

Homer Garden Club

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February 2021

The next HGC meeting is a Zoom meeting on **March 21** at 2:00..

Board of Directors

Kathy Dube, President—
425-241-1045
kdube197@gmail.com

Jan Peyton—Co-Vice President
299-0153
janpeyton73@gmail.com

Sally Coleman—Co-VP
805-746-4148
sallyjcoleman@gmail.com

Louise Ashmun—299-6360
leashmun@gmail.com

Elaine Burgess—299-2325
eburgess216@gmail.com

Ruth Dickerson—299-2773
ruthedickerson@gmail.com

Barbara Kennedy — 235-0007
barbara_e_kennedy@msn.com

Michael Murray—435-7333
murmurart66@gmail.com

Julie Parizek — 299-0343
j3parizek@outlook.com

Paula Riley — 435-7055
pauril@yahoo.com

Francie Roberts —235-1068,
francie.roberts@gmail.com



Newsletter

There will be no meeting in February. The next meeting will be a March 21 Zoom meeting on Hydroponics in the Home.

"Francie Roberts will be the speaker at the March 21st meeting. She will be speaking via Zoom on the topic of Hydroponics for the Home. Francie has had a long-term interest in this type of gardening and has tried many hydroponic techniques. "



The January Garden Club Zoom Meeting Recording is Available Online for Viewing/Listening (See instructions on Page 2.)

Treasurer Reports

by Louise Ashmun, Treasurer

Monthly Treasurer Report for January 2021

Income

Membership	\$25.00	
Book Sales	\$32.91	
Total Income		<u>\$57.91</u>

Expenses

Speaker Honorarium	\$100.00	
Total Expenses		<u>\$100.00</u>

Checking Beginning Balance 01/01/2021	\$	3,837.40
Income	\$	57.91
Expenses	\$	100.00
Interest	\$	<u>0.16</u>
Ending Balance 01/31/2021	\$	3,795.47
Money Market Beginning Balance 01/01/2021	\$	15,056.73
Interest	\$	<u>1.28</u>
Money Market Ending Balance 01/1/2021	\$	15,058.01

Total Ending Balance 01/31/2021	\$	18,853.48
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January Garden Club Meeting Recordings Available Online for Viewing/Listening

The January 17, 2021 Zoom meeting of the Homer Garden Club was recorded and is available online. To access the recordings, click on the link in the following invitation and enter the passcode listed below. Note that there are two separate recordings. The first one is the business part of the meeting and the second one is the presentation by Leah. You should be able to fast forward through the first recording if you just want to see the presentation.

Topic: Homer Garden Club Meeting

Start Time : Jan 17, 2021 01:45 PM

Meeting Recording:

[https://zoom.us/rec/share/
FDBo9kbeQIGoYKEuowDtGpeYpCWdlub68DSkffsot_GmRblo1T5FdBNOqk8d_FAc.NbD2yht1objkiOWi](https://zoom.us/rec/share/FDBo9kbeQIGoYKEuowDtGpeYpCWdlub68DSkffsot_GmRblo1T5FdBNOqk8d_FAc.NbD2yht1objkiOWi)

Access Passcode: fm5@&JdX

Minutes of Homer Garden Club Meeting - Jan 17th, 2020

Gathered via Zoom

OFFICER REPORTS

President Kathy welcomed members, visitors and the speaker. Over 50 participants.

Non-members are encouraged to join the club using Membership application on the website.

Special Report Saskia Esslinger gave a brief presentation on the newly established Homer Seed Library, housed at Homer Public Library. Having received grant money from Awesome Foundation and Homer Library, she is in the process now of packaging 'Open Pollinated' seeds for distribution. Seeds can be 'borrowed', grown and returned to the Community Seed Bank. Donations are accepted, volunteers welcomed and workshops will be offered.

Secretary was absent, but the previous minutes are posted on the website

Treasurer Not much activity to report. Currently in combined accounts \$18,894

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Gardeners Weekend. Anticipating that 'yes' it will be happening – possibly July 17th & 18th.

Francie confirmed that the committee is 'poised to go' for a tour of 5 gardens. In avoidance of large gatherings – there will be no guest speaker. Masks will probably be required and other necessary precautions addressed later.

Speakers Sally reported that plans are for a March 21st Zoom meeting, maybe on the subject of hydroponics. Francie Roberts is a potential speaker with knowledge and experience

Newsletter Thanks Paula for

great articles and such a worthy publication.

Data Base Not a member? Please kick in your \$10 and then you will get that lovely newsletter

Baycrest Gardens Brenda reported a successful year thanks to a few faithful volunteers – despite the fact that it is hard to twist arms or give the challenging eye contact for recruits via Zoom. Please consider offering to help next summer.

Social Committee Michael was absent – so no first hand report on his wife's five star cookies

Plant Sale "YES. We are going to figure it out. May not be crazy fun but we are going to have a BIG one!" May 22nd. Keep this in mind as you plant your seeds and when your dividable perennials appear again from under the snow and ice!

Scholarship. The 'Homer Garden Club Environmental Scholarship' Application has been sent to Homer High to be offered this year. Eligible applicants will not be limited to current year High School graduates and not necessarily for college studies. An Evaluation committee will be formed if/when necessary.

Leah Waggoner of Foundroots – (a brief synopsis)

Farmers and retailers with a mission to develop a secure Alaskan food system and resilient northern communities by growing seed varieties adapted to the Alaskan bioregion.

Leah and her husband cleared their 4¼ acre 'home' lot in Haines in 2012 and began their Permaculture practice using Regenerative Techniques – low tilling and green manure etc

They have since developed almost an acre of market garden with a hoop house.

Their 2020 Seed Catalog offers 75 varieties, 12 of which were saved from their farm. Seeds are Open Pollinated not necessarily heirlooms – but not hybrids.

A major philosophical concern for them is that we are losing control of Seed Availability

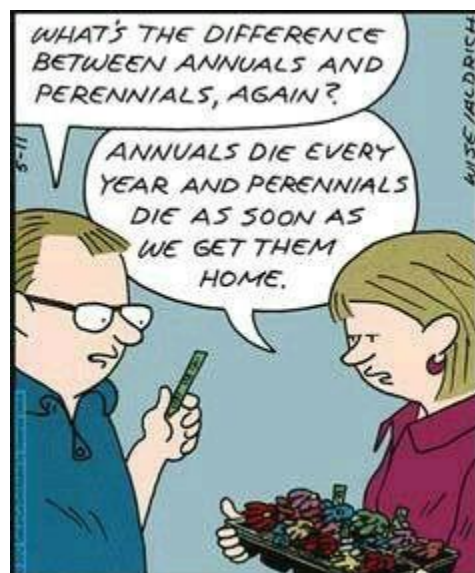
Nearly 93% of the diversity in our food supply is lost

Just 12 plant crops now equal 75% of the food consumed worldwide

4 multinational companies own 60% of the global seed market

Leah's very interesting Powerpoint presentation provided lots of information on the When, How & What of seed saving - including special advice on being willing to sacrifice your 'best plants' and to avoid 'Inbreeding' by paying attention to recommended distancing

Details of how to access a recording of the presentation will be emailed to members.



Tips For Warming Up Soil In The Spring

As winter drags on, gardeners are thinking about spring. And the earlier we can get out there growing, the better. You can actually help warm up your soil quicker so that you can start planting sooner. Cold soil solutions are simple and easy to implement.

Why Warming Soil for Early Planting Makes Sense

For your perennials and flowers, there is really no need to get started early with growing, but for your vegetable garden, why not get some of your early plants in the ground even earlier? It is possible to make your soil conditions just right for some of those hardy early vegetables like greens, radishes, peas, and beets.

Warming up soil in late winter or early spring means that you can start these vegetables early and get a harvest sooner. Starting earlier will also allow you to get more harvests out of your growing season or will give you more space to start growing your summer and warmer-weather plants.

Hardy, early plants can start growing when soil temperature has reached about 44 degrees Fahrenheit (7 degrees Celsius) for a consistent period.

How to Pre-Warm Soil

First, it's important to have the right kind of soil and moisture levels. Even soil with plenty of organic matter and good drainage will hold onto just enough water to keep the soil warmer than dirt that is bone dry. Having water in the soil—but not enough to saturate it—will allow it to absorb and hold onto daytime heat better.

Of course, that won't be enough for most climates. To really warm up the soil, you need some artificial methods. Cover the soil with plastic sheeting and leave it in place for about six weeks. This is approximately how much time is required to heat the soil enough for early plantings.

Once you're ready to sow, take off the cover, pull any weeds, and sow the seeds or transplants. Then recover if it's still

cold outside. Be sure to weight the plastic firmly while warming up soil to ensure it stays in place.

Keeping soil warm over winter is another option for gardeners living in areas where winters are not too harsh. It seems counter-intuitive, but don't use mulch over the soil. This will prevent the soil from absorbing heat from the sun during the day. Instead, till the soil around your plants to loosen it up to a depth of 2 or 3 inches (5 to 8 cm.); this will help it better absorb heat.

Sprinkle dark compost over the surface as well to absorb more heat. If these methods aren't enough, you can also use the plastic sheeting to hold in heat.

Whether you're warming up for an early spring or holding heat in over a mild winter, warming the soil is possible, and is a move that will reap great rewards come harvest time.

Article printed from Gardening Know How: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com>

Plant a Row for the Food Pantry

The local Food Pantry feeds lots of people who are in need. Every week the Food Pantry fills bags with donated potatoes, carrots, and onions. The recipients really appreciate these and other donated fresh produce items that are included. Besides the donations of individuals, our local businesses also donate.

So, please Plant a Row for the Food Pantry. — Peggy Craig

Using Fresh Manure In The Garden

The use of manure as a fertilizer in gardens dates back for centuries. However, as mankind's understanding of disease causes and control has grown, the use of fresh manure in the garden came under some necessary scrutiny. Still, today, many gardeners question if you can fertilize with fresh manure. Keep reading to learn more about fertilizing with fresh manure.

Should You Use Fresh Manure in Gardens?

The benefits of using manure as fertilizer are well known. Manure improves soil texture, allows for proper drainage while also improving the soil's water holding capacity. It can be used in clay soil, compacted, hard pan soil or sandy soils. Manure is an organic material that can increase beneficial microorganisms in the garden soil. While improving the soil, manure also provides a slow and steady release of nutrients to the plant life growing in the soil. Manure is also usually an inexpensive garden fertilizer, especially for gardeners who raise livestock.

However, don't run out to the pasture to collect cow pies for the garden just yet. Fresh manure in the garden can also contain harmful bacteria, such as *E. coli* and other disease pathogens that can cause serious illnesses in humans when edibles are grown in raw manure.

In addition, the digestive systems of horses, cows, cattle or chickens, don't always break down seeds from the weedy plants they eat. In fact, some weed seeds actually rely on a trip through an animal or bird's digestive system to scarify their hard coating and instigate germination. Fresh manure filled with viable weed seeds can lead to a garden plot dominated by

unwanted weeds.

A common question we are asked at Gardening Know How, "does manure need to be composted before using in the garden," is a warranted one. In gardens with edibles, composting raw manures is highly recommended. Composting manure^[3] before adding it to gardens not only kills many unwanted weed seeds, but it is also an important step in preventing the spread of disease and illnesses.

Is Fertilizing With Fresh Manure Safe?

To prevent the spread of disease, the USDA's National Organic Program (NOP) has created rules and guidelines for the safe use of raw manures. Their rules state that if edibles come into contact with the soil, such as root vegetables



or cucurbits which tend to lie on the soil surface, raw manure must be applied to the garden at least 120 days before harvest.

This includes vegetables such as tomatoes or peppers, which dangle above the soil and can come in contact with soil from splashing water or fruit drop. Edibles, such as sweet corn, which does not come into contact with soil, still require that raw manure be applied at least 90 days before harvest.

In northern areas, 120 days can be the entire growing season. In these conditions, it is recommended that you apply raw manures to the garden in fall or winter, before growing edibles the following spring. However, weeds may get the jump on you in spring.

In addition to harmful bacteria and weed seeds, raw manures can contain high levels of nitrogen, ammonium and salts, which can harm and burn plants. The best way to avoid all these problems from raw manures is to hot compost the manure before using it in the garden. In order to properly kill off disease, weed seeds and neutralize excessive salt, nitrogen and ammonium levels, it is recommended that raw manure be composted for at least 15 days at a minimum, consistent temperature of 131 F. (55 C.). The compost should be turned frequently to ensure that all of it reaches and maintains these temperatures.

Generally, we tend to think the fresher the better, but this is not the case for fertilizing with fresh manure. Composting manure may seem like a pain, but it is essential in preventing human illnesses. Composted or heat dried manures are also available to purchase as bagged garden products.

It is also important to note that you **should not use pet or pig waste in edible gardens**, composted or not, as these animal wastes can contain many harmful parasites and disease pathogens.

Article printed from Gardening Know How: <https://www.gardeningknowhow.com>

Just For Fun

Clear indications that you have too much Zucchini:

Your neighbor finds them every morning in his mailbox.
You are eating it for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, snacks too.
You have a flute made out of a Zucchini.
The stores pay you to take some off their shelves.
Even the field mice stop eating it.
You till under the Zucchini plants, but still have more today than you had yesterday.
Nightmares about a giant Zucchini wakes you in the night.

The real meaning of plant catalog terminology:

"A favorite of birds" means to avoid planting near cars, sidewalks, or clotheslines.
"Grows more beautiful each year" means "Looks like roadkill for the foreseeable future."
"Zone 5 with protection" is a variation on the phrase "Russian roulette."
"May require support" means your daughter's engineering degree will finally pay off.
"Moisture-loving" plants are ideal for landscaping all your bogs and swamps.
"Carefree" refers more to the plant's attitude than to your workload.
"Vigorous" is code for "has a Napoleonic compulsion to take over the world."

How do you know you are a Master Gardener?

There is a decorative compost container on your kitchen counter.
You would rather go to a nursery to shop than a clothing store.
You prefer gardening to watching television.
You plan vacation trips to arboretums and public parks.

COMPILED BY KAREN AND MIKE GAROFALO

Homer Garden Club
P.O. Box 2833
Homer, Alaska 99603

