SEEDERS AND WEEDERS NEWSLETTER

November 2026

Armstrong & District Garden Club

WEBSITE: https://armstronggardenclub.com

EXECUTIVE:

President – Heather Hayes 250 546-4969
Vice president – Vacant
Secretary – Mary Jackson
Treasurer – Paul Peacock
Membership Secretary - Chris Williams
Past President – Carolyn Farris
Director at large – Glen Gytenbeek
Speaker coordinator – Suzie Sims
Tour Coordinator - Vacant
Newsletter Editor – Dianne Lockton
Facebook – Ken Barr
Website Manager - Mary Jane Duford
Sunshine - Dianne Lockton and Heather Hayes
Door Prizes – Sue Rook

GUEST SPEAKERS

Our speakers this week were Dan and Kat Saxton and their four children. They spoke about the history of, and life on their farm, Pilgrims' Produce.
The following is an article that Kat wrote for Your Country News in spring of this year. She has kindly offered it for our club newsletter.



Pilgrims' Produce is a small-scale, certified organic farm located near Armstrong, British Columbia, in the beautiful Okanagan Valley. The land our family has the privilege of caring for is nestled below the stately Eagle Rock face. Established in 1991, the Pilgrims have been growing some of the finest organic veggies and fruits

for over 3 decades! This year marks the 35th Anniversary of Pilgrims' Produce. We want to say a very big THANK YOU to everyone who has shown support and encouragement for us over the years! We are honoured to be growing food for the folks of our community. Robert and Kathryn Hettler began the good work of growing organic produce on this land back in 1991. It all started when Robert and Kathryn Hettler and their four children returned from working with poor farmers in Brazil. Robert felt a sense of calling to grow organic food in a sustainable way for our local community. Over the years, the Hettler family played an integral role in the area by growing incredible produce, supplying it directly to customers via Farmer's Markets. They also established a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) harvest box program, one of the first in the area. Rob and Kathryn volunteered on various boards and educated the public about healthy eating, growing, and organic food. And more valuable than growing food, the Hettler's grew farmers! They generously invested time and shared knowledge with many up and coming farmers, including the Saxtons. After several years of working alongside each other and working towards a farm transition, in 2021 Dan and Kat Saxton became the new owners of Pilgrims' Produce and took the baton from Robert and Kathryn Hettler. The Hettlers left big boots to fill, and Dan and Kat, along with their four children, continue farming on this land to keep the legacy growing. This spring we'd like to take the opportunity to tell you about what we have going on at Pilgrims and we invite you to join us as we celebrate the farm's 35th Anniversary! -CSA: Pilgrims' Produce has been offering CSA shares to the local community for 30+ years! CSA, "Community Supported Agriculture", is quite a popular choice for folks who love deliciously fresh, seasonal food. The CSA is about connecting the local farmers and the food we grow to our members who commit to us for the season. There is a real relationship that both parties share and benefit from.

We offer a really flexible program with lots of options making CSA harvest boxes an easy choice for many lifestyles and family sizes. We pack boxes from May-December with 3 seasons to choose from: Spring, Summer, and Autumn. Shares are available in Armstrong and Vernon on Tuesdays and Fridays. Members also enjoy perks like the weekly newsletter with recipes, referral credit, add-ons, unique farm experiences, and more! -GUMBOOTS FARM STORE: We are so excited to have our very own farm store to make buying local easy!

GUMBOOTS is open year-round so you can load up on fresh produce grown by us… all year long! Along with our own items, we stock fantastic products from other local businesses. We carry fresh eggs, honey, organic flour, organic coffee & tea, preserves, organic meats, cheese, art and so much more!

OPEN: Monday-Saturday 8am-8pm

1568 Eagle Rock Rd, Spallumcheen, BC V4Y 0R4

GUMBOOTS is a self serve and honour system shop. -Annual SPRING Plant Sale! Each spring we have a beautiful selection of potted plants available for the gardeners among us. You can pre-order plants and we'll have them ready for your garden in the first few weeks of May. The remaining plants will be available at GUMBOOTS farm store. Choose from a wide selection of our favourite tomato varieties, peppers, cucs, zucs, melons, herbs and more! -U-Pick: Come out to the farm for a unique experience and harvest your own delicious strawberries, raspberries, saskatoons, cherries, currants and more during U-pick days throughout the summer. -Newsletters: Stay connected and be in the know. Sign-up for our e-newsletter today at www.PilgrimsProduce.com. *We invite you to join us in 2026 as we celebrate the 35th Anniversary of Pilgrims' Produce. For details the farm please visit: www.PilgrimsProduce.com From your local farmers, Dan & Kat Saxton at Pilgrims' Produce. We look forward to sharing the harvest with you in 2026!!

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After the presentation there was a question and answer opportunity.
When asked what the best thing is about living on the farm the children felt that the animals are. They have sheep, cats and kittens, ducks, dogs and puppies.
Kat likes being outside, having a flower garden and growing vegetables to share with the children. Some of the produce that is grown from early spring to winter is kale, kohlrabi, cucumbers, peas, carrots, cauliflower, winter squash, sweet potatoes, eggplant, garlic, radish, jalapeno, popcorn, watermelon, haskap berries, strawberries, raspberries, sweet cherries, oregano, cilantro, basil, and much more.
Their son Liam showed us an interesting corn shucker that he had made for removing the popcorn kernels from the cob.
Dan finds that growing vegetables is rewarding because they are not mass producing, the produce is organic, and the process is not abstract …. a carrot seed is planted and it grows a vegetable to sell.
Kat and Dan also enjoy supporting school farm tours and education.

GENERAL MEETING

First Tuesday of the month, 6:30 pm, September to June (except January) in St James Anglican Church Hall, Armstrong.

Next meeting : February 2, 2027 6:30 pm

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MINUTES

Armstrong and District Garden Club
November General Meeting
November 3, 2026 at Anglican Church Hall

1. Call to Order
Glen Gytenbeek and Carolyn Farris called the meeting to order at 7:15 with 12 members and one guest present. Carolyn agreed to take minutes in the absence of the secretary.

2. Approval of Agenda
The agenda was adopted by consensus.

3. Approval of October Minutes
Carolyn Farris moved approval of the October minutes as circulated in the newsletter. CARRIED

4. Financial Report
As Paul was unwell there was not a financial report but the club is in a good financial position.

5. Old Business
None was raised.

6. New Business
a. December meeting (Dec 1) will be an appie and dessert potluck at the Anglican Church Hall at 6:30 PM
b. Armstrong Florist has different orchid soils that they sell by the cup.

7. Elections
If the club is to continue it is imperative that we have members step up to executive positions. Due to the number of people away or sick, elections will be postponed to the February General Meeting. Please consider letting your name stand for one or more jobs/positions so that we can celebrate our coming special anniversary and keep the club going.

Rhea, Carolyn Tod Russell, and Glen have agreed to take on the special garden near the museum to celebrate the club's one hundred anniversary. Sue Wiebe and Carolyn Farris have rocks. It was suggested that a water feature might be included but it will need to be checked out as the city is not encouraging water features.

8. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM.

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GARDENING INFORMATION

Winter is quickly approaching; shorter days, gray skies, leafless trees and disappearing blossoms.
We have the option of introducing some colourful flowering houseplants to brighten the indoors.
Here are a few suggestions.

Note: All of the plants listed are toxic to pets except the African Violets.

Source: www.canadianliving.com
www//ngb.org

African Violets
Require 14 to 16 hours of filtered light and 8 to 10 hours of darkness to bloom.
Plant in African violet potting mix. Refresh it annually.
Keep the soil moist. Use distilled water or rainwater but don't overwater or root rot can develop.
Group plants together to conserve humidity (40 -60%).
Room temperature should be between 18C and 24C

Amaryllis
Bright indirect light for 12 to 16 hours a day. (East or west facing window)
Plant the bulb in good potting soil and place bark in the bottom of the pot for drainage.
Water and wait for signs of growth. Water sparingly and allow soil to dry out in the top couple of inches before watering again.
Tolerates low humidity.
Room temperature should be 18C to 24C.

Anthurium
Bright indirect light for 12 to 16 hours a day.
The colourful blooms on this plant are actually a modified leaf. The spike in the middle supports tiny flowers.
Requires well drained, moist soil.
Does well in high humidity. Misting the leaves will help.
Room temperature should be between 18C and 25C.

Cyclamen
Bright indirect light all day in winter. (East or north facing window)
Water from the bottom of the pot when the top layer of soil dries. Set the pot in water for 15 to 30 minutes.
Cyclamen do well in cool conditions and can bloom from fall to spring.
Keep in a cool room at 15C to 18C.

Kalanchoe
Bright indirect sunlight for 12 to 16 hours a day.
Plant in a well draining succulent mix. Allow to dry out between waterings.
Room temperature should be between 15C and 24C.

Cheques presented by ADGC treasurer to Kalamalka Starfish Society and Armstrong Food Bank





Thank you to Carolyn F for recording the minutes and doing speaker notes at our November 3rd meeting.

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 and Garden in Spallumcheen: See notes under Section 7 in the minutes of April 7th meeting.

Show your membership card at the till before the cashier rings up the total and kindly request your member discount.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Club winter social: Tuesday December 1, 2026 6:30 pm

Next Meeting: Tuesday February 2, 2027 6:30 pm