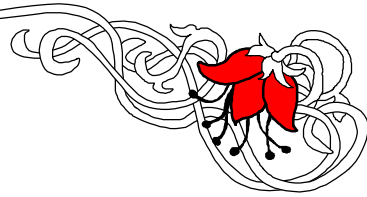


Anchorage Chapter



Volume 5, Issue 3

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER February 2003

From the President

by Mary Shier (Yeah, I'm still here!)

If you haven't been planning this year's garden beds over the winter, you'd better start. Time is running out. Dust off your Garden Journal - you do have a 'Journal' don't you? There are sections for planning and with the catalogs coming in fast and furious, it's time to get going. Have you noticed the new selections for this year featured in Sunset Magazine, for instance, as well as a number of others? I can hardly resist going whole hog with the new varieties. Seems all the catalogs have those sections as well. That's what keeps us buying seeds every year even though we have scads of seeds still on hand. The catalogs are as tempting as fashion magazines. *Some of us* have evolved out of the clothes fashion craze nowadays; but having our gardens in the latest fashion well, that's quite a different story.

In doing this planning it is sooooo helpful in having a book where all our records are kept. You can look back over the year(s) and keep mistakes from happening again, assuming you've kept it handy and jotted notes. You can continue with the winners you've come to love. Also it's nice to know which seeds you are out of, and which you need to order more of, if it's a continuing 'best in my garden type'.

Speaking of the Garden Journals, it's time to update and print out a new version. For example, the one I've been using for 3 years is FULL and has no more space! I need a new one. The Journal committee, working on a new edition, wants to enhance the next version to be even more user friendly. How is that accomplished, you ask?

The committee needs your input as to how you have personalized your journal to fit your needs. The new copy will have a page titled 'Extra tips from Journal Users.' On it will be ideas generated by users which have been found to benefit and/or simplify it for their use. Everyone of us uses this book differently to suit our own specific requirements. It will be a dynamic new addition which users will enjoy.

This brings us to asking the existing users to send ideas you've instilled in the usage of the Journal to make it more personalized for you. Hey, even the most trivial thing you've incorporated into your habits may be helpful to someone else, so don't hold back **anything**. Please send your suggestions to Dana Klinkhart (klinkhart@gci.net) by February 28th. After that it will be too late.

We want to have the best 'Garden Journal' for all the South Central Gardeners ever. So contribute your helpful ideas to see that this is accomplished. Those of you who are ready for a new journal (like me) will certainly appreciate it.



AMGA GREETES NEW BOARD MEMBERS

By Dana Klinkhart

During the January 20 General Membership meeting, nominees were selected and elected to the AMGA Board of Directors.

The new board members are Linda Slack, Linda Klinkhart, Margaurite Barnard and Frank Pratt. They will join Mary Shier, Michelle Campbell, Judy Christianson and Dana Klinkhart. The slate of officers for 2003 are:

President	Mary Shier
Vice President	Judy Christianson
Treasurer	Michelle Campbell
Volunteer Coordinator	Linda Klinkhart
Secretary	Dana Klinkhart

Gina Docherty serves as Newsletter Editor and Web Master and has been on the board of directors for several terms. She has generously volunteered to continue to serve as our editor and web master. Thank you, Gina. We love our news and our website! www.corecom/gardener.

Our thanks to our outgoing board members who volunteered their time and talents Sally Mallory, Rhoda Turinsky, Jim Roberts and Gina Docherty.

Members are reminded to submit their \$15 dues for the 2003 season. The directory will be published with names of gardeners holding current membership in the AMGA.

Ed Humme Seeds are available. Contact Judy Christianson.

Alaska Mill and Feed asks master gardeners to serve as presenters for demonstrations, slide shows and programs during February and March. Topics such as berries, fruit, bulbs and vegetables are only a few ideas to share with others. Contact Alaska Mill and Feed if you would like more information or would like to schedule an activity.

Will you be visiting Bainbridge Island, Washington? Be sure to consider a walking tour of Blodell Reserve. Maureen Pinter highly recommends it.

Community School Classes are still available on gardening and seed starting. Refer to the Community Cache publication or contact your Community School to register. Debbie Hinchey is presenting a series of three programs at Inlet View School: "Trees & Shrubs", "Roses", and "Maintainable Landscapes" are the topics. Contact Inlet View Community School.

Mary Jo Burns announced a meeting on "Primroses" at 7 pm on Thursday, February 20 at her home.

The meeting was adjourned. The lucky door prize winner was new AMGA Board Member, Marguarite **Barnard**. **She went home with** The Sunset Western Garden Book.



Heart of Anchorage Awards

Thanks to efforts by Sue Lincoln, Horticulture Program Assistant, the Cooperative Extension Service received two awards for participating in the development of the Mt. View Garden Art Park. The park is adjacent to a new United Way building and incorporates plantings and beautifully painted metal sculptures of youth involved in a wide range of activities. The Heart of Anchorage Awards are given by the Anchorage Downtown Partnership, the Municipality of Anchorage (MOA) Parks & Recreation Beautification division and the MOA Urban Design Commission.

GOOD WORK SUE!!!



A Slide Show and Drama 'Blossom' into One Great Evening

By Dana Klinkhart

Everything I Know I learned from Gardening: A Psychologist & a Horticulturist Explore the Mirrors of Life & Gardening

This was the title to the AMGA program meeting for gardeners in January 2003.

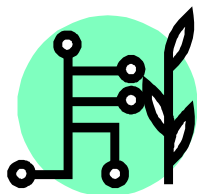
The thirty-five members and their guests who braved the dark night and slippery roads were rewarded with entertainment and laughs during Annie Nevaldine and Julie Riley's presentation. This creative team prepared a slide show and skit portraying a troubled gardener and her psychologist.

Did you know? People with lawns have 'mow' fun?

Or that knowledge is like compost? It's only good when spread around.

Maybe you were aware that gardening is a person's effort to improve their 'lot'.

The audience was invited to participate with gardening comments of their own. They were reminded of the relationship with gardening to tradition and culture and presented with the idea that a garden might reflect a personality and cultivate friendships. All of the ideas explored the link to the world of gardening. Thank you, Julie and Annie, for bringing us to this level of gardening appreciation.



Volunteer Opportunities

The following activities are in need of your talents!

1. Fur Rondy - Northway Mall - Feb 19-23 Shifts are 2 4-hour and one 3-hour

Wednesday, 19 Feb:	10a-2p	2p-6p	6p-9p
Thursday, 20 Feb	10a-2p	2p-6p	6p-9p
Friday, 21 Feb	10a-2p	2p-6p	6p-9p
Saturday, 22 Feb	10a-2p	2p-6p	
Sunday, 23 Feb	12N-3p	3p-6p	
		takedown at 6p	

We need 6 people per shift. There will be a mix of master gardener volunteers, master food preserver volunteers and cooperative extension staff. Because of the number of people needed per shift, this is a great opportunity for many of you to knock out some hours.

2. The Mall at Sears Garden Show - The Mall at Sears - April 19 - Times TBA

3. Mother's Day Flower Show - Northway Mall - May 9-11

Friday, 9 May;	10a-2p	2p-6p
Saturday, 10 May;		2p-6p
Sunday, 11 May;	10a-2p	2p-6p
		Takedown at 6p

To get the day and time you want, contact me as soon as possible so I can schedule you!

Sue



CHOOSE HYBRID SEEDS AND PLANTS FOR BETTER RESULTS

by Michele Hébert
Tanana District Land Resources Agent



When looking through seed catalogs or nurseries, you often will see the word hybrid used to describe a plant. A hybrid will have improved characteristics such as bigger flowers, better yield, cold hardiness, disease resistance, and quicker fruiting than the standard varieties. There can be disadvantages to using hybrid seeds such as increased cost. Sometimes you will want to select heirloom seeds. But what actually do these terms mean and why is it not worthwhile to save the seeds of hybrids for replanting?

A Cross

A hybrid is the term used to describe a plant that is produced from breeding two different types of plants. These plants can be very similar and normally cross breed when planted near each other. Such is the case with many members of the squash family. Pollen from a pumpkin flower can be used to pollinate a Hubbard squash or zucchini. Sometimes it is the cross between two plants, which do not normally interbreed such as cabbage, and radishes.

Seeds that are the result of a cross will not be like the parents but are a combination, having characteristics of both. This new generation is referred to as the F1 hybrid. In many, but not all cases, the hybrid will have improved vigor. This means the hybrid will in some way be better than either of the two parents. The F1 hybrids can be sterile, unable to breed, and in that situation no seeds or sterile seeds will be produced. Some F1 hybrids can be crossed if the genetic material in the two hybrid plants is compatible. These new plants are referred to as F2 plants. There is a lot of variability in what type of characteristic the plants will have.

Just as when two different colored animals are crossed, some offspring will look like the grandparents, some like the parents, and some will have new combinations of characteristics.

Benefits

Just look through most seed catalogs and you will see a list of the benefits of planting hybrid varieties – jumbo sized hybrid jalapeno, early high yield hybrid broccoli, longer storage hybrid tomatoes, extra early hybrid onions, super sweet hybrid corn, disease hybrid cucumbers and extra sweet hybrid watermelons. The increased vigor associated with hybrids can take many forms. In general, the plants are healthier, quicker to grow, and grow to a larger size. Hybrids are also used to bring differences in taste and color.

It takes years of experimentation and selections for plant breeders to bring a hybrid to market. That is why hybrid seeds will cost more than standard varieties. The seed industry is continually changing and making available new varieties every year. Gardeners look forward each year to getting the latest catalogs with new choices. Sometimes it is hard to find the old favorites because they are replaced with new improved varieties. To overcome this problem, gardeners should look for heirloom varieties.

Heirlooms

When hybrid plants set seeds, those seeds will not grow to be similar to the F1 hybrid. Individuals who like to collect seeds at the end of the season for planting next year will want to look for heirloom seeds.

Continued on page 5



Central Peninsula MG News by Rosemary Kimball

Gardening-wise, the Peninsula is moving right along. First is a word about a great flower, cerinthe, available from Thompson and Morgan in three "flavors". I grew c. purpurea last year and it set LOTS of seed before the summer was out and that's wonderful for me because the packet of seeds is rather pricey. This year I will grow the other two varieties in separated locations just for seed. C. purpurea will be offered on the Peninsula by Trinity Greenhouse this summer. The directions Ron Sexton got for it said to start directly into 3" pots. The seeds are big and the seedlings are big. It's nice to have things you can see immediately.

I stopped by to see our Ramrod, Janice, on a Wednesday and it was so nice to see her that five of us MG's got together for our traditional Pad Thai lunch in Kenai. We're going to have to do it more often than spring and fall because Janice has too much stored up- ideas, speakers, information, goings on. The food is good, the company even better, so a quarterly lunch is looking better and better. Janice said that there were 58!!! new bodies taking the Master Gardener class this winter. If we can just rope some of them into our organization-that-isn't.

Our first speaker will be Blythe Campbell on February 27th from 7 to 9PM talking about what has and has not worked for her in Southcentral. If it's Blythe, it's good. Good too will be the cookies that we make- from scratch- to go with the coffee that is available. In March, we're trying something different: a three-lecture series on composting. There will be worms, general composting and compost tea brewing. Our last speaker will be on April 5, Annie Nevaldine on garden art. I'm looking forward to her slide show because she does such good flower photography.

Janice and I thought we would boogie down to Homer and take the lichen class that is being offered through the Community College in April.

Wrong. It's full up. That says something about what we need to offer up here in the Central Peninsula...

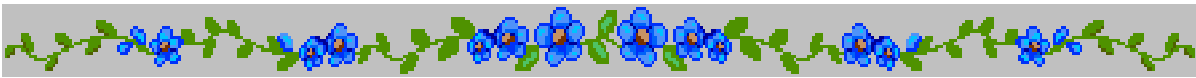
I get asked if I've ordered my seeds yet...I know two gardeners that have gotten their orders back already...I've gotten all my seed on hand collected to the dining room table and now they have to be put in order. Mary Shier gave me a (legal) source for the Tuscan Black Cabbage which is listed as a kale: Johnny's. I was looking forward to going back to Tuscany and smuggling in some more when this batch ran out. A new-to-us seed catalog is Osborne's. They have a small flowering cabbage that grows on a tallish stock that Janice looked at and saw bridal bouquet. They do have a web site: www.osborneseed.com I went there but the type was so small I had difficulty reading the text so I will send for the paper catalog because it sounded like they had the black cabbage/kale. On-line catalogs are not meant for dreaming and impulse purchases.

It's going to be a good year this year! Get growing!

"Hybrid Seeds and Plants" cont. from page 4

Heirlooms are plants that have been saved and replanted for a minimum of 50 years. Their characteristics or genetic materials have stabilized. With heirloom seeds you know what to expect. There are seed companies that specialize in heirlooms or seed-saving techniques. One of the concerns is that some genetic material will be lost if old varieties of seeds are not saved. As diseases and insects change along with new varieties, old varieties may provide the resistant genes needed to combat pests. It is good to have both choices for the future.

When selecting seeds, decide what characteristic you desire. If you plan to not save seeds, you have more choices to make. Look for the words hybrid or heirloom when making selections. Understand that the cost may be more for hybrid varieties, but that is an indication that vigor will be better. Plant breeders have worked hard to give gardeners and the agricultural community more and better choices to make. Additional information can be found in the Recommended Variety List Publication printed by the Cooperative Extension Service.



Bird Chatter

- Plant a Few Extra Seeds: The Anchorage Senior Center needs plant donations this spring. There will be a plant sale and flea market on the 9th of June, at the Senior Center. Anyone that can donate extra plants can contact MG Jim Roberts at 243-1757. He will take care of them up to a couple of weeks prior to the sale if needed.
- Stop in and see the volunteer office at Cooperative Extension Service. New Master Gardener Nicklette LaFleur did a wonderful job rearranging the space to make it user friendly.
- A Master Gardener clinic is like a therapist's office...people come to share their problems and seek advice.

March Bird Chatter

The Cooperative Extension Service office in Anchorage will be closed March 12, 13 & 14. Everyone will be in Fairbanks attending an All CES Conference.

From Rosemary's Cookbook....

Tired of Potatoes?

- *2-4 cloves of garlic chopped fine
- *3 large chard leaves, no stem, chopped or a couple handfuls of spinach
- *2-4 medium potatoes sliced quite thin
- *1 yam- only if such is around, sliced thin
- *(or mushrooms, parsnips, whatever you have on hand)
- *1 onion sliced thin or diced
- *1 t. dried basil
- *some hot pepper flakes
- *1/3 c pitted sliced olives
- *salt and pepper to taste
- *1/4 c. good quality olive oil

Mix everything together in a bowl and spread thinly in a greased casserole dish (or greased cookie sheet, or cast iron frying pan)

Bake at 500°F for 20-25 minutes or until the potatoes are done.

Melt some shredded cheese of your choice over the top.

Classes for Sustainable Gardening Enthusiasts

Ellen Vande Visse

Mat College- *Organic Garden Methods*- Agri 138; Matanuska- Susitna College, Feb 7, 14, 21, 28 from 6 to 9:45 PM; One credit, \$82; Room 117, Snodgrass Hall; Call: 907-745-9799 (M-F, 8a-5p)

UAA- *Introduction to Organic Gardening*- HME A001; UAA Eagle River Campus; Saturday April 5 and April 12, 2003, 1-6 PM. Non-credit, \$99; Course reference number is 38779; Chugiak- Eagle River Campus, 10928 Eagle River Road, Room 228-G; To register, call 907-694-3313 or on line at <http://www.uaa/aaska/edu/eagle>

APU: MAY BLOCK COURSE

LS 192 *Organic Gardening at Kellogg Farm*

Objectives: Gain practical horticultural skills of growing food, examine impacts of growing methods on economic, ecosystem, and community health; apply knowledge to design and install a sustainable vegetable production garden at Kellogg Farm. Students may live at the Kellogg Farm during the block or commute. Exact days and hours per week to be finalized. Registrar, 907-564-8210 or Admissions 564-8248

UAA: JUNE BLOCK COURSE (tentative)

Food, Flower, and Herb Production: A Lab Experience in Organic Methods of Horticulture

For practicing or aspiring market gardeners, greenhouse and nursery growers, and commercial farmers who seek employable skills in non-toxic methods and/or organic certification.

June, 2003. Dates and credits to be finalized; UAA Eagle River Campus, 10928 Eagle River Road; To register, call 907-694-3313 or on line at <http://www.uaa/aaska/edu/eagle>

SUMMER: WILD HERB WORKSHOP

Taught by Janice Schofield, the Alaskan herbalist and author of "Discovering Wild Plants, Alaska's Wild Plants, and Nettles." Identifying and harvesting wild herbs, and make tinctures, foot baths, salves, and teas. Location is Palmer, and estimated cost is \$75 plus a \$15 lab fee. Summer date TBA. Class limited.

Good Earth Garden School

PO Box 2905

Palmer, AK 99645

(907) 745-0758

goodearthgardenschool@hotmail.com



For Peony Enthusiasts...

Feb. 7-9th: Portland Convention Center 'Yard, Garden & Patio Show'

Oregon Convention Center
777 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd; Exhibit Halls A-C
Friday & Sat: 10AM- 9PM Sunday: 10AM- 6PM
Cost: \$10.00 Adults Ages 12 & younger free w/ an adult
Advance tickets available at Safeway Fastixx
Show contact: Oregon Assoc. of Nurserymen 503-653-8733 1-800-791-2250 In Portland dial 503-235-7575

March 15th: 'Pacific Northwest Peony Society Meeting'

The 7th Annual Event 8AM- 5PM
Best Western Greenwood Inn & Suites
10700 SW Allen Blvd Beaverton, OR. 97005
1-800-289-1300 503-643-7444
Registration should be mailed to: Ed & Laura Wild
5465 SW Prosperity Park Rd. Tualatin, OR. 97062
Fee: Advance-\$35.00(By March 1st) \$40.00 at the door (Many Oregon Commercial Peony Growers Attend)

May 3rd & 4th: Canby Master Gardeners Plant Sale

Clackamas County Master Gardeners Spring Garden Fair
Clackamas Fairgrounds in Canby, OR. Sat: 9AM - 5PM
Sun: 9AM - 4PM

May 30th - June 6th: Chinese Garden in Portland

NW 3rd and Everett, Covers entire city block 9AM - 6PM
Includes a display of Peony Blooms
(Oregon growers have some of the finest peonies available)

Peony Flower Show June 14th

The 2nd Annual Peony Flower Show; 9AM - 6 PM
Grand Hall of The Oregon Garden
879 W. Main St. P O Box 155 Silverton, OR. 97381
503-874-8100 toll free 877-674-2733

April 15-30th: China Peony Festival

Visit the two largest festivals in Heze and Luoyang w/ acres peonies in bloom, The Emperors Gardens in Beijing, Botanical Gardens in Shanghai.
For details : [HTTP://www.HILLKEEP.CA/ITINERARY1.htm](http://www.HILLKEEP.CA/ITINERARY1.htm)
or call Paige Woodward at 604 792-9279 (Canada) or Jim Waddick at 816-746-1949 (USA)

Gardening Calendar

Feb 6

Anchorage Garden Club: "Color and Texture for the Winter Landscape" presented by Marge Olson; Pioneer Schoolhouse, lower level; located at 3rd and Eagle Streets; 7:30pm Programs are free and open to everyone.

Feb 7, 14, 21, 28

Agri 138 Matanuska- Susitna College, Room 117, Snodgrass Hall - 6 to 9:45 PM
One credit, \$82 (To register, call 907- 745- 9799 M-Th 8am to 7pm; Fri 8-5)

February 17

Alaska Master Gardener Meeting: "Dahlias", Speaker: Garnett Morrow; 7 p.m., Cooperative Extension Service, Conference Room 130, Carlton Trust Bldg., 2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd. Call Mary Shier, Chapter president, for info: 345-1562.

March 6

Anchorage Garden Club: "New Perennial Introductions From Around the World" presented by Rhonda Williams; Pioneer Schoolhouse, lower level; located at 3rd and Eagle Streets; 7:30pm Programs are free and open to everyone.

March 17

Alaska Master Gardener Meeting: "Living Wreaths" speaker Dana Klinkhart; 7 p.m., Cooperative Extension Service, Conference Room 130, Carlton Trust Bldg., 2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd. Call Mary Shier, Chapter president, for info: 345-1562.



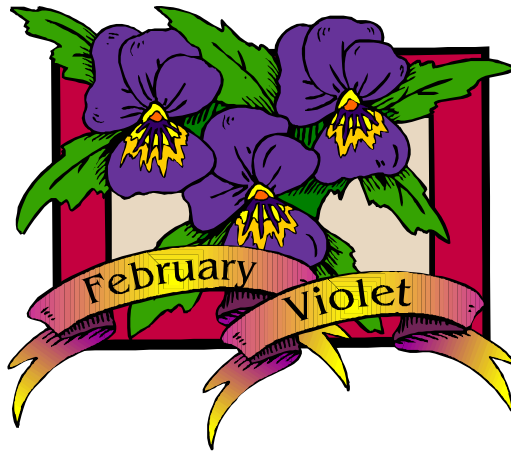
For information about membership or upcoming programs, contact:

Cooperative Extension Office
2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, AK 99508

Phone 786-6300
Fax Line 786-6312

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

Mail: 4006 DeArmoun Road
Anchorage, AK 99516
Phone: 345-4099
Email: gardener@corecom.net



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