



Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska

Newsletter ~ December 2022

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Messages from the Presidents

This is such a fun club! It has been a privilege to work with you all for the last four years. Thanks for the trust and support you have given us as your co-presidents and for the fun times we have had updating and setting up new programs and avenues. I am especially grateful for my co-president Kathy Liska. We made a good team and this past four years cemented our friendship. Her discipline and my artsy-fartsy-ness worked well together. Plus, the laughs kept coming, so it went well.

Your support has been exceptional and crucial to the success of the club. I heard comments numerous times on how much fun we in our club have. Thanks to Kellie and Christie for stepping up to be co-presidents and for the board of directors who back up and hold up the club. I'm looking forward to many more years as a member of this wonderful club. You have my thanks.

Paul

As 2022 comes to a close, it is with heavy feelings that this will be my last 'Messages from the Presidents'. It has been a privilege and honor to be afforded the opportunity to serve our club in this capacity for the past 4 years. I wish to thank every one of you for the unwavering support shown and given to Paul and me in our positions as Co-Presidents of Wildflowers. I am appreciative and honored to be a part of this exceptional group of garden folks, and have enjoyed the times, whether online in our Zoom meetings, or the enjoyable in-person get togethers that we have shared with each other. I am looking forward to 2023 and continuing to build upon long standing friendships and fellowship. Thank you for the happiness and smiles you have brought into my world. From the bottom of my heart... may your holidays be merry and bright!

Kathy



What's Growing Now

The membership drive has been in effect for the last month or so. We have had over 60 members sign up again and have added 5 new folks. These names will be included in the 2023 Yearbook. There is no time limit on when people can join or re-join.

We have had a couple of successful workshops in December. Although the heavy snowfall made travel difficult or impossible for some folks in outlying areas, we still had 13 people in the **Wreath and Centerpiece Workshop** at Dimond Greenhouses on the 8th.

A festive and fun time!



This weather has been tough to maneuver around this season, but 9 people were able to join in for the morning **Gnome Workshop** on the 14th, in which we made 15 gnomes and supplied 4 kits. Between the 10 of us and the 15 gnomes, there was quite a crowd! A very enjoyable morning--those little buggers are pretty darned cute!



Another victim of the vagaries of weather was our traditional and **Holiday Potluck Party**. We took a chance that the weather folks might be wrong, so we held off on canceling the event ahead of time, but amazingly enough, we had pretty near the snow they predicted. It was very disappointing, to not get to see each other again after the long hiatus because of the pandemic, but we felt the safety of our members was more important than having a social event. Thank you to Shirley Luedke for going through Christmas decorations we planned to use to be festive. Thanks to the club members for being patient and waiting until the morning of the get-together to allow us to make our decision. Twelve inches on the ground (at least) made it an easy choice. Apologies to those who had large batches of food to have for dinner that night and perhaps for subsequent nights. Keep your eyes peeled for an alternate date for a in person get-together.



Special Wildflowers that bloomed this month

Mardy Lower & 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

Club Business

November Election Results

We are pleased to announce the results of the election that took place from November 10-15, for the Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska's 2023 Board of Directors. All those who voted were in unanimous agreement to accept the slate as proposed. Installment of the officers will take place at the January monthly meeting. We look forward to working together, growing the club, and furthering its goals.

A Warm Welcome to your WGCA 2023 Board of Directors!

Co-President: Christie Holshouser

Co-President: Kellie Staples

Vice President: Barbara Baker

Secretary: Mary Britton

Treasurer: Cindy Walker

Member at Large: Sally Byrne-Flores

Member at Large: Ruth Bauman



Membership Renewal

To renew your club memberships for the upcoming year, you can access the membership form from www.wildflowergardenclub.org under the membership tab.

If you print a copy of the form and send in a check, the membership cost is \$20 with an additional \$15 for each immediate family member (only one yearbook will be shared in a family membership). You can also fill in the form online and pay electronically. An additional cost of \$1 per member registration will be applied to cover the processing fees of the credit card company.

We like to recognize members' birthday months in the newsletter, so there is also a spot on the membership form to include that information. Month—not year! If sharing birthday information is an issue for you, you may always write n/a in that spot on the form.

National Native Plant Day

We have been asked to sign a petition to Governor Dunleavy to designate May 2023 as Alaska Native Plant month. This effort is being coordinated by the Alaska Native Plant Society and has the backing of the Garden Club of America as well. Nationally, Native Plant Month would be celebrated in April, but we are asking for an exception for Alaska, as April is not much of a gardening month for us—much like Arbor Day is different in Alaska than in the rest of the country. The Board of Directors thought this was a worthy idea and so have sent in the signatures of the co-presidents as requested.

November 2022 Treasurer Reports

Denali Federal Credit Union

Business Savings APYO .10%	\$7,503.28
Business Checking	\$6,037.60
CD - 6 month	\$0
(Matured and moved to checking)	
CD - 12 month	\$5,023.63
Balance 11/30/22	\$18,564.51
Morgan Stanley Balance 11/30/22	\$43,460.03
Total Assets 11/30/22	\$62,024.54



Announcements

Membership Chair needed!

Billye Goff has been Membership Chair for quite a few years now. She feels it is time to share the wealth with another member of the club, and has decided to pass the mantle to another. Billye has done an outstanding job, and has organized the data base to a fine-tuned machine. She has remained active as Chair through this year's membership drive, so her replacement will have an easier time to get used to the system. We need to fill her shoes for the coming year, so are sending out this notice in search of a volunteer. Many, many thanks go to Billye for her valuable and dependable contribution to the club.

Look for your **2023 WGCA Yearbook** to arrive via USPS mail soon. We will be sending them out at the very end of December or early in January. New members will also receive their Wildflower name badge in their envelopes.



Upcoming Meetings, Projects, & Workshops

Thursday, January 12th at 10:00am – ZOOM ONLY

This program promises to be a very interesting one!

Mardie Robb, retired owner of Colony Greenhouse in Palmer, will present via **Zoom** on “**The Beauty of Gourd Art**”. Perhaps you have seen examples of her gorgeous artwork displayed at the State Fair. We will send the Zoom link out a few days before the meeting.



Member's Corner

Curried Herb Dip – Paul Marmora

Ingredients

- 1/2 Cup Sour Cream
- 1/4 Cup plain Yoghurt
- 3/4 Cup Mayonnaise
- 1 TBSP chopped Italian flat parsley
- 1 tsp fresh thyme
- 1 med clove garlic, minced
- 1 tsp fresh ginger, minced
- 2 tsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp Curry powder
- 2 Scallions, minced

Method:

Mix all ingredients well in a small bowl.

Allow to sit in refrigerator for flavors to Blend well. (may make a day ahead)

Serve with crudité (mixed fresh veggies cut for dipping) or subtly flavored crackers.



Schlumbergera
Christmas Cactus

Photo by Alis Schmitt



How Do You Take Care of Poinsettias?

Holiday Poinsettia care begins with proper light, water, and temperature conditions. During the holidays, while in full bloom, they typically enjoy semi-cool, humid locations in bright, indirect light with plenty of moisture.

Poinsettia plants should be watered thoroughly, taking care not to drown them by ensuring adequate drainage is available. Likewise, avoid letting them sit in water-filled saucers, which can lead to root rot. Adding plants nearby can help increase humidity levels in dry rooms, as will humidifiers.



Fertilizing Poinsettia plants is never recommended while they are still in bloom. Fertilize Poinsettias only if keeping them after the holiday season. Apply fertilizer every two weeks or once monthly using a complete houseplant fertilizer.

Once flower bracts have fallen, you have the option of discarding the plant or keeping it an additional year. For those choosing to continue with Poinsettia care, decrease regular watering to allow the plant to dry out some. However, do not let it dry out completely. Also, relocate the Poinsettia plant to a cool, dark area until spring or around April.

In spring, return the plant to a sunny area and water well. Cut back all canes (branches) to about 6 inches from the pot's rim. It may also be a good idea to repot the Poinsettia using the same type of soil. While Poinsettias can be kept indoors throughout summer, many people choose to move them outdoors in a sunny, but protected, area of the flower garden by sinking the pot into the ground. Either way will work.

