



**2016**

# **Annual Report**

  
VanDusen  
BOTANICAL GARDEN

  
Bloedel  
CONSERVATORY

Vancouver  
Botanical  
Gardens  
Association



## Letter from the President and Executive Director of the VBGA



Thank you for taking the time to read our annual report! After a long hiatus, we have come back to presenting the achievements of the year in this format. We hope you find the information contained here helpful, and we'd appreciate any feedback you might have that would help us make it better.

2016 was a busy year for the VBGA, both in terms of our program achievement as well as our governance focus.

First and foremost, we are excited to have broken the \$1 million revenue mark for the first time in our history. It reflects the confidence, trust and support of so many of our loyal donors and other supporters. And it could not have come at a better time.

As you will see in this report, our strategic plan calls for aggressive growth in terms of the number of people we touch and impact with our programs and services, and also our commitment to grow the amount of money we invest in the Garden and the Conservatory. As you keep reading, you will see how we have invested in the infrastructure of our organization in order to support this future growth. We will need to continue to do so in the coming years.

We have also been working diligently towards achieving accreditation under the Imagine Canada Standards program for charities and not-for-profits. This program represents 73 benchmarks for organizational performance and stewardship in the areas of governance, financial management, fundraising, volunteer engagement and human resources. We will be ready in less than a year to provide evidence that we are adhering to all aspects of this set of standards. All of our partners, donors, volunteers, staff and other supporters deserve to know that we hold ourselves to the highest standards in accountability, transparency and stewardship.

Thank you once again for your support for the VBGA and for the Garden and Conservatory. And here's to a successful 2017!

**Richard Hankin**  
President, VBGA

**Shawn Mitchell**  
Executive Director, VBGA

## Introduction

The Vancouver Botanical Gardens Association (VBGA) is the joint operating partner—with the City of Vancouver Board of Parks and Recreation (Park Board)—of the VanDusen Botanical Garden and the Bloedel Conservatory.

In our 40+ year collaboration, our respective responsibilities have largely stayed the same. Park Board is responsible for the maintenance and management of the facilities and collections at both sites, special events, rentals and marketing; and the VBGA is responsible for educational programming, volunteer services, running the library and resource centre at the Garden, the website ([vandusengarden.org](http://vandusengarden.org)) and select social media channels, and the membership program.

We also have a common vision: *We want the Garden and the Conservatory to be cherished locally and renowned internationally.*

## Our Mission

To meet our contribution to the vision, the VBGA's mission is:

*To engage people of all ages and walks of life in the importance of biodiversity to our lives, and to foster a lifelong love of plants and gardens by virtue of their participation in our programs and services.*

## Our Approach

The VBGA exists as the sum of all its parts. We would not be where we are today without the incredible legacy of the founders of the VBGA and the Garden, and the long history of volunteer hours and financial support that brought us to present day. And we could not do what we do now without the passionate commitment from all of us—donors, volunteers, partners, supporters and staff—who believe in the importance of the Garden and the Conservatory.

## Our Passion

The full breadth and scope of our programs would not be possible without our volunteers. In 2016, 1,100 individuals contributed 42,161 hours to the mission and mandate of the VBGA and the Garden/Conservatory.

In total, volunteers contributed to the delivery of 17 VBGA programs (including Guiding, Bloedel docents, school tours) and 10 Park Board events (including the Easter Egg Hunt, Halloween's VanDusen Glow, Heights of Bloedel, Festival of Lights).

The Park Board event support alone was worth \$78,000!<sup>1</sup>

We all owe a huge "thank you!" to our committed volunteer community.

## Our Drive

Our donors are also passionate about the Garden and the Conservatory. We could not function without the financial support of the hundreds of loyal and generous donors who give financially year-over-year. At the end of this report you will find a list of all those who have signaled their commitment to what we do.

To all our donors: thank you!

## Strategic Plan

To be effective stewards of the trust and commitment we receive from all the donors, volunteers, partners, supporters and staff, the VBGA board of directors launched a new three-year strategic plan, one that we review annually to ensure that it continues to be appropriate and that we are staying on track.

To that end, we have set three ambitious objectives to be completed by 2018.

First, to double our engagement numbers (e.g. education enrollment; volunteer enrollment; library attendance, etc.).

Second, to double our expenditures in the Garden and the Conservatory.

And third, to be ready to launch a capital project in the Garden.

All of our efforts are focused on making these things a reality.

## 2016 Actions

To achieve our three objectives, we are pursuing a number of strategic priorities. Some continue for only one year. Others will require a multi-year commitment. Some are financial in nature, while others are focused on infrastructure and program. All of them reflect our ongoing commitment to the current and future success of the Garden and the Conservatory.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

#### Modernize programs and services we offer to visitors and members

##### 2016 ACTIVITIES

- Launched an online tour at Bloedel Conservatory, allowing visitors to access hundreds of pages with information about the various plant and bird species in the collection.
- Acquired a new database (Amilia) to help us manage enrollment and engagement with our education program stakeholders. This has streamlined the sign-up, payment and ongoing communications related processes.
- Launched a new field trip program aligned with new BC curriculum and pedagogical objectives.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

#### Install family friendly features in the Garden and the Conservatory

##### 2016 ACTIVITIES

- We worked with Park Board to design and build the new demonstration Backyard Bird Garden at VanDusen Garden which will be completed in 2017.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

#### Ensure the quality of our programs and services is high

##### 2016 ACTIVITIES

- We proactively solicited feedback from all of our education program participants to inform future planning and execution.
- We involved a number of stakeholder groups in the Garden in the performance evaluation of our Executive Director.
- Thanks to generous gifts, we increased the number of staff hours in the library and expanded hours of service.
- We developed and launched a new fundraising strategy.



### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

#### Sponsor/support projects that improve the nature or quality of the collections

##### 2016 ACTIVITIES

- The VBGA contributed \$29,000 in support of labelling and interpretation and plant material acquisition.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 5

#### Clearly define our relationship with Park Board

##### 2016 ACTIVITIES

- We continued our efforts (ongoing since 2013) to begin discussions with Park Board regarding a new Joint Operating Agreement (our current agreement was done in 1996). We were unsuccessful in making any progress.
- City-based strategies such as *biodiversity*, *access to nature*, *local food* and *bird strategies* were incorporated into VBGA programming.

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 6

#### Continue investments in hardware and software that will make operations more cost-effective and improve member/visitor experience

##### 2016 ACTIVITIES

- In addition to the acquisition of the Amilia platform in education, we also migrated our donor and volunteer management databases to Donorperfect.
- We purchased hardware upgrades to the digital screens in the Visitor Centre.

## 2016 Performance

We track performance. We have 10 specific measures that allow the board of directors to see how the organization is progressing against our strategic plan. We also track an additional 43 measures that allow the board to understand and see how our programs are performing on a year-to-year basis.

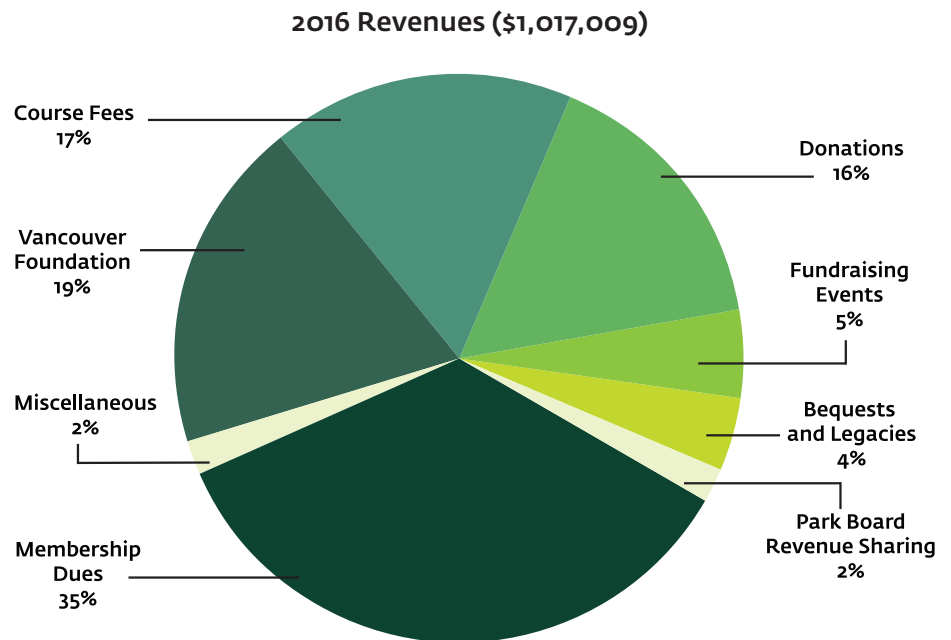
<b>STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES</b>				
<b>3 YEAR OBJECTIVES</b>		<b>2015 BASELINE</b>	<b>2016 ACTUAL</b>	
<b>Double engagement</b>	Library attendance	4,429	4,932	
	Tours (Walk & Cart)	11,055	11,302	
	Membership	7,207	8,383	
	Education reach	7,534	7,106	
	Website traffic (User sessions)	406,068	419,285	
	Volunteer pop	955	1,101	
	Docent contact	Baseline to be established in 2016	17,439	
	Info desk contact		7,581	
	<b>Double our spend (\$)</b>	Labelling and Interpretation	14,239	14,500
Carts		11,540	2,721	
Library		51,190	58,594	
Education program		198,313	220,448	
Web		32,786	16,871	
Volunteer services		71,117	126,602	
Bloedel		9,223	10,743	
Memberships		96,425	100,643	
VC screens		662	1,386	
Repairs to glasshouse		15,653		
Invasive Species tech		25,171		
40th Photo retro		13,000		
Bloedel Concierge event		2,275	3,185	
Spring/Fall bulletins		6,830	7,720	
Plant material Roy Forster Dedication			12,429	
			2,433	
<b>Total</b>		<b>548,424</b>	<b>578,593</b>	
<b>Launch a Capital Campaign</b>		Year 1 Priority 1. Secure agreement with PB on concept <sup>2</sup> 2. Confirm with PB process for advancing concept		

### ANNUAL KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (SELECT HIGHLIGHTS)

CATEGORY	METRIC	2016 RESULT
<b>Governance</b>	Attendance (BoD)	68%
	Attendance (Comm)	77%
<b>Financial</b>	Admin expense/ Total operating revenue	29.29%
	Fundraising expense Total operating revenue	12.22%
<b>Fundraising</b>	Unrestricted raise	\$175,206
	Restricted raise	\$310,872
	Program ROI	291.00% <sup>3</sup>
<b>Membership</b>	Number of Member households	7,178
	Number of Members	8,383
	Distribution (not Retention)	48% / 52%
	Total revenue	\$352,014
	Program ROI	230% <sup>4</sup>
<b>Volunteer Services</b>	Number of volunteers	1,100
	Number of volunteer hours	42,161
	Volunteer satisfaction	93% <sup>5</sup>
<b>Education</b>	<b>Adult Ed</b>	
	Number of adult ed courses offered	97
	Number of Adult Ed course participants	1,265
	Adult Ed course fill rate	67%
	Adult Ed Satisfaction rate	97% <sup>6</sup>
	<b>School Programs</b>	
	Number of Participants in school programs	3,917
	Percentage fill rate for school bookings	84%
	<b>Summer Camp</b>	
	Number of camp participants (SB and Summer)	415
	Percentage fill rate for summer camp	94%
	Summer Camp Satisfaction rate	95% <sup>7</sup>
	<b>Community Engagement</b>	
	Number of participants in community engagement	1,252
<b>Library</b>	Number of library visitors	4,932

## Financial Results

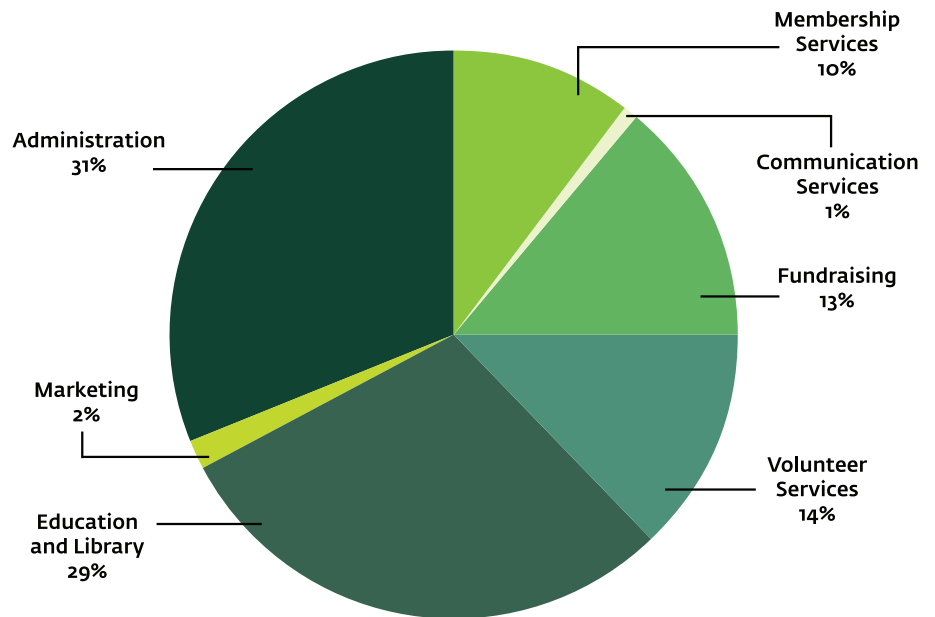
For the third consecutive year, the VBGA has completed its financial year in the black and with a surplus of \$59,634. These surpluses are shown cumulatively in our audited financial statements under Net Assets. The graphs highlight the breakdown of operating revenue and expenses in 2016. A copy of our full audited financial statements is available upon request.



### Key Notes

- After three years of effective cost containment and steady revenue growth, the organization now has a modest reserve to cover three months of operating costs.
- In 2016, we grew the number of learning opportunities for adults and children in the Garden and the Conservatory. As a result, we also had healthy growth in our education-related revenue.
- Membership to the VBGA continues to be our biggest source of revenue. In 2016, we planned for flat growth as we absorbed the roll-out and implementation of the city's new ActiveNet software system.

## 2016 Expenditures (\$957,375)



### Key Notes

- Staff continue to be adept at getting the maximum impact for every donated dollar, while keeping a sharp eye on costs.
- Administration costs shown here are unallocated (i.e. all administration costs, regardless of their direct contribution to program delivery, are shown in the Administration line).

### Accountability

Increasingly, donors—both individual and institutional—are looking for evidence of sound governance and management of the causes that they support. We support this level of interest and concern in our organization.

In 2015, the VBGGA board of directors voted to pursue accreditation under the Imagine Canada Standards Program—a set of 73 governance standards that reflect best practice in the areas of governance, financial management, fundraising, volunteer engagement and human resources. To date, more than 200 charitable and not-for-profit organizations across Canada have achieved accreditation.

Each year, board and staff have reviewed and updated existing policy, created policy where gaps were identified, altered current practice(s), added communications channels and increased the nature and quality of internal and external reporting—all guided by the standards as a benchmark.

We are pleased to report that we anticipate being prepared to submit our application for accreditation by the end of 2017 and hope to achieve certification under this important national program.



**This list recognizes donors' contributions received between January 1—December 31, 2016.\***

**None of what we have achieved in 2016 would be possible without the generous support of our donor community. Thank you!**

**\$100,000+**

Estate of Anne Marie Kaplan  
The Glenn and Annetta Agnew Memorial Fund, held at Vancouver Foundation  
Vancouver Foundation

**\$10,000 – \$24,999**

Estate of Ann Margaret Hotter  
Estate of Elizabeth Margaret Stirling  
Estate of Irene Gladys Brown  
Estate of Ruth Elizabeth Hodge  
Alex and Marlene Mackenzie  
RBC Foundation  
Service Canada  
The Christopher Foundation  
Yosef Wosk

**\$5,000 – \$9,999**

Canadian Wildlife Federation Inc.  
Diamond Foundation  
Estate of Margaret Jean Bannerman  
Jean Hurst  
Master Gardeners Association of BC  
TD Friends of the Environment  
The Grayross Foundation  
Victoria Foundation  
Patricia Wales

**\$1,000 – \$4,999**

Sue Abzinger  
Anonymous  
Glenn & Loretta Barr  
Joan Bentley  
Robert Brebner  
May Brown  
Emmerich & Marie Ceschi  
Brian Clark  
John Cuthbertson



Estate of Katherine J. Heller  
Ronald Fulton  
Richard Hankin  
John & Cheryl Heady  
Tim Hollick-Kenyon  
J. Rhodes Consulting Ltd.  
Lagniappe Foundation  
Godfrey Harald Lynum  
Christine McCaffrey  
Mary McDonald  
Heather Merilees  
Brian Mickelson  
Mirhady Family Fund  
Amber Murphy  
Phyllis Robson  
Anthony Sessions  
Beverley Tamboline  
Mollie Thackeray  
The Hamber Foundation  
The Jack and Doris Brown Foundation  
John Toovey  
Gillian Wills  
World Wildlife Fund Canada/Telus

**\$500 – \$999**

Larry H. Argatoff  
Joan Baker  
Arlene Clark  
Pam Cooper  
Audrey Dewan  
Jessie Fischer  
Lynne Guinet  
Shirley Heberton  
David Kyle  
Bruce Ledingham  
Anne McNamara  
Shawn Mitchell  
Arthur Monahan  
Michael Murgatroyd & Susan Mawhood  
John Pappajohn  
Kathleen V. Raisbeck  
Gordon White  
Margaret Wiles  
Eric Wilson  
Jill Wright  
Donald Zarowny

\* Contributions separate from VBGA membership fees.



**\$250 – \$499**

Arbutus Tree Service Ltd.  
Lois Arnold  
Mari Coghlan  
Dolf DeJong  
Norma Dixon  
Tony DuMoulin  
Jennifer & Karl Dusting and  
Mr Karl Brunner  
Susan Eltringham  
Henry G. Hawthorn  
Lorna Herberts  
Sheila Hildred  
Alison Hyatt  
Elizabeth Jarvis  
Lynn Kagan  
Norene Kimberley  
Marlene Lougheed  
Jo A. McDaniel  
Hilda McLennan  
Rowland McLeod  
Francis Milledge  
Elizabeth Murray  
Craig Robert Ogilvie  
Midge Oke  
Christopher Pain  
Becky Paulsen  
Penelope Pearse

Abdul Pirbhai  
Jean E. Pirie  
Carla Poppen  
Russell Quinn  
Elizabeth Reibin  
Sheila Rogers  
K. Sutcliffe  
James Taylor  
TELUS  
Angela White  
Terry Wilkinson

**\$100 – \$249**

Ginger Abell  
Diego Alcaraz  
Sonja Banks  
R. Paul Beckmann  
David & Georgia Black  
Sharon Bleuler  
Lore Brongers  
Angela Burnett  
Cyril Burrill  
Angus Campbell  
Joan Campbell  
John A. & Beverley Carl  
Michael R. Carter  
Marilyn Cassady  
Lynne Christmas

Shirley Coolidge  
Anna Coopman  
Anne & Doug Courtemanche  
Philip Currah  
Laila Damani  
Helen Davis  
Dorothy Dawson  
Rachael Day  
Joyce Drohan  
Vicky Earle  
Barbara Ebelt  
A. Jean Elder  
G. Jeanne Elliot  
Mark Emanuel  
Wolf & Elizabeth Endrejat  
Erick Factor  
Stuart Fine  
David Forsyth  
Kuo Chin Fung Wan  
James & Marion Geros  
Shannon Gillin  
Georgeann Glover  
Corinne Halliday  
Janet Hamilton  
Judith Hansen



Evelyn Harden  
Shirley Heibin  
Lenora Ho  
Walter Holmes  
Jack & Elaine Hurst  
Alfred Hurwitz  
Leslie A. Ingram  
Margaret Irving



Susan Jamieson-McLarnon  
 Pamela Jeacocke  
 Linda Johnston  
 Hughena & Trevor Jones  
 Elizabeth Kerklaan  
 Claire Kermacks  
 Debra Kohen  
 Andrea Kon  
 David Lane  
 Richard Lee  
 Jeanine Lucas  
 Richard Mackenzie  
 Maureen Maclachlan  
 Sarah Maclachlan  
 Genefer MacLean  
 Leslie MacLean  
 Karen Matthews  
 Francis Gerald McCullough  
 Jan Miko  
 Jean Molson  
 Anne Morley  
 G. Edward Moul  
 Douglas Muth  
 Lesia Muzylowski  
 Michael Page & Ms. Anne Smith

Daniel & Janet Phelps  
 Anne Piternick  
 John Rawsthorne  
 William Robertson  
 Rolfe, Benson LLP  
 P. Bernard Rowe  
 Clare Saadien  
 Angela Smith  
 Peter J. Smith  
 Richard Stace-Smith  
 Penelope Stock  
 Ian & Jane Strang  
 Susan Stubbs Courtemanche  
 Delfa Syeklocha  
 Phillip Tindle  
 Jose & Leila Trinidad  
 Sheila Veuger  
 Robert & Rosemary Wakefield  
 Elizabeth Walker  
 Sylvia Wallis  
 Brian Wasson  
 Caroline Wilkin  
 Eva Williamson  
 Daniel Worsley  
 Gloria Yuen

**\$1 to \$99**

Michelle Aderem  
 Robert Anderson  
 John M. Anderson  
 Joan Anderson  
 Anonymous  
 Sharon Armstrong  
 Rick & Kitty Ashe  
 Yik Fung & Kam Duen Au-Yeung  
 Julie Backer  
 Renaa Bacý  
 Sheila M. Barford  
 Gisela Beckmann  
 Anne Beveridge  
 Barbara Boehm  
 William Botham  
 Steven Bracher  
 Gail Brazier  
 Thelma Bremner  
 Wendy Chang  
 Audrey Cheesman  
 Jane Cherry  
 Lucy Chi  
 Anne Clayton  
 David Conlin  
 Deborah Cook  
 Valerie Cooper  
 Alix Devlin  
 Ann Doyle  
 Bob & Louise Dyer  
 eBay Inc  
 Ellen Ellis  
 Shirley Embra  
 Krystyna Endelman  
 M. Diane Eyre  
 Linda Farrell  
 Maureen Fauman  
 Marguerite Ford  
 Judy Forsberg  
 Hannah Frankel  
 Graham Fraser  
 Patti Ghobrial  
 Dorothy Glover  
 Libby Goszer  
 Gareth Griffiths





Donald Griffiths &  
 Barbara Brimacombe  
 Grohne Advisory Inc.  
 Colin & Sue Guiel  
 Ivy Hadley  
 Allison Hamilton  
 Shelley Hamilton  
 Lori Hansen  
 Paul Harder  
 Heidi Harms  
 David & Maria Harris  
 Cory Heavener  
 Eleanor Hill  
 Wei-Ning Ho  
 Susan Hoff  
 Diana Hume  
 Elizabeth Hunter  
 Jennie Ireland  
 Linda Jang  
 Amy Kain  
 Kimiyo Kamimura  
 Shirley Kaplan  
 Tyleen Katz  
 Marjorie Kennedy  
 Shane Koscielniak  
 Donald Laing  
 Steven Lampert  
 Nancy Lanphear  
 Margaret Laxton  
 Robert J. Leader  
 Esme Leigh  
 Fiona Lewis  
 Nova Lewis  
 Lynna Lippmann  
 Joan Liu  
 Stuart Mackinnon  
 Margot Magee



Jacqueline Marshall  
 Leanne Mason  
 Ruth Matheson  
 Sandy Matheson  
 Sarah McLoughlin  
 Ray McNabb  
 Doris J. Millen  
 Jane Ann Mintenko  
 Alan Mulvenna  
 Mary Olson  
 Jennifer Owen  
 Dennis Padmore  
 Nancy Pap  
 Arlene Polnik  
 Private Giving Foundation  
 Vicky Probert  
 Regent Eye Center Inc.  
 Jeanette Reynolds  
 Sylvia Riddell  
 Sheila Robinson  
 Anita Romaniuk  
 Lisa Romanuik  
 Ken Ryan  
 Debbie Samija  
 Meena Sanghera  
 Antonio Scaiano

Domenica Scaiano  
 Ian Sharma  
 Shaughnessy Restaurant  
 Helen Smith  
 Ka Lai So  
 Nan Spedding  
 Joan Stevenson  
 David Tamblin  
 Flora Thompson  
 Meghan Thompson  
 Anona Thorne  
 David W. Tobin  
 Patricia Tracy  
 Truffles Fine Foods Ltd  
 John Turner  
 Jennifer Urquhart  
 Margaret Walwyn  
 Lita Wells  
 Elizabeth Ann Werry  
 Margaret R. Wilson  
 Mona Woodfine  
 Jane Woodllends

**Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list. If there are errors or omissions please accept our apologies and contact our Development Office at 604.257.8190 so that we are able to make corrections.**

## VBGA Leadership

### Board of Directors

The VBGA is led by a volunteer board of 18 directors. The board meets monthly, and in 2016 also had six standing committees and one ad hoc committee (each must meet no less than four times per year). Every director must sit on at least one committee.

*(Sitting between April 25, 2016 and April 24, 2017)*

**Rich Hankin**, *President*

**Don Zarowny**, *Vice President*

**Tony DuMoulin**, *Secretary*

**Ewa Opalinski**, *Treasurer*

**Terri Clark**

**Dolf DeJong**

**Vicky Earle**

**Leslie Ann Ingram**

**Norene Kimberley**

**Paul Kluckner**

**Christine McCaffrey**

**Michael Murgatroyd**

**Stephane Mouttet\***

**Susan Jamieson-McLarnon**

**Chris Pain**

**Janet Rhodes**

**Desmond Rodenbour**

**Angela White**

\*Resigned part way through the year.

### Staff

*(Active between January 1, 2016 and December 31, 2016)*

**Shawn Mitchell**,  
*Executive Director*

**Judy Aird**,  
*Director, Volunteer Services*

**Tania Clarke**,  
*Adult Education and  
Communications Coordinator*

**Gillian Drake**,  
*Director, Education*

**Natalie Gray**,  
*Field Trips Coordinator*

**Maureen Kelly**,  
*Development Assistant*

**Lee Laxton**,  
*Executive Assistant*

**Janene Preston**,  
*Membership Manager*

**Marina Princz**,  
*Librarian*

**David Tsang**,  
*Director, Finance*

**Gordon White**,  
*Director, Development*



The VBGA can be contacted at:  
5251 Oak Street,  
Vancouver, BC V6M 4H1  
604-257-8625  
[vandusengarden.org](http://vandusengarden.org)

Vancouver Botanical Gardens Association is incorporated under the BC Societies Act, and is a registered charity;  
Charitable #: 119281301 RR0001

1 3,437 contributed hours @ of a contracted City Clerk or \$23/hour

2 Our work with Park Board on this item is ongoing.

3 Program ROI is calculated as a ratio of revenue brought in against all associated program costs.

4 Same as above.

5 Survey respondents were asked to rate the following statement: "Overall my volunteer experience has been positive" – 93% Strongly agreed or Agreed, as opposed to Neutral, Disagree or Strongly Disagree.

6 Course participants are asked to state how satisfied they were with the course they just finished.

7 Same as above.