



**2016**

# **Annual Report**



**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.

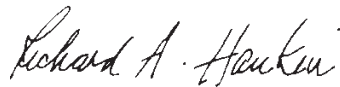
2016 was a busy year for the VBGA, both in terms of our program achievement as well as our governance focus.

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!¹

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.

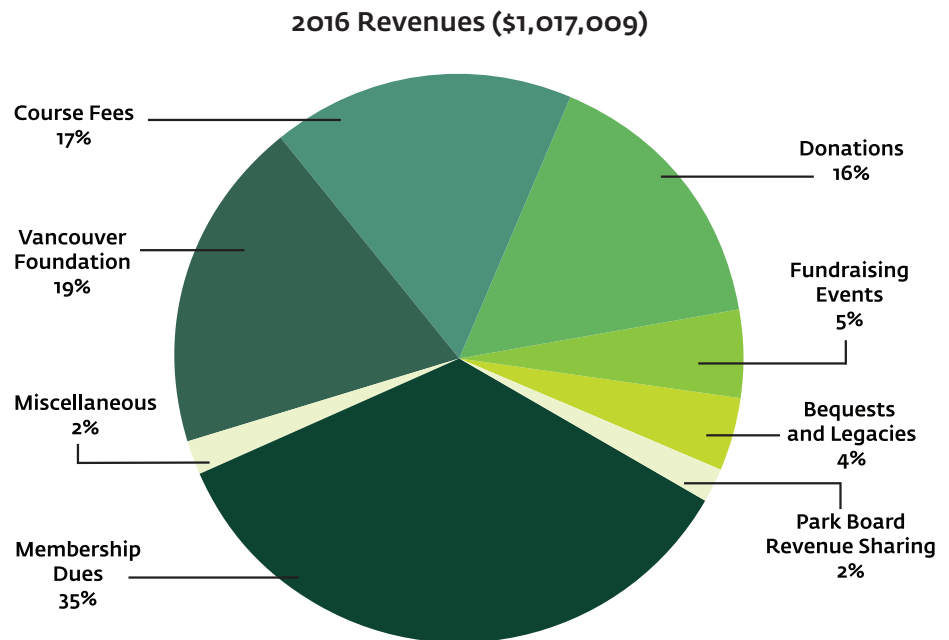
STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES			
3 YEAR OBJECTIVES		2015 BASELINE	2016 ACTUAL
<b>Double engagement</b>	Library attendance	4,429	4,932
	Tours (Walk & Cart)	11,055	11,302
	Membership	7,207	8,383
	Education reach	7,534	7,106
	Website traffic (User sessions)	406,068	419,285
	Volunteer pop	955	1,101
	Docent contact	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		12,429
	Roy Forster Dedication		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

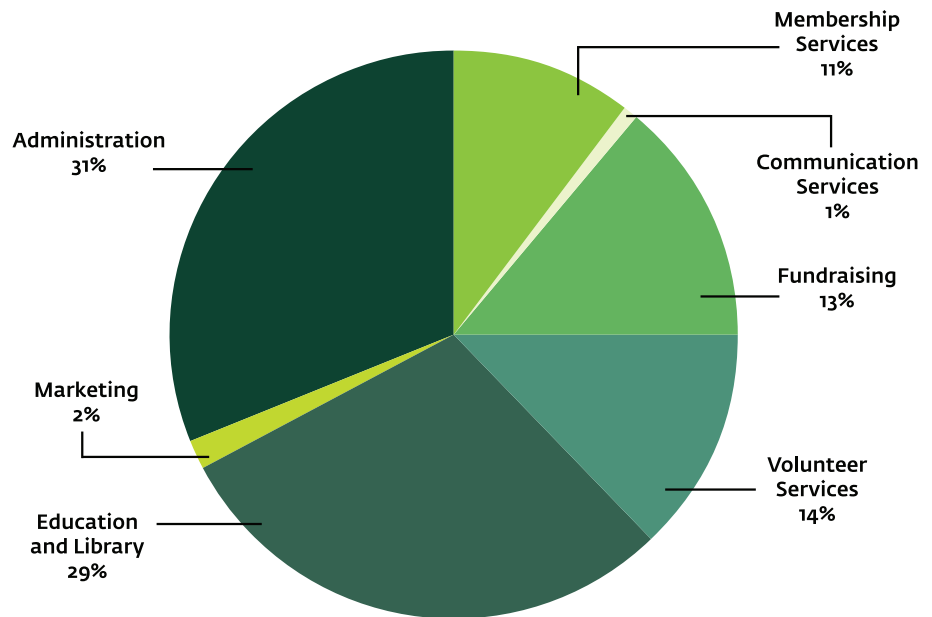
For the third consecutive year, the VBGA has completed its financial year in the black and with a surplus of \$59,634. These surpluses are shown cumulatively in our audited financial statements under Net Assets. The graphs highlight the breakdown of operating revenue and expenses in 2016. A copy of our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

**\$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  
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

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



Ronald Fulton  
Richard Hankin  
John & Cheryl Heady  
Tim Hollick-Kenyon  
Jean Hurst  
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 Hebenton  
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 Disting and  
Mr Karl Brunner  
Susan Eltringham  
Henry G. Hawthorn  
Lorna Herberts  
Sheila Hildred  
Alison Hyatt  
Elizabeth Jarvis  
Lynn Kagan  
Norene Kimberley  
Marlene Loughheed  
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  
Rena Bacy  
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.  
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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 Mintonko  
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 Woodlends

**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**,  
*School Tours Coordinator*

**Maureen Kelly**,  
*Fundraising 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.