



Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska Newsletter ~ December 2021

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Messages from the Presidents

These holidays are one of my favorite and possibly busiest seasons of the year. I love the family time, am still reveling in the respite from all the summer gardening madness (the ennui hasn't set in yet), love all the cooking, and am leery of all the floral work and classes. It is all made up of things I love to do—probably the fact that it is all crammed into a few weeks makes it a bit more frantic. I also think about what I have done this year, the things I am pleased with and the things I want to work on. I am very thankful for each member of the club—I love our fellowship and like-mindedness and what we do together as a group. I surely hope that we can keep the club going after this year is up. You are wonderful and I appreciate and enjoy you all, and want to see the club keep going.

Paul

The hustle and bustle of the holidays are in full swing here on my home front with days filled of baking those once a year treats, wrapping gifts for the grandkids, listening to Christmas music, enjoying the sparkle of lights, and all of the other good things, such as receiving seed catalogs and dreaming about the next growing season that is in my mind at this time of year. As 2021 comes to a close, I am thankful to be a part of our exceptional group of gardeners, and have enjoyed the time, whether online in our Zoom meetings or at the handful of in person get togethers that we have shared. I am looking forward to 2022 and the opportunity to continue to build upon our friendships and fellowship. Thank you for the happiness and smiles you bring into my world. From the bottom of my heart, may your holidays be merry and bright!

Kathy



What's Growing Now

The annual **Wreath-Making** workshop at Dimond Greenhouses took place on 02DEC. Darryl is always entertaining and although the rapidity with which he finishes a wreath is intimidating to novices, he (and his son, Matt) are eager to assist and keep things lively. Sixteen people participated in the workshop, and judging by the laughter and cheerfully raised voices, all enjoyed themselves enormously. The option is always to make a wreath or centerpiece, but this year, 16 wreaths marched out the door at the end.



The workshop making **Holiday Hanging Baskets** took the place of the Holiday Potluck on 09DEC, which was canceled due to continuing unease about the Covid situation. We met in-person and via Zoom, to accommodate both points of view. 18 people participated through either option. A lot of fun and pleasant fellowship was shared. The hanging baskets are versatile: going either inside or outside, so they can bring holiday cheer in any situation.



Special wildflowers that bloomed this month

Mardy Lower and Dennis Ronsse



One of the official December birthday flowers is the **Narcissus**. This flower commonly represents purity, sweetness, and simplicity. The narcissus flowers are also often associated with respect and faithfulness. It's often confused with daffodils since they are also part of the Narcissus genus of the Amaryllis family. Most narcissus species are spring bloomers. However, there are a few types that showcase their cheerful blooms in the winter, like the **paperwhite narcissus**.

While Poinsettias are more commonly associated with Christmas, they are also considered as birth flowers for December. Poinsettias are also called **Christmas Stars and Christmas Flowers** because of the shape and color of the "flowers," which are technically bracts. The vibrant poinsettia flowers signify success, good cheer, and celebration.



Announcements

The yearbooks for the 2022 calendar year are going to the printer this week, and we expect to mail them out early in the new year. Inside you will find the events plan for the coming year as well as much information about the club. Those who renewed before print are included in the yearbook members list.

We are looking for input for the **Member's Corner** in our newsletter: share pictures, tips, recipes, successes or learning opportunities (problems you learned from and overcame) if they are beneficial to fellow club members. Please send them to the Club Email or to Kathy Liska by the 5th of the month for inclusion in the newsletter.

Be sure to check out the additional email sent your way with a 'Special Edition of Recipe Shares' from our members. Thank you to those who answered the call for this exchange.

Upcoming Meetings & Workshops

January 13th – "Essential Herbs for your Pantry" with Deb Blaylock

Member Deb Blaylock is a busy gardener. She is president of the Mat-Su Master Gardeners group, she is Administrator for the Alaska Home Gardeners Facebook group (as well as a few other groups), she is a daily volunteer and prolific exhibitor at the State Fair, and she still has an abundant garden! Deb has been growing herbs for her household very successfully for many years. She will share her secrets and techniques with us at our January meeting via Zoom, although we will also meet in person at Central Lutheran Church in Anchorage to watch it. This promises to be an enlightening program!

Club Business

The membership drive has been completed with 59 members signing up for 2022. As always, Membership Chair Billye Goff conducted the drive with her usual mix of professionalism, attention to detail and good humor. She is well deserving of our thanks and respect for all she does so well.

The election was held for the 2022 Board in the beginning of November, and the slate proposed by the Nominating Committee was elected unanimously, as they were unopposed (imagine that!!).

Kathy Liska and Paul Marmora will continue as Co-presidents for this final year.

Barbara Baker will have another year as Vice-president.

Cindy Walker is Treasurer for her final year.

Sally Byrne-Flores will be the Secretary for 2022

Ruth Bauman and Barbara Carrick are the Members-at-Large

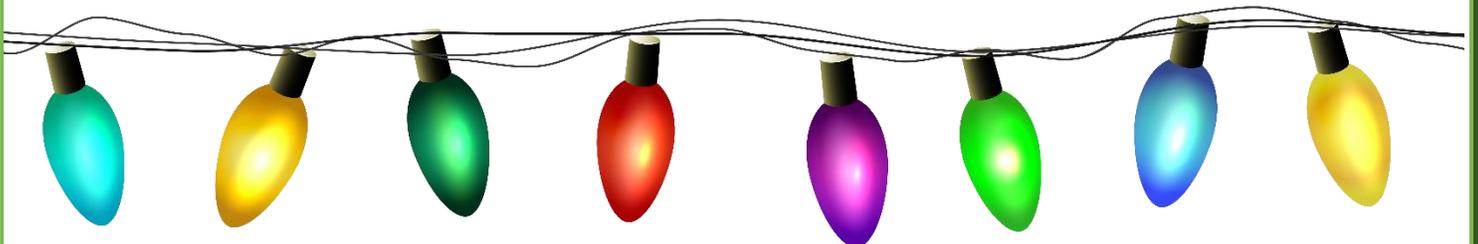
Many thanks to these folks who volunteer to serve the club in these capacities.

The 2022 Budget has been approved by the Board of Directors and will be presented to members at the January 13th meeting and via email.

December 2021 Treasurer's Report

Denali Federal Credit Union

Business Savings APYO .10%	\$4,999.12
Business Checking	\$3,361.46
CD - 3 month	\$2,500.19
CD - 6 month	\$2,500.38
CD - 12 month	\$5,001.53
Balance 11/30/21	\$18,362.68
Morgan Stanley Balance 11/30/21	\$49,465.41
Total Assets 11/30/21	\$67,828.09



The Story Behind Your Christmas Wreath

The Old Farmer's Almanac

This time of year, Christmas wreaths are hung in every place imaginable—from doors and fences to lampposts and windows—even the front grille of the car! How did a round bit of greenery come to symbolize the holidays?

Wreaths are part of many ancient traditions dating back to the earliest civilizations. The circle is a symbol of immortality; throughout history, wreaths have been associated with life, rejuvenation, and renewal.

Originally, wreaths were worn around the head, neck, or waist. The Greeks awarded laurel wreaths to their triumphant athletes; in the Persian Empire they were worn on the head as a symbol of importance; and ancient Romans wore them like crowns. In Sweden, candles were incorporated in the wreaths to celebrate the return of light after the winter solstice. Nowadays we use them in a window or on a door as a sign of welcome during the holidays.



Luckily, there are no hard and fast rules for wreath-making. Whatever pleases you is a success! Every wreath starts with a base of some sort; it can be wire, straw, vine, or wood. Stalks of woody herbs like rosemary, lemon verbena, artemisia, or summer savory can be wrapped into a circle to make a fragrant base. Gather small bunches of evergreens together and wire them to the base. Overlap the bunches to hide the stems. Tuck small bunches of herbs and other interesting greens into the base using more wire to hold them, if necessary. Using greens of different colors and textures will give your wreath its richness. Add cones, dried flowers, berries, and fruit for accents. Don't forget the bow!

Herbs can add symbolic meaning to your wreath:

- Rosemary for **remembrance**
- Sage for **good health**
- Thyme for **bravery**
- Lavender for **purity**
- Rue for **virtue**
- Juniper for **life and hope**
- Hawthorn berries for **protection and joy**

Throw in cedar for **strength**, holly for **immortality**, and pinecones for **long life and prosperity**.

Whatever your family traditions are, at its very core, a wreath celebrates the cyclical nature of life.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year