



SUMMER  
SOLSTICE  
2018

# The Bloomin' News

PACIFIC GARDENS  
COHOUSING COMMUNITY  
NEWSLETTER



## A Strange but Merry Flock Crane-making workshop with Riko from Japan

A big thanks to an enthusiastic bunch who came out , who folded and refolded until formless paper began to resemble the fabled crane... ok... some resembled pterodactyls and others made the Dodo bird look pretty... all in all over 100 birds were created... soon to take flight overhead... ok, Ron!, you can come back with the ladder, we're finished!

- Victor and Chiaki, 302



## Welcome to Pacific Gardens!

This summer is marked by many new neighbours arriving at Pacific Gardens. Karen and Bohdan (303), Dan, Myriam and Gabriel (310), and Judith (207) are in process of moving in, and Yukiko and Craig (306) yet to arrive. We are so glad you are all here!

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: We were both born in Edmonton and raised our son and daughter there. We moved to  
: Banff about 13 years ago for a change of scenery. Both of us recently worked for Parks  
: Canada.

: We were visiting relatives on the island last November. At that time, after years of saying  
: "One day, we will move to island", we finally decided that now was the time. Of course,  
: having an adorable baby grandson on the island was also a huge deciding factor. Upon  
: returning home from vacation, we put our condo up for sale and started downsizing our  
: stuff. The day our condo sold in mid March, we left town in a snow storm. We arrived on  
: the island the next day ready to ditch the winter boots!

: The search for a place to live was a bit daunting as many of the places we looked between  
: Victoria and Qualicum Beach had multiple offers within days of listing. Most of the places  
: also lacked any sense of community. We had researched co-housing in the past, but did  
: not give it serious consideration until a Facebook post on Pacific Gardens serendipitously  
: showed up. It was a lightbulb moment for us and we decided to book a tour with Susanna.  
: A few weeks later, after attending potlucks and meeting some of the amazing community  
: members, we made the leap and put in an offer.

: After a few small renovations to the unit, we are still in the midst of unpacking, but Bohdan  
: has wasted no time in starting his garden. We are both looking forward to an enjoyable  
: summer of watching the garden grow and sharing the harvest at potluck.

: - Karen & Bohdan, 303  
: .....

Myriam Verzat, Dan Parker and their two-year-old son Gabriel are excited to be part of Pacific Gardens. Myriam hails from France and Dan from Ontario and Brazil, but they had spent 6 years in Montreal before they moved to Nanaimo last year. Dan teaches French Immersion Math and Social Studies at Nanaimo District Secondary School and Myriam gives Non-Violent Communication workshops and project manages events like Nanaimo's recent Bike to Work Week. They love singing and jamming, so expect to hear some more rhythms and harmonies at PG! It's important for them to be living in a tight-knit community, and they believe that this form of living is the way to go for a whole bunch of environmental and social reasons. The Verzat Parker crew looks forward to collaborate with all of you!

- Myriam, Dan, and Gabriel, 210

One of our tenants, Dema Maksod, a Syrian refugee staying among us, had a show of her paintings on the 3rd floor of the VIU Library. It is a must see. Dema paints about the culture and experience of Syrian women. Her work is striking yet diffuse and evocative. She really communicates the emotion and relationships in various situations.

- Frances, 304



*Sisters waiting for friendship and good fortune.* Acrylic on Canvas. By Dema Maksod.

## Saturday Social

A little social gathering is planned for this Saturday evening to welcome our newest members, Dan, Myriam, and Judith as well as to say good bye to Carol, Dema, Colin, and Mishko.

**7 p.m. in the dining room**  
**Potluck appetizers**

Here's a challenge: who can create a vegan, raw, gluten free, unsweetened - no sugars in any way - tidbit that is tasty? Let's see what you can come up with!

- Shari, 208

## COMMUNITY CALENDAR

This Saturday, June 23  
: **Work Party Coffee** 9 am  
: **Work Party Lunch** 12 pm

Every other Saturday  
: **Coffee, Centre Atrium** 11 am

Every Tuesday  
: **Tea, North Atrium** 4 pm

Every Thursday  
: **Potluck** 6 pm

## Neighbouring



We love to get fancy! From Susana's fabulous birthday dance party (above), to spiffy hats and delectable treats at High Tea in May (below), this community knows how to put our best foot forward. *Photos submitted by Chiaki (above) and Judy (below).*

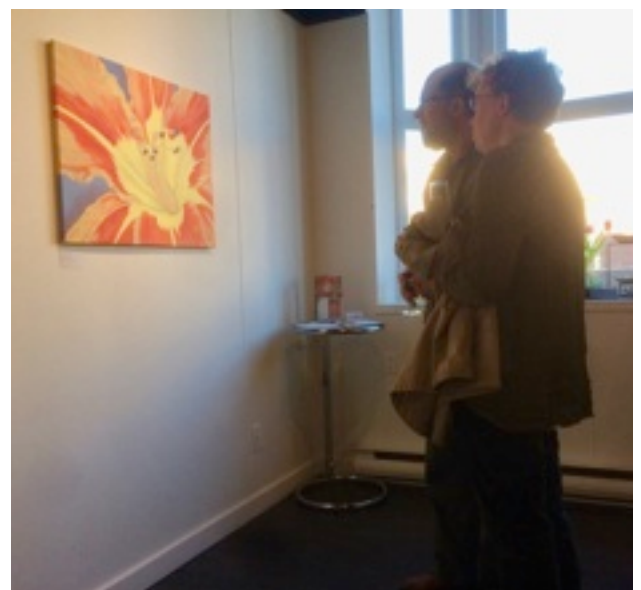




## Frances' Art Show

Thanks to all those Pacific Gardeners for showing up and helping us make a party of it. I felt your love and support.

- Frances, 304



## EVERYDAY HEROES

I would like to give a shout out to Kari who insisted on donating frequent flyer miles to me when she heard that my son would be graduating with a PhD in San Francisco. The trip was ever so meaningful to me. Mike had worked incredibly hard, I was bursting with pride, and it was the most joyful celebration you can imagine. Thank you, Kari, for providing the magic carpet that got me there!

- Judy, 102

Have you noticed an everyday hero recently?  
Send a paragraph about them to the newsletter!  
We would love to make this a regular feature.



Emma and Willa enjoy their favourite backyard features: the strawberry patch, and the swings.

- Photo by Chiaki, 302



## Members of Pacific Gardens in Action

Photos by Frances, 304



## A Letter from the Editor

With our time at Pacific Gardens drawing to a close, I would like to express what an honour it's been to act as editor for this quarterly newsletter.

I've been reflecting on what I've learned over the eight editions since taking on the newsletter. I've learned that what looks like very little in my inbox, a few photos or calendar events, when put together gives a very colourful snapshot of life in this community. I've learned that anything people care about makes for good news, whether it be compost tips, art shows, rat prevention, or wider community events. And most of all I've learned to recognize the unique role this newsletter can play in strengthening the sense of community here at Pacific Gardens.

When I first started thinking about the newsletter, I was very concerned about what purpose it would serve, and that it not be redundant of the pre-existing forms of communication. The dialog and strata email lists are tools for problem-solving, time-sensitive announcements, discussion, and FYIs. The PG Life website is an organizing workhorse, and the Facebook page a way to socialize and share things in real time.

This newsletter can do many of those things incompletely. But what it mostly does is remind us of the small moments that we weave together to make our social fabric. It reminds us that the reason we choose to live in community is because we genuinely enjoy these people and these events. We need to have the committees and meetings and work parties to live in such a unique community structure, but no one moved here so we could go to meetings. We moved here because we want to share life with other people.

This doesn't mean it's not challenging. Being different people, we all have different perspectives on what life together looks like. Decisions must be made, floors cleaned, and plants watered (or not). And every three months, we take a minute to look back. It is good to be reminded about the crane-folding evening, the sunny day downtown, our neighbours' art shows, the particularly fabulous birthday dance party, the simple pleasure of eating a sun-warmed strawberry right from the garden.

I hope that in future someone will feel excited to bring their own blend of style and insight to a new incarnation of The Bloomin' News. That being said, there's no pressure on anyone do so. The new version can (and perhaps should!) look quite different from this one. Whatever you choose to do, may the joy of life together continue to inspire you.

- *Stephanie, 206*