



Wildflower Garden Club Newsletter

October/November 2019

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Messages from the Presidents

I was in Fairbanks last week and came home via Paxson Lake. On the way up the Parks, the scenery was progressively more colorful and beautiful. It got frosty in Fairbanks our last night, most of the leaves were gone, and on the way back near Fort Greeley, there was fresh snow on the ground. Sigh. An interesting time of year for me—I am so exhausted from all the non-stop gardening, potting, selling, the state fair in Palmer and then the yard clean-up, that I am quite glad to see everything going to sleep, and I find the first few snows lovely and restful. After a month or so, I am DONE with restful and want plants in any shape or form. I bet I am not alone! Plenty of reason to enjoy the start of up of all the club meetings again! It will be fun to see you all again at the WfGC meetings.

Paul

Mid November already? Where did October go? Time is going by way to fast for me! We had another wonderfully extended fall which gave me lots of time to get more yard and greenhouse chores done than I expected. This will certainly be a blessing come spring when I have less to do than usual. Who am I trying to fool ...? I'll find plenty to keep me on my toes. I am happy that our regular monthly meetings have started up again and the opportunity to see all of you once again. I enjoyed the 'in the field' program at the Ronsse's home about Garden Fertility, followed by Floral Design with Paul, and this month's Houseplants. (I have been busy repotting some of my root bound plants already.) Kathy Zins, our Program Chairperson, has once again planned and accomplished scheduling many interesting and new programs for us in the coming year. Lastly, I look forward to another year serving with Paul as Co-President along with a few new Board Members in 2020 and am excited for some new ideas to bring to the club that we are working on.

Kathy

2019 Member of the Year

The Wildflower Garden Club has awarded Billye Goff the honor of being our 2019 Member of the Year! Fellow Wildflowers recognized Billye and her excellent job as the Membership Chair, keeping meticulous records and constant updates to the board. She also suggested and put together a publication with the help of Karen Edmundson to welcome new members to WfGC and to give them access to the numerous resources we enjoy belonging to the National Garden Clubs. Billye volunteers at many club events, including the Marigold Giveaway, the annual plant sale, the Verna Pratt Wildflower trail clean-up, and she assisted in the State Garden Club convention when hosted by our club a few years ago. Billye is also one of the club members that volunteers every year at the Alaska State Fair in Palmer. The Wildflower Garden Club would like to recognize and thank Billye for her enthusiastic participation in our club and for the many things she accomplishes as a member. Well deserved!



What's Growing Now

Reminder: to be included in the 2020 Yearbook membership registration forms must be received by the club by December 1st. The yearly dues are \$15 for individuals, and we have a new feature for a family membership, with the initial membership costing \$15 and each individual family member for an additional \$10. Family membership will receive just one Yearbook.

The list of candidates running for board positions was announced at the October club meeting and elections were held at the November meeting by the club members present.

The 2020 Board of the Wildflower Garden Club is as follows:

Co-presidents: **Kathy Liska** (returning) and **Paul Marmora** (returning)

Vice President: **Barbara Baker** (new)

Treasurer: **Cindy Walker** (new)

Secretary: **Tobi Harvey** (returning)

Members at Large: **Annita Magee** (returning) and **Kathy Tiede** (new)

After sending an email notification to club members in September, the club discussed updates to the By-laws. There were a few changes to duties, and most of the updates were to modernize wording to reflect the modern times. At the November meeting, the club voted to accept the proposed Amendments, which will be printed in the 2020 yearbook.



The program for October was a presentation by Paul Marmora on floral design. He demonstrated a vase arrangement and a new design trend arrangement using the Oasis midnight floral foam, a black foam that is used as a design element in arranging flowers, meant to be featured and not covered up. There were questions from members interested in what the judges look for in the flower shows by National Garden Clubs and during the State Fair.



The November monthly meeting presentation was about houseplants and which ones are the most effective for health in the home, presented by Monica Emerton from The Green Connection. She spoke us about the benefits of live indoor plants, sources of indoor pollutants, and some basic care of our plants. She also touched on a new topic coming into play called 'Biophilia' which is the innate human attraction to nature and our contact to it being essential to our overall health.





The garden at the Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center (AWCC) is still awaiting movement of rock and soil. The goal is to get it to settle for the winter, so there will be less shifting once the garden is planted.

An application was submitted in October for the grant from the National Garden Clubs (NGC), and we are awaiting an answer. We are also planning to apply for the NGC Ames Tool Grant to bring us tools to use for both the work at AWCC and at the Alaska Botanical Garden.

Flower Judge School #2 was presented on 12-14OCT. Four WfGC members participated. In November, there was the Holiday Flower show. Three club members, Billye Goff, Linda Kelly and Carroll Samuelson were volunteers as clerks for the judging. Six members of our club volunteered to help with the show and/or participated by entering either plants or floral designs. Many thanks to Martie Black (General Chairman), Kathy Liska (Staging), Paul Marmora (Classification & Entry) Robin Phillips (Placement), Jeanette Bock and Chris Wood. The top two awards were awarded to WfGC members! Jeanette Bock received the Award of Design Excellence for her design depicting the roaring 20s, and Chris Wood was awarded the Award of Horticultural Excellence for her outstanding succulent specimen. Kudos to these two women for representing our WfGC so well. The next flower show will be in August of 2020. Get ready to enter something at that time!



Members Share ...

Alis Schmitt presented the Wildflower of the month at the November Meeting, presenting on Fireweed. The name Fireweed comes from its rapid ability to colonize areas burned by fire. In Great Britain it's called Bomb Weed due to the rapid colonization of land bombed during WW II. The specific epithet *angustifolium* ('narrow leaved') is constructed from the Latin words *angustus* meaning 'narrow' and *folium* meaning 'leaved' or 'leaf'. It has a limited use in wild gardens and must be carefully checked and confined. Reproduces readily from rhizomes as well as seed. Seeds can be dormant many years awaiting warmth for germination. Each plant can produce up to 30,000 seeds. Health benefits can be from an infusion or tea. Can be used to help treat urinary, prostate problems & GI disorders such as diarrhea and dysentery. Traditionally, the plant use has been to cleanse, soothe and heal minor burns, ulcers, skin rashes and irritation. Flowers yield copious nectar that yield a rich, syrupy honey. Fireweed honey, jelly, and syrup are quite popular here in Ak. Tender young fireweed shoots are nutritious rich in Vitamin C, Flavonoids and beta carotene.



Around the Corner

November 21 – ABG Volunteer Appreciation Dinner 6 pm at the Garden. RSVP to stacey.shriner@alaska.abg.org

December 5 – **Fresh Holiday Wreaths or Centerpieces** making at Dimond Greenhouse with Darryl Leiser, 10 am-12 pm. \$25 / Pre-registration is required for this Member-Only Activity. If you didn't already sign up at the November meeting, please email Kathy Zins at kzins@gci.net to get on the list. Always a fun time with fellow members!

December 12 – **Annual Christmas Luncheon** starting at 11 am. A long standing Wildflower tradition! Parties are about good food so please bring a dish of your choice: salad, appetizer, main dish, vegetable or dessert. And if you'd like to participate in the always spirited Christmas Gift Exchange, bring a wrapped garden-type gift valued at \$15 to exchange. Pat & Linda Kelly's home. More information to come soon.

**** We are still requesting assistance with the Wildflower-of-the-Month presentation at monthly meetings and for contributions to the newsletter. More people make the presentations more interesting and varied. Feel free to share gardening tips, recipes, pictures ... every little bit helps to make our newsletter even better. ****

~ Wishing everyone a Happy Thanksgiving ~

