

Pugwash Communities in Bloom

" People, plants and pride.... growing together "

Planting days are like playing with friends in a sandbox. Garden tour days are like a school trip. Meeting days are spent exploring and implementing ideas. Whatever the day Communities in Bloom's focus is to improve and beautify the village.

In 2005 a small group of people interested in beautifying Pugwash formed a committee and joined Communities in Bloom. The founding members were Anne Riopelle, Paolo Brenciaglia, Elaine Cook and Marilyn Horton. Under the leadership of Chair, Marilyn Horton the group grew. Today there are 17 committee members. The executive is Chair, John Mills, Past Chair, Marilyn Horton, Secretary, Mary Maron, Treasurer, Bill Church.

The first year CIB hung baskets, planted gardens, hung banners and started the Peace Garden at the train station. In 2006 the committee entered the Communities in Bloom non-competitive category of Friends. The judges were impressed. Urged by the judges and encouraged by their report CIB entered the provincial competition in 2007 in the 1000 and under population category. They were elated when the province announced the winners: Pugwash won 5 Blooms, the highest award given, with special reference to the Peace Garden.

The provincial judge strongly suggested that the committee take the next step; in 2008 Pugwash CIB entered the national competition, again in the 1000 and under population category. Pugwash won 4 Blooms with special mention of the Friends of the Pugwash Estuary! In 2009 CIB is focusing on listening to and communicating with other volunteer organizations, pulling the community together and improving its quality of life. They will enter the non-competitive Friends category.

Since 2005 CIB has established some annual events: a garden contest with winners announced at HarbourFest, SoupFest, a spring fundraiser, a garden seminar also in the spring and the TreeFest during Christmas, sponsored by the Pugwash Chamber of Commerce.

"CIB strives to grow a vibrant community," says Chair John Mills. "This can be achieved in a large part through volunteerism. We've been fortunate having had over 80 volunteers participate in various activities." He continued, "Volunteers pull communities together, sharing pride and ownership."

Communities in Bloom is not just about planting flowers. It is a Canadian organization committed to fostering civic pride, environmental responsibility, and beautification through community participation with focus on the protection and promotion of green spaces. Eight criteria must be met: tidiness, environmental awareness, community awareness, heritage conservation, urban forest management, landscape areas, floral displays and turf and ground covers. The Pugwash CIB works hard to improve the village in all of these areas. Everyone can help. To volunteer for CIB is easy: be environmentally aware, pick up some litter, plant a tree, plant a garden or become a committee member. Every little bit helps and working together makes a community a home.

For information about Pugwash CIB call Mary Maron at 257-2468. Information about the national Communities in Bloom is on their website - communitiesinbloom.ca □

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