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Homer Garden Club

Newsletter

The next Homer Garden Club meeting will be the Harvest Dinner held at 5:00 pm September 22 at the Methodist Church.

September 2019

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The Harvest Dinner will be held September 22 at the Homer Methodist Church

This free event for Homer Garden Club Members and a guest will be held at the Homer Methodist Church starting at 5:00 PM, Sunday, September 22. Members bring their favorite garden salad or home cooked dish, celebrating the bountiful harvest of our local gardens. The club provides prime rib, roasted to perfection by Tom Stroozas.

It is remarkable to see all of the beautifully prepared dishes such as fresh veggies garnished with edible flowers, creamy cheesy local potatoes, home-made bread and jam alongside hearty offerings of favorite casseroles. (Labels identifying what is in your dish are helpful for those with food restrictions.)

Don't forget to leave room for dessert! And, while you're enjoying those fabulous desserts, you just might win a door prize!

If you would like to contribute a door prize item, it would be greatly appreciated. Bunches of carrots to beautifully hand crafted pottery - any offering is welcome. If you have any questions or would like to contribute, please contact any of the HGC Board members. Since we do not currently have a social secretary, the Board members are setting up the dinner, but they would appreciate any volunteers who are willing to help.

During the dinner, there will be a very brief meeting, calling for nominations for open board positions. This year we are hoping to find a Secretary, Social Secretary, and Club Historian. Please contact a board member if you are even slightly interested in any of these positions.

We look forward to seeing you all there and sharing our favorite foods. What a bountiful summer we have had!

Homer Garden Club Board Has Open Positions

Your Garden Club Needs You

During the Harvest Dinner, which will be held on September 22 this year, new officers will be elected. We still have two positions which need to be filled. Both are essential if we are to keep the Homer Garden Club functioning as it has since 1984. The positions of Recording Secretary and Social Secretary are open. Are you one of those who might stand for election, or volunteer to take one of these positions, but really don't know what you'd be letting yourself in for? The following will give you an idea of what, specifically, your responsibilities would be.

Recording Secretary: The secretary takes notes of, or records, general meetings and board meetings during the months of September through May (there is no meeting in December). The secretary types up the minutes and submits them for fact checking and editing to a couple of other

board members. They are then posted on the website and printed in the next month's newsletter. If you are tempted but have more questions, please get in touch with Roni Overway, the current secretary, at 242 1966 or 226 3404.

Social Secretary: Our move from the Bidarka to the new Aspen Hotel means that our venue will be structured differently. The Aspen will provide coffee and tea for our general meetings and a place for refreshments. The Social Secretary makes signup sheets for those volunteering to bring refreshments and has them available at general meetings. She will then have the responsibility of calling to remind those volunteers when it is their turn. On the meeting day she will oversee set up. That's it for general monthly meetings! **Please note:** Elaborate decorations are **not** expected nor required. Over the years, each Social Secretary has just done her own thing! Keeping it simple is just fine!

The other responsibility of the **Social Secretary** is to serve as the organizer of the Harvest Dinner. There is a small notebook which includes a timeline of what needs to be arranged ahead of time, i. e. reserving the venue, arranging to provide a certificate of insurance for that venue etc. Volunteers who serve on the Harvest Dinner committee will help with set up, buy door prizes, assist with clean up, etc. Again, signup sheets need to be made available, principally at the spring meetings. **Board** members are usually **on board** to help with this event.

Becoming a more "active" member of this vibrant club is fun and rewarding. Current board members are always available to answer your questions. Just ask any one of them: Francie Roberts, Kathy Dube', Louise Ashman, Paula Riley, Barbara Kennedy, Jan Peyton and Julie Parizek. You'll find their phone numbers on the first page of the newsletter.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

***** New Meeting Venue

Beginning with the OCTOBER meeting, the Homer Garden Club will have a new venue. Arrangements have been made with the new Aspen Suites Hotel to hold our meetings there. Their meeting room will be more accessible for any members who currently have difficulty accessing stairs. Details will be provided in the next newsletter.

***** Do You Need Help with Garden Cleanup?

The Homer High School Volleyball team is fundraising and team members would love to earn money by coming to help you clean up your garden. Call Aryn for more information (907-669-2239)

***** Homer Garden Club MEMBERSHIP

There will be a table at the Harvest Dinner for individuals to sign up and pay their dues for the 2019-2020 year. Remember the dues are due on October 1. The cost is only \$10 per year for new or renewing individuals

Now That the Smoke Has Cleared

by Jessica Shepherd

Our exceptionally hot, dry, and smoky summer is finally drawing to an end, yielding to some much-needed rain and the return of fresh, cool mornings. In June the long sunny days delighted us, but that was before the onset of the Swan Lake fire in early July and the continued drought throughout August. The garden, however, took to the heat with enthusiasm, and had I known in late May what we were in for I would have done a few things differently. Following is a list of some lessons learned during our sultry summer.

Tomatoes are generally hit or miss in my high tunnel. They look great when I plant them in June, but by early August, when our rains normally arrive, they're shivering and yellowed, with late blight killing off any new growth. Not this year. Even now, in early September, the plants are healthy and robust, with fruit-bearing runners reaching for the trellis like kids on a jungle gym.



Strawberries were another winner in the high tunnel. Despite a cool spring (my notes remind me that it was 27 degrees on the morning of April 16th), the first white blossom appeared on May 5th and by June 25th I was harvesting a gallon of berries every other day! Strawberries (I grow Jewel and Earliglow) have been evasive producers over the years. The last time I had such a bounty was about seven years ago and coincided with another warm summer, so that's probably a key factor. And while the plants were hit early with aphids, a mesh bag of lady bugs from Wagon

Wheel took care of that problem overnight.

Because we had just one rainstorm between the first of June and the end of August, watering became an ongoing chore. This was soon complicated by the fact that the level in the spring house we share with our neighbor dropped significantly each time I watered and was painfully slow to recharge. We compensated by doing laundry in town, showering less, and watering different areas of our large garden on a rotating schedule; outdoor vegetable beds one day, flowers on the sunny side

of the house the next, and the high tunnel on a drip system the day after that. I worried that this dearth of watering would adversely impact the plants, but I discovered that, once established, they didn't seem to mind the reduced schedule. In fact, less water meant fewer slugs, lower humidity and thus less opportunity for mildew to gain a foothold, plus less work

for me in terms of dragging hoses around.

In the outdoor beds the two sugar pie pumpkin plants I bought at Baycrest Greenhouse had a field day during the balmy weather. I planted them under a low tunnel where they grew vigorously, soon spilling out from under the protective plastic cover and expanding, with multiple side shoots, to an area about the size of my living room! At first all of the blossoms were males. But soon the female flowers, with their tell-tale bulb below cheerful blossoms, began to appear. Initially, I broke off male flowers and hand polli-

nated the females, but after a while I let the bees take over. At last count I had 20 bright volleyball-sized pumpkins and more blossoms coming on.

If future summers are as warm and dry as this one, (which, according to local climate predictions, could become our new normal), I will plant more tomatoes, striving for bumper crops to process into a winter's worth of sauces and salsas. As for corn, I will plant it directly outside. At five dollars an ear at the Homer Farmer's Market, it's certainly worth a try. If I'm more diligent about rotation planning – harvesting beds of early lettuce and radishes and promptly replanting with broccoli or kale, I can increase my overall harvest. And perhaps I won't be in such a hurry to plant everything by Memorial Day. I could wait a few weeks on crops that need cold storage after harvesting, like potatoes, cabbage and carrots. This might free up time for an early season kayak or a camping trip, something my current gardening schedule never allows for. Whatever the future of our weather, I will keep experimenting and tracking what succeeds and what languishes under the given conditions. That's part of the joy and mystery of gardening – working with what nature delivers and reaping the inevitable treasures from the garden.



**Homer Garden Club
Monthly Treasurer Report for May - August 2019**

Income

Membership	\$135.00	
Book Sales	\$773.88	
Apron Sales	\$50.00	
Plant Sales	\$1,574.50	
Newsletter Ad Revenue	\$480.00	
Donations	\$70.00	
Gardener's Weekend Ticket Sales	\$7,745.00	
Total Income		<u>\$10,828.38</u>

Expenses

Meeting Venue	\$150.00	
Meeting Speaker Expense	\$379.00	
Baycrest Garden expenses	\$171.00	
Plant Sale Expenses	\$169.05	
Gardener's Weekend Speaker Fee	\$1,500.00	
Gardener's Weekend Speaker Expense	\$1,373.04	
Gardener's Weekend Committee Exp	\$2,302.00	
PO Box Rental (annual)	\$138.00	
Storage Unit Rental (annual)	\$395.00	
Website Fee (annual)	\$19.99	
HGC event insurance (Safeco-annual)	\$425.00	
3 Cash Boxes (one-time purchase)	\$73.48	
Total Expenses		<u>\$7,095.56</u>

Checking Beginning Balance 05/01/2019	\$	3,308.20
Income		10,828.38
Expenses		7,095.56
Interest		0.86
Ending Balance 08/31/2019	\$	7,041.88
Money Market Beginning Balance 05/01/2019	\$	15,012.66
Interest		9.88
Ending Balance 08/31/2019	\$	15,022.54
Total Ending Balance 08/31/2019	\$	22,064.42

Special Event Income/Expense Data

Plant Sale		Gardener's Weekend
Income \$ 1,574.50		Income \$ 7,815.00
Expenses \$ 169.05		Expenses \$ 5,950.74
Profit \$ 1,405.45		Profit \$ 1,864.26

Thank You Garden Club Officers and Volunteers!

As we start a new year of Homer Garden Club meetings, I want to give a HUGE thank you to all the Garden Club officers and volunteers for the 2018-2019 season. What a fantastic, energetic, fun group of people to work with in making all of the club activities throughout the year a success. From the yummy Harvest Dinner to the informative monthly meetings, the Spring Plant Sale where we can all stock up on plants for the summer, the beautiful Baycrest garden, and of course the fantastic Gardener's Weekend; it has been a great year. Special thanks to long-time volunteers

who are retiring from their board positions, including Roni Overway (secretary), Sharon Froeschle (historian), and Renee Patten (co-vice president) as well as the entire Gardener's Weekend Committee (Brenda Adams, Lorna Olson, Roni Overway, Millie Lewis, Sharon Froeschle, Joan Splinter and Gari Sisk). And, although not a committee member, thanks, too, to Paula Riley for the work she's done producing her consistently beautiful posters and brochures.

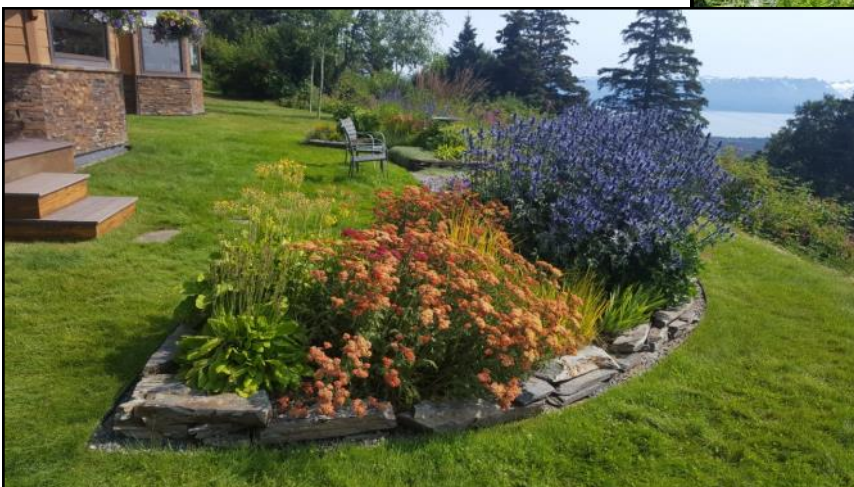
Please consider joining this fun group of volunteers and help the club continue all of these amazing events as you support your fellow gardeners who enhance the community of Homer.

Gardeners' Weekend

As always, Gardeners' Weekend was a huge success! Well over 450 fellow garden lovers from Homer, other parts of the Kenai Peninsula, Anchorage, even out-of-staters and a few from other countries enjoyed a tour of five fabulous gardens. Over 130 attended the presentation by our keynote speaker, Fergus Garrett, head gardener of Great Dixter, from Sussex in England. Gardeners' Weekend volunteers enjoyed a post-tour Thank You reception at Wasabi's Bistro with excellent food and great fellowship. Thank you to the committee, garden

owners, and all the volunteers for your contributions to the occasion.

has prepared a great manual delineating all the steps required during the planning process and they have already lined up some gardens for 2020. Please consider volunteering so we can keep this multi-year tradition going!



owners, and all the volunteers for your contributions to the occasion.

After 13 years, the Gardeners' Weekend Committee has decided to take a well-deserved break. Therefore, we are looking for new committee members for this traditional event. This might seem like big shoes to step into, but the Gardener's Weekend committee

*****Our Membership Year is October 1st to September 30th*****

THE HOMER GARDEN CLUB MEMBERSHIP FORM

Date:_____Membership Type: Basic(\$10)___Supporting (\$15)___Business (\$25)___

Name_____Phone #_____

You will receive the newsletter by E-Mail. This saves us printing and postage costs.
Plus, the E-mailed version is in fabulous color!

E-Mail Address_____

How would you like to participate in the Garden Club *this Membership Year?*

(please check any activities in which you would like to help)

___Meeting Refreshments ___Board of Directors ___Nominating Committee ___Newsletter
___Spring Plant Sale ___Harvest Dinner ___Baycrest Garden ___Gardeners' Weekend

Suggestions for future Topics or Speakers _____

Please make check payable to "Homer Garden Club" and mail along with this form to:
Homer Garden Club, P.O. Box 2833, Homer AK 99603

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P.O. Box 2833
Homer, Alaska 99603*

