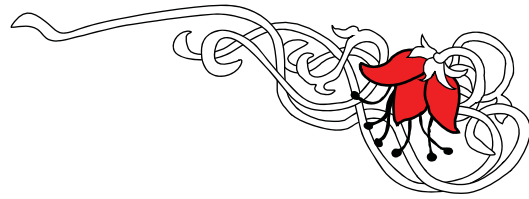


Anchorage Chapter



Volume 12, Issue 6

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER June 2010



Message From Jane

My thermometer is reading 70.7° as I write this and needless to say, the sun is shining. Are you finished cleaning out and rehabbing your garden beds? I'm not done yet and beginning to wonder if I will finish before frost. There are a whole bunch of plants to get into the ground, not to mention a bunch of pots to plant. The warmer temperatures make it hard to keep those little four-packs of plants watered. Is the earth spinning faster these days? It seems like the hours are shorter than they used to be.

My first early primroses started appearing May 4th. There was still snow on one side of the yard when the first flowers opened, poking up through the winter leaf mulch. Every day more and more flowers opened. By May 14th I had lots and lots of cheery flowers - even if the rest of the garden beds were still void, brown and messy and some even still with snow. It's just the time you really need to see some flowers. Everyone should plant some primula for spring flowers along with spring bulbs.

I'm always fascinated with Rosemary Kimball's reporting of soil temperatures from the Peninsula. This spring I made more of an effort to pay attention to my soil temperatures. Working two soil thermometers (which was said to register temperatures in about 5 minutes) I did numerous tests around my yard. What a variation I found -- with the sunniest locations registering 48°-50° and cooler areas reading 34°-38° at the same time!

Here's an interesting idea: give dahlia tubers a hydrogen peroxide "bath" to debug them. There wasn't much detail on the internet (even with Amelia Walsh's help!), except for a couple of references to cleaning bulbs & tubers with hydrogen peroxide, both in the fall before storing and in the spring before planting. Directions were to mix 2 tbsp. of baby shampoo, 1 tsp. of hydrogen peroxide, and 1 quart of warm water in a bucket. Then, bath gently in the mixture and check for insect infestation. Rinse with clear water, let them dry and then either store or plant as appropriate. Has anyone tried this? Pro's or Con's?

A tired and self-admitted obsessive gardener described themselves as having reached the snapdragon gardening stage: part of me has snapped and the other part is draggin'.

At the last MG meeting, we had the chance to find out "what tree we fell from" (would that be a tree-o-scope instead of an astrological horoscope?) I seem to have fallen out of a Maple Tree. Julie Riley fell from an Elm Tree. Check out the website www.wowzone.com/what-tree.htm to see what tree you fell from and see if your 'tree-o-scope' describes you.

Heard on the morning announcements over the PA system at Rabbit Creek Elementary School during the last week of school: daily updates on the number of dandelion flowers turned in by Rabbit Creek students. I'm not certain of this, but think it was a competition between different classes. The last total I heard was something over 14,000 dandelion flowers gathered by students on their way to school. Right on Rabbit Creek!

See you on the AMGAA garden tours.



Master Gardeners enjoyed a field trip to view the tulip 'sail boat' created by Kathy Feathergill-Calvin of Forget-me-not Nursery in Indian on May 24th. A viewing platform provided a perfect photographer's 'perch' to photograph the tulip 'boat'. What more can a gardener ask for but to be surrounded by a beautiful garden and have a shopping opportunity too?



Maple Trees & More!

Ever met an urban forester? Anchorage has one in Scott Stringer. He and Nickel LaFleur addressed the MGs on Arbor Day (fittingly) regarding trees. As is true of all MG gatherings, the ideas and experiences contributed by MGs in attendance added to the discussion.

Scott came to Anchorage in 2008 with eight years experience as a certified arborist. His experience has been in the colder areas

of the lower 48, but Alaska has its own way of challenging Nature. To balance the forces when selecting trees, Scott organizes his thoughts in this way:

- Species selection - where are you going to plant the tree and what do you want from it?
- Planting location - what are the constraints and your desires?
- Seasons of interest - what colors are you wanting to see and when?
- Maintenance considerations= what are the height and width and features such as limb strength that you are willing to address in your tree maintenance?
- Wildlife issues - are your 'fans' moose, beavers, squirrels, or other creatures?

In a city that has now earned the TreeCityUSA designation for the fourth time, trees are a matter of pride. Citizens can take it further, though, talking to government representatives about investing in them.

Whether advocating or planting, MGs want variety. To this end, Scott presented 10 Maples, 2 Lindens, 3 Ashes, 2 Oaks, and a sampling of Aspens, Poplars, Elms, and surprises such as the Kentucky Coffeetree (*Gymnocladus dioica*).

Answering questions about moose and beaver activity, Scott noted that beaver issues are referred to Fish & Game for handling, but there are ways to deter moose and other creatures: use the urine or dung of fox, bear, mountain lions, or similar predators and you will encourage the tree chompers to go elsewhere. This works best when the weather is dry, as rain washes away the scent. Check with the Zoo or purchase desiccated urine at stores such as Alaska Mill & Feed. (I used desiccated urine, a powder, in the attic to deter squirrels, purchasing via the Internet. It worked!)

MG George Lyle, who was in attendance at the MG meeting, has 14 different Maples at his home, leading the way in informal research. He likes the Asiatic Maples (Japanese Maple) especially well. Even beyond the reach of his yard and his care, Maples are doing well in Anchorage. Try the Deborah Maple (*Acer platanoides*, a Norway Maple) the Moose seem to be a little less taken with them. Autumn Blazes (*Acer freemanii*) are planted near the First National Bank on Old Seward and Dimond - 25 of them, established in 2003. Mooses Tooth has some Autumn Blazes. There is a Douglas Maple (*Acer glabrum* var. *douglasii*) by the Admin Bldg at UAA.

Scott closed with encouragement to MGs to go request the Maples and other trees he reviewed, buy them, and keep him informed of your findings. In this way, MGs assist in determining how well they do here.

Taking the nature trail at UAA to see the trees is a great follow-up to Scott's discussion. Nickel added the results of her informal research, having asked MGs and nurseries around town for their picks. You can purchase trees in many places (check your Garden Snaps Map) while buying other plants, or when frequenting stores like Lowes, Wal-Mart, and Costco. Just remember the five questions Scott uses when making your selections.

More Resources

<http://www.maple-trees.com/>

http://www.aboutmapletrees.com/types_of_maple_trees.shtml

<http://www.gi.alaska.edu/ScienceForum/ASF7/774.html>

Why Lower 48 Trees Don't Work Well in Alaska

<http://esp.cr.usgs.gov/data/atlas/little/> Digital Representations

Public Comment Period for CES PLAN

The University of Alaska Fairbanks Cooperative Extension Service is seeking public comment on its draft strategic plan, which will guide work for the next five years.

Extension thanks all who contributed ideas for the draft strategic plan and is seeking comments on it by June 15. The plan outlines goals, objectives and strategies in six areas: energy, health, food safety and security, economic development, climate change and youth, family and community. It is linked from Extension's home page at www.uaf.edu/ces. Comments may be made through a link on the site.

In addition to hundreds of comments received from Alaskans, the plan will consider the results of a Dittman Research and Communications Corp. poll. Extension commissioned the random sample poll to determine which issues are the greatest concern to Alaskans, the public knowledge of Extension and the best methods to reach clients.

Extension director Fred Schlutt says he hopes the strategic plan will provide a blueprint for how Extension can be most helpful to Alaskans.

Extension is a nationwide education network supported by a partnership between the U.S. Department of Agriculture and land grant universities such as the University of Alaska Fairbanks. It provides fact-based, practical information to Alaskans on many topics, ranging from energy conservation and gardening to wood stove safety and making sauerkraut. Its 4-H program reaches more than 13,000 Alaska youths every year.

Extension district offices are located in Fairbanks, Delta, Anchorage, Palmer, Soldotna, Bethel, Nome, Juneau and Sitka. For more information, call toll-free, 877-520-5211.



Master Gardener Focus: Amelia Walsh By Cheryl Chapman

With people and property alike, when it comes to beauty, good bones count, and Amelia and John Walsh's garden has good bones -- east, west, north and south -- all from Mother Earth: rocks.

A sweeping berm between the cedar-colored home and the Lower Hillside street is a rock garden in the making, and more rocks form paths, garden borders, stream beds, walls and pools: a scaffold of stone to hold thousands of plants in crannies and beds as orderly and colorful as terrazzo at Pompeii.

"Around every corner, there's a surprise," says Amelia, a native of Calabria, Italy, and there are corners aplenty in these two acres sloping west to the sun, where every inch shows the loving high-energy attention of an artist.

A classic English-style greenhouse next to the garage is jammed with orchids, tropicals, starts, baskets, containers and the dense, heady smell of happy plants, among them two glowing neon-red Epiphyllum, or orchid cactus, and overhead baskets of Black Krim tomatoes. The greenhouse is heated. There's electricity and hot water. A sink. Potting space. It's a tropical respite from Alaska winters right next to the Walsh garage. "It's our oasis, a getaway," Amelia says.

Though the greenhouse has taken some load off the garage, two of the three-car spaces still are jammed with plants in waiting, plants about to be carried into spring, among them 150-170 pots of dahlias. Amelia is famed for her dahlias -- hundreds and hundreds of dahlias -- and for her African violets, and her orchids, her cacti, her bonsai.

"My husband gave up on the garage a long time ago," says Amelia. "He's proud to say his car has never seen the inside of a garage."

A bird sings, a tinkling high-pitched bell. Down the street a big-voiced dog barks, letting the world know he's on duty. And everywhere at the Walsh's, there is the sound of water. Not counting birdbaths and still pools, there are 10 fountains with pumps, and the splash and chime of water is the home's background music. Blindfolded, someone who knew the yard could identify a location by its water song. It's known around town as "The Waterfall Garden," and birds love it.

"This is bird heaven," Amelia says. "We don't need other music because birds serenade us all the time."

A Steller's jay hops closer along the back deck rail among plants set out to acclimate. He gives Amelia a mischievous look and feints at a plant label. "He's so bad," Amelia says. "He pulls up all my plant labels. It's like a game with him." The jay makes a rude noise and flies away, minus, for once, a label.

The National Wildlife Association has certified the Walsh's home as a wildlife habitat. Moose take advantage of this designation long enough to learn that 1) The really tasty plants are behind iron gates and tall fences and 2) There's not much available out front that's palatable to a moose. That, says Amelia, is the strategy.

Containers packed with succulents and other rock garden plants line the gravel and stone path arcing around a course of water tumbling five levels into a pool. Heavy equipment gouged out the basic fall, but the Walshes did all the rest, including placing the boulders. "Every rock here has its own story," Amelia says. Almost all are leftovers from highway projects, or from slides along the Seward Highway.

She's put rich soil into each rocky crevice, cradles for tiny plants that flame with color. "You have to plan for color all year," she says. "If you don't plan for it, it doesn't happen."

Between the house and the cascade, a spruce grove tempers winds and shadows native plants, including ferns and devils' club, and nearby, *Primula auricula* ("I love primroses"), *Chionodoxa*, or glory-of-the-snow, the last of the crocuses, the surviving *Lewisia*s ("It looks as if about half the *Lewisias* didn't make it, but their root is like a carrot, so they may come back"), and the spot where the yellow *alyssum* was for four years, but not this year. Mortality also hit the hostas, but the *Berge-nias* mostly pulled through.

The false Solomon's seal in the spruce gloom is a lush volunteer, but the bishop's weed is kept in a rocky straitjacket. "Everybody hates it, but bishop's weed is like children," says Amelia. "If you want it to behave, you have to set rules."

An outsize stump near the big pool shows plenty of character and a collection of birdhouses, most tenanted during nesting season, and frogs ("I like frogs"). There are gnomes ("I like gnomes"). There are angels ("I like angels"). And everywhere, more frogs and frogs and frogs ("Did I mention that I like frogs?").

Amelia was planting grasses long before everybody else joined the grass parade "for their texture, the way they sway in the wind," and has experimented with the look of them in a long bed above a stone and paver flat that divides the cultivated areas from the woodlands. That bed sparkles as well with *Lewisia* "Little Plum," *Lewisia tweedyi* ("Blossoms as big as a tennis ball -- my favorite *Lewisia*"), *Sempervivums* and miniature Norwegian spruce.

Other beds, other areas, are thick with tulips. Peonies, among them the Japanese fern-leaf cultivar. White Peruvian daffodils. Forsythia. A creamy hellebore striped with wine. *Primula polyanthus*, *Primula denticulate*, New Zealand delphiniums ("They're shorter and fuller than the Pacific Giant"). Alabaster and lemon and orange trollius. Japanese iris

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Gardeners Alert - Iris Yellow Spot Virus

From Janice Chumley, IPM tech/Research tech
UAF-CES, Kenai Peninsula District



Since 2004 Iris Yellow Spot Virus has spread through a number of western and southern states that we Alaskan gardeners rely on for our onion starts. IYSV tospovirus affects onions, garlic, leeks, iris, and several weeds. This devastating disease is vectored by the onion thrip

(Thrips tabaci) which are known to occur in Alaska.

Plants infected with Iris Yellow Spot Virus will have yellow to straw colored lesions and may appear stippled. Lesions may be more or less round with or without a necrotic center or may be diamond shaped. Lesion will appear on both the seed stalk and the leaves. Late in the season, infected plants will fall over.

The virus is transmitted by the onion thrip, and is transmitted by both larvae and adults, but only larvae can acquire the virus from infected plants, once a thrip has acquired the virus, it can transmit the virus for the remainder of its life. The disease has the potential to spread rapidly and could cause crop failure if not maintained. The virus is NOT seed-borne and does not appear to be found in the bulbs (or set) and does not survive in the soil, but for those gardeners who purchase onion starts, close inspection is necessary to stop the spread of this disease by the thrips. If you purchase onion starts talk to the supplier and ask if they have Iris Yellow Spot in their fields and have had to treat them. If they do, look for another supplier of the great green seedlings that does not have the virus. Starting the conversation is the best way to avoid introducing this disease into Alaska which will affect both commercial and home agriculture.

Once the plants are infected there is no cure, they should be removed and destroyed. Do not compost the infected plants, either burn or bag and remove from site.

While Iris Yellow Spot Virus has not yet been found in Alaska, it has tremendous potential to establish here. Most of us that purchase onion starts have suppliers in the southwest or the northwest, the source for the recent spread of IYSV throughout the United States. Let's work to keep Alaska free of this devastating virus. Make sure you keep your garden area perimeter weed free, water your plants regularly as thrips prefer warm and dry, and inspect them often. When in doubt you can always bring a specimen into you local Cooperative Extension Office for identification and more information.

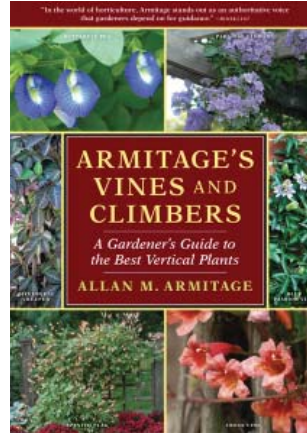
Good pictures and web related information can be found from Colorado State University, Extension Tri River area. www.coopext.colostate.edu/TRA/PLANTS or: Cornell University <http://vegetablemdonline.ppath.cornell.edu/NewsArticles/Onion>

Book Review by Fran Durner

Armitage's Vines and Climbers

A Gardener's Guide to Best Vertical Plants

By Allan M. Armitage (Timber Press, Hardback, \$29.95)



For anyone who wants to expand their garden vertically, this is a handsome volume covering more than 115 climbing and vining plants with color photos and easy to read text.

Dr. Armitage writes plant portraits of both annuals and perennials that covers their habits, zones, propagation and etymology, all in personable prose and with lots of his characteristic humor.

Armitage adds dimension by bringing in authorities such as rose lover Suzy Bales and Clematis Society board member Lyndy Broder to name their favorite performers.

There are only about two handfuls of climbers that I am aware of that gardeners grow in Alaska and this is a good reference book if you are looking to expand your repertoire and try something new and interesting.

Armitage cites many plants that could possibly grow in Alaska and some are unusual and handsome, such as annuals Clitoria or butterfly pea and Ipomoea lobata or Spanish flag, which are among those worth searching out. The back of the book contains useful lists of cold hardy plants. An index of botanical names and an index of common names are also included.

Professor Armitage teaches horticulture at the University of Georgia and travels extensively on the lecture circuit. If you were lucky to meet him when he visited Alaska in 2008 and gave talks and garden walkabouts in both Anchorage and Homer, then you will recognize, and practically hear, his voice throughout this book.

My favorite Armitage quote from the introduction, "However, everything I have written is not to be taken too seriously. After all, this is gardening, not rocket science. So, no worries, no exams will follow. Have fun."

If anyone out there has experience with any unusual vines or climbers, please let me know:

durner1@gmail.com



Central Peninsula Master Gardener News By Rosemary Kimball

It was May and the needles started falling from the Christmas wreath by the front door every time it was closed. May means the plant world goes into high gear for more than a month. All sorts of little green things become bigger green things and places must be found for them as they expand.

MG Margaret Simon taught a greenhouse class for the Central Peninsula Garden Club this spring. Margaret has a gold standard yard and garden here on the peninsula and this is what she said last week:

"I pushed the window! The garden is planted and fingers are crossed that frost is no more! Now the fun planting--the flowers and where to put them?"

We have eaten two tomatoes and two 'lunch box' cukes from the greenhouse and they even tasted like tomatoes and cukes!

The slow-to-show hostas are popping and I have six new ones to add to the beds. I've had such great luck with field-grown hostas from whiteoaknursery.com in Illinois. Even shipping is within reason. Consequently, I have to add a few new ones every year. I think I now have 66 different varieties. Fun!"



And then we see what plant tags are really tomb stones. The rock garden by our back steps started blooming early and was a joy and delight. I've decided not to keep the tags there; the plants will either be pretty or dead, period.

Some of us went to the valley nurseries mid-May. Outstanding was Butte's Ewe-topia's baskets with the firecracker begonias. I'd not seen that plant before but saw it at Gray Owl as well as in spades

at Ewe-topia. The car was FULL of plants between the four of us including two trees that Gina Docherty got, mercifully at the very last. We didn't have lunch until 5 PM! The thing I like best about the small nurseries is the diversity of offerings. In Homer I found a yellow-ish alysum called Aphrodite



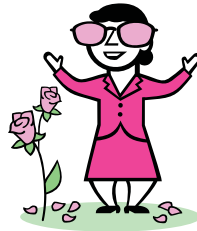
Lemon. That meant at another nursery I had to get some bright yellow pansies to go with them for a "cheery" basket.

It was interesting to see how many nurseries have lady bugs running around. Personally, without a screen door on the greenhouse, I prefer praying mantises because they have more

of a sense of place. MG Kathy Wartinbee, married to a buggy guy, said that the ladies, when they arrive, are interested in finding mates, hence the wanderlust. Praying mantises, when they hatch are ready to eat and are seriously looking for food which includes their siblings if the aphids aren't there. I've put all the aphid attractant plants in the greenhouse this year. Now to get a sufficient supply of little green buggies for them.

I took all my annoyingly old seed packets, mixed all the seeds together and tossed them on the new dirt by the side of the driveway. It will be interesting to see if anything shows up. It was sure nice to see them go. Enough of this and off to the greenhouse and garden!

Homer Garden Club Tour - July 24 & 25, 2010 <http://www.cenpengardenclub.org/>



There will be two featured speakers on Saturday, the 24th at the Gardeners Weekend. The first, at 11:00 am, will be Erica Glasener of Home & Garden TV fame. A horticulturist and author, Erica has hosted "A Gardener's Diary" on Home and Garden Television (HGTV) for fourteen years. In her role as host, Erica interviews gardeners from all walks of life across the United States. She writes a biweekly

column on plants and garden design for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution. She has also served as a contributing editor for Fine Gardening magazine, a Taunton Press publication. Her articles have appeared in The New York Times, The Farmer's Almanac and Atlanta Magazine. In her own garden, Erica grows vegetables, fruits (including blueberries), heirloom roses, bulbs, perennials, shrubs and trees. Her presentation will be titled: "A Gardener's Diary: Designing the Year-Round Garden." She is terribly excited about her first visit to Alaska and she's bringing her husband and daughter too.

Elliot Coleman, the second speaker, comes to Homer at 2:00 pm via the magic of E-Live computer technology. This will be a "virtual" presentation enabling Mr. Coleman to speak to us and answer our questions in real time from Four Seasons Farm, his home in Harborside, Maine. There he produces year-round vegetable crops under extreme conditions in unheated and minimally heated greenhouse structures. Mr. Coleman is one of the most influential small-scale farmers in the U. S. His 1989 book, The New Organic Grower, is considered must-reading for organic farmers and market gardeners. Titled "The Out of Season Gardener", his presentation will include his live narration of his own photographs.

Continued on page 7



Bird Chatter

- ARS* researcher Steve Seefeldt has documented moose eating white sweetclover. Now he is looking for a photo...you guessed it, white sweetclover seedlings and moose nuggets. He also said that chickweed and lambsquarters will pass through moose and produce viable seedling in the greenhouse.

*USDA Agricultural Research Service

- Thanks to new MG Tracy Russell for loading up composted manure in her truck for the Refugee Garden. And thanks to Linda Boggs for lending Kelly her handy dandy don't-have-to-shovel-manure-off-the-back-of-the-truck roller gadget.

- In her presentation on early Alaskan gardening given to the Cook Inlet Historical Society on May 20, Ayse Gilbert stated that pictures show the annual flowers grown in Anchorage between the 1920s and 1940s were larger than the varieties of the same flowers we grow today. The annuals included calendula, snapdragons, pansies and stocks.

- Also from Ayse's talk--Bagoy's Florist opened in 1935 and sold cut flowers grown in the Bagoy's garden and greenhouse.

- It was a good winter in the herb garden at the Alaska Botanical Garden. Perennials that usually don't overwinter are up and growing including Greek oregano, Oregano 'Hot 'n' Spicy', Golden oregano, Feverfew and Verbascum bombyciferum.

- Dee and Kathy Feathergill-Calvin's sailboat made of over 10,000 bulbs was featured on the first page of the Anchorage Daily News May 19. If you missed the picture and the field trip, check out the Forget Me Not Nursery's Facebook page.

- Composting wizard Gordon Pyle was featured on Channel 2 News' "How 2 Do It" morning feature.

- Chit-chat about getting rid of those pesky moose at the May AMGAA meeting lead to a never-before-heard-of suggestion. Beam a laser pointer on the moose's nose and lead it away from your garden edibles. It worked for somebody! (Would this MG please come forward so that the author of Bird Chatter can ease her worried mind.)

- This spring Forsythia bloomed a good two weeks before Rose-tree-of-China.

- Sherry Lee Bottoms has successfully reared out four delphinium root maggot flies from specimens brought into the CES office last fall. Now to get them identified....

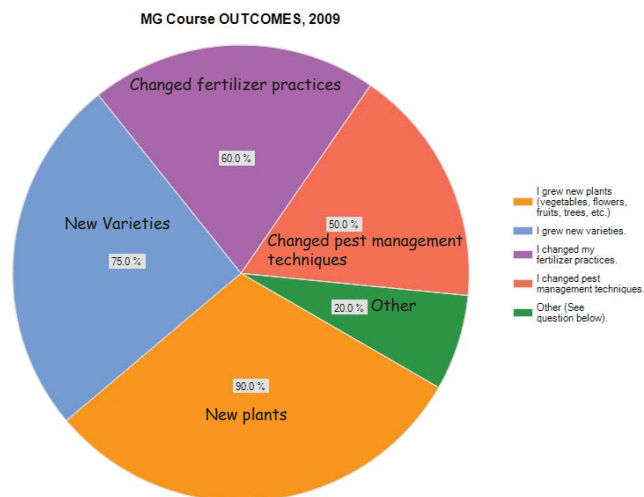
- Extra staff working in the Anchorage CES office this summer, Hailey Scofield, IPM Technician (year 3), Americorp VISTA volunteer extraordinaire, Kelly Ingram (year ending in Sept), Cory Ink (complements of USDA APHIS) and gypsy moth trapper (among other things) Sherry Lee Bottoms.

-- A traveler from Tennessee who teaches the Master Gardener course will be staying at Mary Rydesky Jarvi Homestay bed & breakfast June 30-July 3. Julie is tentatively planning a get-together for food and gardening chatter on Thursday night, July 1st. Keep your schedule open if you'd like to visit.

- Hauling display materials to the Dena'ina Civic & Convention Center can be hazardous. Julie Riley had a fire extinguisher go off in her car. First thoughts, "The car's on fire!"

2008-2009 MG Update

Master Gardeners changed their 2009 gardening practices after taking the MG course in winter 2008.



MG Help Needed

Spenard Farmers Market

MG Laura Minski is scheduling staffing for the Spenard Farmers Market "Ask an Expert" table. The market opens at 10 a.m. on Saturday's. Please contact Laura if you'd like to help. Word on the street is that the first "Ask an Expert" table was a grand success. See photos at the Market's Facebook site, <http://www.facebook.com/#!/pages/Spenard-Farmers-Market/357797668860?ref=ts>

Alaska Boys and Girls Club, Woodland Clubhouse Garden

The Woodland Clubhouse (2300 West 36th Avenue in Spenard) will be having their first vegetable garden this summer! They have 2 raised beds and will be working on getting materials for a "potato fort" made out of tires. Volunteers are needed to meet 1 hour each week to help the kids work in the beds and discuss growing topics. The focus will be on vegetable gardening, with an emphasis on the food system and local food. If you'd like to volunteer or have questions, please contact Kelly Ingram, CES Americorps VISTA, at (907) 786-6331 or klingram@alaska.edu. If you can only do a few days, that's fine too!

Festival of Flowers, Sat June 5

Jane Baldwin and Nickel LaFleur have been representing Master Gardeners on the Anchorage Downtown Partnership's Festival of Flowers Committee. The group hopes to raise \$1 million dollars to establish an endowment fund for the city's flowers. The big kick-off event, Festival of Flowers, is being held in the Town Square. Master Gardeners have been enlisted to give 20-minute presentations, but additional MGs are needed to staff a table of publications and answer gardening questions. Someone can even float about wearing an outrageous hat and a nametag that says, 'Ask me a Gardening Question'. Please let us know if you can help between 12 noon and 5 p.m.

ABG Garden Fair, June 26 & 27

Join IPM staff in setting up a booth at ABG's annual event. One or two MGs are needed for shifts on Saturday 10-12; 12-2; 2-4; 4-6 and on Sunday 11-1; 1-2; 3-5. MG display coordinator Michelle Coburn is scheduling MGs. Please get in touch with her if you can help, mcoburn@clearwire.net/.

Volunteer Opportunity

Volunteers are needed for the ABG Midsummer Gala fundraiser. Contact Mary Rydesky if you are interested in set up (afternoon/day time) or event (evening of June 24) - we need adults to work in the Children's Activities area, the Food Service Area, and more. And of course they go free for the evening in the Botanical Garden. The garden art sale is enjoyable; there are refreshments and music. I have done it for a number of years and am always glad I did! More info on the www.alaskabg.org

Amelia Walsh...cont. from page 3

"I know where everything is," says Amelia of the thousands of Walsh plants. "I know every one of the plants. If something is missing, I can see from across the garden that something is missing."

There's a sprinkler system for the lawns and for an elevated rectangular dahlia bed close to the fire pit, but all the other plants, every single one, is hand-watered by Amelia. She weeds. She cultivates. In the fall, she puts down leaves and steer manure. She pots up each dahlia to await its next season, then come spring, de-pots them by the hundreds. The gardens are immaculate.

"Where other people see work," she says, "I see an opportunity to make things beautiful. The idea is to have fun - in the garden, in life."

Homer Garden Tours cont. from page 5

Featured Sunday, the 25th will be our annual tours of six of Homer's best gardens. The tours remain the most popular event of the weekend. As always, we promise variety, gorgeous displays, surprises, and a fulfilling experience. Following the tours the day will end with a reception at the Bear Creek Winery, an event that becomes more popular every year... wine tasting and appetizers will be provided. There will also be door prizes, and opportunities to chat with all your gardening friends.

Purchase tickets after July 1 at the Homer Bookstore or the Chamber of Commerce.



The Anchorage Chapter of the Alaska Master Gardeners Association welcomes letters, opinions, articles, ideas and inquiries. Contact the editor, Gina Docherty, at:
Mail: 14051 Fejes Road
Anchorage, AK 99516
Phone: 345-4099
Email: amga@alaska.net (NEW EMAIL)
AMGA Web Site: www.alaskamastergardeners.org
(The Newsletter will be on-line in living color!)

To send concerns or information to the AMGA directly, mail to:
AMGA
P.O. Box 221403
Anchorage, AK 99522-1403

Garden Event Calendar

Wednesday, June 2

Organic & Community Gardening Workshop Series; Community Planting at C Street Gardens with loyal supporters and gardening enthusiasts. 7-9pm. Register information call ACAT, 222-7714

Thursday, June 3

Anchorage Garden Club Meeting; "Underwater Designs" by Letti Delk; 7:00pm; Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd & Eagle; Contact: AGC hotline 566-0539.

Saturday, June 5

* Festival of Flowers - Town Square; Music, flower auctions, educational programs, vendors and more. Celebrate and support our City of Flowers; noon-6pm; Contact: Nickel LaFleur 337-5651

* Anchorage Plant Sale -- Anchorage Garden Club; 3734 W. 35th, 9a-5p. (west on Northern Lights to Aero Drive, left on 35th). Contact: AGC hotline: 566-05

* Anchorage Plant Sale -- Wildflower Garden Club; 7435 Old Harbor Ave; 9a-4p. Contact: 243-1961; <http://www.alaskagardenclubs.org/wildflowerclub.htm>

* Valley Plant Sale - Mat-Su Master Gardeners; Plant Sale held at Palmer Pavilion, Valley Way, Palmer. Contact: www.matsumastergardeners.org

Monday, June 7

AMGAA Field Trip: Alyeska Resort Spring Bulbs & Girdwood Gardens. Watch emails for more information. Think car pooling.

Saturday, June 12

* Anchorage Plant Sale - St. Alex Church, 5801 Arctic Blvd., Anchorage, 10-4pm; Perennials, native Alaskan plants, wildflowers, rock garden plants, annuals, vegetables, herbs, berries, hardy kiwis, hardy roses, trees, hanging baskets and garden-related items. Contact: 333-1481

* Peninsula Plant Sale - Central Peninsula Garden Club, 11:00 am. Plant Sale held in the Kent and Sullivan parking lot, 312 Tyee Street, Soldotna. Contact: 283-4632, www.cenpengardenclub.org or Marion Nelson mmkn@ptialaska.net

* Spring Permaculture Workshop Series: June 12: Greenhouse Design, Saskia Esslinger. 9-noon; Williams Street Farmhouse; Saskia Esslinger & Matt Oster; hands-on workshop series. The cost is \$150 for the whole series or \$30 per workshop, including refreshments and handouts. Space is limited! Pre-register by e-mailing alaskasaskia@gmail.com or call 563-1119.

Saturday-Sunday, June 12-13

Healy Field Trip, Alaska Rock Garden Society. Botanizing the area around Bison Gulch and Mt Healy to see flowers in bloom, take photos. A follow up field trip is scheduled in August for seed collecting and botanizing. Information: Verna Pratt 333-8212.

Thursday, June 24

Midsummer Gala in the Garden -- Alaska Botanical Garden; Reservations required. Information: www.alaskabg.org

Saturday-Sunday, June 26-27

ABG's 13th Annual Garden Fair & Garden Art Show, Saturday 11-6p; Sunday 11-5p Alaska Botanical Garden. www.alaskabg.org

Saturday-Sunday, July 10-11

67th Annual Flower Show "2010: A Space Odyssey" and Free Day at ABG. Anchorage Garden Club. AGC hotline: 566-0539

Saturday-Sunday, July 17-18

Coyote Garden Tour (Les Brake), Saturday 10-5:00pm; Sunday 12-5:00pm. Benefit for Willow Garden Club & Alaska Rock Garden Society Seed Collecting Expedition

Saturday-Sunday, July 24-25

Homer Gardeners Weekend - Homer Garden Club. Saturday speaker & programs; Sunday self-guided tour of 6 gardens; reception & wine tasting at Bear Creek Winery. (Homer Garden Club President: Jack Regan regan009@alaska.com)

Sunday, July 25

Annual City Garden Tour -- Anchorage Garden Club. AGC hotline: 566-0539



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



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Amelia and John Walsh in their lovely hillside garden. Amelia is the subject of our monthly Master Gardener Focus article on page 3.

Alaska Master Gardeners Association, Inc.
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