

# Growing GREAT PLACES Together

B.C. COMMUNITIES IN BLOOM NEWSLETTER

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Communities in Bloom

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September 1, 2023

On behalf of the Directors and Judges, we want to thank this year's participants in the British Columbia Communities in Bloom program.

Each of our Evaluated, Friends and Showcase Non-Evaluated participants will be recognized with Certificates and in an Awards PowerPoint presentation on our website in the coming weeks.

We will also arrange an in-person presentation by one of our BC CiB representatives to come and personally present your award. Please let us know so we can have them be available for your media, event or council meeting.

Volunteers are the backbone of this program, and your team efforts are a testament to how well "Growing Great Places Together" works. We thank you for your ongoing support of this valuable program that does so much for CommUnity Success!

Sincerely,

Floortje Molenaar,  
BC CiB Chair



Left to right: Edward Stanford, Shirley Fowler, Mary Jackson, Heather Doheny, Linda Tomlinson, Kerry Bysouth, Yvette May, Darlene Kalawsky, Floortje Molenaar, Anne Kulla, Thomas Meyer, Allie Double.

**Look for BC Communities in Bloom at the UBCM Tools, Resources and Funding Session on September 18<sup>th</sup>.**

## Community Showcase – Town of Qualicum Beach – Friend



In the idyllic setting of Qualicum Beach, the importance of youth interaction with nature and Communities in Bloom takes on a unique significance. Here, young people are not merely observers; but dedicated stewards of the environment, guided by the example of mindful seniors, parents and teachers.

Through hands-on engagement in gardens, parks, and eco-initiatives, Qualicum Beach's youth cultivate a profound sense of responsibility for their surroundings. This dynamic interplay between youth, nature, and their community underscores their pivotal role in ensuring a sustainable future. Our youth truly showcase the potential for positive change and a harmonious coexistence with nature.

Town of Qualicum Beach



This September Newsletter features: Shoots with Roots and Qualicum Beach Museum Gardens, and the October newsletter will feature: Brant Wildlife Childrens Festival, Global Roams and Mindfulness in May.

## Community Showcase – Town of Qualicum Beach – Friend

### SHOOTS WITH ROOTS

The Shoots with Roots Program at Milner Gardens & Woodland started in 2003, beginning as an introduction to gardening for children. The program has since evolved into a place-based, curriculum-linked nature education program that connects children with nature.

Based on five interconnected field trips, the Program enables local elementary school children to observe seasonal changes, develop memories of natural events, plant seeds that they see grow into plants, and even form relationships with favorite trees.

As our world becomes increasingly connected by technology, children are increasingly disconnected from the natural world around them. In order to become stewards of the natural world, they need opportunities to not just learn about nature but also experience it in a joyful, first-hand way.

Revisiting a favorite place several times and connecting with nature-loving mentors helps create a sense of stewardship in young children. The Program is different from many typical school nature field trips because it provides both of these opportunities. Shoots with Roots is not a one-time field trip to learn about plants, it is a year-long project where students build a connection to nature, and their place in it over time.

Time spent in nature has been shown to contribute positively to both the mental health and academic success of children. The connection to the natural world that children develop through Shoots with Roots hopefully inspires them to be stewards and contributes to their overall well-being.



## Community Showcase – Town of Qualicum Beach – Friend



### QUALICUM BEACH MUSEUM GARDENS

The beautiful 'Barbara Kulla Garden,' is the highlight of our community museum. It is named after a beloved and knowledgeable volunteer, who spent years developing the garden and nurturing its many plants.

At the centre of the garden stands the Salish Bear pole, by acclaimed Cowichan artist, Hwunumetse' (Simon Charlie), and the breathtaking Salish Sea sparkles in the distance. Radiating outward is a dazzling array of flowering plants, trees and shrubs, including indigenous varieties such as arbutus and trillium. One hears the cheerful songs of chickadees and finches, and the gentle buzz of hummingbird's wings. Information panels help visitors learn about water-

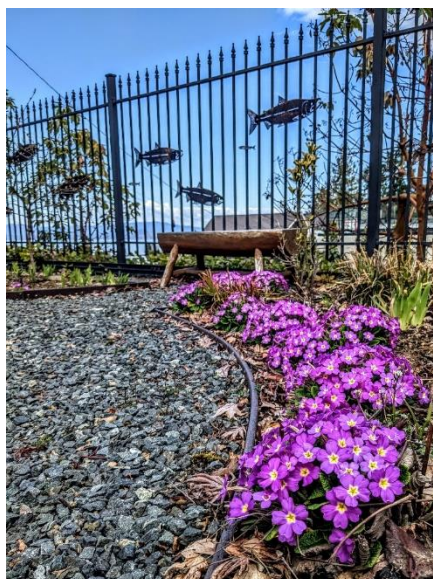
wise and pollinator-friendly gardening, while raised garden beds and multi-graft apple trees show how to grow a variety of species with a small footprint.

The volunteer gardeners are seniors, generously sharing their expertise to create something beautiful for their community and visitors. The garden is also a learning place for children, who make a small 'bee puppet' out of paper, which they 'buzz' around the garden, learning about nature through play. They are also given a small pot with some soil and a sunflower seed to grow at home.

The museum is planning another garden in a treed area, that will start by addressing the invasive species, and identifying and encouraging the indigenous plants. In collaboration with an Indigenous knowledge keeper, we will add interpretation about the traditional names and uses of these plants, and an accessible path for community members to explore the wonder of nature - right on their doorstep.

The Qualicum Beach Museum is a keeper of memories and stories, and the garden continues this narrative into nature which spans across time.

Photo credit:  
Kisselle Reid, Qualicum Beach



## Community Showcase – Castlegar CiB Business Planter Program - Friend

**Purpose:** To engage Castlegar Businesses with the Communities in Bloom program and its values, by improving community appearance and to encourage environmentally sustainable actions.

**Program Description:** Since 2017, when we began this program, we purchased Equinox Skyline planters. They are designed with reservoirs which require, much less water, and provide for a balanced moisture level in containers for better growth. The moisture loss is minimal, less water is required and with less labor costs to maintain. These planters are indestructible, (being made from recycled plastic), they are a great investment for this program. Currently, we have 24 leased planters in Castlegar. Our initial focus was the downtown area, as it needed a much-improved curb appeal in many business frontages. It has now expanded to uptown locations.

**How it Works:** This is coordinated by a sub committee of four individuals, who are very enthusiastic community members. The businesses are approached in early October to renew or purchase the lease. Initially, we were operating on a yearly basis, but now we are starting on a two-year lease program. Each year the business receives two, one-of-a-kind, designs in their planters. These are created by volunteers, in May (Summer) and in November (Winter). Businesses receive information on the Castlegar in Bloom program (Brochure), maintenance information, and one personalized watering can, with our Castlegar CIB Logo. The cost per planter per year is \$150. Businesses are allowed to purchase two per year. Each business receives a written receipt after signing on.

Each planter design is created by volunteers according to the growing conditions of that site. They change up every year dependent on a theme. Maintenance is the sole responsibility of the business owner and staff. Volunteers are assigned locations to monitor and offer support, during the summer months.

**Program Insights:** it is a very successful community engagement project. We have 100% participation from year to year. Word of mouth and the improved appearance of the business frontage tells its own story. All proceeds stay in this program for purchase of plant materials, fertilizers and to purchase more planters. Soil used in planters is from our local community enviro green recycling program.

**Successes:** Businesses are involved with maintenance, taking ownership, and enjoying the compliments, which are shared on these gorgeous one-of-a-kind planters. Photos & sponsors are posted on social media, giving recognition for business support of this leasing program.

Community recognition happens at our volunteer recognition event when judges visit our community.



**Outcome:** By purchasing Equinox planters, the Provincial Communities in Bloom program receives rebates from Equinox, on a yearly basis. A win-win situation for all involved.

# Sicamous COMMUNITIES IN BLOOM 2023

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## To all friends of Sicamous Communities in Bloom:

Although we chose not to participate in the evaluated category in 2023, we continue to make the revitalization and beautification of Sicamous a priority.

We considered submitting a showcase entry for 2023, but had a lot of important priorities and decided our best course of action was to complete as much as we could on several fronts.

In July of this year, Council adopted a Heritage Register for Sicamous. This can be explored on our [\*\*Sicamous Heritage webpage\*\*](#). This has been a priority for Communities in Bloom for several years. In partnership with the Sicamous Museum & Historical Society and a very motivated group of residents, Communities in Bloom was able to offer support in bringing this important Sicamous initiative to fruition.

Downtown revitalization continues to be a priority for Communities in Bloom. We continue to work with the Legion to keep their site looking its best and to encourage long-blooming drought-resistant perennials to limit water use as much as possible. This year, the Legion added a sun sail to the Communities in Bloom sponsored patio project to make it even more fabulous.

Our feature downtown business this year is the Paradise Motel. The owner is a great supporter of Communities in Bloom and has discussed his vision and ideas with us throughout his business revitalization project. He has added much needed downtown camp sites and a laundromat; at the same time, Paradise Motel has added local artwork, plantings and screening. The owner has gone above and beyond to create a space that is lovely while simultaneously adding much needed services and amenities to our downtown.

# Sicamous COMMUNITIES IN BLOOM 2023

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Because the Sicamous Pickleball Club has been a great supporter of the Annual Communities in Bloom Community Clean Up, Communities in Bloom was happy to lend support to the club. The Pickleball Club requested that the District of Sicamous convert two of the three tennis courts into six new pickleball courts. Communities in Bloom provided screening and wind breaks for the courts and is working with the arts council to provide artwork as well. Sicamous hosted its first annual Pickleball Tournament at the new courts. Everyone agreed it was a great event and we have created an amazing facility for the community.



The District of Sicamous continues to make the environment and responsible energy use a priority. Communities in Bloom supported the District conversion to LED lighting this year. We love the efficient night lighting that has been added and how much more vibrant our downtown is in the evening.

Sicamous completed their **Active Transportation Network Plan** earlier this year and it was endorsed by council on April 12. The plan will help inform and guide the development of infrastructure, policies and programs for human-powered forms of transportation in the community. Goals of the plan include encouraging more environmentally friendly forms of transportation, improved connectivity, improved safety of transportation within the community and making transportation in the community more accessible.



Sicamous continues to build on fire safety within the community. This year, the District received a grant to hire a FireSmart Coordinator and crew to support the **FireSmart program** and work with residents to reduce fire risk within the community.

Sicamous continues to make bylaw education a focus over enforcement. Bylaw officer John Moore was **recently featured in the local newspaper** for his educational approach to bylaw compliance. A community ambassador was hired for the summer to work with bylaw enforcement on public education.



This year's Community Banner Project showed strong support for CiB with its pollinator theme. Communities in Bloom's partnership with the **Eagle Valley Arts Council** facilitates the addition of beautiful art throughout our community annually.

**STAY TUNED – MANY EXCITING CIB PROJECTS COMING SOON!**