



Grape Growers of ONTARIO

Canadian actress, comedian, and mental health advocate, Mary Walsh, to speak at Grape Growers 38th Annual Celebrity Luncheon

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: St. Catharines, ON (July 6, 2023): The Grape Growers of Ontario's Celebrity Luncheon marks the opening of the Niagara Grape and Wine Festival by showcasing Canadian personalities and celebrating the annual grape harvest. This year, in partnership with Meridian, Ontario's largest credit union and the third largest in Canada, we welcome acclaimed comedian and actress, Mary Walsh.

Mary is the creator of the multi-Gemini-award-winning series, *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*, and is currently appearing in the second season of the hit CBC comedy *Little Dog*. She has also recently appeared in *Republic of Doyle*, Global's *Rookie Blue*, and HBO Canada's *Sensitive Skin*, for which she was nominated for a Canadian Screen Award. Mary wrote, produced, and starred in the Gemini award-winning show *Hatching, Matching and Dispatching*, which returned to CBC in 2017 as a feature length presentation called *A Christmas Fury*, with her and the original cast reprising their roles.



Outside of the film, TV and theatre world, Mary is an outspoken advocate for mental health and addiction awareness. She is also the author of *Crying for the Moon* — her debut novel released in 2017 to widespread critical acclaim.

Among her many awards and honorary doctorates, Mary is the recipient of the Order of Canada and the Governor General's Lifetime Achievement Award in the Performing Arts.

"We are thrilled to welcome Mary Walsh to Niagara to kick-off the grape harvest and the 71st Niagara Grape and Wine Festival," said Debbie Zimmerman, CEO, Grape Growers of Ontario. "Mary's story of determination and resilience will be powerful, even when delivered in her classically Canadian lighthearted manner."

"As long-time advocates and financial partners of the grape and wine industry in Niagara, we are thrilled to once again join forces with the Grape Growers of Ontario," said Stephen Otten, Regional Vice President, Business Banking, Meridian. "We take great pride in supporting the Grape Growers of Ontario's Celebrity Luncheon and look forward to attending and celebrating all of the industry's accomplishments."

The Grape Growers of Ontario's Celebrity Luncheon is on Wednesday, September 13, 2023 at 11:30 a.m. at Club Roma in St. Catharines. Ticket order forms are available at www.grapegrowersofontario.com or by contacting the GGO Board office at: (905) 688-0990 or info@grapegrowersofontario.com.

About the Grape Growers of Ontario

GGO is the official organization that represents over 500 actively producing grape growing families who are rooted in Ontario. 18,000 acres of vineyards are planted across the province's three designated viticulture areas: Niagara Peninsula, Lake Erie North Shore and Prince Edward County, and emerging regions.

About Meridian

Meridian is Ontario's largest credit union, and second largest in Canada, with over \$30 billion in assets under management (March 31, 2023). Guided by our purpose, "helping you achieve your best life," Meridian delivers personal, business and wealth financial solutions to over 370,000 Members. Our bold *Meridian for Good* strategy is aimed at helping people get access to the money and advice they need; plan for a better future that is clean, resilient, and diverse; and be financially confident. Meridian has two operating subsidiaries: Meridian OneCap Credit Corp ("MOCC") and motusbank. For more information, please visit: meridiancu.ca, follow us on [@MeridianCU](https://twitter.com/MeridianCU) or visit us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/meridiancu).

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