**Homer Garden Club Meeting Minutes**

January 20, 2019

The January meeting of the Homer Garden Club was called to order at 2:00 PM by President Kathy Dube’. She reminded members about the upcoming lunar eclipse this evening.The next general meeting will be held on February 20 at the Bidarka Inn.

No visitors or new members were present. Peggy Pitman announced she had old copies of *Horticulture* magazine to share with members. She suggested if you took some, to return them in the future for others to read.

Secretary’s report: Roni Overway was absent and Francie Roberts took minutes in her place.

Treasurer’s report: Louise Ashmun reported a current treasury balance of $16,550.83.

Gardener’s Weekend: This years speaker will be Fergus Garrett, head gardener of Great Dixter in Sussex, England. His talk will be on the topic of succession planting and the event will cost $10. Fergus will be visiting Homer for 5 days. The cost for the garden tour this year will be $15 dollars for a tour of 5 gardens. The gardens visited will be those of: Jerry and Sharon Froeschle, Teena and Pete Garay, Rachel Lord and Ben Gibson, Susan Woodward and Liah Evans-Cloud. There will be no Bear Creek Winery reception this year due to the difficulty in finding enough volunteers to fill several important roles. It takes many volunteers to put on the event and the committee is always asking for help.

Speaker’s Committee: Renee Patten reported that the speaker for February, Casey Matney, will speak about soils and soil amendments. A bonsai expert and beekeeper are some of the upcoming speakers.

Baycrest Garden: The committee passed around the volunteer calendar and encouraged gardener’s to sign up for the weekly maintenance.

Social Secretary: No one has stepped up to be Social Secretary. Jeanne MacArthur, Kate MacNulty, and Barbara Kennedy took care of treats for this month.

Books: Kathy reported the gardening book, *Kachemak Cultivating: from Seaside to Summit*, is finished and available for sale. The beautiful cover is taken from a watercolor by member Jan Peyton. The paperback book costs $25 and will be available through the club or through The Homer Bookstore or Wagon Wheel Garden and Pets. Kathy thanked the many members who contributed to the book. Aprons are also available for sale.

School Gardens: Kyra Wagner, USDA, has received a grant to help expand school gardens. She is looking for volunteer gardeners to advise a classroom teacher about gardening next fall.(Can you explain the link to the USDA or Kyra’s position or role with that agency? I only know her as Sustainable Homer)

Renee Patten introduced Brenda Adams, the owner of Gardens by Design. Brenda is a local garden designer and the author of two books on perennials appropriate for our zone and garden design.

Brenda’s presentation today was about the Baycrest Garden, which was designed by Brenda and maintained by the Homer Garden Club. The garden is located at the top of the Baycrest hill in the state pullout area. There are several garden beds there and the bed just south of the Chamber kiosk is the Homer Garden Club bed.

In 2013-14 Beth Cumming urged the Garden Club Board to renovate the existing garden, as it had become quite overgrown. Members agreed if money was spent to renovate the garden, that the membership would maintain it. With Brenda’s design, Beth Cumming, Tracy Asselin, Carole Demers, Brigette Suter and Kyra Wagner were appointed to a Baycrest garden committee. (I’m having trouble with the committee planning the bed since Brenda designed it and they then took on the Herculean task of implementing that plan) This group planned and created the new garden.

Renovation began with all of the existing soil being removed, a big task, and new soil brought in. Over 50 bags of compost were incorporated into the garden. Small stepping stones were installed throughout the garden to prevent compaction. Plants need oxygen and compacted soil holds very little.

Twenty members planted the garden in July of 2015. When transplanting potted plants, eliminate the top inch of soil so no insect eggs are transplanted and the bottom inch of soil for no slugs are moved into the garden. The garden is in a sunny location and the garden designed focused on maroon colors. The garden is an organic garden with no herbicides or pesticides used.

Brenda then presented photos of? the garden through the seasons. In early May, the club holds a work party to remove spent foliage, weed and amend the soil with steer manure. If the ground is too frozen, the mulch does not go on until it is thawed. Over 600 bulbs are planted in the garden, so early bloomers are crocus, chionodoxa and daffodils.

Early bloomers are Shooting Stars (*Dodecatheon*). This is an Alaskan native that blooms early. Another early bloomer is the cultivar Pasque Flower (*Pulsatilla vulgaris* ‘Violet Bells’). Cultivars do not self sow. Beside having a beautiful flower, the Pasque Flower has a beautiful fuzzy seed head. Grape hyacinth (*Muscaria*) has dark blue grape-like blooms. Early on, the Barberry (*Berberis thunbergii* “Orange Rocket’) and the Ornamental Rhubarb (*Rheum palmatum* var. t*anguticum*) provide color in the garden.

In June, the Sem False Spirea (*Sorbaria sorbifolia* ‘Sem’) contrasts beautifully with the Pulsatilla. This time of year it is apricot and later in the season it becomes chartreuse. This variety has fewer suckers than other spireas.

Daffodils continue to bloom in June. Select daffodils for all three seasons to extend blooming for almost six weeks. A late blooming variety in the garden is called ‘Pleasant Eye’. Wooley Thyme (*Thymus pseudolanuginosus*) makes a great ground cover with its fuzzy foliage and lavender flower.

Colorful Shooting Stars (*Dodecatheon* ‘Little Leo’) bloom a long time. Native Iris (*Iris setosa*) grows naturally in wet areas but does well in this sunny garden. Himalayan Blue Poppies (*Meconopsis betonicifolia*) are also successful in the sun in this climate. There are five varieties of primula in the garden, including the waxy leaf *primula ariculata* that blooms early. *Primula juliae* ‘Dorothy’ is covered in blossoms. The garden contains a little cottage garden with light yellow Globeflower (*Trollius cultorum* ‘New Moon’), orange Avens (*Geum* ‘Totally Tangerine’) and Catmint (*Nepeta x faassenii* ‘Walker’s Low’).

Spirea (*Spiraea nipponica* ‘Snowmound’) has white blooms and moose generally leave this shrub alone. Lilac (*Syringea vulgaris* ‘Sensation’) has white edging on each petal and is another shrub generally ignored by moose.

In the middle of summer, white and pink Lewisia (*Lewisia cotyledon*) abound. The candelabra *Primula alpicola* is in full bloom. Speedwell (*Veronica spicata* ‘Royal Candles’) begins to bloom from the bottom up. This plant is inclined to powdery mildew, so keep it well hydrated and spaced apart. Columbine (Yellow *Aquilegia* ‘Goldfinch’) contains long lasting soft yellow flowers. Another Columbine (*Aquilegia* *vulgaris* ’Blue Barlow’) is the spurrless variety with a double bonnet.

Two varieties of Siberian Iris are in the garden: *Iris sibirica* ‘Silver Edge’ and ‘Caesar’s Brother’. The tall iris must be divided every four years or so. Sea Holly (*Eryngium planum* ‘Blue Glitter’) provides texture and color to the garden this time of year. Hardy Geranium (*Geranium x magnificum*) is an outstanding plant that fills its space so well that it periodically needs dividing.

Hostas (*Hosta* ‘Regal Splendor’) come up late but this is the time of the year these vase shaped plants come to the fore. The Mock Orange (*Philadelphus lewisii* ‘Blizzard’) has a wonderful fragrance. The moose generally ignore these plants. The Rugosa Rose (*Rosa Rugosa* ‘Lac Majeau’) blooms most of the summer along with the Masterwort (*Astrantia major* ‘Hadspen Blood’). The clumping Feather Reed Grass (*Calamagrostis x acutiflora* ‘Overdam’) has grown to four feet tall.

By late summer the 3-4-foot-tall Monkshood (*Aconitum x cammarum* ‘Bicolor’) is blooming. The red Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium* ‘Paprika) contrasts with Lady’s Mantle (*Alchemilla mollis*). Culver’s Root (*Veronicastrum virginicum* ‘Apollo’) is in full bloom with bees buzzing all around. The lily (*Lillium* LA Hybrid ‘Royal Sunset) stands out in the garden.

As fall arrives, the Gentians (Gentiana cruciate ‘Blue Cross’) are in full bloom. They like shade and moisture. The Globe Thistle (*Echinops ritro* ‘Vetch’s Blue’) has deep blue foliage and white stems. Shrubs have color and bulbs are planted before the season is over.

Brenda explained proper deadheading and weeding techniques.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:45 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Francie Roberts, Acting Recording Secretary