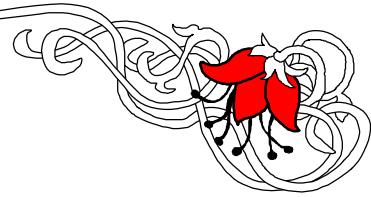


Anchorage Chapter



Volume 6, Issue 5

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

April 2004

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

From Dana Klinkhart

Your association is actively making plans for the year. Programs are being scheduled as well as tours for our summer season. Thanks to the generous nature of members and others in our community, a full calendar is prepared. **Primroses** will be the topic of our April 19 program meeting. The month of May will host our regular meeting and program titled - **Compost Tea** on May 17. This year we hope to have some added tour opportunities. On May 24 a **tour of the 20,000 tulips planted at the Forget-me-not Nursery** is scheduled.

Our AMGA annual directory is being typed and prepared for the printer. Thanks to one Master Gardener whose busy fingers typed for more than 25 hours and thanks to the committee who scheduled all the parts and pieces, the directory should be in your hands by mid-April.

Kudos are sent to each and every one who so willingly stepped forward to be on a committee or to work individually on plans for coming year. Those door prizes magically appear at every meeting, some are purchased by our chairperson and others are donated by you. The programs and tours are booked and announced and afterwards thank you notes are written. The plants are started and garden beds at the Pioneer Home and ABG are routinely planted and maintained. Your newsletter is mailed each month and your web site has the most current information. Behind the scenes is a volunteer coordinator who keeps an 'eagle eye' out for the needs of the association by sending informational items and requests for your help. And then there are the refreshments that send a warm welcome whenever we gather together. Let's remember the countless members who never hesitate to share with others in the community with a phone call or by working with a new member under the "The Buds to Blooms" program. The numerous classes taught by Master Gardeners are just one more gift of time and talent given to our community. You each provide the structure and nutrients for our group. And a large group it is. Our attendance is growing by leaps and bounds. So for all the things you are doing folks, it is making a difference. The excitement for gardening and service is very visible here in Anchorage. Your enthusiasm must be contagious. How can we tell? Take a look at the large enrollment in the Master Gardening course offered each fall, or the attendance at our gardening classes, and the calls to the "Hot Line". There is little doubt that you have been **sharing seeds of thought on gardening with others. Keep up the good work!**



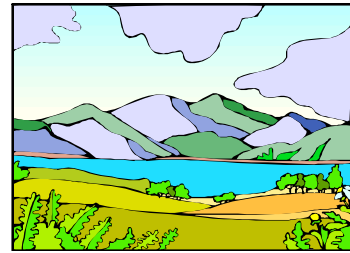


AMGA March Meeting Report Submitted by Eva Hancock

Julie Riley introduced Sally Arant, our guest speaker for the evening on the topic of shade gardening. Sally is an author, landscape designer, nursery owner on DeArmoun, a lecturer, and mother of FOUR teenagers. She's been in Alaska since 1984 and opened her nursery in 1997. She currently has one of the gardens she designed in the perennial special edition of Better Homes and Gardens!

The room was packed and if you weren't there you missed an excellent lecture and a feast for the eye. Sally came with two wonderfully informative eight-page handouts. One was entitled "Foliage for Fun, Color, and Texture". This was complete with how foliage can be used to add interest in the garden and plant list for bold foliage; bluish or silver colored foliage; golden foliage; variegated foliage; reddish, purplish or bronze-colored foliage; and feathery foliage; as well as how to use variegated plants in the garden. Her other handout was entitled "Success with Perennials in Unique Situations in South Central Alaska Gardens". This was complete with A Few Keys to Successful Perennial Gardens; Basics of Shade Garden Design, Preparation and Care of Shade Gardens; and a list of selected hardy, shade-tolerant plants for Anchorage. Her nursery "In the Garden" will be opening May 16 – regular hours are Thursday-Friday Noon-6pm and Saturday 10am-5pm.

Our guest speaker for April will be Mary Jo Burns and the **topic is PRIMROSES.**



High Country Wildflowers in Denali National Park June 18-20

Surround yourself in the vibrant color and bloom of Denali's tundra and taiga forests. With wildflower expert and author Verna Pratt, we'll move from the boreal forest to alpine meadows, learning about wildflower adaptations to extreme latitude and high elevation. We'll spend these long daylight hours near summer solstice learning to identify wildflowers with a hand lens, a dichotomous key, and field guides. Verna Pratt is the author of Field Guide to Alaskan Wildflowers and Wildflowers of Denali National Park. Designed for all levels of plant enthusiasts.

About Denali Institute Field Seminars: Denali's mountains, forests, and tundra are incredible classrooms! With Alaskan experts and authors like Verna Pratt and Nick Jans, let the Denali Institute be your guide. Our Ten weekend natural history courses are an unparalleled opportunity for People who want to learn more, while experiencing more, of Denali National Park. Join us for an inspiring weekend of hands-on exploration.

Accommodations and Meals: All meals, accommodations, transportation, and instruction are included. All programs are based out of the brand new Igloo Canyon Field Camp, 35 miles inside the Park. This spectacular location allows us access to Denali's diverse environments and puts us in the heart of wild country. Our Field Camp includes shared tent cabins and a common dining tent. Programs are limited to 12 participants, ensuring a distinctive experience for all.

University Credit: University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) offers one professional development credit (level 595) for all Field Seminars and Teacher Trainings.

For Further Information or to Register: Visit our website at www.denaliinstitute.org, or call toll free 866-688-1269

Luscious Plants to come to ABG in May

By Barbara Miller, ABG
Horticulturist



What awaits the Anchorage gardeners this May are some truly new and wonderful plants coming to the Alaska Botanical Garden nursery. I am so excited to be bringing the newest varieties and

species on the market to the Garden nursery for ABG's annual Plant Sale & Membership Drive, May 22nd. The nursery will be open from 10am to noon for ABG members only and from noon to 4pm for the public. Come early for the best selection including plants never before available in Anchorage and convince a friend to join you and become a new ABG member. All proceeds help maintain the Garden and its endeavors to further enrich the quality of life in our great city.

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Gardeners Affect Change in City Government

By Julie Riley

Keeping municipal funding in place for Anchorage's flower beds, hanging baskets and the maintenance of the city's \$50 million worth of trees, shrubs and turf has been an issue for years.

In December 2000, in response to the threat of reduced funding for the Municipality's horticulture budget, Master Gardener Annie Nevaldine called together a group of people who became interested in tackling the city's horticulture budget woes. Many of those who rallied were Master Gardeners and AMGA members. This group, which came to be known as the Anchorage Horticulture Coalition, met almost weekly for two years and continued to meet throughout 2003. This article is an effort to describe the Horticulture Coalition's accomplishments and the steps that were necessary to affect change in the city's operating budget. Though currently dormant, the efforts of the group are still reverberating through the community.

The mission statement of the Anchorage Horticulture Coalition was simply "to promote municipal support of horticulture by increasing awareness of its contributions to our quality of life." By demonstrating to municipal officials that public opinion supported horticulture in the community, the Anchorage Horticulture Coalition hoped that funding for the city's horticulture budget would be reinstated. To typically non-political gardeners the prospect of effectively voicing their opinion seemed onerous.

2001-2002 activities

In the very first meeting, Assemblyman Allan Tesche provided information on how the group could make their wishes heard. Once armed with facts on how to work with Municipal government, the group quickly established their name as the Anchorage Horticulture Coalition, put together a mission statement, procured a post office box, a voice-mail phone number and later, a web site. They designed Anchorage Horticulture Coalition letterhead, contacted local gardening clubs to put together a mailing list, sorted the list according to Assembly Districts, began fund raising and hired a lobbyist with funds from the defunct Alaska Horticulture Association. Contributions to the Coalition for their public relations campaign came from as far away as Fairbanks, with a note saying that what Anchorage did other cities often followed.

To garner municipal support the Anchorage Horticulture Coalition met with the editorial board of the Anchorage Daily News, wrote Letters to the Editor, held a press conference at the municipal greenhouse and set up meetings with the Mayor's office.

The Anchorage Horticulture Coalition and individuals in the group became active at election time, but choose not to become a Political Action Committee (PAC). They solicited a candidate with horticulture experience to run for Municipal Assembly in 2001. Janice Shamberg was successful and was elected to fill the South Anchorage Assembly seat. The Anchorage Horticulture Coalition queried all candidates running for election in 2001 and 2002 on their support for horticulture funding. As the Anchorage Horticulture Coalition they provided voter information through mailings, e-mail and their web site prior to these elections. As individuals they became involved in candidate's campaigns, making 'get out and vote' calls, waving signs before elections and personally voting.

They testified numerous times before the Municipal Assembly wearing gardening hats, passing out flowers and carrying a flat of unmowed grass. The issues raised by the Anchorage Horticulture Coalition made the news. The editorial board of the Anchorage Daily News was supportive of their cause. The group got the attention of city government and in 2001 was successful in reinstating \$370,000 back into the city's horticulture budget, bringing it back up to the level of funding it had in 2000. Money was also reinstated twice during the 2002 budget process.

2003-2004 activities

By 2003 the city's budget was in tough shape. A tax cap loomed over efforts to cover expenses for city services. However, the Mayor's proposed budget for 2003 did **not** include further reductions to the city's horticulture budget. Discussion in Municipal Assembly meetings and in the newspaper pitted funds for beautification efforts against fire and police

Continued on page 4



"Hort. Coalition" Cont. from page 3

protection. The Anchorage Horticulture Coalition continued meeting with key Assembly members in an effort to add a first quarter budget amendment to cover unfunded maintenance of the city's most recent landscaping projects but the amendment was not taken to the Assembly floor. Out of respect for the city's budget woes, the group did not employ the public relations tactics that had been used in previous years to try to attain increased levels of funding.

Prior to the spring 2003 mayoral elections, the Anchorage Horticulture Coalition asked candidates three questions relating to the city's horticulture budget. Would candidates vote for a) funding maintenance of existing landscape projects that were currently unfunded, b) would they vote to increase funding to keep the city's horticulture budget consistent with the year 2000 and c) would they include funding to provide maintenance for new projects added in the future?

Because of limited funds, the Anchorage Horticulture Coalition decided not to distribute candidate responses until prior to the expected run-off election. Anchorage elected a new mayor and the run-off election never occurred.

The Anchorage Horticulture Coalition expanded its efforts. Other items before voters during the 2003 election included bond propositions. The Anchorage Horticulture Coalition identified horticulture-related items buried in the Parks and Roads bond package. A post card mailing, flyers placed in malls and garden club newsletter articles pointed out that this particular bond included replacing the roof and fixing the floor of the municipal greenhouse. Unfortunately, the bond package which included repairs to the municipal greenhouse did not pass in 2003 and is before voters again in 2004. The horticulture related part of the bond was only a small portion, but repairs to the greenhouse are long over-due.

An effort was also made to place "horticultural heritage" in the Bill of Rights section of the Municipal Charter. The amendment to include "horticulture heritage" as part of the Municipal Charter's Bill of Rights was withdrawn at the last minute by the Assemblyman who had sponsored it. The Horticulture Coalition was told it was better strategy to hold off and introduce the amendment at a future date.

As Mayor Begich entered office, members of the Anchorage Horticulture Coalition provided input to his transition team. Because of lost state revenue, the city faced having to make enormous budget cuts. In an October public meeting on the city's proposed 2004 budget, the mayor stated that new bonds put before the public which included landscaping would also include money for maintenance. This was a major victory for the Anchorage Horticulture Coalition. As stated earlier, two of the

questions asked of mayoral candidates prior to the election included concerns with inadequate landscape maintenance funding.

Vestiges of the Anchorage Horticulture Coalition's efforts were still being seen this spring as the city geared up for elections. A March 13 Anchorage Daily News article describing the Assembly race in South Anchorage stated, "Shamberg... the former co-owner of DeArmour Greenery, ran for office in 2001 partly at the urging of fellow gardeners, who were appalled that the city had cut the budget for flowers and landscaping.....". A March 10 article presenting the views between East Anchorage Assembly contenders Ken Stout and Bill Wielechowski, gave Mr. Stout's view as "tight budgets [mean]... turning city operations such as park maintenance and summer flower gardens over to volunteers."

The city's budget has been pulled tight. New and increased user fees have been implemented. The mayor's office has developed a plan for bringing in money to the municipal horticulture budget. Residents and businesses are being asked to adopt the city's 1,000 hanging baskets this season. Seventy-five dollars covers the cost of materials and planting for one basket. Gardeners who are interested can call Kathy Anderson at 343-4287.

Times change, but a motto placed on the bottom of one of the Anchorage Horticulture Coalition's flyers still rings true, "Never underestimate the power of a group of dedicated gardeners to make Anchorage more beautiful."

Southeast Alaska Gardening Conference & Trade Show

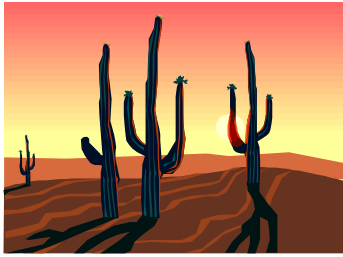
May 13-16, 2004
Centennial Hall, 101 Egan Drive
Juneau, Alaska

Come explore the world of gardening! Special guest speakers are coming from the Pacific Northwest, the Southwest, Alaska and Canada, and all have extensive backgrounds in gardening. There will be informative feature sessions, a variety of workshops, garden tours and a reception.

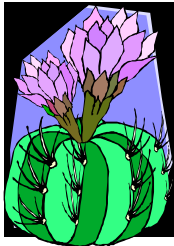
To register for the conference or to inquire about booth space for the trade show, please contact:

Southeast Alaska Master Gardeners
Alaska Cooperative Extension 3032 Vintage Park, Suite 104
Juneau, AK 99801
907-465-8749; jyces@uas.alaska.edu OR
907-364-2243; jkasson@gci.net

A full program schedule and registration details can be found on the web at www.spectrumdesignonline.com/gconf/



[South Peninsula MG News not available this month, as Rosemary is off to Arizona to enjoy some desert flowers and some heat....!]



MGs are E-mail Savvy

A perusal of the new 2004 AMGA Directory shows that 89% of Master Gardeners listed gave e-mail addresses. This is phenomenal! Those that stood out include the following.

Garden related addresses:

Sue Baily, akgardengirl@hotmail.com
 Gina Docherty, gardener@corecom.net
 Gail Hooyer, vine_lady72@yahoo.com
 Kristin Permenter, sproutkrp@alaska.com
 Linda Slack, slugart@aol.com
 Carmel Tysver garden@corecom.net
 Linda Vick, rooterroo@aol.com

MGs with garden-related names:

Rosemary Kimball, rosmarinus@gci.net
 Connie Sanders, botanical4@aol.com (street address)

There must be a story:

Barbara Atcheson, akpepper@msn.com
 Fran Flint, wheezerp@gci.net
 Genevieve Holubik, frogstop@gci.net
 Ruth Kircher, oldhouse@girdwood.net
 John Tracy, frozenfish13@hotmail.com

E-mails with people related names:

Ski Olsonoski, skired@gci.net
 Jill Pawson, akjillybean@aol.com
 Jean Poor, akgenie@att.net

"Luscious Plants" Continued from page 2

All of the fabulous plants on order will flourish in our climate, from climbers to ground cover for shade or sun. *Clematis* is the queen of the climbers and our large selection will include single and double varieties in shades of blue, purple, pink, white, red, and multi-colored with names like 'Bee's Jubilee' and 'Cardinal Wyszynski'. With the popularity of vines and trellises, these are the perfect plants for your garden.

Also on order are the New Millennium New Zealand Hybrid Delphiniums bred in New Zealand. They are hand crosses that produce strong-stemmed plants with heavily petalled flowers of excellent color and form. They are considered to be longer lived and more tolerant of heat and humidity, while retaining their cold hardiness. This Delphinium comes in a wonderful array of mixed colors in shades of white, pink, blue, and purple.

There are too many plants to list here but a few more worth mentioning are the Hostas, one of the best perennials in existence. They are a valuable addition to any garden and remain attractive from spring until frost with handsome foliage and prolific flowers. I can't forget to mention the new columbines, ferns, and geraniums, some of them never before seen in Alaska.

Totally new this year, the nursery will be offering the latest annuals that will enrich planters and baskets. Not just any annuals, ours are the newest and the best and most popular on the market. Chosen for their uniqueness, color of foliage, and performance, they include *Alternanthera* 'Purple Knight', new colors of Marguerite Daisies and *Osteospermum*, *Dracaena australis* 'Red Star', unusual new Geraniums prized for their attractive and unusual foliage, and *Perilla* 'Magilla' with jazzy colors in electric pink, lime green, and bordeaux. These are just some of the plants we will be selling at the ABG nursery this year. We will also have herbs and they will be the same varieties displayed in ABG's herb garden so you can see the size, colors and habits before you choose plants for your very own herb garden. There will be cilantro, dill, fennel, mints, oregano, parsley, sages and thymes, just to name a few.

All in all, this is shaping up to be a fabulous growing season already and I know everyone is itching to get started. So when May does finally get here, come and welcome in the spring with us at the May Plant Sale and Membership Drive. See you there and don't forget to bring a friend.





Bird Chatter

- A record number of 61 people showed up to hear Sally Arant talk about "Shade Gardening" at the March AMGA meeting. Thank you Sally!
- The Cooperative Extension Service in Anchorage will be hiring two seasonal full-time Integrated Pest Management technicians to work May – August. If you are interested, watch for advertisements in the Anchorage Daily News and on the UAF & UAA websites. Once open, applications will only be accepted for one week.
- Debbie Hinchey had *Scilla* blooming March 25 on the south side of the DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles) off Benson!
- Mary Jo Burns is excited about hardy cyclamen (and primroses). If anyone has experience growing cyclamen outside in Alaska, please get in touch.
- A BIG THANKS to Sandra Harrington who has spent 40 hours updating the AMGA directory (with input from Dana Klinkhart).
- Julie Riley's favorite quote from MG Katy Gilmore's ADN March 18 article, Anticipating Spring: "In Alaska... garden happiness springs largely from contemplation."
- An insulated casserole cover was left after the AMGA February potluck. It can be claimed in the CES office break room.
- Gardeners from Cordova– new Master Gardener Margaret Harwick Thomas and AMGA President Dana Klinkhart both knew each other from living in Cordova.
- *Newsweek's* March 1 issue reports that the designer who won the World Trade Center memorial competition was required to collaborate with a landscape architect. Apparently, the design lacked landscape appeal.
- New MG Joyce Smith has been working with Pat Ryan's first grade class at Trailside Elementary. Their Junior Master Gardener Group, the Green Machine is featured as the outstanding group of the month on the JMG website, jmgkids.com.
- The rumor mill says a couple of MGs have planted \$200 yellow peonies in their gardens last fall.

- Leslie Kellogg found a variegated leaved nasturtium that trails 5-6 feet. It is called 'Jewel of Africa' and is available through Select Seeds.
- The Anchorage Master Gardener master database includes current addresses for 599 gardeners who have completed the course since 1978. About 205 are AMGA members.

Low-Carb Seeds

It's hard to believe but a story in the March 29 *Anchorage Daily News* states that W. Atlee Burpee reports "a record number of gardeners requesting the carb content of key vegetables before ordering for this season." If you are on the Atkins or South Beach diet, note that onions, parsnips, green peas, acorn squash and lima beans are on the high carbohydrate list.

15th Annual Garden Party Clare House & McAuley Manor

Where: BP Atrium
When: Friday, May 28, 2004, 5 – 9 p.m.
Tickets: \$20 in advance - \$25 at the door

Join us! We're turning the BP Atrium into a garden paradise. Enjoy an evening of shopping and hors d'oeuvres to the music of Harp by Skookums. Plant Sale & Gift Ideas: Purchase your summer flowers, greens, hanging baskets, window boxes, & perennials provided by Anchorage and Matanuska Valley greenhouses.

Silent Auction: Fabulous auction items include unique gardening-related items, baskets filled with gardening goodies, and much more! Proceeds from the Garden Party benefit Clare House, a shelter for homeless women and women with children, and McAuley Manor, a home for teenage girls. Both are programs of Catholic Social Services.

Door Prize:
Two domestic round-trip tickets, compliments of Alaska Airlines. Sponsored in part by BP and Alaska Airlines

Please send ticket request/donation with check, money order, or MasterCard/Visa number to:

Clare House & McAuley Manor Garden Party
Catholic Social Services
225 Cordova Street
Anchorage, Alaska 99501
277-2554 phone
272-7370 fax



Volunteer Opportunities

The Northway Mall Garden Fair will be held on 7th, 8th, and 9th of May. Set up will be on Friday night. We need Master Gardeners to set up a booth in the middle court yard. We also need someone to teach classes on Saturday and Sunday. Classes are needed for 11:00 am Sat, 4:00 Sat and 3:00 Sun. There is an area for the classes.

The event is the second annual Garden Fair and will include all the clubs, local artists and garden type vendors. They have also invited the BLM, Forest Service, and The Watershed Group. The event will be advertised on TV, Radio, newspaper, and the reader board.

Contact Chelse at:
WORK 276-5520 FAX 279-7192

2005 Alaska Garden Flowers Calendar

...features Annie Nevaldine's botanical photographs. The Meconopsis (blue poppy) cover opens to reveal twelve months of flowers and gardens. Images were captured at public and private gardens, including Mrs. Hedla's, Anchorage's Town Square, and gardens of master gardeners including Gina Docherty and Cooperative Extension horticulturist Julie Riley. The large (12 x 17.5 inches) wall calendars are available directly from Annie (333-2100 or alzina@acsalaska.net) for \$11 and at retail stores for \$12.

Do you have perennial bulbs?

Annie Nevaldine is doing a photography project this spring and summer photographing bulb flowers in bloom and following blooming throughout the season. If you have bulb flowers that you'd be willing to let her photograph, please contact her at 333-2100 or alzina@acsalaska.net. You will get a picture or two of your bulbs in exchange as a thank you.



What's your Favorite Tool?

Julie Riley would like to know what your favorite gardening tool is. She is gathering information for an article for the ADN on tools and gadgets. Contact Julie Riley, 230-7339.

Gardening Calendar

April 13, Tuesday

Alaska Rose Society meeting, "Spring Pruning Roses" by Chuck Decker, 7 pm Central Lutheran Church, 15th & Cordova
Contact Don Daniels 346-1143.

April 17

Sears Mall Spring Garden Show - Most garden clubs participate in setting up booths.

April 19th

*Alaska Rock Garden Society meeting at Recluse Gardens at 2p.m. - Rhonda will give a demonstration on how to plant Alpines into the Rock Garden and how to plant a Hyper-Tufa. Jeff will give a demonstration in the construction of the Rock garden and some basics on constructing a Water Feature. Open to the public, at no charge. You do have to bring a rock to Jeff though and consider an invitation to join the Rock Garden Society.
*AMGA meeting - Mary Jo Burns will talk on "Primulas" - 7 p.m., CES Conf. Rm 130 - 2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd. Call 346-1631.

April 24

Baxter Community School Home and Garden Saturday - contact Sharron Harris if you'd like to teach: 907-742-1781, harris_sharron@asdk12.org

May - Weekdays

Organic Farming, LS 192- A block class, practical, hands-in-the-soil experience at the Kellogg and NOLS Farm gardens in Palmer; prepare soil, select organic fertilizers, plant, compost and develop a project. Weekdays in May. Stay at the Kellogg Farm or commute. Call 564-8301, or Ellen Vande Visse, Good Earth Garden School, PO Box 2905, Palmer, AK 99645, (907) 745-0758 goodearthgardenschool@hotmail.com for info.

May 6

Anchorage Garden Club meeting, "Container Gardening" presented by Ayse Gilbert. 7:30 p.m., Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd & Eagle. Call 566-0539.

May 10th

Alaska Rock Garden Society - Northway Mall ARGS Plant Show

May 15th

Anchorage Garden Club's "Lobelia Basket Workshop" - \$45 Advance registration required (learn how to put together a lobelia basket similar to the ones the city puts up downtown, go home with a completed basket) 7:30 p.m., Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd & Eagle. Call 566-0539.

May 17th

Anchorage Garden Club - Alaska Arbor Day - join in planting trees at one of Anchorage's schools in celebration of arbor day. Call 566-0539 for more information.

May 17th

Alaska Rock Garden Society Plant Sale, 7435 Old Harbor Road, Anchorage.

May 18th

AK. Botanical Garden, Spring Cleanup

The Anchorage Chapter of the Alaska Master Gardeners Association welcomes letters, opinions, articles, ideas and inquiries. Contact the editor, Gina Docherty, at:

Mail: 4006 DeArmour Road
Anchorage, AK 99516

Phone: 345-4099

Email: gardener@corecom.net

AMGA Web Site: www.corecom.net/~gardener
(The Newsletter will be on-line in living color!)

For information about membership or upcoming programs, contact:
Cooperative Extension Office
2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, AK 99508
Phone 786-6300
Fax Line 786-6312



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Think Spring!!!

**Alaska Master Gardeners Association, Inc.
Anchorage Chapter
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