

Youth- Special Project

2020-2021 School Year



Section G

Class 14-Ruby Bryan Award

Oro-Medonte Horticultural Society

District 16

The Oro-Medonte Horticultural Society supports several school-based youth garden clubs each year. Due to Covid, the clubs have not been able to meet in schools, since March 2020.

Considering our limitations and our long history of providing youth support, we discussed ideas to reach out to the youth. It was recognized that most schools were in the planning stages of a Covid safe grade 8 graduation. During school openings and closing and provincial orders, school were forced to do a virtual graduation and creative diploma hand off for 2021. We agreed to reach out to each school that enrolls students from our township.

We identified ten possible schools that enroll students from Oro-Medonte. Four of the schools are in our physical township boundaries and six lay outside our boundaries but enroll Oro-Medonte students. Six schools responded to our offer, to provide flowers for graduation. This is not an unusual offer for our society as we have donated grad flowers collected at our “Spring Flower Shows” many times before. The difference this year is the fact we were not having open meetings or a spring flower show, to collect donations. It was agreed there was money in our youth budget to purchase

flowers. Velta Bush one of our executive board members offered to purchase and distribute the flowers to the volunteers making the grad floral arrangements.

Amazingly, Velta Bush, Edna Caldwell, Lynne Melnyk, Michelle Lynch and Joanne Rachfalowski, who are all talented floral designers from our society volunteered to make the graduation arrangements. With the graduations taking place from June 22 to 29th it took some coordinating to have the supply of fresh flowers and accessories ready for the designers and distributed in a timely manner. Even though Oro-Medonte covers a geographical area larger than the city of Toronto, Velta managed that task with ease and professionalism.

Each school also had their unique needs such as: school colours, graduation themes, home delivery of grad items, drive through graduations, school photo booths and different number of days they were running graduation. This was all due to limits on people allowed at school at one time. After many emails collecting the needed information, the project was complete. The teachers and students were extremely grateful.

The beautiful arrangements created for the grade eight graduations are as follows:



Graduation arrangement designed
by Edna Caldwell for

W. R. Best Public School

Thank you so much!

That sounds wonderful, yes WRB
would be very appreciative of an
arrangement! Teena, SASE



Graduation arrangement
designed by Michelle Lynch
for

Notre Dame Catholic School

*Thank you very much for reaching out. We
could use all the help we can get to make
this a special graduation for these kids that
have missed out on so much over the last
year. Matt, Principal*



Graduation Rose bundles
with cards created by Velta
Bush for

Shanty Bay Public School

*Your connection to Oro schools is
'pandemic proof'. Stay awesome!!!*

Ian, Principal Shanty Bay

*The flowers were absolutely lovely!
What a wonderful, thoughtful gesture.
They really did add a special touch to
the presentation of the sign and grad
goodie box. Heather, Grade 7/8 Teacher*



Graduation arrangement
design by Lynne Melnyk for
Hillsdale Public School

*The flowers for graduation last night
were absolutely beautiful! Thank you
for organizing this for us!*

Hilary, Hillsdale SASE



*The arrangement is beautiful! We will
be sending a note, Sally, Teacher*

Graduation arrangement
design by Velta Bush for
Guthrie Public School

*We're thrilled to be able to thank the
Horticultural Society, and Ms. Bush
specifically, for the breath-taking flower
arrangement. Our graduates are very
fortunate to have such a beautiful
accompaniment in their photos.*

Karen, Guthrie Public School

Graduation arrangement design by Joanne
Rachfalowski for
Orchard Park Public School



This project is just wrapping up as I compile this entry. Overall, it has turned out to be a rewarding and successful endeavour. It allowed us to reach the youth of Oro-Medonte: even during this unprecedented time of a COVID pandemic. It also allowed some of our talented society members to demonstrate their amazing skill and generosity. Additionally, this project demonstrates, to our membership and supporters, that the Oro-Medonte Horticultural Society is here, active, committed and looking for ways to support our community and youth.

Ron Nelsons,
Youth Liaison