

# **THE BULLETIN**

**BRITISH COLUMBIA COUNCIL  
OF GARDEN CLUBS**

**JULY 2026**

# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## LYNDA PASACRETA

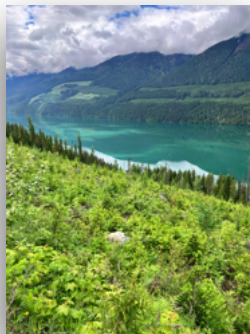
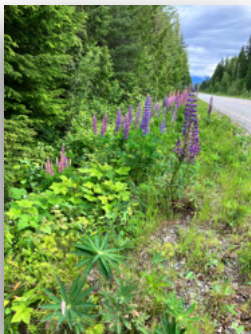
### PLEASE FORWARD TO ALL OF YOUR CLUB MEMBERS

**"Because the greatest part of a road trip isn't arriving at your destination. It's all the wild stuff that happens along the way."** – Emma Chase

Dan and I recently decided to explore an area that we grew up in – the West Kootenays – primarily the Trout Lake area. Even though Dan grew up in Nelson and I grew up in Castlegar, we had not visited this area.

We followed Highway 31 after catching a free ferry ride from Shelter Bay to Galena. We started our road trip (all dirt roads by the way) via Beaton, formerly Thompson's Landing. In 1896, the steamboat landing for the Arrowhead-Beaton Ferry was located here. The area was famous for logging and now is the location of the Beaton slate mine – beautiful blue slate is everywhere in this part of the West Kootenays. According to our geology friend, we were in an area that is part of the Precambrian shield. It has some of the oldest exposed rocks in the world – about 2.5 million years old.

Our very slow road trip took us down Trout Lake, followed along the Lardeau River to the bottom of the Duncan Dam, and then to the massive body of water of the Kootenay Lake – the whole route interconnected and was filled with wildlife!



It was a feast for our eyes, and ears, and nose. Butterflies were bouncing around our feet and legs (bright yellow swallowtails, colourful painted ladies, dark and gorgeous Lorquin's admirals, and Parnassian butterflies, "snow Apollos"). Tiny flocks of pine siskin birds were forcing us to stop and wait for them to finish their feast of tiny pebbles to help their wee bellies to grind up food. The locals tell us that we should honk our horn anytime we come across these little fellows on the road.

Deer, moose, and grouse were just standing in the middle of the road, which also delayed our delightful journey. A cacophony of bird songs played to us as we took in the sights.

What caused us to just stop and breathe was the vast array of native wildflowers growing everywhere – the lupins were stunning.

We highly recommend this trip to everyone – the wild stuff that happens along the way makes you soak it all in!



Trout Lake to Kaslo. Photos by Lynda Pasacreta — lupins everywhere and a lovely view of Trout Lake.

PRIZE DONATIONS AT THE BC COUNCIL OF GARDEN CLUBS SPRING MEETING 🙏

Club/Vendor	Donation
Fraser Valley Rose Farms	Rose 'Francis Meilland'
Canadian Western Association of Floral Arts Club	15 books
New Westminster Horticultural Society	Plant shears and mister
BC Floral Arts	Floral vases, books
North Surrey Horticultural Society	Hanging basket
South Burnaby Garden Club	Gardener's pot of goodies
Dunbar Garden Club	\$25 Hunter's Garden Centre gift card
Lorna Herchenson	Citronella scented geranium
Maple Ridge Garden Club	Sempervivum planter
Dogwood Garden Club	Two bags of dahlias
Upper Lonsdale Garden Club	Itoh peony 'Singing in the Rain'
Richmond Garden Club	Four plants (Columbines, peony, bleeding heart)
Vancouver Rose Society	Rose (Honey moon)
Langley Garden Club	Trug and <i>Hacquetica epipactis</i>
South Delta Garden Club	Non hardy succulent planter
Darts Hill Conservancy Trust Society	Coulter pine cone and bag
Vancouver Dahlia Society	Five dahlia tubers
BC Fuchsia, Begonia and Geranium Society	Basket with 2026 project plant
Grower's Delight	Sol activator and water bottle
Vancouver African Violet and Gesneriad Club	Solar patio lamp
South Surrey Garden Club	Rose pruning gloves and watering globe
BC Horticultural and Floral Design Judges Society	Orchid plant
Floral Artists of the Fraser Valley	Bougainvillea
Lynn Valley Garden Club	Spider azalea ( <i>Rhode linear folia</i> )
FOGS (Friends of UBC)	Rhododendron 'Percy Wiseman'
Peatland Protection Society	T-shirt
My Farmer's Garden	Blueberry jam
<b>Total raised in prize draw</b>	<b>\$517.50</b>

## DONOR PROFILE: NEW WESTMINSTER HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY MAKES IT HAPPEN! PAM ROBERTSON, SCHOLARSHIP FUND COMMITTEE

Since its founding back in 1934, the New Westminister Horticultural Society has been focused on sharing garden knowledge and bringing like-minded garden enthusiasts together to celebrate all things horticultural. And with education at the forefront of their mission, like many clubs they support the BC Council of Garden Clubs Scholarship Fund with an annual donation, like clockwork.

You may also recognize their members from over the years at the BC Council's Spring AGM and Fall General Meeting, where they go above and beyond in helping raise money for the fund by organizing and running the draw table – handling everything from gathering donations and distributing tickets to calling out the winners at the end of the day. They've been doing so for about 20 years, according to club historian Audrey Barnes, who remembers helping with it at St. Helen's Hall before the meetings moved to the Fireman's Hall, and then to Bonsor.

Every single penny raised by the draw table goes into the scholarship fund (as do the table fees paid by the vendors on hand). It's a significant and ongoing amount we receive from attendees who support the draw, all made possible by the volunteers from New West.

The NWHS meets 10 times a year – from February to November – on the second Tuesday of the month, at the Centennial Lodge in Queen's Park. The club currently has about 170 members. A typical monthly meeting features a guest speaker, a tea and coffee break with donated goodies, a horticultural lending library, time to socialize, and a popular prize draw. Members often share seeds and gardening information, too, and can showcase their garden bounty on the Flowers from the Garden display table. They also hold annual photo and container contests and tours of members' gardens each July.

Club president Lorna Cloutier also describes a fun activity the club has undertaken: "We are also doing an Adventures in Gardening Challenge. This year, a member is growing the same plant in five different soil

mixes, and giving them the exact same treatment. The member reports each month how things are going, or gives us a related challenge, and really gets the members involved.

"Initially she had the members nominate some potting soil mixes. This past month she brought the samples and asked people to guess – by looking at, feeling, and possibly smelling the soils – which soil might do the best. They were numbered by her husband so even she doesn't know exactly which soil is which, so it is a blind soil test. In the fall they will be judged on how well they grew and produced."

And when it comes to community support, the scholarship fund is just one beneficiary of the club's generosity. Many members are involved in the well-known Plant a Row, Grow a Row program – from growing extra veggies to working the drive thru and making regular donations – and each year's Christmas party raises money for a charity voted on by the membership. In 2025 they supported BC Agriculture in the Classroom, with the funds raised being enough to support the Spuds in Tubs program at a local elementary school for three years.

With their charitable giving, the New Westminister Horticultural Society is proving how a dedication to horticultural learning and having determined volunteers can provide meaningful support to students of all ages.





## 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.



## HOW FAR CAN WE GO?

### DEBBIE MELLENGER, SCHOLARSHIP FUND CHAIR

Our fundraising goal for 2026 is \$12,000. We have surpassed that goal and with only **\$700** more in donations we will reach the \$13,000 mark. Keep those donations coming in for our horticultural students throughout British Columbia!

Thank you for all of  
your continued support!  
We appreciate it!



Cecil Beaton Photographs — Women's Horticultural College, Waterperry House, Oxfordshire, 1943. Photo from Wikimedia Commons.

## BC AGRICULTURE AND FOOD EDUCATION

### TINA EVANS, PROGRAM AND EVENTS COORDINATOR

BCAIFC is a non-profit, charitable organization that works with educators to bring BC agriculture and food education to K-12 students throughout the province. We are based out of Abbotsford, where we have our office and an educational garden called the Pencil Patch.

Each year, we hold an event called Summer Institute, a week-long professional development course held in Abbotsford July 20-24 for adult participants. The program provides educators, community leaders, and members with tools and resources to help integrate important concepts related to food, agriculture, and environmental sustainability into their learning and work environments. The course version is done through UBC but this year we have reached capacity for our UBC spots, so we have decided to open up a limited number of spots for adults to take it as a non-credit workshop. There are no prerequisites and participants would be given a certificate of completion at the end.

Throughout the week, our Chef Ambassador, Chef Randle, prepares snacks and lunches for participants and leads cooking demonstrations. We also take participants on field trips to visit local agriculture-related businesses/farms and have industry speakers come out to talk to the group about a variety of age-related topics. It is a fun but full week. Participants walk away with lots of information and insight into local agriculture. I think this would be a useful and informative workshop for Rise-Up volunteers. More information on Summer Institute

can be found here: <https://www.bcaifc.ca/summer-institute>

The cost of the workshop is \$550 + GST. This includes everything for the week — all the content (tours, speakers), the charter bus for Tuesday/Thursday, Red Seal chef-led cooking classes, coffee/tea/water, and daily chef prepared snacks and lunch. Participants also get a swag/resource bag and opportunity to win a daily prize.



**Calling all Adult Learners - Register for Summer Institute today!**

## SOME TIME IN THE GARDEN

### SÉBASTIEN CHABOT AND MICHAEL SLACK

Dear Members of the BC Council of Garden Clubs,

We appreciate this opportunity to share our work with the broader British Columbia horticultural community in this month's newsletter. As the filmmakers behind the documentary series *Some Time in the Garden*, we are currently embarking on our third summer of filming. Thanks to Lynda Pasacreta's invaluable assistance, we were recently introduced to the vibrant horticultural communities of the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island.

Seizing the opportunity to explore West Coast gardening landscapes for the series, we filmed five beautiful green spaces this past month in Richmond, Surrey, North Vancouver, and Victoria. We visited gardens ranging from backyard sanctuaries dedicated to mental wellness and bustling community parks to lush, microclimatic coastal rainforest havens. Most rewarding of all, however, was meeting the dedicated individuals who continually will these green oases into existence.

To introduce ourselves properly, we are Sébastien Chabot and Michael Slack, a two-person team based out of our small farm nestled in firefly country on the Ontario/Québec border. In addition to filmmaking, we maintain active, 30-year careers in the arts. Sébastien works as a film and television director, while I teach performance costume design at the National Theatre School of Canada in Montréal.

Our horticultural film career began in 2007 during a transformative visit to the iconic Les Quatre Vents estate in the Charlevoix region of Quebec. Profoundly moved by our experience walking through the garden rooms, we composed a letter to the late proprietor and renowned plantsman, Mr. Frank Cabot. Knowing his reputation for fiercely guarding his privacy and declining media access for the previous three decades, we fully anticipated a polite rejection. To our immense

surprise, Mr. Cabot invited us back to his garden to discuss our approach over lunch. That single exchange initiated a spectacular 10-year journey to document the paradise he created in Eastern Quebec, culminating in our feature documentary *The Gardener*. Nearly twenty years after that fateful lunch, we are humbled that our first film continues to resonate with audiences globally.

Filming a feature-length documentary taught us that while flowers are fleeting, cinematic production is a lengthy process. We are now several years into the development of our second feature film, but we sought a more immediate way to share the incredible stories we encounter. The solution has turned out to be a dedicated YouTube channel where we can showcase these beautiful gardens. Through this platform, we have discovered that the gardening community is beautifully diverse. Individuals tailor their green spaces to their unique needs – whether for aesthetic expression and curated landscape design, botanical preservation through dedicated plant collecting, or the social cohesion found within community plots. Ultimately, these distinct paths are united by a shared commitment to working the soil and the profound benefits it brings.

This endeavour remains entirely a passion project rather than a commercial enterprise, and the relationships we have forged have proven to be our greatest reward. The extraordinary people we have met – many of whom we now consider friends – have reminded us that community and a shared connection to the earth are the true currencies of our lives. We all belong to a remarkably rich gardening community across this country, and we are thrilled to share these green spaces and their gardeners' stories with you. Thank you for welcoming us into your community, and we look forward to our next visit to the beautiful West Coast.

## SOME TIME IN THE GARDEN, CONT'D

### SÉBASTIEN CHABOT AND MICHAEL SLACK

The five episodes will air over the coming year, with the first episode highlighting our time spent in Paulik Park in Richmond. We sincerely hope you enjoy them. To join the conversation, please find us on YouTube at [www.youtube.com/@SomeTimeintheGarden](http://www.youtube.com/@SomeTimeintheGarden).

Warmly,

Sébastien and Michael

#### Where to Watch *The Gardener*:

- **Apple TV:** [Stream on Apple TV](#)
- **Prime Video:** [Stream on Prime Video](#)



# Upcoming Courses

## Landscape Horticulture Certificate

- Jan 18 - Nov 19, 2027
- Full-time Mon-Thurs 9-4, Fri 9-12:30

### Level 1

- Jan 19 - May 20, 2027
- Part-Time Tues, Thurs 6-9 & Sat 9-4

### Level 2

- Aug 11 - Dec 17, 2026
- Part-Time Tues, Thurs 6-9 & Sat 9-4

### Level 3

- Nov 2 - Dec 11
- Full-time. Week 1-4 online, Week 5 & 6 in-person @ PHC

### Level 4 (Part-Time)

- Aug 10 - Dec 12, 2026
- Part-Time Mon, Wed 6-9 & Sat 9-4

### Level 4 (Full-Time)

- Feb 1 - March 12, 2027
- Full-Time Mon - Fri 9-4

contact:  
admissions@hcp.ca

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<https://hcp.ca/pacific-horticulture-college/>

## FIRESMART BC "HOT TIPS"

### Hot Tip #1:

Keep grass cut to less than 10 cm — fires can ignite and travel quickly through long grass.

### Hot Tip #2:

Bark mulch is highly flammable. Remove bark mulch from around your home and don't lead fire to your door.

### Hot Tip #3:

Are overhead power lines clear of vegetation? Contact your service provider for assistance with removing trees close to utility lines.

### Hot Tip #4:

Clean your roof and gutters of leaves and pine needles.

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

## SCOTCH BLOOM — A FRIEND OR FOE?

LYNDA PASACRETA, RICHMOND GARDEN CLUB

On a recent trip to the West Kootenays, we were travelling alongside the beautiful Kootenay Lake, one of the largest natural, ice-free freshwater lakes in British Columbia, stretching approximately 104 km long!

We travelled from Kaslo to Nelson, which is approximately 69.5 km. Not long out of Kaslo we started to see Scotch broom growing along the roadside. *Cytisus scoparius*, or Scotch broom is a deciduous leguminous shrub native to western and central Europe.

Scotch broom is an escaped garden plant from Europe that easily invades sunny, disturbed sites such as rangeland, roadsides, and areas of recent logging activity.

Scotch broom is highly flammable and combustible so it increases the intensity of wildfires! It crowds out native plants that wildlife depend upon. A mature plant can live up to 25 years and produces seeds (up to 10,000 seeds!) that can survive in soil for 30 years.

This plant followed along on both sides of the road the entire 69.5 km! It was even tucked against older homes along the way and seemed to be considered a garden plant by the homeowners.

The wildflowers we were enjoying around the Trout Lake area were gone.

As our province has been dealing with increasing wildfire activity, this would be the first plant I would remove from my landscape.

If you have Scotch broom on your property contact Invasive Species Council of BC – <https://bcinvasives.ca> or call toll-free 250-305-1003.



## THE ART OF WATERING DURING DRY SPELLS

### LYNDA PASACRETA, RICHMOND GARDEN CLUB

The last notable rainfall in the Lower Mainland occurred between June 6 and June 9 — with a total of 11.3 mm in total.

Our gardens are extremely dry and with the level 3 restrictions in place in the region, we can only hand water.

Many of our edible crops need quite a lot of water to produce tasty veggies and fruit for our year-round nourishment.

We are all focused on gardening sustainably with little impact on the environment and keeping our soil healthy.

There are a lot of online resources to remind us best practices in watering our gardens.

West Coast Seeds and Phoenix Perennials have offered some very good advice for sustainable watering practices.

According to Gary Lewis from Phoenix Perennials, dry soil becomes hydrophobic and resists the penetration of water so water will just stay on the surface and not get down to the roots.

Gary suggests creating a circular dyke by removing excess soil from the base of the plant. This method will create a bowl that you can fill with water. The water will sink down and travel to the thirsty roots. This method works for planting new plants and watering existing plants.

West Coast Seeds offers advice on best practices for sustainable watering.

Most of us know that the best time to water is early in the morning. This is when the soil is coolest so the water will not evaporate.

Water less frequently but water more deeply. As we know, plants get water through their roots, and less frequent watering encourages the plants to grow deeper roots.

Water close to the soil not overhead. The plant's leaves will act as a sun umbrella, reducing evaporation so more water has an opportunity to soak into the soil.

Paulik Park volunteers are continuously reminded about watering deeply. We have a practice of digging into the soil or spreading a layer of the soil with our hands to see how deep the water has gone. If it is dry we continue to hand water.

Adding a layer of mulch after watering helps conserve water in the soil and helps prevent weeds from springing back up.

West Coast Seeds and Phoenix Perennials both advise to know your plants. Choose plants that are drought-tolerant (and pollinator friendly).

One of our BC Council of Garden Clubs members is excellent at xeriscape landscaping. Check out the Okanagan Xeriscape Association for inspiration on drought-resistant gardens — [www.okanaganxeriscape.org](http://www.okanaganxeriscape.org).

Sources:

[www.westcoastseeds.com](http://www.westcoastseeds.com)

[www.phoenixperennials.com](http://www.phoenixperennials.com)



Photo by Alice Jensen-Stanley, Richmond Garden Club. Drought-resistant *Helianthus* in Paulik Park.

## DARTS HILL SCARECROW STROLL

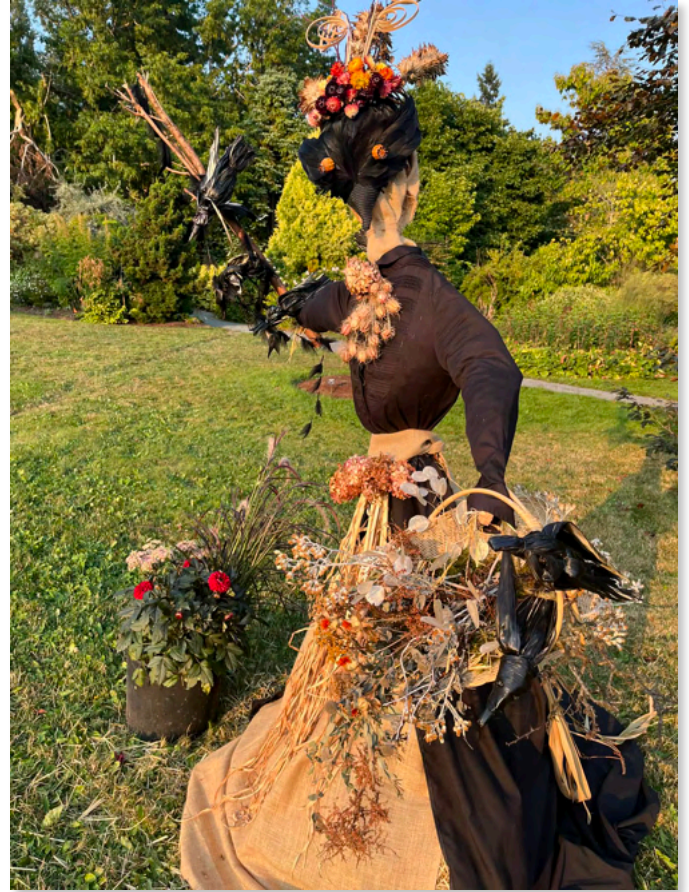
LINDSEY MCCANN, CHAIR, DARTS HILL CONSERVANCY TRUST SOCIETY

Darts Hill is inviting members from local garden clubs and other non profits to participate in the Darts Hill Scarecrow Stroll,

Last year was the first time this event was held and six teams from local garden clubs and non profits participated. For more information, visit us at [www.dartshill.ca/scarecrow-stroll/](http://www.dartshill.ca/scarecrow-stroll/).



"Alzheimers Awareness" by South Surrey Garden Club 2025. Photo by Cynthia Waiz, DHGTS.



"Queen of Crows" by BC Floral Arts Society, 2025. Photo by Cynthia Waiz, DHGTS.



# VICTORIA LILY SOCIETY

## SUMMER SCENTSATIONS SHOW, TEA, SILENT AUCTION AND PLANT SALE

The Victoria Lily Society's Summer Scentsations Flower Show, Sale and Tea is on Saturday July 11, 2026 from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Lambrick Park Church, 1780 Feltham Road, Victoria B.C

Show admission is by donation and a fancy Tea with homemade scones and baked goods (and coffee) is available for \$5.00. There is a silent auction and the plant sale features potted lilies and a wide variety of other plants including specialty items from some local growers. The judged show includes lilies, roses, perennials, foliage, succulents, fruits, vegetables and more. The public (including children) are welcome to submit their own entries that meet the Show Schedule criteria at no charge. The 2026 Show Schedule can be viewed at <https://victorialilysociety.ca/services-2/>.



**The Victoria Lily Presents**  
**Summer Scentsations**

# Flower Show

## Plant Sale & Fancy Tea

- Judged exhibits
- including Floral Designs
- Silent Auction
- Wheelchair accessible
- Admission by donation
- Lots of free parking

Tea/coffee with scones and homemade sweets *only* \$5

**Saturday July 11 . 10 - 4 PM**

Lambrick Park Church Hall 1780 Feltham Rd. Victoria V8N 2A1

Don't miss our **HUGE**  
**LILY AND PLANT SALE**  
Come Early for Best Selection  
[www.Victorialilysociety.ca](http://www.Victorialilysociety.ca)



# 2026

THE THEME OF THE YEAR | LE THÈME DE L'ANNÉE



## Therapeutic Gardening Jardinage Thérapeutique

Plants You.ca

Les plantes vous .ca

### Announcing the 2026 Communities in Bloom Theme — Therapeutic Gardening

This year, CiB is recognizing the restorative power of green spaces — gardens that nurture the mind, body, and spirit. For more information on therapeutic gardening — <https://bccib.ca>.

Horticultural therapy uses plant and nature-based engagement to improve physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

Some ideas of sensory and mindful activities in the garden can include:

- Sensory planting: Grow raised beds using highly aromatic and textural plants such as lavender, mint, lamb's ear, lemon balm to help calm and trigger memories and for those affected with anxiety or dementia.
- Plant small indoor containers like teacups with herbs such as peppermint or chamomile, offering low-impact, tactile engagement.
- Plant mandalas: Gather colourful fallen leaves, twigs, and petals to create geometric, meditative designs.

• Paint and dirt go together: Paint up clay garden pots first, then plant colourful flowers in each pot. Display on a shelf or pallet.

• Terrarium building: Create miniature, enclosed ecosystems in glass jars. This activity breaks a complex task into manageable steps — such as layering gravel, soil, and charcoal — that can boost planning and sequential thinking.



# 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 July 15 for August 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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