



# Russell and District Horticultural Society meeting

Location: Marionville Community Centre

April 20, 2026

## 1. Welcome, New members, exits and washrooms.

Grace Stapper greeted all attendees, new members, and identified washroom facilities including exits.

Grace also thanked and was grateful for all the RDHS volunteers on this National Volunteer week.

## 2. Acceptance of minutes of March 16, 2026 meeting.

Moved by Margaret Helliker and seconded by Diane Sharp. All were in favour and last meeting's minutes were accepted.

## 3. Business concerns.

- OHA 2026 Convention – Location: Oshawa Date: July 24 – 26. Any members interested in attending are to contact Grace.
- RDHS has provided seeds and potting soil to St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic High School for their seedling contribution to the plant sale. They have recently requested more soil so things must be going well.
- **Reports from committees.**
- March it on Out – Kathleen thanked everyone who volunteered. She made mention of the wonderful support from students and staff at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic High School. She did point out, however, that Friday night volunteers need to be reminded that items they may be interested in purchasing are not to be set aside or removed prior to commencement of the event on Saturday. Over \$2,600 was raised. Congrats to everyone!
- 2026 District 1 AGM – Frances shared details of this event that was hosted by the Vankleek Hill & District horticultural society. The theme was 'A Passion for Pollinators'. The venue was beautifully decorated and well organized. The 1<sup>st</sup> speaker was Tara MacWhirter, owner of Garden Path Homemade Soap of Vankleek Hill. She is passionate about monarch butterflies and has taken part in tagging those she raises on her property. She is truly knowledgeable on the life cycle of the monarchs and their struggle for survival including their perilous journey from Mexico to the USA and Canada in early spring. The 2<sup>nd</sup> speaker was Mary Shearman Reid, Master Gardener and owner of the Green Thumb Garden Centre. She

encouraged people to stay away from monoculture, diversify, plan and plant what gives you joy. If possible, try and incorporate some native plants as well. There were 17 RDHS members in attendance.

The 2027 District 1 AGM will be hosted by Williamstown Green Thumb Horticultural Society.

- Logging Volunteer Hours – Carole VanDie made mention of the importance of logging volunteer hours. Members can use page 13 of the RDHS 2026 Yearbook for tracking their hours.

District 1 for 2025 logged a total of 21,201 volunteer hours. Congratulations!

- Veggie Share Project – More updates will be available at the May meeting.
- Annual May Plant Sale - Louise reminded members that this is the largest money maker for RDHS. She suggested that members who wish to contribute any plants should dig them up at the beginning of May to avoid shock. Please remember to name the plant, its light requirements and put your name at the back of the tag. Members are encouraged to bring their contributions well before the official opening time of 9 a.m. Location: Russell Fairgrounds. Native plants will be made available through the Butterfly Way Project as in previous years. Junior Gardener leaders will be distributing seeds and seedlings to junior members.
- 2026 June Flower Show – Will be held at the June meeting on Monday, June 15. This is the 'big' one! Details can be found in the 2026 RDHS Yearbook on pages 18 & 19. Louise suggested interested members should think about it now and prepare their tags well in advance of the show.
- Workshops – Are outlined on page 14 in the 2026 RDHS Yearbook. Sign up sheets are available and members must pay ahead of the workshop to secure their participation spot. Please note the following amendments:

Glass on Glass workshop is scheduled on Saturday, June 20<sup>th</sup>.

Grapevine Wreath or Topiary Making workshop is scheduled for Thursday, October 15<sup>th</sup>.

- Junior Gardeners Program – Registration has been launched and the registration form is available on the RDHS website. Julie shared that Jo-Anne Moor has joined the program this year. If there are any other members that are interested in supporting this program, please contact Julie as a police check is required. The theme this year is 'dragonflies'.
- New District 1 Director - Susan Ramsay has retired in her role as District 1 Director and Louise Freeman has accepted the position in her place.
- Earth Day is April 22 – OHA is pleased to announce that there will be an on-line presentation by Mark Cullen on April 24<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. Further details are available on the OHA website.
- Tree Sale Initiative – Marianne and Jake continue to oversee this program. The following trees are now available for sale at \$30 per tree: spruce, red maple, tamarack and catalpa. Those interested in purchasing a tree or two are asked to contact Marianne.

*Post meeting.* 15 entries were submitted at the April Mini Flower Show and a list of the flower show winners are as follows:

Tartan Day

Easter

Mossy & Rocky

1st: Gloria Biickert  
2nd: Louise Houle  
3rd: Pegi Holtz

1st: Pegi Holtz  
2nd: Alanna Groen Brunsting  
3rd: Rosie Farrell &  
Louise Houle

1st: Rose Sicard  
2nd: Pegi Holtz  
3rd: Grace Stapper

Winnings from the mini shows and the June show will be presented at the monthly meeting in September.

Cynthia Anderson introduced Lee Ann Smith who will be sharing her presentation on Wildscaping: Wild planting in a Strong Design.

\*\* Big thank you to Gloria and Rose for the evening's refreshments.

Next meeting – May 18th. Presentation by Judith Cox on Vegetables in all Situations.

Minutes prepared by Christine Bourgeois, Secretary