

SEEDERS AND WEEDERS NEWSLETTER



FEBRUARY 2023

Armstrong & District Garden Club

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EXECUTIVE

President - Carolyn Farris, 250-546-6083 ; cfarris@telus.net

Vice president - Vacant

Secretary - Tracee Andrews

Treasurer - Sue Wiebe

Membership Secretary - Chris Williams

Past President - Glenn Gytenbeek 250-546-9891; gcgardenedge@telus.net

Newsletter Editor - Vacant

Directors - Heather Freeman

Sunshine - Dianne Lockton and Heather Hayes

Door Prizes - Sue Rook

GENERAL MEETING

First Tuesday of month Sep to Jun in Oddfellows Hall, Armstrong except Jan

EXECUTIVE MEETING - 5:30 before General Meeting

Executive Report

Happy New Year to everyone and best wishes for a fun and successful gardening year for 2023. The good news is the club has a basic executive to continue functioning. The challenge is that a lot of volunteers are needed for small or one time / short term jobs to make the year success and the club move forward. If you able to volunteer for anything please let Carolyn know of your interest and your time availability. Many hands make light work. The most urgent need is volunteers to serve on the Plant Sale Committee or we will not have a plant sale in May

A huge thank you to Glen Gytenbeek, Mary Jackson and Judi Cogan as they take a well deserved break but not for too long we hope.

Carolyn

MEMBERSHIPS ARE NOW DUE. PLEASE BRING TO THE MARCH MEETING OR MAIL A CHECK TO CHRIS WILLIAMS AT #2-2435 OKANAGAN ST, ARMSTRONG, V0E 1B1

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

A good time was had by all attendees with great food and conversation. We are hoping to have an even bigger social next year so please mark your calendar for December 5, 2023 and plan to start the festive season with lots of gardening conversations.





At the February meeting, Janet Stoll spoke on Healthy House Plants. All had been asked to bring a favourite plant and share it as a starter for discussion. Snake Plant (Mother in laws Tongue) and a small cactus were shared. These were favourites because they did not require a lot of care, adjusts to a variety of house temperatures and could be allowed to dry out.

All plants want to reproduce and flower even if you don't see them doing it. An example of Pony Tail Pom which is also included as a succulent.

Members were asked if they had any questions. Shrek Ears with white cotton looking spots is caused by mealy bugs. 3 tbsp Dr Browner's peppermint soap, 3/4 c of isopropyl alcohol and put in a 1 quart spray bottle and fill. Spray on the plant. Check carefully and repeat until the plant is clear. Check often and spray whenever noticed. They may be spread by wind currents or come in on a new plant or soil. This works for scale as well. It works on orchids, jade plants and a variety of other plants.

Some houseplants such as Scheffelara have a natural bloom that protects them from temperature, pests and looks like dust on the leaves.

Fruit flies and fungus gnats can come from unpasteurized soil. A good choice is Nursery Land organic potting soil mixed with store potting soil.

Christmas cactus cuttings are best taken at a joint and let dry for 3-7 days and let them dry. Then root the cuttings in water or dirt. Northwest corner light works well. Water over summer every two weeks lightly. The plants have never been re-potted. Cactus needs at least 13 hours of darkness to set their buds. Withholding water often sets new

blooms. They can be fed in the spring with an all purpose mix or in the fall with a large third number.

Fungus mats are useful to put in plants to reduce pests. It is important to put them right down in the soil. It is also important to regularly remove all the dried and dead leaves from the pots of houseplants.

Foliage plants add a great décor for houses. Janet shared a chart with conditions and the most suitable plants for that area. All shapes and sizes are available to suit any place you desire. Warmth, light, water, air and food are essential for all plants.

When cutting back plants make sure you cut back to where you want the leaves to start again. Some will not branch out and some will not. Air railing is cutting into a branch and graft on another so a new plant starts on what might be a bare branch. When starting new plants be careful if you cover with a plastic bag be careful about moisture and how tight the bag is to prevent the cuttings from rotting.

Re-potting orchids is best when it is resting but they can be potted when you choose. Cutting off flowers and excess roots is recommended. Soaking it before taking it out of a pot may make it easier.

African violets often rot at the bottom. Watering from the top is usually better and know your soil. Using a water meter may also help but know your water meter and what it is telling you.

Buying a plant and taking it home can be a challenge. They are grow in a warm humid environment and the world outside is far less accommodating. Look over carefully before buying to ensure it is a healthy plant. Wrap before leaving the nursery and treat gently for about a week. Keep out of direct sunlight and draughts and do not over water or give to much heat. After this it can be moved to its permanent quarters and treated normally.

MINUTES

ARMSTRONG AND DISTRICT GARDEN CLUB
GENERAL MEETING Minutes
TUESDAY, February 7, 2023, 7:00 PM
ODDFELLOW'S HALL

1. Call to Order

President, Carolyn Farris called the meeting to order at 8:20 PM with 12 members present.

2. Approval of Agenda

Rea moved approval of the agenda as circulated. CARRIED

3. Approval of November minutes

Glen moved approval of the minutes as circulated. CARRIED

4. Correspondence –

- Thank you from the museum, to Brenda, Dianne and Heather, for the gingerbread display.
- Thank you from the Vernon Hospital for our donation.
- Thank you from Boys & Girls club of Okanagan for our donation.

- Received a request if we want to participate in the volunteer fair, Chamber of Commerce.

5. Treasurer's Report

Sue Wiebe presented the Treasurer's report. The club is in good financial shape.

Sue Rooke moved to receive the Treasurer's report. CARRIED

6. Old Business

- a. Appointment of President - Carolyn Farris, Recording Secretary - Tracee Andrews
Rea moved to accept these people in these positions. CARRIED

Carolyn spoke about trying to match small club jobs with a greater number of members. More participation means less work for all!

7. New Business

- a. City Planters – Shirley spoke regarding the Planning Grant that was awarded and waiting to hear about the 1 million dollar application for revitalization to encourage better visitation to Armstrong. The fact that the planters and wall are in need of repair/replacement, been in service since 1989. Rail trail access/egress, long-range plans. Potential changes to rail line easement to accommodate improvements. 2024 to complete the infrastructure. Landscaping for new city hall is scheduled for the first week of March, potential for a small plot there to be planted by the club. Theme color for 2023 is purple. Glen has volunteered to coordinate the schedule for the planters.

- b. Banners for City – Paul Peacock – delayed to next meeting.

- c. Volunteers for Plant Sale Committee - If no organizing committee, then there won't be a plant sale this year. Potential to change the way the sale is conducted – personal tables and the proceeds donated. Committee needs to be at least 4 people to manage the workload and take on leadership. Sale is usually the second Saturday in May. Suggested that donation recipients could be encouraged to help us out. Suggestion was made to have high school students to potentially help out.

- d. Like to garden but no space? - O'Keefe Ranch is looking for volunteers to help with their heritage and perennial gardens. Contact administrator at O'Keefe Ranch if interested.

- e. Signing Authority Motion

Shirley moved that the signing authorities be any two of Carolyn Farris, Sue Wiebe and Glen Gytenbeek with Judy Cogan being removed. CARRIED

- f. Volunteers needed to tend to the garden at the Food Bank (contact Jennifer).

- g. Seed Library is available at the Enderby library. Open for donations of seeds also.

8. The meeting adjourned at 8:53 PM

Next meeting Tuesday, March 7, 2023 at Oddfellow's Hall at 7:00 PM.

The Executive will meet at 5:30 PM prior to the General Meeting

Winter Sowing, by Rosemary Botner (used with permission)

In January of 2022, I decided to try, once again, growing plants from seed. I searched online and found excellent information on winter sowing on this site: <https://www.hobbyfarms.com/sow-seeds-in-the-winter-without-grow-lights/>

Using that information as my guide, this is what I did:

I collected together 4-litre milk jugs, duct tape, potting soil and some seeds.



Following the instructions, I prepared the milk jugs:

1. Punctured holes in the bottom of the jugs
2. Cut part-way around the milk jugs to form a hinged top and bottom.
3. Placed a few inches of potting soil in the bottom of the cut jug.

I sowed the seeds fairly thickly as the plants would be transferred to my garden in spring... if they grew! Then covered the seeds with a little soil, and sprayed the soil to dampen it.



A marker inside the jug showed what seeds had been planted.
Then I taped the jugs closed,



and put them outside in the snow . (For my first attempt at winter sowing, that was on January 31st.) Although the above photo shows the jugs without caps, I did, in fact, put the bottle caps on until the seeds germinated.

With just the winter sun warming the jugs, condensation began forming on the inside of the jugs, enough to irrigate.

I never did have to water but if the weather had become really warm that may have been necessary and I would have watered gently through the cap-hole.

Well, the spinach and mesclun seeds grew beautifully...



... the Grand Rapids lettuce did not. Could be the seeds were past their due date!

Once the garden soil in my raised bed was warm enough for planting, I transplanted my seedlings,



and they grew beautifully.

This winter (2023), I am experimenting with a variety of perennial flower seeds and again spinach and lettuce. I put them out on January 20th. Here's hoping for an exciting new crop.

I found Winter Sowing a great way to get my longing for gardening under control without expensive risk. And last year I was delighted with the result.

Rosemary Botner
January 2023

THANK YOU

Appreciation and thank you to Janet Stoll for an very informative and interesting evening on how to have healthy houseplants.

Thank you to Shirley Fowler for the goodies and tea/coffee at the meeting.

Member Discounts

Members of the Armstrong & District Garden Club receive discounts at a number of local garden centres:

- **Shepherd's Home Hardware Outdoor Living** in Armstrong: **15% Discount** on Regularly-Priced Garden Plants
- **Blue Mountain Nursery** in Armstrong: **10% Discount** on all products
- **Swan Lake Market & Garden** in Spallumcheen: **10% Discount** on all products
- **Nicholas Alexander Nursery** in Vernon: 10%-15% Discount on Regularly-Priced Garden Plants

Show your membership card at the till before the cashier rings up the total and kindly request your membership discount. Let us know if you have any difficulties getting the discount.