



# THE BULLETIN

BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL  
OF GARDEN CLUBS

FEBRUARY 2025



# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## LYNDA PASACRETA

### PLEASE FORWARD TO ALL OF YOUR CLUB MEMBERS

Oh my gosh! I just found out that there are seven days dedicated to Valentine's Day. It starts February 7. The seven days of love are Rose Day (February 7), Propose Day (February 8), Chocolate Day (February 9), Teddy Day (February 10), Promise Day (February 11), Hug Day (February 12), and Kiss Day (February 13). I think my two favourite days are Rose Day and Chocolate Day.

Many of our garden clubs/community gardens have some members who may be struggling with illness or physical disabilities.

Richmond Garden Club has created a Valentine Fairy team who put together some Valentine treats every year. We secretly choose some deserving members and deliver the packages on Valentine's Day.

One of our members teaches young children all about nature and the wonders of the outdoors. She has her children create Valentine's Day cards to include with the treats.

The treats includes homemade cookies, a bright pot of flowering bulbs, and some chocolate. Our members who receive the surprise are delighted and honoured to be recognized.

As in any organization, any ways you can engage your members and give the "personal touch" helps to retain members and attract new members.

So this Valentine's Day think of how you can reach out to those members who have been in your group for a long time or are dealing with some difficult issues. Make sure to let all of your members be part of putting together the treats and choosing the recipients.

I can hardly wait to get my roses and my chocolates!



All the Valentine's Day cards are from Wikimedia Commons.

# SCHOLARSHIP FUND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

## ANITA IRANI, SCHOLARSHIP FUND CHAIR

The Scholarship Fund Committee meets once every month, except during the summer when meetings are held either in July or in August. Meetings are held virtually.

Members on the Scholarship Fund Committee serve for a period of three years. Each member will serve as secretary in their first year, treasurer in their second year on the committee, and will take on the role of chair in their third and final year. The Scholarship Committee disburses funds to twelve post-secondary institutions in British Columbia and each member is assigned four institutions/programs as their responsibility. Committee members communicate with their assigned institutions, ensuring that the funds are received through the Vancity Community Foundation, and monitor the funds disbursed through the institution. We also have the opportunity to communicate with award recipients if contact information for the students is sent to the committee, and we report on recipients through the monthly BCCGC newsletter.

The chair of the committee also attends approximately nine BCCGC executive virtual meetings held during the year. The committee presents semi-annual reports at the fall and spring meetings, held in April and October respectively at the Bonsor Recreation Complex in Burnaby. We also arrange for student award recipients from graduate programs to present research at these meetings, as well as arrange for a diverse range of vendors to be present at the meetings.

Other tasks include record keeping and liaising with the Vancity Community Foundation.

This volunteer opportunity is extremely rewarding as the members are able to liaise with, and sometimes meet student award recipients. As indicated on our website, we support twelve programs, including ones at UBC, SFU, University of the Fraser Valley, Thompson Rivers University, and more. Our student award recipients are enrolled in a diverse range of courses including horticulture, viticulture, pest management, forest and ecology management, and more. The mandate of the Scholarship Fund Committee is to manage the fund and also grow the fund and expand our scholarship program. We hope to support a new program — the Richmond Farm School (Kwantlen Polytechnic University) — this year.

As our chair completes her third year a position on the committee will become available in April 2025.

Please consider joining the Scholarship Fund Committee. Members from garden clubs outside the Lower Mainland are welcome to join. Contact the committee at [scholarship@bcgardenclubs.com](mailto:scholarship@bcgardenclubs.com).





## HOW TO DONATE TO THE BCCGC SCHOLARSHIP FUND

If you wish to make a donation by cheque please send it to:

BC Council of Garden Clubs  
Scholarship Fund, c/o: BC Council of  
Garden Clubs

10952 McAdam Road

North Delta, BC, V4C 3E8

Please ensure that the cheques are made out to the "Vancity Community Foundation" and the memo field shows "BC Council of Garden Clubs." If the person or organization that the donation is from does not clearly show on the cheque, please include a brief note with the cheque indicating who the donation is from and a return address (so that an income tax receipt can be issued).

If you wish to donate online with a credit card:

Go to  
[www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca](http://www.vancitycommunityfoundation.ca).

Click the "Funds" button on the top right side of the home page.

Locate the BC Council of Garden Clubs Scholarship Fund, either by scrolling through the list or searching "garden clubs" in the search bar.

Once on the BCCGC Scholarship Fund page, click "Give to this Fund" and complete the form.

OR

Go to [www.bcgardenclubs.com](http://www.bcgardenclubs.com).

Go to the "Scholarship Fund" on the top bar and click on the "Donate" page below.

Scroll down to the link to Vancity Community Foundation and click on it. This will take you to the BCCGC Scholarship Fund page.

Click on "Give to this Fund" and complete the form.

Thank You!

**CONTINUE TO SUPPORT  
HORTICULTURAL STUDENTS WHO WILL  
BECOME OUR FUTURE FARMERS AND  
KEEPERS OF THE LAND!**

**DONATE TODAY!**



## CANADIAN WILDLIFE FEDERATION WINNER

### RICHMOND GARDEN CLUB

Richmond Garden Club member Visnja Vojvodic Gasparic was announced as a winner in her category (Finding Flora) in the 2024 Reflections of Nature contest.

Visnja loves taking photos which is the reason we met her taking some gorgeous photos in Paulik Park. She is now very involved in Richmond Garden Club as the club photographer and a volunteer in Paulik Park.

If you get a chance to browse our website <https://www.richmondgardenclub.ca> you will find examples of her work.

The photo she entered into the CWF contest is the remains of a poppy right in the courtyard of her building. To see all of the winning photos visit [https://blog.cwf-fcf.org/index.php/en/winners-of-the-2024-reflections-of-nature-photo-contest/?utm\\_source=facebook&utm\\_medium=organic\\_social&utm\\_campaign=blog](https://blog.cwf-fcf.org/index.php/en/winners-of-the-2024-reflections-of-nature-photo-contest/?utm_source=facebook&utm_medium=organic_social&utm_campaign=blog).

Congratulations Visnja!



Photo by Visnja Vojvodic Gasparic, Richmond Garden Club

# CREATING CLIMATE-RESILIENT LANDSCAPES

## OKANAGAN XERISCAPE ASSOCIATION

This Climate-Resilient Landscape workshop, hosted by the Okanagan Xeriscape Association, is designed to educate, inspire and connect landscape professionals with like-minded organizations in the Okanagan.

Climate resilience must include water conservation and resistance to fire, using plant materials that have adapted to ever more frequent and intense drought and heat, as well as extreme cold. The event is not exclusively for landscape professionals — any keen horticulturist, Master Gardener or home landscaper is welcome to attend.

**The workshop will cover these topics presented by well-known experts with experience in the Okanagan climate:**

- The principles of xeriscape for landscape professionals (breakfast session)
- The changing Okanagan climate and the necessity of embracing xeriscape
- New xeriscape plants and nursery industry updates
- Tree root defects and management at planting
- The Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper (QWEL) program
- Inviting pollinators and meadow landscapes
- Drought-tolerant tree selection
- Regenerative landscaping
- FireSmart landscaping

**It's the best opportunity of the year to:**

- Hear the latest science from Okanagan experts
- Ask questions and network before the season begins
- Learn practical information to improve your landscaping practice for the coming year
- Take your design of climate-resilient landscapes to the next level — improve customer satisfaction for the future

### Tickets

OXA is offering this full-day workshop at the low price of \$55 thanks to the tremendous support from our partners — Okanagan Basin Water Board, the City of Kelowna, and the City of Kelowna Fire Department. Industry sponsors are Sawchuk Developments, Foxglove Nurseries, and the Kelowna Rotary Clubs.

**BRING YOUR ENTIRE TEAM!** If you purchase 10 or more tickets, we will lower the price even further.

Please contact: [admin@okanaganxeriscape.org](mailto:admin@okanaganxeriscape.org) for further details, to ask any questions, or to arrange invoicing or e-transfers.

**For more information:** <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/creating-climate-resilient-landscapes-tickets-1139404321999?aff=oddtcreator>



# HOW TO KEEP RABBITS OUT OF YOUR GARDEN

## LIGHTLY ADAPTED WITH PERMISSION FROM GARDEN DESIGN

As we plan for adding edibles to our gardens (or adding pollinator plants to our community edible gardens) — as per the Community in Blooms theme of 2025, edible gardens — I recommend subscribing to [www.gardendesign.com](http://www.gardendesign.com), where you will find all kinds of information on growing gardens.

Rabbits (and other wildlife) can wreak havoc in your garden, as it supplies a veritable feast and sometimes a lovely spot to create a nest.

Justine Guidry, *Garden Design*, wrote an article on some ways to keep the ‘wascally wabbits’ out of your garden.

**🐰 Add physical barriers.** Keeping in mind that rabbits can hop over some fencing and tunnel under fencing, you need to ensure that your fencing is at least 6 inches below ground level. Many gardeners choose chicken wire. It is wise to check the fencing from time to time to see if there are any holes. Guidry suggests installing motion-activated sprinklers as another way to deter them.

**🐰 Include plants that rabbits do not like.** Some suggestions include sweet alyssum, lantana, salvia, milkweed, spirea, catmint, sunflower.

**🐰 Remove potential nesting spots.** Rabbits love to nest in overgrown grassy areas. One year I was working in a garden bed and stepped into a hole filled with baby bunnies! A female rabbit can have more than 10 babies in a litter.

**🐰 Add visual deterrents.** Some suggestions were adding metal pinwheels, rubber snakes, and owl statues. Running twine between two stakes with strips of aluminium foil tied to the twine may also be a

deterrent. It is important to keep an eye on the garden to watch if other areas show signs of digging.

**🐰 Create your own spray.** Cayenne pepper is not a favourite smell for rabbits. Give this recipe a try:

- Mix 2 tablespoons of cayenne pepper, 2 tablespoons of garlic, 1 teaspoon of pure castile liquid soap, and 5 cups of water. (If you have pets that love to roam your garden, ingesting too much cayenne pepper can irritate your pet’s stomach.)

To read the article in its entirety, visit [https://www.gardendesign.com/how-to/rabbits.html?utm\\_source=article-newsletter&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Rabbits-12-26-24](https://www.gardendesign.com/how-to/rabbits.html?utm_source=article-newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Rabbits-12-26-24).



Photo from Wikimedia Commons

Growers Delight is now a member of COTA, the Canada Organic Trade Association. Check us out: <https://organicdirtsupplements.ca/>. Use code BCCG12 for special discounts.

# Growers Delight

## Granular Soil Activator

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**Perfect for:**

- General row gardens
- Repotting plants
- Trees & shrubs
- Lawn maintenance & care

## PLANNING FOR ANNUAL PLANT SALES

### LYNDA PASACRETA, RICHMOND GARDEN CLUB

In our June 2024 issue of *The Bulletin*, we featured an article from South Surrey Garden Club on the success of their plant sale in May 2024.

Richmond Garden Club is in the initial stages of preparing for our plant sale Saturday, May 3, 2025.

We sent copies of that article around to our plant sale team to look at some of their activities to prepare for their sale.

As the article mentioned, they had almost 600 customers waiting in a line to participate in the sale!

Some take-aways that we will implement is the early preparation. They encouraged their members to start seeds and plant up their own plants at home (this activity contributed approximately 1,000 plants

to the sale). They also have a propagation team who meets in March to pot up more than 1,000 plants dug up from members' gardens. Hostas and other perennials are so easy to divide and create more plants!

Thank you South Surrey Garden Club for sharing your success. (Photo: Joanie Webster, South Surrey Garden Club.)





## GREETINGS FROM THE WEST KOOTENAYS!

### DARLENE KAWALSKY, PRESIDENT, CASTLEGAR GARDEN CLUB

Hello 2025 and Happy New Year everyone!

The Castlegar Garden Club was formalized in 1996 but had its beginnings around kitchen tables five years earlier. Bob Switzer provided the original spark that got things going, as we understand.

We are located in the beautiful West Kootenay region of British Columbia in the Selkirk Mountains at the confluence of the Kootenay and Columbia Rivers. Our city has a population of approximately 8,400 people.

We are a small club of nearly 50 members living the dream as gardeners. All are welcome. Our garden club meets on the third Wednesday of every month year-round at 6 pm.

For nine months of the year, we meet indoors at the Castlegar Community Complex, and in summer (June through August) we meet outdoors in members' gardens .

Much to the delight of members, we frequently go on "road trips" visiting places of interest in our region.

At winter meetings we welcome guest speakers on a variety of topics. Beekeeping, pollinator gardens, native plants, growing dahlias, travelogues, and planning for vegetable gardens to mention a few.

For our community we have a number of activities. For fundraisers we host an annual Mother's Day plant sale, which is our most favourite time of the year. Last year for the first time members organized a popular hanging basket seminar. In mid June we volunteer with the BC Yukon Region of the Canadian Peony Society to promote

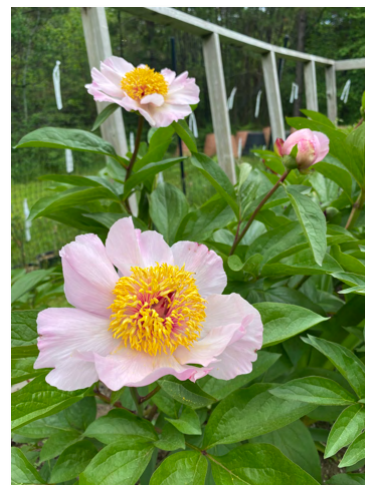
peony growing in the Kootenays at their annual show.

On June 22 of this year we will be hosting our community garden tour. Often we partner with local artists for displays and chamber music. Our latest addition was our local quilt guild, which was well received. Most often we have eight to ten locations on the tour.

In April, July, and October we participate in the Adopt-A-Road program for Castlegar In Bloom, picking up litter on our designated route. This activity helps our community, builds community pride, and encourages camaraderie. Usually this group retires to a local coffee spot for a cuppa.

Our club supports the BCCGC scholarship program, which we feel is vital to those studying in horticulture. We give thanks to the members of the Scholarship Committee for their outstanding contributions to this much needed cause.

We continue to celebrate the vital roles that gardens and gardening play in our communities and in our lives.



GREETINGS FROM THE WEST KOOTENAYS, CONT'D

DARLENE KAWALSKY, PRESIDENT, CASTLEGAR GARDEN CLUB



Photos by Darlene Kawalsky, Castlegar Garden Club



# Growing Together

B.C. COMMUNITIES IN BLOOM NEWSLETTER

#### IN THIS ISSUE:

- Volunteer Opportunities
- Your Favourite Memories
- Supporting Community Sustainability
- 2025 Registration Form

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#### UPDATED MAILING ADDRESS:

4451 212-Street, Langley, V3A 7Z8  
(604) 576-6506

[www.bccib.ca](http://www.bccib.ca)

[Facebook](#) [BC CiB](#) [Privacy Policy](#)

Provincial Coordinator  
Catherine Kennedy  
[c.kennedy@telus.net](mailto:c.kennedy@telus.net)

## Volunteer Positions

We are looking for a few new Judges and one or two board members for the coming year. One of the best things about our provincial organization is its wide representation of the province. If you are interested, please go to our website [Volunteer](#) info page.

### Do you like people and plants?

Think horticulture is a critical part of community life and wellness? BC Communities in Bloom is a not-for-profit organization looking for volunteer judges able to train and evaluate at specific times of the year. This is a great opportunity to put your expertise to use and see some incredible horticulture work in BC communities!

BCLNA member, past president, and previous CiB judge, Jeff Foley, shares his experience:

*"I was lucky enough to serve as a Communities in Bloom (CiB) for three years. Each summer I would get to spend a week exploring a different zone of British Columbia. It is a very rewarding experience where you are able to see some amazing efforts to make communities more livable through horticultural initiatives. I met some awesome people in the communities and made friends with the fellow volunteers. Catherine, the Executive Director of BC CiB, makes sure you are well set up and comfortable before you embark on your tour. Judges receive excellent training and the experienced ones help to support the new ones. I would highly recommend volunteering as a judge. It is a great way to gain inspiration and also share some of your knowledge in return."*

– Jeff Foley, Para Space Landscaping

### When did your Community participate in CiB?

Link to all [British Columbian participants](#) since 1995

### Send us your Favourite Memories

We encourage all past community participants and former volunteers to reach out to the provincial coordinator with [your Photos or Quotes](#).

1

BC Communities in Bloom invites BC Council of Garden Clubs member to view their newsletters from the website, [Past Newsletters - BC Communities in Bloom](#).

**MOTIONS FOR APPROVAL**

At the Annual General Meeting, members will be asked to approve the following motions:

1. Motion to approve minutes from the 2024 Annual General Meeting
2. Motion to approve election of officers (BCCGC Bylaws, Article 3 — Elections and Appointments of Officers, 4.)
  - President
  - Secretary
  - Second Vice President
  - Scholarship Fund Committee Secretary



**BCCGC Reminders:**

📌 Remember to add your events to the BC Council of Garden Clubs website. It is one of our most visited sites by people in your community looking for gardening events.

📌 When looking for a guest speaker for your group, visit our speakers list on our website. If you had a great speaker and they are not on our list, ask them to consider adding their name to our list. It is a valuable resource for our members!

We are here to make your jobs easier! Visit [www.bcgardenclubs.com](http://www.bcgardenclubs.com) regularly.



## NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

We would love to feature your club or community garden in the newsletter.

Tell us about some of the projects your club or community garden is involved in.

You are invited to submit an article at any time (please include photos and name of author). Photos should be high resolution and you should include the name of the photographer if possible. Articles should be in the range of 300–500 words. If you have an idea for a

longer piece, connect with the newsletter editor in advance to discuss your idea.

Articles are due on the 15th of the month preceding publication. If they are submitted after that date, they will be held for the next issue.

The **next due date is February 15 for March 1**. Submissions/ inquiries:

[newsletter@bcgardenclubs.com](mailto:newsletter@bcgardenclubs.com)

Lynda Pasacreta, Editor

Pam Robertson, Copy Editor

### BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS

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