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BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS  
FALL MEETING  
OCTOBER 26, 2019

**USING ONLINE SOURCES TO YOUR CLUB'S ADVANTAGE**

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1. **Tried and True:** posters about your club and events are still great idea. Create 8.5 x 11 posters and make these available to download by your members (save as a pdf so everyone can open the file). Print and post to libraries, coffee shops, and other community bulletin boards.
2. **Newspapers:** local newspapers often have a community event section which runs in their hard copy and online editions. Be sure that your meetings, activities, and events are listed. Many people consult the online calendar of local newspapers. If something truly special is happening, create a press release about your event and send it in to the appropriate editor at your local paper. Don't forget to list your plant sale with Brian Minter. He puts out a regular list in early May. Send it to : [mail@mintergardening.com](mailto:mail@mintergardening.com) January/February.
3. **The BCCGC website:** we have an events calendar that now reliably functions. As a member of the BCCGC, your club can post meetings, activities, and events online. To add a listing, go directly to: <https://bcgardenclubs.com/add-events>. If you have any trouble, contact me at [webmaster@bcgardenclubs.com](mailto:webmaster@bcgardenclubs.com). Outside entities can post one event on the calendar with a paid advertisement in the Bulletin or for \$30.
4. **The BCCGC newsletter:** we are happy to have articles after an event is over; send me a message at [newsletter@bcgardenclubs.com](mailto:newsletter@bcgardenclubs.com) for more information. Your group can also purchase an advertisement for an upcoming event. We have very reasonable rates which are posted on our website: <https://bcgardenclubs.com/resources/newsletter>.
5. **Using social media:** yes, use social media! But be patient, it can take a year or so to get an established audience, but like asparagus, it's worth it and you best get it going sooner rather than later. Instagram is ideally suited to garden clubs with our fabulous plant photos to share! Hashtagging your posts is critical to building an audience. See the posts on <https://www.instagram.com/oceanparkorchard> for examples. Tag your photos too (include your supporters in your tags; include every appropriate local IG group in your hashtags).

Unless you have a lot of activity, Twitter is not really suited to garden clubs. To gain a Twitter audience, you need to have something to regularly tweet about. To communicate to your own in-house board or exec, consider What's App or Slack.

You should have a club website. Free websites include Weebly and Wix. These have limited fonts and designs but suit the purposes of most clubs and are super easy to set up. My favorite low-cost website producer is Without Code—very professional and easy to use. The BCCGC uses Wordpress and I really am not a fan, but that is what we have—complex, cumbersome, and takes a lot of skill to set it up and maintain (and you must pay for the server, plug-ins, and widgets). Look for an article about setting up a club website in the Jan. BCCGC newsletter.

Get a mailing list together and set up your lists using a mail program like Mailchimp, so easy and is free at the level most clubs need. The BCCGC uses Mailchimp and I love it (much better than my experiences with Constant Contact).