

Anchorage Chapter



Volume 13, Issue 7

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

July 2011



Message From Jane

The summer solstice has come and gone already. I know everyone celebrates the coming of summer with the solstice. But it always seems a bit depressing to me, because now the daylight hours start diminishing! That sounds a bit like the glass half empty syndrome - "Where does the time go?", she wondered while surveying some plants still in pots, not in the ground where they should be by now. Now that sounds like a bit of whine in my half empty glass, but it really isn't, because in spite of being behind in my own garden chores, I've been having a good time doing so many things gardening related with other gardening folks. And best of all: enjoying just being out of doors!

Garden Tours - Tours are listed in the directory, in the newsletter, and on the AMGAA website calendar and newsletter online. www.alaskamastergardeners.org

Reminders and notices of any changes or additions that miss publication dates for the newsletter are sent via the AMGAA google group site.

https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/akmgaa
If you have joined/signed up for the group forum, you'll
receive the notices by email.

If you have not joined or signed up for the google group site – or have opted to not receive emails – you can still go to the group site and read the reminders and/or change notices posted on line. Check it the weekend before the regular Monday tour days – notices are usually posted towards the end of the week before the Monday evening tours.

Watering the garden: Surprisingly we don't get a lot of rain here so most gardens need supplemental watering. This is especially true when our temperatures hit the 70 degree mark and days are sunny and long. The entire root growing zone needs moisture, so water accordingly - not just the surface half inch. This often requires watering slowly and repeatedly to allow time for water to soak in.

Remember that trees and many plants absorb most of their water at or outside the canopy drip line and not right at the base or trunk of the plant.

How much water? Hard to say, but unless you totally saturate your soil in an over-extended period of watering, it's difficult to give plants too much water.

Slugs: 'Tis the season. Be alert! There are many different control methods. Some are deterrents like various barriers (which will protect your plant, but won't reduce the slug population) and others are eradication measures (attack mode!) to reduce the population. The single most effective method is vigilance, regular slug patrols with hand picking (wear gloves) and dispatching the critters.

Remember that beer traps are "attractants" that bring in slugs (the kill method is drowning, not the drinking). Commercial slug bait used should be an iron phosphate based bait, not metaldehyde based (poisonous to humans, animals & the earth). Slug baits also contain attractants. Because of the attractants, it's best to place traps and slug bait outside your garden rather than inside, to bring them out of the garden, not attract them into it! Same caution with using copper barriers - if the slugs are already in your garden, they won't cross the copper to get out.

SLUG CHALLENGE: Keep a running count of the number of slugs you dispatch this summer. One of our MGs recently told me that last summer he stopped counting either as he approached or exceeded 2,000 slugs killed (can't remember which one). I know I disposed of a lot of them last summer, but I didn't actually count. This year I'm going to try to keep a running tally. Come September, let's see who eliminated the most slugs!

Leafhoppers, Aphids and Thrips, Oh My! by Jane Baldwin

The usual garden pests should be arriving to our gardens soon, if not already. These include aphids, leaf hoppers and thrips. Spittlebug foam sightings have already been reported. What has and hasn't worked for local gardeners? What is the least toxic, easiest and least complicated approach to deal with these pests? Perhaps a dialog on control suggestions on the AMGAA google group forum is in order. https://groups.google.com/forum/#!forum/akmgaa

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Monday Night Tours By Nickel LaFleur

The Alaska Master Gardener's Monday Garden Tours started off with a visit to Verna & Frank Pratt's home in East Anchorage. Weather cooperated and the garden was splendid. With all the bulbs and early blooming perennials, Verna was busy saying (and spelling) the botanical names of the plants while we were quickly writing them down. She had so many plants that each one of us had to have' (or already have but just didn't know its name). Two more tours of their well - established garden to come.

The following Monday was Memorial Day and we didn't have a scheduled tour



Apple Blossoms at Clark Orchard Photo by GD

have a scheduled tour but we made up for it by having 3 tours the next week. We started off by joining the Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers on Sunday, June 5th, with a members-only private orchard blossom tour at The Clark Orchard on Rabbit Creek Road. The first trees in the orchard were planted about 1964. When harvest time comes around, sometimes 'you pick' opportunities are offered. Last year 5,000 lbs of apples were harvested! With over 200 apples, cherries

and apricots in the orchard, there were many boasting blossoms as we envisioned future fruits. They provided some nice cookies & juice as well.

Monday June 6th we headed down Turnagain Arm for their spring bulb flower display. We stopped into Forget-Me-Not Nursery to delight in Dea & Kathy Feathergill-Calvin's delectable greenhouse and to see what bulbs did come back. Unfortunately, the flower bed with the 'sailboat' display bulbs in it didn't return this year. Kathy was bummed but lamented that it was part of what gardening was all about - the good with the bad. At 7pm, we met up with Robbie Frankevich at Alyeska Resort. He pointed out the blooming bulbs along with the gorgeous hostas, ligularias and bleeding hearts that were weeks more advanced than ours in Anchorage. The variety of daffodils and tulips and all the garden beds around the

The variety of daffodils and tulips and all the garden beds around the hotel were marvelous. Robbie has quite the touch with integrating bulbs and perennial plantings as well as wonderful use of foliage colors and textures. We loved those yellow trout lilies, Erythronium 'Pagoda'.

Monday, June 13th - Lucky for us, two of our wonderful Advanced Master Gardener II's (Camille Williams and Pat

Anderson) opened their gardens to view. Camille Williams had lots to look at with all the trees, shrubs,

Artful plant stand at Camille Williams' garden -Photo by Mike Baldwin

perennials and annuals. It is an ever-changing garden and Camille has outdone herself with all the hanging baskets throughout the property. (The snacks were wonderful too!) Pat Anderson's garden (a short walk away from Camille's) had wonderful river-bed trails, Primulas in bloom, a great composting system, and container veggies with a nice,

relaxing view from the backyard deck.





Mary Shier and Mike Baldwin get up close and personal with the heavenly scent of lilacs in Sharon Davies' garden. Photos by G.Docherty

Monday, June 20th - Brian and Sharon Davies welcomed MGs with wonderful well-tended landscaping and lovely snacks. The irises were blooming and most of the lilacs were open and smelled heavenly. There was every kind of hosta you could imagine with apple, maple, and gorgeous evergreen trees around. They have to have the biggest honeysuckle I've ever seen, which was in full-bloom and gorgeous. All the peonies were still tightly closed but promised to be a show-stopper when they open.

Thanks to all who have opened their gardens to us master gardeners. We are so fortunate to have such generous and talented gardeners in our midst!

Dora to Retire July 29

Dora Wainwrite is retiring from Cooperative Extension Service after working 10 years for the Anchorage District Office as administrative assistant and two years on the UAF Chukchi Campus in Kotzebue where she provided administrative support for the acting director.

Dora has always done a fabulous job working with the public. Upon greeting someone new to the office, she would enthusiastically tell them about the services Extension has to offer. She built up regular communication with over 1,000 people by signing them up to be on the Anchorage District listserv. The listserv was her 'baby' and she made sure to send out messages every few weeks about Extension's classes, programs and new publications. When asked what she found most enjoyable about working for CES, Dora replied, 'Helping the public, and working with Master Gardeners and faculty.'

Dora will be moving to Juneau. Her last day is Friday, July 29. A goodbye party will be held starting at 5:00 p.m. at Julie Riley's, 934 W 8th Ave. All CES is invited to attend.

Master Gardeners Wanted

Master Gardeners are needed to help "man" the CES/4H Hospitality Booth at the Alaska State Fair, Aug 25th - Sept 5th. Hours vary. Participants get free Fair Entrance and Parking Tickets. Call Deb Blaylock 745-3360 or email: matsu.ces@alaska.edu

Master Gardener Focus: Sharon Davies By Cheryl Chapman

The lilacs are blooming at Sharon and Brian Davies' home in Bootlegger Cove and spreading their sweetness for blocks, not bad for a gardener with an earlier and deserved reputation as a houseplant serial killer.

This time of year, it might even be possible to guide blindfolded scent-tourists from point to point through the gardens, though they'd miss the good-neighborliness of colors, of textures, of perennials and annuals and the marvel of what must be one of the city's oldest pink honeysuckles (Lonicera tatarica) inside a trellised enclosure for fruit, cutting peonies, young peas, yet more lilacs and an Evans sour cherry, its smooth burgundy bark stippled with ivory.

"Once, I was afraid I'd never garden," says Sharon. "I thought I had black thumb, I'd killed so many plants when I lived in an apartment.. Then I got a piggyback plant that lived for years, and it gave me hope."

There wasn't much gardening in the California household where Sharon grew up.

"My mother grew sweet peas, and there were Boysenberries," she says. "A couple of houses had really beautiful roses and hibiscus, and I admired them."

When they moved, the young Sharon, inspired, planted her first garden in the new home's back yard. The soil was hostile and unprepared, and the plants lived just long enough to kill themselves in despair. She put gardening thoughts aside, not knowing that gardening is a blessed infection that can go into remission but eventually, inevitably, comes back with a boom, in her case after she visited Alaska for two weeks in 1967 to check the place out, and stayed.

She and Brian, who worked for BP, married, and moved to a smaller home on their present site in the early 1970s. Sharon saw what was and what might be: Gardening saw its chance.

"I love the planning part," Sharon says. "The things that attract me most are colors and textures, and plants that look good all year round."

Husband Brian, she says, is more into trees, and that's a big help. "When we're trying to put a tree in its best place, I can say, 'Brian, go be a tree,' and he does, and he turns so I can see what it will look like at different angles. And then he digs the hole and plants it."

She comes to her immaculately maintained landscape the way an artist in paint comes to canvas, though with the dimensional sensitivity of a sculptor.

The beginnings started with a lot of study, other gardeners, Alaska Greenhouses, which offered advice, and Mom's Trucking, "where you could buy a single yard of soil and she'd bring it to you in her tiny dump truck."

The Davies home had been owned by a fountain fan who'd gotten far enough to build an 8-foot basin in the front yard, surround it with jagged shale, pipe it and then give it up as a bad job.

"Mom's filled up that basin with a load of good soil, and when I looked out the window, I could see a garden," Sharon says. And to this day, most of her designs are based on what she sees outside from every window inside.

With land to garden and dream, Sharon had the added spur of a bossypants friend taking the Master Gardener class in the early 1980s. "She bullied me until I started going along with her, and this was very good," she says. "I love gardening, but it's solitary, and the Master Gardeners keep me connected."

She connected with members of the Alaska Horticultural Association too, in 1983, and got in on the ground floor of creating the Alaska Botanical Garden.

She and Brian circulated from Anchorage to San Francisco, Anchorage to Houston, then back to Anchorage for good in 1990. During the San Francisco years, Sharon volunteered as a docent in the San Francisco Botanical Garden "where I learned a lot more about gardening," she says. "Also, I liked the way you could look over walls and see little gardens (in San Francisco)."

By 1993, the Davies' Anchorage gardens already were such that revered garden maven Lenore Hedla used a photograph of one of them for the cover of "The Alaska Gardener's Handbook."

These days Sharon's previous favorite bed at the rebuilt home's entrance, a pattern of coral wax leaf begonias with wine-colored leaves, ferns, evergreens, redstemmed rhubarb, a Gartenmeister fuchsia and shrubbery, is fighting for her affections against the more recent lilac and hosta dell, a contoured basin drilled through 6 feet of clay, that filters the setting sun into shadows that dance across the back of the house.

She visited the Hulda Klager Lilac Gardens in Woodland, Wash., and sniffed her way around the collection to pick the most fragrant varieties.

"Sensation" made the cut, lavender with a crisp white edge to each petal – "not my favorite color but such a healthy plant I had to learn to love it" -- and so did a blush-pink-and-white Beauty of Moscow, and an "Ivory Silk" tree lilac (Syringa reticulata "Ivory Silk), a late-bloomer with Muscari and Heuchera at its feet in the arboretum paddock. A mammoth blue Mr. Lincoln lilac holds pride of place among other lilacs in the dell.

"Blue Angel" hostas with corded blue-green leaves and "June" hostas – gold-centered with a hemline of blue-green – are favorites there, but the latter are temperamental. Hostas are played against color-flares of primroses, daylilies and other plantings from irises to sedums, yellow-stemmed dogwood to viburnums.

A Himalayan pine (Pinus wallichiana: "We saw one first in England, and this one now is growing a foot a year") anchors the southwest corner of the arboretum, which, among other plants, has three Norway maples, one with chartreuse leaves and two with rich red foliage that mirrors that of a flowering crab apple. The Davies have espaliered a Rescue apple-crab on the north fence; it's blooming.

"Once I felt I could make a garden myself, I was constantly inspired to do more," says Sharon. "The more you do, the easier it gets.."

Full Circle By Christine Sexton

My husband Trent purchased property in Chickaloon the year before we met. That's what we called it then, "The Property". I had been an avid long distance road cyclist before I became involved with the cleanup.

What was once a plywood structure known as a cabin, and had no indoor plumbing, heating or insulation, has been transformed into a well insulated, sided, primed, painted cabin. We have planted trees, grass and flowers, and built a shop and a bunkhouse that sleeps 7.

Starting out with a 4' \times 4' bo \times to grow radishes, lettuce and onions, we grew into two 8' \times 17' raised beds. I planted simple, fast growing food that I knew at the time. I didn't have much interest or time to devote to weeding. In fact, Chickweed was the most prominent green growing!

I became so excited with growing that I started planting seeds indoors. I planted over 200 seeds in little containers, and watered them with Miracle Gro. You can imagine what happened. A year later I again started more seeds indoors. Then Trent mentioned that we were flying to Tennessee on April 1st and then driving the ALCAN back, returning around the 18th of April! At least I didn't use Miracle Gro this time!

I am an eighth generation Rasbeck farmer. My lineage began with Johannes Rasbach who came from Berne, Schwartzwald, Germany in 1720. He moved to what is now the Town of Herkimer in Upstate New York.

I grew up in Oswego, N.Y. right on Lake Ontario. My Grandpa Rasbeck started delivering milk in 1932 from a horse and wagon, in the winter time he delivered with a horse and sleigh. He owned a 24 acre farm in Oswego. In 1957, my Grandpa bought a 175 acre farm in Mexico, N.Y., (14 miles from Oswego) with 70 head of Guernsey cows. My Grandpa and Dad delivered the milk from "Rabeck's Milk Dairy".

Growing up on the farm I baled hay, drove the tractor, milked cows, fed the calves, and cleaned out the stalls. As an adult I learned and remembered my Grandma making jellies, homemade pies, fudge, and canning. She sewed, knitted, crocheted, made quilts and afghans.

My mother's mother, Grandma MacPherson also made jellies, canned, made homemade pies, and her favorite was Rhubarb. She had a root cellar and a small garden.

In 2009 I stopped by the CES table at the Diamond Mall and put my name on the mailing list for something. In September of 2010, I received an application for the MG course. It was perfect timing, considering Trent and I had discussed expanding our garden.

Since graduating from the MG course, I have learned what to do with my seeds and garden. I make jellies in the fall and spring. In the winter, I spend a lot of time researching seed companies and ordered from Comstock and Johnny Seeds. To my surprise, I have had 100% germination. No more Miracle Gro or going out of town!

We are no longer call it "The property", it is now "Sexton Farms", with a 50x25' garden.

The MG course woke my hidden passion for gardening as well as sharing what I grow. I am excited and proud to say I am now a vendor at the Spenard Farmers Market.



Alaska Garden Clubs State Convention By Della Barry, Convention Committee Chair

"NATURE'S WONDERS", the 52nd annual Alaska Garden Clubs state convention, hosted by the Wildflower Garden Club, will be on July 14 to 17, 2011, at UAA Commons, Anchorage.

The two prime convention days, Friday and Saturday, July 15 and 16, have full schedules. The preceding Thursday will be a board meeting, and the farewell brunch Sunday morning at the home of Gail Harbin is invitational to Wildflower Garden Club members and convention attendees.

Scheduled activities include presentations, an alpine wildflower tour, and garden tours. The speakers include Annie Nevaldine with a presentation on "Garden Art, Alaska Style"; Marilyn Barker will be speaking on "Low Life in the Alpine", and Sally Arant will have a display. Gina Cologgi will present a workshop "Club Websites". Door prizes will be offered Friday and Saturday. A silent auction of donated items will also be available during the convention.

Room 107 will be the site for the convention opening, Friday at 9 a.m., and subsequent meals and meetings, except for the installation banquet Saturday event at the lower level dining room of UAA Commons. Lunches and dinners at the UAA Commons will also feature programs. Following lunch, attendees board the bus for transport to Glen Alps and "A Walk in the Wild", led by club member Verna Pratt, and assisted by Dr. Marilyn Barker, of UAA. The National Garden Clubs has given a \$500 grant from its Wildflower Fund for the wildflower symposium, partially covering the bus and other costs.

Debbie Hinchey, newly installed Pacific Region Director of National Garden Clubs will give an address at Saturday's installation banquet, titled: "Looking In and Reaching Out". She will also install the 2011-2013 Alaska Garden Club's president from Fairbanks, Becky Hassebroek, and officers. Carol Norquist, Alaska Garden Club's president, has served the 2009-2011 term.

Registration forms are available online, under 'calendar of events' at: http://www.alaskagardenclubs.org or call Liz Rockwell at 277-7150. Attendees may register for the full convention or parts of it. Della Barry will also have application forms at functions, like the Monday garden tours. The attractive George M. Clark photoson-canvas, gallery mounts, "Loon", "Dwarf Fireweed", "Narcissus Anemone", will be raffled off. Tickets are available, \$2 each or 6 for \$10, until the Saturday July 16 banquet drawing. The Wildflower Garden Club invites you to share in "NATURES WONDERS".

Garden Snaps Map Update

One of the MG proprietors of Garden Snaps Map LLC, Anna Denis and husband, will be rotating out of state (and out of country) soon. Consequently, the Garden Snaps Map business will be on the market. A wonderful and valued addition to our gardening community, we hope to see the Garden Snaps Map availability and website services continue! Interested parties can give MG Lynn Opstad a call for more information. Contact information is in your MG Directory or on the website: http://www.gardensnapsmap.com



Central Peninsula Master Gardener News By Rosemary Kimball

Janice Chumley, our ramrod, made the front page of the Clarion with the local Weed Smackdown in Kenai pictures and all. Way to go, Janice.

May was a cold, cold month and June hasn't been much better. We seem to be cooler out here in Sterling and morning temperatures in the high 20s to high 30s have not been uncommon.

The petals are dropping from our May Day trees and carpeting the paths like snow. At least they don't have to be shoveled.



Margaret Simon's fig tree is producing and she sent me a picture to prove it. She and her husband have harvested and shared the first one. She said she got the start from Jaime Rodriguez several years ago. If the tree is happy in her work room, I want one too for my sunroom!

And she wrote that "after it set fruit last time and the fruit was all gone, all the leaves dropped off the 'tree'. I thought I had killed it but I ignored it and backed off on watering then all of a sudden new leaves popped. In all honesty I don't know much about growing figs--it seems to be taking pretty good care of itself. When it droops I water it."

Kathy Wartinbee said she's going to have a bumper crop of both aphids and chickweed, but some of the potatoes were "showing up for work". The hares decimated their nascent orchard this winter. They've been using an "organic control", a .22 long rifle bullet. Last count I heard was they're down 15 destroyers, but my neighbor Mark White has them beat by five. Where are the Lynx?

Kathy, and neighbor Mark are busy with "lawn abatement" projects called rock gardens. They both have nice ones as starters. Mark gets his soil by small dump truck loads. He buries a bathtub in the mound to use as a high ground swamp and his Alaska cotton does real well.

We've had a lot of birds in the yard this year. There are two pairs of sandhill cranes which will destroy sleep when they do their unison calling under the open bedroom window very early. They seem acclimated to humans as we've seen them parading down the lane and Mark sees them parading across his field. There were lots of warblers, ruby-crowned kinglets, and more robins than usual. Haven't seen any carpenter ants either. The robins seem to really like them and a robin with a beak full of ants is funny to watch. Lots of the birds I just hear. The nuthatches have gone to nest, I hope, as I haven't heard their honey-here-I-am calls lately. We used to hear all five varieties of thrushes but something must have changed as all I've heard are the varied thrushes, in addition to the robins.

You have not truly gardened until you try to garden through an adoring chicken who walks out down a long driveway to get the papers with you in the morning and then supervises your planting in the greenhouse (usually between my eyes and what I'm doing with my hands!)...



Or the tyranny of a laying chicken that likes to walk out with you. I get the 'chicken eye' when I approach the front door to get the newspapers when she's busy, that says "Just wait, human!". And I say, "Yes dear". But she lays an egg a day and her name is Sunny Side Up.

Advanced Master Gardeners News From Dana Klinkhart

The summer is filled with activities that qualify for CEU's or Volunteer Hours. Here are a few to consider:

A workshop to create 'hypertufa planters' with Carmel Tysver on July 6 at the ABG - RSVP 770-3692. The 'Lighthouse Garden Tea' is scheduled on July 9th - RSVP 770-3692. On July 16-17, Les Brakes 'Coyote Garden' will be open for tours. The Anchorage Garden Club holds the 'Annual City Garden Tours' on July 31st. Watch your local newspaper for details. All of these are just a few of the activities to learn and collect CEU hours for your Advanced Master Garden Certificate in Soils. Check the AMGAA web site or the Google group site for current tours and activities that qualify for both CEU's and Volunteer Hours for your soil certificate.

The July summer botany lab is planned Thursday, July 14 from 11a.m. to 1 p.m. for 'Strange & Bizarre but True: A look at Plant Growth Curiosities'. RSVP klinkhart@gci.net. Cost \$5

Volunteer Hours can be filled in many ways. Articles written for our AMGAA newsletter will qualify. Julie Riley and her staff at the University of Alaska Cooperative Extension are also available for ideas

Reminder: The deadline to complete the CEU's and volunteer time is September 1st and in order to maintain our Advanced Master Gardener status, we are required to serve 10 hours volunteer time or 10 CEU hours every year. Questions? Call or email any member of the education committee.

Rosemary & Thyme: Worth a Watch From Jane Baldwin

Rosemary and Thyme is a 2003 British detective series that ran for three seasons. The basic story line is about two women, Rosemary Boxer, a plant biology professor who loses her job and Laura Thyme, a former policeman who's police officer husband ran off with a younger woman. They learn they share a love of things horticulture and a nosey curiosity. Teaming up to offer gardening services, they repeatedly stumble onto suspicious deaths while performing their gardening services. The series is gentle, simple and charming despite dealing with murders! The English country gardens in each episode are gorgeous and usually some tidbit of gardening, botany or horticulture helps them to solve the murder. Available from Netflix; a google search also turned up several sites where episodes can be watched online, apparently for free.



- -- The Flashback page of the July 2011 National Geographic has a picture of monstrously huge rhubarb growing in Skagway. MG Jill Shepherd provided information for the caption which quotes Skagway resident MG Charlotte Jewell.
- -- Some Master Gardeners actually have hobbies besides gardening. Greg Kalal was part of the Volkswagen Family Reunion Car Show at the Dimond Mall in June. Karen Coady cared for the baby ravens that fell out of a nest at the Alaska Botanical Gardens as a Bird Learning and Treatment Center volunteer.
- -- Mel Monsen propagated 85 'Polsjaman' ('Polestar') white climbing roses this spring and generously shared his rooted cuttings with the Wyoming Prairie Rose Society.
- -- Thirteen MGs got up-close and personal with Elodea densa and spent an hour peering at chloroplasts, golgi bodies and streaming mitochondria in a UAA biology lab. Sandy Harrington was the only one who could pronounce the aquatic plant's common name, Anacharis
- -- Erna Rousey has joined Jane Baldwin in vying for the 'most kale planted this summer'. She's put seven varieties into her Wasilla garden.
- -- The Alaska Agricultural & Forestry Experiment Station was the site of an outdoor wedding last month. The bride and groom requested Western attire and Julie Riley donned a flowered cowboy hat.
- -- Native Marsh pea, Lathyrus palustris, is establishing itself in the rain garden planted in 2007 at Taku Lake Park. The vining legume can be confused with Bird vetch, but Marsh pea has winged stems and its leaves are short with only 2-3 pairs of leaflets.
- -- The root maggots are so bad this season even the chives have taken a beating.
- -- Fresh International Gardens (refugee farmers's market project) is selling Wednesdays at Northway Mall and Saturday at the Spenard Farmers Market. MG Liesa Crowley painted the group a beautiful sign for their garden fence.
- -- Let's BEAT FAIRBANKS! in the Invasive Weed Smackdown, Saturday, July 9, from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Valley of the Moon Park. Anchorage needs to pull more weeds than they do.

Weed Smackdown MGs Needed by Martina Steinmetz, MG

On July 9th, 10am TO 1pm, Anchorage will host its 1st annual Weed Smackdown at Valley of the Moon Park. You all will have noticed the increasing numbers of invasive plants all over Anchorage, the Mat-Su area and down Turnagain Arm. Not to mention the slow and steady increase along back country hiking trails. It is high time to fight back.

To make the war on weeds more fun Fairbanks has challenged the rest of the state to an invasive weed pull competition. We are hoping to beat them on July 9th. The Anchorage Master Gardeners are signed up for this event as the "Weed Masters" group. Please consider participating. We need your help!!! Bring your kids and grandma, friends and neighbors. It is a family friendly affair with food, lots of prizes and even more fun. Please let me know if you are planning to come so I can add you to the "Weed Masters" group. msteinmetz@ideafamilies.org or 653-1999. I think there is a prize for funnest outfits - if some of you are artistically inclined we may consider a Master Gardener outfit of some sort.

Please put this event on the calendar, let me know and get your gloves ready. Oh - did I mention that you can scratch 3 hours off your volunteer hours if you participate. Please come. Let's beat Fairbanks!

Leafhoppers, Aphids and Thrips, Oh My!.... cont. from page 1

Thrips: A local MG reported using a dilute alcohol and water spray for thrips on flowers. Superficial google searches offered some suggestions. Reflective mulch early in growing season is said to be somewhat effective in reducing or deterring pest populations, at least until the leaf canopy grew large enough to obscure mulch. The theory is that reflective mulch confuses & repells certain flying insects (including aphids, leafhoppers, thrips) searching for plants, because reflected UV light interfered with the insects' ability to locate plants.

Some folks use bright yellow and/or blue sticky traps to capture thrips and leaf hoppers. A google search revealed how to make homemade sticky traps: cover a piece of stiff cardboard or cardstock with grease or contact adhesive (one website said use honey or molasses) - hold it above infected plants and lightly brush or shake the plant with the other hand. Leafhoppers, thrips and aphids will hopefully become stuck to the sticky cardboard. Organic pesticides based on pyrethrum or rotenone were also mentioned for control.

Learning the life cycles of particular pests should help with the timing of control methods used. Spittlebug/hopper eggs hatch in 1-2 weeks, nymph stages range from 1-4 weeks, with up to 5 generations per year are possible. Eggs can overwinter.

Thrips go from eggs to actively feeding larval (nymph) stages before reaching adulthood & may complete this cycle in 2 weeks in warm weather and can have up to 8 generations or more a year. (http://www.ipm.ucdavis.edu/PMG/PESTNOTES/pn7429.html)

Aphids may have many generations per year, reproducing asexually with adult females giving birth to live offspring (nymphs), up to as many as 12/day. Some species mate and produce eggs in the fall or winter which will survive winters. In warm weather, many species develop from newborn nymph to reproducing adult in 7-8 days. With each adult able to produce up to 80 offspring in about a week, aphid populations increase with great speed.

There are a number of control methods we can use. The important thing is that we try something! Happy hunting.

25th Annual Willow Garden Tour Saturday, July 16, 2011, 9:30 am – 3:30 pm

Meet at Willow Community Center: 9:30 a.m. Mile 69.8, Parks Highway (slightly north of business section and before the fire department). Maps will be distributed listing gardens to be visited. Tour starts at 10:00 a.m. and lasts until 3:30 p.m. Please bring a brown bag lunch to eat at Dorothea Taylor and George Murphy's lakeside garden. Tickets will be given to all who attend for door prize drawings during lunchtime. For more information about Willow Garden Tour call 495-2080. (NOTE: Coyote Garden is one of the featured stops on the Willow Garden Club tour).

19th Annual Coyote Garden Tour Saturday, July 16, 2011 10:00 am to 5 pm AND Sunday, July 17, 2011, Noon to 5 p.m.

Les Brake's beautiful garden has been featured in numerous magazines. Suggested donation \$7 - all proceeds from donations at Coyote Garden Tour will go to help support the Georgeson Botanical Garden in Fairbanks (on UAF campus) and Willow Garden Club. Directions to Coyote Garden: Mile 71 Parks Highway; turn right on Willow-Fishhook Road. Drive 7.5 miles up Willow-Fishhook Road. Signs will be posted. For further information about Coyote Garden Tour call 495-6525.

Horticultural References in our Language By Annie Nevaldine

You've heard of tulip mania, where the price of a single tulip bulb in 17th century Holland was extraordinarily high--sometimes even exceeding the cost of a person's home. The term has long been used metaphorically by economists to refer to an economic bubble where a commodity is overvalued and its price skyrockets, only to collapse shortly.

But have you heard of academic tulip mania? In the June 6, 2011, issue of The New Yorker, Louis Menand coined the term in his article about college entitled "Live and Learn." In referencing the stiff competition for admission to elite private colleges and their tuition costs compared with those of public institutions, he writes, "You see academic tulip mania: students and their parents are overvaluing a commodity for which there are cheap and plentiful substitutes."

Horticulture continues to seep into our language. Keep on gardening.

Alaska Master Gardener Events

Monday, July 11

7 p.m. - A Season in the Garden: return visit to see the mid-summer changes in Verna Pratt's garden. 7446 E. 20th Ave.

Thursday, July 14th

11 a.m. to 1 p.m. - Strange & Bizarre but True: A look at plant growth curiosities. A summer workshop to get you in the mood for this fall's Advanced MG training course on plant physiology. \$5 - Email Dana Klinkhart if you plan to attend. klinkhart@gci. net

Monday, July 18

7 p.m. - Field trip to Chugiak and Eagle River.

(1) Extraordinary window boxes and perennial gardens, 7 - 8 p.m. Host Sally Tilton, 2211 Homestead Road off Glenn Hwy.

(2) Lighthouse Garden: riverfront gardens with nautical theme, 8 to 9 p.m. Host: Susan Brusehaver, 16117 Poppy Lane, Eagle River. Monday, July 25,

7 p.m. - Catherine Renfro and Sean Monico, both in midtown. Catherine is known for delphiniums, especially, and for perennial gardening (1233 Bannister Drive). The highlight of Sean's perennial gardens is his G-gauge train garden, planted completely to scale. (2319 Galewood).

Monday, August 1st

7 p.m. - Unique High Tech Vegetable & Herb Growing Containers. Hosts: Rick Abbott & Hope Wind; 19660 Villages Scenic Pkwy (off Potter Valley Rd).

Wednesday, August 3rd, 7 p.m. - Richard Sanders' garden features rock gardens, perennials, greenhouses, hoop gardens, garden art and more. 8241 Barnett Drive.



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

14051 Fejes Road Mail: 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

If you have questions or want to make address or email corrections, please contact Sandra Harrington at: dsharr@ptialaska.net

Garden Event Calendar

Saturday, July 9th

**10 a.m. - "Seasonal Perennials" Lorri Abel of In The Garden Nursery talks about her favorite perennials for mid to late season show in your garden. In The Garden Nursery, 7307 O'Brien Street, west of Lake Otis, off 72nd Street. Free, but call to register: 346-4247. July hours for the nursery are Wednesdays and Saturdays 10 until 2; otherwise by appointment (227-0172). **10 a.m. - 6 p.m. - MidSummer Garden & ArtFaire; downtown Palmer Pavillion; featuring nurseries, garden art, farmers' market, children's garden, farmers' market, workshops, tours, entertainment and food. Proceeds benefit the Mat-Su Special Santa Program.

**10 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. - "1st Annual Anchorage Weed SMACK-DOWN". Family-friendly competition to control invasive plants in Anchorage; prizes and free lunch. Pull weeds to help protect our wild habitats for people, parks, native plants and animals. For more information and registration: http://www.weedwar.org/ or call 441-7366. Location: Valley of the Moon Park, 640 W. 17th Ave., Anchorage.

Tuesday, July 12th

6 p.m. - "Bioswale" Tour. Alaska Division of Forestry, Community Forestry Program. Tour site of a bioswale, sedimentation basin, and created wetland using a variety of local plants - some grown from seed and others salvaged. Engage in discussion of the use of escrow for revegetation. Presented and led by Mary Lee Plumb-Mentjes, Corps of Engineers. For more information, call 269-8465 or email Patricia joyner@alaska.gov Location: Meet at the northwest corner of C Street and International Airport Road. Park on Business Park Blvd., south of Lone Star Steakhouse, west of C Street - Anchorage

Wednesday, July 13th

9 a.m. to noon - "Annual Weed Pull" -- University of Alaska, Anchorage. Meet at the eastern entrance to the Gordon Hartlieb Building (next to the greenhouse) and help attack invasive plants on campus. Please dress for the occasion, and don't forget sunscreen, insect repellent and your favorite weed-pulling gloves. A barbecue will follow at noon for all participants. For further information call Mary Parker, 786-6922 or email mary@uaa.alaska.edu or Pat Leary at anpml1@uaa.alaska.edu. Location: Leaving from the UAA greenhouse, UAA, 3211 Providence Drive, Anchorage Saturday, July 16th

9:30 - 3:30 - Willow Garden Club Tour - see article page 6 for info Saturday, July 16th , 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

and Sunday, July 17th, noon - 5 p.m.
"Coyote Garden Tour" - See article on page 6 for details.

Sunday, July 31st

"Annual City Garden Tour" - save the date.

Details TBA. http://www.alaskagardenclubs.org/anchorageclub. htm

Friday, August 5th,

6:30 p.m. - 8:30p.m.- World-renowned plantsman Dan Hinkley's presentation about his plant exploration travels and new and exceptional plants appropriate for Alaskan gardens, shade gardens and others. \$15/person, \$10/ABG members. Location: ABG, 4601 Campbell Airstrip Road, Anchorage.

Saturday/Sunday, August 6th & 7th

"68th Annual Flower Show"; Anchorage Garden Club. Theme: 'Mystical Garden Creatures'. Admission to Garden is free. Both horticulture and flower design exhibits. Call 566-0539 to enter. More information on website: http://www.alaskagardenclubs.org/ anchorageclub.htm

Saturday/Sunday, August 6th & 7th

Homer Garden Club's "Gardeners' Weekend". Speakers and programs; self-guided tours of 6 local gardens; reception and winetasting at Bear Creek Winery. For more information, email brenda@gardensbybrenda.com

website: http://www.homergardenclub.org/

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For information about membership or upcoming programs, contact:
Cooperative Extension Office
2675 C St, Suite 100.
Anchorage, AK 99501
Phone: 786-6300

786-6312







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Sharon Davies stands in front of her lilac Syringa X hyacinthiflora 'Asessippi' at the June 20th MG Monday night tour. Sharon is featured in Cheryl Chapman's article, "MG Focus" this month, on page 3. Photo by Annie Nevaldine

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