (summer 2021).



If you see jumping worms in your area, please contact Dr. Michael McTavish (michael.mctavish@alum.utoronto.ca), University of Toronto.

❖ Cathy Kavassalis, Halton Master Gardeners

Pumpkin (or "Pun-kin?") Groaners:



What do you get when you drop a pumpkin?
Squash.

What's a pumpkin's favorite genre?
Pulp fiction.

Why was the gourd so gossip-y?
To give 'em pumpkin' to talk about.

Why was the jack-o'-lantern afraid?
It had no guts.

Why was Cinderella bad at football?
Because she had a pumpkin for a coach.

What do you get if you divide the circumference of a pumpkin by its diameter?
Pumpkin Pi.

Why did the pumpkin take a detour?
To avoid a seedy part of town.

What does a carved pumpkin celebrate?
Hollow-een.

❖ Donna-Marie Fennell

Don't toss your summer bulbs!

Many summer bulbs such as cannas, dahlias and gladiolus are not hardy in our zone and will die if you leave them in the ground over the winter. The best time to lift these is around the corner -- after the first hard freeze when the leaves are crispy or black and mushy.



Dig when the soil is moist. After digging, trim the stems and clean the soil off of the bulb so fungus and insects won't ruin them during storage. Inspect the bulb and remove/discard any that don't look healthy and firm. Lay the bulbs for a few days in a well-ventilated area to dry completely -- I lay mine out on newspaper. After drying, brush off any excess soil. For winter storage, it's important to keep the bulbs cool and in darkness to maintain dormancy -- a chilly basement or garage that doesn't freeze is a good place.

Store these in slightly moist peat moss or vermiculite as they require humidity to prevent them from drying out: Calla, canna, dahlia

Store these in dry sawdust: Crocosmia, gladiolus, Peruvian daffodil

If anyone needs a little sawdust, my hubby makes it all of the time and I'd be happy to give you some! Let me know, and you can pick it up in downtown Selwyn. 😊

❖ MJ Pilgrim

Overwintering Rosemary



Often by this point, the harvesting, canning, blanching, freezing, drying and storing are enough for me to feel I'm ready to shut the garden down for this season. I know it won't be long before I get itchy waiting for the next seeding season, but by late October I'm ready for a break and not too inclined to extend the season much further.

However, my rosemary this year was so beautiful that I can't stand to see it go by way of the frost (whenever it finally gets here). It is in a large pot on my south-west facing porch. I'm going to bring it in and try to over-winter it, so I've done some reading to learn what I need to know (articles at the Farmer's Almanac and Peterborough Master Gardeners were helpful).

Here's what I've learned about overwintering rosemary. I'll start by digging it out of its current pot and replanting it to another with a drainage hole, using well-draining potting soil. I'll cut back the plant to the healthiest parts, both stems and roots.

Rosemary is called an "upside down" plant, which means it prefers to gather moisture from the air through its needles. Rosemary doesn't like wet feet but doesn't like to dry out either. I'll water the soil about every second week. However, I'll fill a water tray with small stones and place the new pot on top of the stones. I'll keep the water tray filled so the plant can absorb what it needs. If it looks like it could use some help, I'll give it a spritz with a spray bottle.

For indoor success, rosemary needs a lot of sun but not a lot of heat. Tricky – I've got a great south facing window but it's in a warm room. I'll need to shift to another window in a slightly cooler room. Rosemary prefers about 60-65F when indoors.

I'll fertilize the rosemary in the spring, about a month before I move the pot back outside. I'll give it a dose of a diluted fish or kelp emulsion to give it some oomph for the summer season ahead. Here's to enjoying lots of rosemary-inspired recipes this winter!

❖ **Sandra Caswell**

Planting Garlic

These lovely fall days are a great time to get your garlic planted. Fresh, suitable garlic bulbs can be easily found at any of the local farmers' markets. Best planting time is before the first frost.

The soil should be prepared by loosening and liberally mixing in compost. Cloves are planted individually flat side down. It's best to "crack" the bulb just before planting leaving as many layers of skin on the clove as possible. Planting depth is 3 - 4 times the length of the clove. Pat soil firmly after planting.

Plant each clove 6 inches (15 cm) apart and rows should be a distance of 10 inches (25 cm) apart.

Cover your planted garlic with mulch - weed free straw or leaves. This will lessen the effects of sudden changes of temperature. Compacted leaves may need to be removed in the spring.

In early spring It's rewarding to see the green tips emerging along with the first green of spring bulbs. The eventual harvest will be late July when you are rewarded with your own garlic bulbs juicy and pungent with flavor.

❖ **Pat de Villiers**



Refueling Your Composter and You



Last month I wrote about fall being a good time to empty composters, consider what to put back into them and remember to layer and toss the contents regularly to help start rebuilding great mulch and fertilizer for the next season.

Some of us use coffee to help keep us going or maybe a cup of tea to sit still and ponder new garden ideas. The used coffee grounds and tea leaves that have sustained us, can also be beneficial for our gardens. Composting coffee grounds and tea leaves can boost the nitrogen in your compost pile as well as add organic matter. Using higher nitrogen, or green waste, in your composter in the winter helps to keep the temperature up as well as attract microorganisms that encourage plant

growth. Worms even like used coffee grounds! Used or rinsed coffee grounds will not greatly affect the acid levels of your soil, as they have a near neutral pH of 6.5. Mixing them up with your kitchen scraps in the composter as well will also dilute their acidity level. (Unwashed grinds however will lower the pH- thereby raising the acid level-so only good for using around acid loving plants.)

Like composters, we put all kinds of stuff into ourselves and also need to be mindful of what and how much we should keep inside. It's also a good idea to remember to turn and 'fluff up' our contents and recognize when we should empty and give away the good stuff we have made from scraps and leftovers! We can refuel ourselves as well as our composters with good 'food' and energy while looking and planning ahead for another year of gardening.

❖ **Laura Jack**

Newsletter articles sometimes come from simple questions....



On Thursday morning, one of our board members asked the following question to our email group:

"I found 5 of these bees yesterday morning unmoving on my bush. Are they cold, sleeping or? I didn't notice them later on. Does anyone know about this?"

Another member reported: *"I'd be very interested. My neighbour and I found the same things. Bumblebees in the center of our pollinator flowers but barely moving."*

The answer came in a couple more messages: *I just googled it and the bees are dying. Only the queen overwinters underground in hibernation. All the rest die. Sad.*

And finally, this one: *Bumblebees have been spending nights with their heads tucked into the center of my Dahlias regularly for years. I notice it happens particularly in the fall. Once it warms up, they wake up and take off. They are older bees and don't go back to the nest as the season wanes. They are hungry and the pollen rich flowers are basically their last 'meal' before they die. I don't disturb them and let them gorge, quietly thanking them for their hard work as pollinators all summer.*

❖ **Shaun Pyper, Pat de Villiers, Laura Jack**

Gardening Word Search

T	V	M	G	T	L	O	W	S	T	U	S	A	W	D	U	S	T	T	S
T	S	N	M	U	T	U	A	G	I	S	A	A	T	H	O	B	Q	P	N
H	H	I	L	L	O	Y	X	T	G	A	M	P	Y	N	S	T	I	N	G
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P	N	T	W	S	F	C	J	U	S	M	T	W	S	V	I	R	E	L	Y
R	U	H	C	S	K	Y	M	K	O	R	V	C	M	O	G	Y	K	I	Y
P	M	G	N	E	H	C	L	U	M	O	P	A	O	Y	I	D	V	P	S

PRUNERS

HYDRANGEA

GARLIC

OCTOBER

BULBS

MULCH

AUTUMN

ROSEMARY

SAWDUST

FALL

DIRT

GARDENING

◆ Elane Kalavrias

November 24, 7pm Zoom Speaker:

Cathy Kavassalis, Halton Master Gardeners
 "Trees for Small Spaces"



Iris at Thanksgiving?

I nearly always have a rose to cut for the Thanksgiving table and lavender's last blooms hang on too, but I have never seen an Iris bloom at this time of year.

I know some will say it's down to the weather or the particular warm section of the garden where it is planted but I believe there is another explanation.

In the Spring, I weeded and dug over a friend's garden. She never professed to know anything about gardening but loved the "yellow things" that bloomed every year. When I returned home, sitting on top of the brown bag was a piece of Iris root and three little leaves, so I optimistically stuck it into the soil. Several weeks later I returned home from my friend's funeral and went to sit in the garden and found the Iris in bloom. I was delighted to share her joy at seeing the beautiful yellow flowers.



The Autumn was my friend's favourite time of year and I believe it is blooming now to let me know that while everything has its season, life is still full of beautiful surprises !

❖ **Thankfully, Catherine McLoughlin**



From January 1 to December 31, 2022, The **Year of the Garden 2022**, a Centennial Celebration of our horticulture sector, will commemorate Canada's rich garden heritage, celebrate today's vibrant garden culture, and create important legacies for a sustainable future.

Planning is already underway for a year of exciting **Live the Garden Life** activities, celebrations, special events and promotions that will take place in communities, schools, businesses, public gardens, and backyard gardens in all parts of Canada.

Join the Celebration. It will be easy to sign up your garden as a **Year of the Garden Celebration Garden.**

Be inspired by garden experiences found in public gardens across Canada. View landscapes that represent different regions, climate zones, and purposes, for fun, and to help you plan your own backyard garden sanctuary. More information will be shared in newsletters in 2022!

The planting of red flowers during Year of the Garden 2022 is encouraged as a way to celebrate and recognize the project.

