



Uxbridge Horticultural Society



"We Bring Gardening Down to Earth"
www.uxbridgehorticulturalsociety.com



"Your Local Garden Club News"



The Year of the Iris - photograph by Stephanie Davidson

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On-Line Questionnaire

With the cancellation of a number of our meetings so far this year, we are looking at the possibility of delivering presentations on-line.

When you receive an e-mail from **Rose** asking you to vote on this, before you vote, please consider whether you would realistically participate if a presentation were offered on-line. Offering presentations virtually would still cost the Club money in a year where we have no revenue, so we really want to make sure we have a significant number of members that would be interested. Please also indicate any specific topics that would be of interest to you.

Dear Fellow Gardeners:

We sincerely hope you and your loved ones are all keeping safe and healthy as this Covid-19 pandemic continues to keep us in our homes. It is a difficult time for sure and no one knows where and when this will end.

The Executive Group has been watching the situation closely and discussing the options for our Club this year. **We have, very unfortunately, come to the decision of cancelling our meetings for July and August.** We will be reviewing the situation on an ongoing basis and keeping our fingers crossed that we can at least finish the year together. In the meantime, I will continue to publish a newsletter each month, and would very much encourage your participation – more on that in this newsletter.

As the period of social distancing and staying home goes on, a lot of people are experiencing feelings of sadness, isolation and depression. Please do not suffer alone – there are many resources available to help us through this. I have included contact information for mental health resources, both locally and provincially.

Please see the flyer (attached to this newsletter) from **Mirela Lazariou** who is sponsoring a fundraising for handcreams for our local front line workers.

Hopefully, as the weather improves, so will the situation with Covid-19. We wish you all continued health and safety!

Sandee

"All through the long winter, I dream of my garden. On the first day of spring, I dig my fingers into the soft earth. I can feel its energy and my spirits soar."

... Helen Hayes

Meetings 2020

We are very disappointed to announce that we have made the decision to CANCEL our July and August meetings.

There are numerous concerns that led us to reach this decision. In summary:

- First and foremost, we don't believe that we can safely conduct these meetings. The safety of our members is, and has to be, first and foremost in our decision making. This includes, but is not limited to, maintaining appropriate social distancing, ensuring all surfaces are kept sanitized, and ensuring everyone follows the medical community directives when meeting in groups;
- The Township, whose facility we rent for our meetings, understandably cannot commit to when and if they will re-open Township facilities;
- Our speakers are unable to commit to their availability given no one knows what the future months hold.
- We may well face large group gathering restrictions for some time to come; and,
- Arguably, the number of members who may actually want to come out to meetings will be reduced as they do not wish to expose themselves to potential infection.

We are holding off making any decisions for September to December. Any decisions taken regarding the balance of the year, will be based on the situation and directives recommended by the Provincial and/or Federal government.

Beware of Covid-19 Scams

There are always scammers looking to take advantage of others and profit from consumer fears and uncertainties - probably never more so than in difficult times such as the one we are currently in. I have put a link in below to the Government of Canada's Anti-Fraud Centre and I encourage you to read this carefully and pass it on to your family and friends. Unfortunately, cyber crime is alive and thriving!

The information on this website outlines the many types of scams and requests for money, gives many clear examples and legitimate resources to call for advice or to report suspected fraudulent activity.

Beware COVID-19 scams

As COVID-19 continues to spread globally, protect yourself and beware of associated scams. Fraudsters want to profit from consumers' fears, uncertainties and misinformation. Turn to trusted resources and advice for health, financial and security resources.

Full details can be found here: <https://antifraudcentre-centreantifraude.ca/features-vedette/2020/covid-19-eng.htm>

For more information on the Government of Canada's response to COVID-19, refer to <https://www.canada.ca/covid-19>

Send in Your Pictures

This is certainly a most unusual year for everyone. A number of our members have suggested to me that they would love to see pictures taken by other members – be they pictures of their gardens, specific plants or vegetables, houseplants, nature around their house or neighbourhood, or really any gardening or nature related pictures. I would love for you to send me your pictures and I will try and publish as many as possible. We will also post as many as possible on our website.

I have included a few spring pictures that **Angie** has taken, on page 4 of this newsletter, to get us started.

Please remember that you don't need to be an experienced photographer or use a fancy camera. Today's point-and-shoot cameras and cellphones also take outstanding pictures. So please don't be shy – send me your pictures. We all look forward to seeing nature around your house!

Re-growing Vegetables

Did you know you can regrow green onions and other vegetables? At right are my green onions that I keep re-growing. It's easy:

Simply cut off the bottom 1 to 1 ½" piece of the green onion, leaving the roots attached. Then stand these upright in a glass or jar, adding water just to cover the roots, place in a window, and change the water every few days.

Other vegetable roots that grow well under this method include Bok Choy, Celery, Fennel, Leeks, Lemongrass and Lettuce.

More on growing food from scraps in future newsletters.



Successfully Growing Tomatoes – Part 1

This year more than ever, many are planning to grow their own vegetables, and the hands down favourite for many is the Tomato. So a few starter tips on growing tomatoes:

- Make sure you know whether or not your tomato is **Indeterminate or Determinate**. This makes a big difference to where and how you plant it. An Indeterminate Tomato means that it will continue to grow and is best planted and staked in the ground, as opposed to a pot. A Determinate Tomato will grow to a certain point and then produce its flowers, which form the fruit. These can successfully be grown in pots.
- If you have started your tomato plants from seeds, it is important to "harden them off" before planting them in the garden. Gradually expose them to the outdoors by putting them outside in a sheltered, sunny place and bring them inside at night. As the nights get warmer, you can leave them outside and plant them in their permanent home after a week or so, as long as night temperatures are above approximately 15 C.
- To plant your tomatoes, snip off the lower leaves and bury the stem about 2/3rds deep. The portion of the stem that is buried will form roots, which will allow for better water uptake and make the plant stronger.
- Tomatoes need as much direct sunlight as possible to produce the best results.
- Water regularly but do not over-water.

Managing Mental Health

Adapting to substantial changes to our lifestyle, feelings of isolation, lack of physical contact with family and friends, fear of contracting the virus, and temporary job loss, amongst other things, can be challenging for all of us, and particularly so for people with mental health conditions.

There are lots of things that we can do to look after our own mental health as well as helping others who may need extra support.

- **Routine:** keep to your normal routine as much as possible or create a new one. Get up and go to bed at similar times, exercise regularly, eat healthy meals at regular times, take time to rest, make time for things you enjoy.
- **Maintain social contact:** Keep regular contact with friends and family by phone or online options.
- **Minimize constant exposure to the news:** While it is important to keep informed, minimize the number of times you watch/listen/read the news if it makes you anxious or stressed.
- **Screen time:** Be aware of the amount of time you are spending on screen time, be it video games, social media, watching movies, etc. Balance on-screen time with off-line activities.
- **Help Others and Support Health Workers:** If you can, offer help to others, call people who are on their own, take opportunities to thank Health Care Workers through your community or on-line.

Numerous resources are available in our community and our Province if you or someone you know needs help:

- East York and North Durham COVID-19 Support Services: provides essential services for seniors and vulnerable populations in North Durham, including transportation, wellness checks, counselling, caregiver support, grocery and pharmacy pick up, Meals on Wheels, homemaking services. Please share with your neighbours and consider accessing on their behalf. Call 1-877-452-4287 or go to <https://eyrndoht.covidresponse.ca/> .
- 211 Ontario: For information and referrals for social and health services, including mental health resources across Ontario, call 211 or 1-877-330-3213. Live web chat is also available.
- ConnexOntario: Adults and frontline workers who are dealing with the realities of COVID-19 can call ConnexOntario at 1-866-531-2600 for support.
- Kids Help Phone: Children and youth 18 and under who need to talk to someone about their mental health can call Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868, for 24/7 phone and text support.
- Your local church or faith group: Faith leaders are ready to listen to and support you in this time. If you are unsure of who to call, contact St. Paul's Leaskdale church; they will connect you to a local minister.



Left: Instagram Posting Shout-out by the Uxbridge Library to our Club

Thank you Angie for these other pictures. Love the Happy Cactus!

