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Voting will take place online—all clubs may participate.
Hello!

I wanted to reach out to you as we all navigate these challenging times. At the BC Council of Garden Clubs, we have had to make some difficult decisions in response to the current challenges. Our Spring AGM voting for the proposed constitutional change will now be conducted via electronic means. Voting for vacant executive positions will be done at our fall general meeting. With the presumption that we will be able to meet in person again this fall, we have booked our fall meeting for Saturday, October 24th, at the Bonsor Community Centre. Watch for more information on this meeting as we get closer to the date.

As members of garden clubs and community gardens, all of us are part of a community of people who know us, care for each other, and can be sources of support and inspiration. With that in mind, given the current restrictions on gathering and travel, how do we move forward with our monthly meetings, annual plant sales, and the activities we enjoy with each other?

Our first priority should be to support and maintain the health of all the members in our community by following all the Health Authorities’ recommendations—maintaining a social distance of one to two metres, not gathering in groups, and as much as possible remaining at home and limiting our travel/movement except for necessities.

Keeping in touch and maintaining our connection is important to our well-being as individuals and to that of our community, especially as we all pass through this time of change and upheaval. Knowing we are not alone, having others to talk with, and discussing ways to deal with the myriad of large and small changes we each face makes it more bearable for all.

For some of our member clubs, keeping in touch has been through the internet, meeting virtually through Skype, Zoom, or similar programs. For others it has been through blogs or posts on Facebook. Some have started a phone chain or are using e-mail to keep in touch, and others are even using the post to write to each other.

These communications can be about our club, plant sale, gardening in general, or to see if anyone in our community is in need of anything that we can offer—including picking up groceries, medication, or just to say hello and build our friendship(s) and sense of connection.

We can still work on a project together (like our annual plant sales) while maintaining our social distance. For example, through the methods mentioned above, members can support and encourage one another in propagation techniques. Working on projects—together while apart—can also be of great support in focusing our energies on positive activities and learning that we can still accomplish our goals in these new times.

Speaking of plant sales, many garden clubs have realized that their annual plant sale cannot go ahead as in past years. Through discussion, these clubs have determined new ways to serve their greater community while supporting the financial

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needs of their club. For example, one club has decided they will plan for a fall plant sale vs. their usual spring sale. They are encouraging their members to shift their “growing focus” to perennials that can be planted successfully in the fall. At the same time, they are creating an order sheet (after surveying what the members have grown/have available) to be hand delivered to homes in their community so that local residents can place an order that will be delivered to their house—allowing club supporters to still get spring plants, support their local garden club, and maintain their social distance.

We would like to encourage each club and community garden to engage in discussions with their membership and create solutions that work to support the objectives of both their club and our greater community. As in many past times of challenge, the answers lie in coming together as a community, working together, and acting as one—looking out for and thinking of the whole and all the members in our community.

Let’s work to thrive in these times by maintaining and growing our relationships with creative thinking and possibly new uses of technology. And throughout these times, let’s foster a positive impact on our well-being by being of service with and to each other.

How lucky we are to be gardeners; gardening has not been cancelled. Take care of yourself and each other and keep in touch.

PUBLICIZE YOUR CLUB

There are many ways to publicize your club activities and events!

THE BULLETIN

The BCCGC newsletter reaches over 800 subscribers. Why not write an article about your club or special interest to be included in The Bulletin?

The deadline for the July 1st issue is June 15th. You can now use an eTransfer to pay for your ad! See the last page of the newsletter for rate and size information.

THE BCCGC ONLINE CALENDAR

You can list your club events on the BCCGC online calendar for free! Once you list your event and it is approved, you can use the URL (web address of the listing) to share in your advertisements. Your BCCGC event includes a map of the location of your event and a photo (if you have one to upload). The next five upcoming events are also featured on our website.

If you need to change or cancel an event and that function is not working for you, contact webmaster@bcgardenclubs.com

FIND A SPEAKER OR JUDGE!

BY CINDY TATARYN

BCCGC FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

The searchable BCCGC Speakers List is available on our website. You can search by name or by topic. Please email me if you know of a speaker who should be put on the list. If you are a speaker, you can fill in the form on our website (www.bcgardenclubs.com) under the Speakers Directory tab. The Judges List is now available on our website under the Judges tab. If you have questions or input, please contact me (1vicepresident@bcgardenclubs.com).
PROFILE OF A BURSARY RECIPIENT

BY ANNE SPRUNG

SCHOLARSHIP TRUST FUND COMMITTEE

Donations to the BCCGC Scholarship Trust Fund reach all areas of the province, assisting students with their studies. Recent bursary recipient Madeline Clarke sent us a lovely thank you letter for her $1,000 scholarship from Vancouver Island University. I’d like to share it with you.

Hi Anne,

I’d love to share my story with the BCCGC! The award really helped support my studies this year. The attached photo was taken during my work placement at Streamside Native Plants, fertilizing our Devil’s Club!

I grew up in Lethbridge, Alberta, and discovered the Horticulture Technician Foundation program at VIU during a summer trip to Vancouver Island a few years back. I’ve always loved spending time outdoors, and had been looking for a way to develop a professional career in a field that would have me working outside and helping the environment. The Horticulture Technician Foundation program at VIU seemed like a perfect way to meet both of those goals, and it has been a truly rewarding experience. The program has provided a variety of opportunities and experiences in such a short amount of time I wouldn’t have been able to find anywhere else. This summer I was employed at Streamside Native Plants in Bowser, BC. Through this work placement, I discovered that I really enjoy working in a nursery setting. I also developed a strong interest in native plants, which has led me to becoming involved with the Nanaimo and Area Land Trust and their conservation projects. Making the move to BC was intimidating, but now I can’t imagine living and working anywhere else.

The BC Council of Garden Clubs financial assistance helped me support myself during my time in the program, letting me focus on classes, create relationships and develop the skills I need to be successful in this industry.

I can’t thank the BCCGC enough for choosing to support me in achieving my goals and find the confidence to pursue an exciting new career in Horticulture. ~Madeline

Photo: Bursary recipient Madeline Clarke at Streamside Native Plants.
WHAT IS A SEED LIBRARY?

BY ANNE SPRUNG

SURREY SEED LIBRARY

A seed library is a free local source of organically grown seed, where you can borrow herb, vegetable, grain, or flower seed, with the promise to return dried seed from the successful crop at the end of the growing season. There are seed libraries around the province. Many of the volunteers who run the programs are Master Gardeners who understand the local growing conditions. Seed libraries put on educational programs on seed saving, and share resources and information with the local gardening community.

The Surrey Seed Library is supported by Surrey Libraries at the Ocean Park branch. They keep the seed in a climate-controlled room, provide the meeting room, and help with photocopying. We are fortunate to have other donors of seed: West Coast Seeds, the Historic Stewart Farm, and AROCHA. We were also fortunate to get a Vancouver Neighbourhood Grant last year to assist with new storage containers and an honorarium for our speakers.

The multigenerational and ethnic mix of 300+ members allows the Surrey Seed Library to offer a wonderfully diverse mix of vegetables, herbs, and pollinator-friendly flower seed. The library meets once a month from February until November, usually on the third Saturday, from 10:30–3:30. We can only share seed that we are given by our donors and members, so we cannot always meet the choices people request.

Here is the current list of BC seed libraries and supporting organizations (links below are clickable if reading the newsletter online):

- Surrey Seed Library
- Victoria Seed Library
- Sechelt Seed Library
- Richmond Seed Library
- Salt Spring Island Seed Library
- Kalamalka Seed Library
- Kwantlen Polytechnic Seed Library
- Sunshine Coast Seed Saving Collective
- Central Island Seed Savers Network: Contact Jen Cody at jenandbearit@gmail.com
- South Saanich Seed Bank & Exchange: Location at Saanich South Community Office

A wonderful alternative to a seed library is a Seedy Saturday. Seedy Saturdays are a series of independent local events held across the country, usually in time for local spring seeding. Seedy Saturdays are usually free public events, organized and operated by volunteers. They bring together home gardeners, seed savers, native plant collectors, agriculture conservation groups, and community gardeners as well as local seed companies that sell locally grown, open-pollinated, non-GMO varieties of vegetables, fruits, flowers, grains, and herbs.

There are great resources for seed and information about Seedy Saturdays or seed exchanges, at

- BC Seeds, a program of FarmFolk CityFolk
- BC Eco Seeds Co-op
- Seeds of Diversity
- Salt Spring Seeds

They all list local seed events on their websites, please check dates and locations near you.
Like many of you, I am at home thinking, planning, and working on building a future now that the future I thought I had only a few weeks ago has been swept away.

Funny how that happens. Like a wind sweeping out the house and giving us the space to create—whether we wanted to or not. In times like these we can be shocked, fearful, and even frozen with thoughts of what now and what to do? After the initial overwhelm passes, I often reflect on the Chinese symbol for crisis, which is comprised of two characters: Danger and Opportunity.

Much of the danger of the current situation can be mitigated by following the protocols outlined by the Health Authorities and taking care of our family and ourselves. So what then of opportunity?

In The Power of Vision, Joel Barker states, “a positive vision of the future is what gives meaning to life.” It gives us direction, purpose, and keeps our focus on what we can do and influence. By focusing and working on our vision of the future, we stay positive and contribute to family, friends, and the community while moving through the situation with less stress.

When I was elected President, I had a vision for the BC Council of Garden Clubs (BCCGC). In its broadest terms, I would like the Council to represent all the garden clubs, allotments, community gardens, and members throughout the province. The vision grew from the February 23rd, 2019 Vision Day—where 17 members of the Council discussed ideas for the future of the BCCGC and developed the mission statement: To plant seeds of hope for our future by inspiring the gardener in everyone.

There are many ways the Council can be of greater service to our members and their communities, including:

- Regional meetings in different areas of the province where member clubs can meet to share ideas and resources.
- Council representation at local club meetings throughout the province.
- Growing the Scholarship Fund to support more people in their educational goals in horticulture.
- Creating an “Endowment Fund” to fund special projects, garden clubs/community gardens, intergenerational gardens, neighbourhood, community, research, and school initiatives . . . and many more areas.

I would like to continue that work and journey with you, and hope you will join me and the council executive as we further develop a strategic plan and then map out an action plan to realize our vision for BCCGC for the next five years.

Can you please email me with specific things the Council could do that would benefit your club and develop closer ties and communication with your club and its members?

Thank you, Eric Hees
president@bcgardenclubs.com
BACKGROUND AND EXPLANATION FOR OUR VERSION OF THE APRIL 25, 2020 “VIRTUAL” ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

BY LORNA FRASER
BCCGC PAST PRESIDENT

For public health reasons, we are not holding our usual Annual General Meeting (AGM). An e-Bulletin was sent out in March to all representatives of our affiliated clubs officially cancelling the Saturday, April 25, 2020 in-person AGM. The wording in-person was specifically chosen. The BCCGC constitution reads “the Annual General Meeting shall be held in the period from March 1st to April 30th of each year.”

There is no provision in the current BCCGC constitution on how to deal with the reporting and business that would normally arise in an AGM when that AGM is cancelled. This is something that will need to be addressed in the future. In the meantime, your current executive has decided to keep as close as possible to our perception of the spirit of the constitution. Rather than set aside the AGM business until our next general meeting, we are going to stay within the period guidelines given in the constitution and, instead of an in-person meeting, provide you with our version of a Virtual AGM.

The Virtual AGM will come to your club representative as an email from the BCCGC on or near April 13, 2020.

This email will include a link to the information normally distributed at our Annual General Meeting:

- The BCCGC’s 2019 Annual Reports
- The Scholarship Trust Fund’s 2019 Annual Report
- A motion for a constitutional change (emailed to your club in February)
- A list of executive positions that are up for renewal.

If you are the BCCGC representative for your club, be sure to watch for this email. Should it come to you in error, please redirect it to your club representative.

As club representative, you will be able to read through all the material and get up to date with the Council’s activities. There will be a contact email address for you to use should you have questions about any of the material. There will also be a link to SurveyMonkey, where you can vote yes or no to approve the executive reports (to include the 2019 financial statements and the 2020 budget proposal, as well as details about the proposed constitutional change). Make sure to register your vote through SurveyMonkey in time for it to reach the BCCGC by Saturday, April 25, 2020, the scheduled date of the AGM.

Handling the votes electronically will allow all our affiliated member clubs to participate, regardless of where they are located provincially. Although we will not be gathered in-person, we are excited about having this broader participation. Whether to use this form of voting as a regular practice in...
“Handling the votes electronically will allow all our affiliated member clubs to participate, regardless of where they are located provincially.”

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the future will be something to address going forward.

With respect to the list of positions that are up for election this spring, the constitution allows for the executive to appoint people to fill the vacant roles. This is what we plan to do for the short-term. Please contact us should you wish to be considered for a position, or if you know someone you think we should contact. When we are next able to meet in-person we will hold elections for these vacant executive and scholarship trustee positions.

NOW IS THE TIME TO VOLUNTEER

The positions up for election in 2020 are:

**First Vice-President**, two-year position  
bcgardenclubs.com/about/exec-board/first-vice-president-terms-of-reference  

**Treasurer**, two-year position  
bcgardenclubs.com/about/exec-board/treasurer-terms-of-reference  

**Communications Coordinator**, two-year position  
bcgardenclubs.com/about/exec-board/communications-coordinator-terms-of-reference  

**Scholarship Trustee**, three-year position  
bcgardenclubs.com/about/exec-board/scholarship-trust-committee-terms-of-reference

Linda Stanley Wilson, have both indicated that they will again put their names forward. Our current Treasurer, Ruby Miller, will be stepping down as of April 25. A member of an affiliated club has come forward to volunteer to step into the Treasurer’s position.

There are a total of three trustees on the Scholarship Trust Fund (STF) Committee. Each year, one of the trustee’s completes their three-year term and a new trustee is added to the committee. Currently, there is no one lined up to fill this third position.

In addition to attending the spring and fall general meetings, the BCCGC executive meets six to nine times a year. These meetings are several hours in length and are used to steer the direction of the council as well as to plan the general meetings. Times and dates for the executive meetings are chosen to accommodate the executive members’ schedules. There are no meetings during the summer. The STF Committee holds their own meetings and sends a representative to the executive meetings.

As we are not able to hold our in-person AGM this year; the formal elections for these positions will be delayed until our next meeting.

Contact me for further information and to pass on the names of people to contact who may be interested in volunteering for the council (pastpresident@bcgardenclubs.com).

~Lorna Fraser
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NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTIONS

We would love to feature your club in the newsletter. You are invited to submit an article at any time (please include photos). 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 June 15th for the July 1st issue.

Submissions/inquiries: newsletter@bcgardenclubs.com.

NEWSLETTER ADVERTISEMENTS

BCCGC member groups and outside vendors wishing to advertise events in our newsletter are invited to submit an ad electronically.

Advertising Rate

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Camera-ready artwork (300 dpi jpg or pdf) and payment due June 15th. Send artwork to newsletter@bcgardenclubs.com. You may also contact us about how to eTransfer the payment.

Linda Stanley Wilson, Editor
Pam Robertson, Copy Editor

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