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Homer Garden Club Newsletter



The next Homer Garden Club meeting will be held at 2:00 pm May 19 at the Bidarka Inn, downstairs.

May 2019

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May 19 Meeting will Again Feature Paul Marmora on Bonsai After Being Weathered Out in April

Paul was weathered out for our April 21st meeting. He is scheduled to return for a presentation on cultivation of Bonsai trees on May 19, 2019. He will demonstrate growth, care and maintenance techniques.

On Sunday, May 19, we will join noted Alaskan teacher, Paul Marmora, as he demonstrates the art of Bonsai. Paul will illustrate how to prune a tree found in Alaska and how to modify it to exhibit the Bonsai principles of harmony, peace, order of thoughts, and balance.

Paul will instruct us on techniques used to shape essential Bonsai composition and form. He will show us how to wire branches of a small tree and how to prune for the desired Bonsai effect. Bonsai appeared in 12th century in Japan. Artistic cultivation originated in China well over 1000 years ago. The ultimate goal is to create a miniaturized but realistic representation of nature in the form of a tree.

As many of us, Paul came to gardening first as a child at a young age. "We all had to work in the family garden, and each got our own plot to do with as we pleased. I had always been fascinated by Asian culture and art, especially Bonsai. I didn't start until moving to Alaska in 1997, but being a teacher/trainer, I just started teaching as I learned."

Below are two samples of pruned trees that have been shaped into the desired Bonsai form.

On Sunday, he will demonstrate beginning Bonsai techniques with a local tree.



The Baycrest Spring Clean Up will be Saturday May 11th beginning at 10 AM. Join us!

Carole Demers and Brenda Adams, co-chairs, will both be on hand to help, answer questions, and cheer you on! Please bring your favorite hand tools, a small bucket, and something to drink. We'll provide the long handled tools, trash bags, and large buckets. We'll also provide the compost and bark mulch. It's always a fun event where you can see old friends, make new ones, and help keep the Homer Garden Club's Baycrest garden looking gorgeous. The bulbs are blooming to welcome you!

Questions call Brenda at 235-3763.

Treasurer's Report - April 2019

by Louise Ashmun, Treasurer

Income

Membership	15.00	
Book Sales	71.94	
Newsletter Ad payment	120.00	
Gardener's Weekend Tickets	70.00	
Donation	500.00	
Total Income		<u>\$ 776.94</u>

Expenses

April speaker airfare refund	323.01	
Speaker handouts	25.50	
Web Page annual fee	168.00	
Copies	6.43	
Newsletter	7.35	
Total Expenses		<u>\$ 530.29</u>

Checking Beginning Balance 04/01/2019	\$ 3,061.43
Income	776.94
Expenses	530.29
Interest	<u>0.12</u>
Ending Balance 04/30/2019	\$ 3,308.20
Money Market Beginning Balance 04/01/2019	\$ 15,010.25
Interest	<u>2.41</u>
Ending Balance 04/30/2019	\$ 15,012.66
Total Ending Balance 04/30/2019	\$ 18,320.86



**2019 HGC
Annual Plant Sale is
Saturday, May 25, 2019
Viewing at 10 am,
Sale begins at 11 sharp!**

Location: Homer Chamber of Commerce's parking lot, 201 Sterling Hwy next to Fat Olives.

This is the Club's major fund-raiser that supports the wide range of Speakers in our monthly meetings, the Harvest Dinner and planting of the Baycrest Garden.

HELP NEEDED:

1. **Plant Donations needed – please drop-off at 9:30 on Saturday**
2. **Strong, happy people to set up tables and tents at 9 am**
3. **Need cookie donations for our coffee and treats table – by 10 am.**
4. **Some boxes for folks to take their plants home in — liquor store half boxes are perfect.**

If you would like to help, please, email Barbara.Homer@gmail.com or call 907+235-4347 and leave message if you cannot reach me.

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Gardening by the Birds

by Jessica Shepherd

Each year I line up small plastic pots in trays on the kitchen counter, fan out an array of seed packets, and get to work planting. Following folksy advice about the lunar calendar, I plant lettuce and kale after the new moon, and tomatoes, squash and peppers just before the full moon. Unfortunately, the lunar calendar ran late this year, just as

Easter did. Easter falls on the first Sunday after the full moon following the March 21st equinox. Subsequently, March 22nd is the earliest date for Easter while April 25th is the latest. This year Easter was April 21st, a few days after the prescribed lunar planting dates. Consequently, my tomatoes and peppers are now just an inch high and

unlikely to mature and produce during our short growing season.

As I rinsed out last year's plastic pots and trays in preparation for planting, I observed chickadees and a red-breasted nuthatch flit between the spruce trees and the swaying bird feeder. These winged

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*Gardening By The Birds
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spirits are my joy on cloudy spring days, and I mark the arrival of each new migrant on the calendar, like a birthday.

My neighbor, a tender-hearted soul, has a way with birds. In the winter her feeder is always bustling with pine siskins and chickadees and the occasional rosy finch, while my feeder seldom has more than a steady two or three customers at any one time. I suspect she takes time to visit with them each day, speaking sweetly. Or maybe she sings to them. They are her darlings and they know it. She gardens as well, and in this she also outshines me.

What if, rather than the moon, we planted by the birds? They know the nuances of the growing season better than we ever can, having adapted over the eons to the whims of a maritime climate. Even as that climate warms, they demonstrate this by extending their range or arriving a few days earlier and lingering longer.

Had I seeded a flat of lettuce back in late March, when the first flock of

western sandpipers swept in like a small cloud over Mud Bay, it would be ready to set out under a row cover. The tomatoes should have been planted when the first Varied Thrush arrived on April 2nd, kicking aside spent sunflower seeds for any small grub.

The potatoes, already sprouted, could have been planted out on April 23rd, the day the first family of sandhill cranes arrived at Beluga Slough.

One spring evening, as the day lingered long, my neighbor walked over for dinner at our house. We were sitting around the sunlit dining



room drinking a pretty good home brew and pretended to enjoy last



year's salmon when I noticed movement out of the corner of my eye. A gray jay swooped past right outside the window. Another, this a nuthatch, clung delicately to the edge of the window sill above the kitchen sink. Standing to gather our plates, I scanned the alders and spruce. There were song birds everywhere. It wasn't until after my neighbor had stepped into her mud boots and headed home that I understood. The birds had followed her here and back.

If I mean to garden according to the clamber of white-fronted geese overhead, pausing to drink in the liquid notes of the first robin of spring, should I not also garden to suit the birds? There are fewer songbirds now than there once

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Garden Décor

*Gardening By The Birds
(Continued from page 5)*

were, and less spruce forest for them to populate. Surely the wild corridor of land alongside the house with its narrow creek and dense growth should remain always for the birds who vanish in and out of the trees in noisy numbers.

And where I mow and rake and fork over, I can add another honey berry bush or a row of currants for the hermit thrush and robins to enjoy. I might refrain from trimming away the lowest branches of the alders where the white-crowned sparrows nest. And on the south



side of the house I could plant tall sunflowers to dry, heads down, for the pine grosbeak to worry. And when I set out to discourage the dandelions, the weed trimmer should suffice instead of an

indiscriminate bottle of weed killer.

This idea of planting by the birds holds great appeal. No more a slave to the cold-hearted moon, instead, I will listen eagerly for the trill of the first dark-eyed junco and the winnowing of snipe, tailoring my seed planting to coincide with their arrival. Weeks later, I will scan the skies for the quick pass of a swallow and plant out my garden according to their trusted advice. Perhaps then I too will have the company of song birds as I walk a wooded path to visit friends in the enduring light of a spring evening.

NOTE: This newsletter does not have the minutes from the previous meeting since the April meeting was canceled because of weather.

*Homer Garden Club
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