



Wildflower Garden Club

February 2020 Newsletter

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Messages from the Presidents

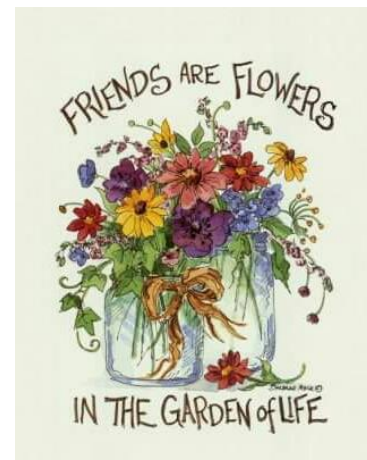
Spring is not here yet, but I think I did receive a post card that it is getting bored with the warm climates and wants to come back to the north. I cannot wait! As so many are commenting, the catalogues are arriving, the seeds trays and soil have come out, the potting soil is warming, the lights are being checked. Kathy reminds us that we need to have our marigold seedlings planted if we want them in blooming size for the midtown mall spring garden show. That is scheduled for 11APR, which is only a little less than two months away! The air of growth and expectancy is in the air, and not just the plants' juices are starting to flow! We are all making plans for what we want to do with our gardens this year, and not really caring that we cannot remotely accomplish all the things we are writing down. No matter!! It is so much fun to dream. Can't wait to get my hands dirty again!

Paul

So glad that the temps have finally risen above zero after what seemed like an extra-long January and I appreciate the extra light February has brought. I welcomed the snow we received this week and have not minded shoveling in the balmy 30 degree days that have followed. It's sweatshirt weather again ... for the time being. We held a couple of hands-on Kokedama Workshops over the past few weeks which were a lot of fun and helped to break the monotony of the winter months. Many thanks to member Robin Phillips of the Alaska Wholesale Flower Market for allowing us the use of her back room area to make this happen. Paul and I look forward to bringing more workshops to the club over the course of 2020. Happily, I can say my hands have been dirty in the soil seeding Marigolds for the clubs first 'Service Project' at the Midtown Mall Spring Garden Show in April. I really enjoy the smiles we get to see on the kids' faces at the Children's Marigold Giveaway. It is also great to see and visit with friends and fellow plant enthusiasts from other gardening groups who gather to have a good time in promoting spring. We have some great monthly programs lined up for March and April that will swing us right into the next season. Hope to see you there!

Kathy

**Remember, the Board of Directors is here for you.
If you have any questions, comments or ideas,
we would really love to hear from you.
Feel free to contact any of us!**



What's Growing Now?

The two Kokedama workshops were quite successful. A total of 27 people got together with us to build a moss ball planting. Great fun was had by all and we were able to bring in a little to help defray the costs of running the club.



Our February meeting was a new approach for the Wildflower Garden Club. The presentation was conveyed electronically (called a webinar) by Mingchu Zhang of the Cooperative Extension Service, Fairbanks office. After a little preliminary struggle with technology, we were off and running. Ming is an expert in soils and Biochar, which is a recently focused-on phenomenon to build up soils and carbons with a charcoal-like substance produced in specific burning to create a fertile milieu for plant growth. By the end of Ming's talk, several people were asking for a workshop on Biochar. We were also privileged to be visited by other Cooperative Extension experts from the Fairbanks and Anchorage offices and the Agriculture and Forestry Experimental Station in Palmer. Art Nash, Bob Van Veldhuizen and Deshana York were present as back-up to the technology and were most informative in addition to what Mingchu shared.



Announcements

Unfortunately, our October program's presenters are unable to make the meeting in October, so they have changed their presentation to a workshop on 20JUN. Details will be announced as they are developed.

We are **very excited** to announce that we have found an excellent alternative for the presentation. Mike Baldwin will present about our local native carnivorous plants. He has been studying these rascals for many years and has done quite an amount of research and has become an expert. This should be a fascinating topic.



Announcements continued ...

In the interest of saving a bit of time, the board will be sharing the minutes of the previous meeting via email rather than reading through the entire process at the monthly meetings. If there are any concerns with the information sent out, members can bring them up for discussion and/or amendment before the minutes of the previous meeting are accepted at the meeting.

We are looking into acquiring permanent nametags, like many other garden clubs have. So far, we have seen that most of these cost around \$10 per person. These are nice to be able to wear at any garden gathering and give us a professional look. We will talk more of this as we get more information.

Reminder

On **11APR**, the Midtown Mall Garden Fair is planned. One of our most popular **Service Projects**, we have our Marigold Giveaway to assist children to plant their very own marigold. With this in mind, in order to have blooming plants for early April, **your marigold seeds should be planted by now**. Last year, over 200 children walked away with a prized plant.



This year, in answer to a growing interest, we are planning on offering some of the marigold plants, a few tomatoes and Verna Pratt's books for sale as well.

We need volunteers to staff the Wildflower Garden Club booth for set up, planting, and take down shifts that day. Times 9-10am, 10-am-1pm, 1-4pm and 4-5pm.

Please email Kathy Liska at akliska@aol.com to put your name on the list.



Club Business

Our **Plant Sale** is scheduled to occur on **06JUN**, which is a slight departure from the Saturday after Memorial Day, which was our norm. Remember the Craft corner was a great success last year, and we encourage crafters to make any garden inspired crafts they excel at available for the sale.

We are planning on the club selling **hanging baskets, salad bowls and herb gardens** as a WfGC fundraiser. We will make available any leftover basket plants for individual purchase as well. Plan on details for a 5-person work party to build the baskets, proceeds of which will be completely for the club. We are working on making available baskets at cost for those participating in the assembly work party.

February Wildflower of the Month

Zygadenus elegans also *Anticlea elegans*

Death Camas, Camas Wand Lily, Mountain Death Camas, Poison Camas



This is a lovely native which is, as intimated by the common names, a very poisonous plant. The entire plant is highly toxic. In Montana, whole flocks of sheep have been lost due to wandering into a field of Death Camas. If one wishes to plant this striking plant in the garden, it must be protected from animal and human consumption.

The foliage grows up to 18 inches long and is a bluish-green, with a fold or crease along the middle, but it is very grass-like when it is young and short. The lily-like flower is delightful to look at with the white background and the yellow green spots on each petal/sepal. The root is a small bulb that has been confused with wild onions or lilies. The flowers bloom on sprays during late June to Early August, depending on the area.

Death camas grows in meadows and open woods throughout most of Alaska.