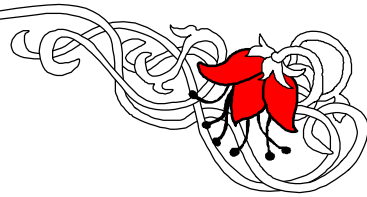


Anchorage Chapter



Volume 4, Issue 3

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER February 2002

FROM THE PRESIDENT
BY MARY SHIER

Just when you think you have everything under control, something like nature pops up and blows away the assurances. Something like that happened to me the other week. Can you guess what form of Alaskan nature thing I had dealings with??

One morning shortly after rising I was on my way to the kitchen to get my morning rush of a cup of tea. Yes, I like a weaker rush than some who like coffee. I passed by the window that looks out on my backyard and as I always do, and glanced out. I usually see mounds of snow on the table and containers throughout the area. Sometimes a fresh snowfall has placed white ribbons along the cable of the fence, coating the tree limbs and putting a face on the end of the BBQ creating a lovely winterscape. I often get my cup of tea and go back to gaze out and enjoy it before the wind comes up to whisk it away.

No fresh snow this day, just the remains from a few weeks ago dwindling a bit from the warm temperatures. The round table has several inches around the perimeter showing and the tower of snow looks like a miniature building with many floors graduating in circumference towards the penthouse. But wait, I see dark round marble things on the ground. WHAT? I run for the back door and look out - yes, both gates are closed. Whew, must be crab apples the wind blew off the tree. I go back in and look out again. Oh - oh, I see several patches of these marbles - the wind would not leave them in patches. Gads, I see foot prints too- and now I see that the apple trees have been pruned, the crabapples also and even some shrubs. My eyes move to the fence and follow it around the yard: no break-ins visible and no animal(s) to be seen.

The damage is done so there's no point in scurrying out. Time for breakfast and that cup of tea. Later on, hubby and I go out and he circles outside the fence while I circle inside the fence. What a mystery but we finally discovered an angled hole where the fence attaches to the wood storage roof and small moose prints on either side. After seven years, a brazen young moose wiggled his way in and out. Guess the backyard got too tempting. We were thankful it wasn't summer as we secured that spot. Now, are we good for seven more years?





JANUARY AMGA MEETING NOTES

A good number of Master Gardeners braved the cold to attend the Annual Election, Seed Exchange and potluck. A few announcements were made: the January newsletter was late due to 'technical' problems with the printers. We hope to resolve the problem in the coming months.

Nominees were taken for the election: Judy Christianson was nominated, and several names were suggested. A motion was made and seconded to continue the nominations and election at the February meeting. (We're still looking for volunteers....) There are 3 seats that will be open for the AMGA board.

Verna Pratt shared slides and commentary from her visits to several International Rock Garden Society Conferences over the past few years. The slides were fantastic and well presented. She also featured a few Alaskan gardens that will be featured at the International Rock Garden Society conference that is scheduled for June 11-14, 2002 here in Anchorage.

There was a large amount of food consumed, seeds shared, and lively conversations following the slide presentation. Thank you, Verna, for another outstanding presentation.

FEBRUARY 19, 2002 AMGA MEETING PROGRAM: "SEED STARTING BASICS"

Ellen Schwenne will be sharing her secrets on seed starting at the next MG meeting. Don't miss it!

Nominations for AMGA Board & the final election will be held at the next meeting as well.

Also, newsletter articles are always needed: Bird Chatter, your favorite plants, gardening experiences, travel experiences, quotes, poems, ideas, fun things, announcements, jokes, suggestions, etc., are always welcome. It really helps the editor if the article is emailed, or not too long to retype. It is very time consuming to recopy long articles. But, again, anything is considered and your effort is greatly appreciated!



2002 AMGA CONFERENCE FEATURES A VARIETY OF EXPERTS

BY BLYTHE CAMPBELL

The Alaska Master Gardener Conference, to be held May 10-11, 2002 at the Hawthorn Suites in Anchorage, features a slate of Outside and local speakers on topics including perennials, garden design, arborsculpture, greenhouse gardening, gardening with children, roses, peonies and many other topics.

Featured speakers include:

Dan Heims, Terra Nova Nurseries, Portland. *Gardening with New Perennials*.

Sharon Lovejoy, author of *Roots, Shoots, Buckets & Boots* and other books about gardening with children and *Country Living Gardener* columnist, *Garden Design* and *Gardening with Children* (two separate sessions).

Shane Smith, author of *Greenhouse Gardening* and Director of the Cheyenne Botanic Garden, *Greenhouse Gardening in Cold Climates* and *Ruthless Gardening* (two separate sessions).

Steve Schmidt, president of American Ornamental Perennials nursery, Eagle Creek, Oregon, *Ornamental Grasses for Alaska Gardens*.

Richard Reames, owner of Arborsmith Studios in Williams, Oregon and author of *How to Grow a Living Chair: Tree Trunk Topiary, Arborsculpture*.

Marion Owens, co-author of *Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul*, Master Gardener and published photographer, *No Fear Seed Starting* and *Picture This: Tips for Garden Photography* (two separate sessions).

In addition to these out of town speakers, Julie Riley, Debbie Hinchey, Annie Nevaldine, Judy Wilmarth and Dana Klinkhart, and Harry Engel will make presentations.

More information and registration packets will be mailed statewide in early February. Look for more information in the newsletter and on the website soon.

Call Blythe Campbell at 345-1066 to volunteer to help with the conference. Volunteers are needed in many areas, from sponsor solicitation to packet preparation to food and decorating.



FUCHSIA REVIVAL

BY SANDY ST. GEORGE

For those folks who will soon be starting the process of reviving wintered fuchsias, I thought I'd pass along some tips that have considerably increased my success factor. In mid-February, pull out your fuchsia baskets and inspect all the plants. With your fingernail, lightly scrape a main branch on each plant — if the plant has survived the winter, there should be green beneath the thin bark. If you don't see green, check several other branches; if there's still nothing, toss the plant. (Also, branches on a dead plant will snap, whereas live ones are more pliable.) Trim away any obviously dead branches; pull dead leaves. If your soil looks especially old and tired, carefully dig out the plants that pass the nail-scrape test, clean your container, add fresh soil and replant your fuchsias. If the soil still seems decent, loosen the soil around the plants with a fork or small trowel, but leave plants as they are. Use plugs or small starts to replace any dead plants. Water well. Provide roughly 14 hours of direct light and a temperature of 50-60 degrees. Pinch new growth fairly regularly to promote branching; stop pinching by mid-April to allow bud formation.

I have often had trouble with aphids on fuchsias I've wintered, but have found that if I add some systemic insecticide to each container when I am just getting the plants going, using amounts as directed on the package, I almost never see an aphid on my fuchsias. I am not a great advocate of poisons, but I assume that much of the poison has dissipated by 3-4 months later, so I like to believe that by the time I move them outdoors, my plants and containers are relatively non-hazardous to local insect or bird populations.

My fuchsias are usually not as full as those I see riding past my house in pickup trucks, going home from Bell's, but they are moderately full, and flower nicely. Best of all is the immense satisfaction they bring me: I don't spend big bucks to winter them, and I get to watch them go full-circle through the seasons.



March AMGA Newsletter Alert

January 31st was the deadline for dues and for having your name included in the 2002 AMGA Annual Directory. If your newsletter says LAST ISSUE, your name will be deleted from the mailing list next month, & you will not be receiving further newsletters until your dues are paid. However, we have extended the newsletter subscriptions through February to accommodate people who renewed up to January 31st. After that, no more newsletters for slackers!

The editor will be out of the country chasing yellow-eyed penguins in another hemisphere during February and March. Master Gardener Dana Klinkhart has kindly agreed to publish the March newsletter in the editor's absence. Please help Dana out by submitting articles you need or want published in the March edition to:

Dana Klinkhart - 346-1631
klinkhart@gci.net

Cheery!



**BARGE AND BIKE
SPECIALTY FLOWER
TOUR 2002
(FOR WOMEN ONLY)**

Augustine Global Travel is featuring a **HORTICULTURAL TOUR** to Holland, which includes Floriade, www.floriade.com an international horticultural exhibition, held every ten years. Our tour also includes visits to Keukenhof Gardens www.keukenhof.nl

Hortus Botanicus in Leiden, Aalsmeer www.vba.nl flower auction and private gardens.

Dates:

April 27 - May 11, 2002 (15 days / 14 nights)

May 11 - May 25, 2002 (15 days / 14 nights)

Augustine Global Travel is a womens adventure tour company appealing to women wishing to travel in the company of other women. A detailed itinerary is available upon request. Please contact us if you have further questions or require more information.

Spring is the most beautiful time to visit Holland. Located in the heart of Europe, it features pristine villages, 17th century homes, canals and spectacular museums. During one week we will experience Holland while either bicycling on dedicated bike trails past fields of blooming tulips, spinning windmills and towering dikes or from the comfort of our movable hotel - a converted cargo barge, complete with cabins, private bathrooms and an experienced crew. Starting in Amsterdam, we will travel along the waterways of northern Holland, stopping to visit Zaanse Schans, a 17th century historic village, Alkmaar, Holland's cheese town and the island of Texel. We tour the island by bike and see beaches, flat polderlands, forests and picturesque villages including Den Hoorn, Den Burg and De Koog. We will pass through locks and a man-made dam. Enkhuizen is our next stop, to visit the Zuiderzee Museum, an open-air nautical museum portraying life at sea in the past. We continue on to Hoorn and the fishing village of Volendam before returning to

Amsterdam. After leaving the barge, we continue on to the land portion of our tour. Our day in Amsterdam will be spent touring the canals, with stops at Anne Frank House, Rijksmuseum and the Van Gogh Museum. During the remainder of our tour we make stops at Aalsmeer (flower auction), Maarssen (private garden tour) and Utrecht before spending two days at Floriade. This world horticultural exhibition takes place every ten years. Entrants from approx. 30 countries exhibit bulbs, flowers, plants, trees, vegetables and fruit. We spend several nights in Den Haag, with daytime visits to Gouda, Delft (known for its Delftware), Leiden (Hortus Botanicus) and Keukenhof. A world renowned display garden, it has the worlds largest exhibition of blooming tulips, hyacinths and daffodils. This is a unique mix of barging, biking and horticultural delights!

Prices: \$1999 US Dollars

Included:

- All participants will share a room, twin beds. There is no single supplement
- Meals where indicated in brackets (B-Breakfast, L-Lunch, D-Dinner)
- English speaking local guides.
- Transfers to and from airport
- Entrance fees to museums etc.

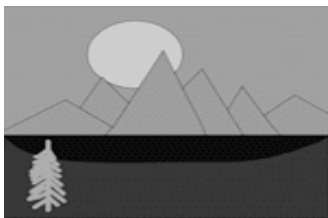
Not Included:

- AIR FARE
- Meals not included in the itinerary.
- Airport taxes payable locally upon departure.
- Travel Insurance.
- Tips for guides/drivers (discretionary).
- Items of a personal nature, including alcohol, laundry, drinks etc.

10% DISCOUNT TO YOU - if you bring someone along on this tour. So bring your friend, sister, mother or daughter!

Mare Appleby & Kathe Burkholder

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augustinetravel@canada.com



CENTRAL PENINSULA MASTER GARDENER NEWS
BY ROSEMARY KIMBALL

Sumer is a-cumin in, lude sing coccoo.
 Orthography was not the fine science then as it is
 now so don't knock the spelling.

There seems to be a lot of interest this spring in landscaping so the three programs in the speaker series are oriented towards that subject. The first speaker in February is still pending but on March 7, Wayne Vandre will be showing slides and talking about landscaping. We know that one will be good. Icing on the cake is Rita Jo Shoultz of Fritz Creek Nursery April 18, who will show pictures of her visit last fall to nurseries in England. She will encompass some elements of landscaping. If you are not on RJ's e-mail list for her Homer columns, you need to subscribe at fcgplants@ptialaska.net This week her article is on a hardy phlox, next time it will be on clematis. She's mastered the digital camera so she includes a picture of the plant(s) under consideration.

...and in the Groweth seed department...Some people have already gotten their seed orders!! That's what I call organization. It seems like the seed catalogs are coming sooner then they used to. I always figured catalogs came after Christmas but I got several before. I still have a stack of catalogs on the floor with pages turned up to things I want to order. Mind you, I have many seed packets that I haven't planted already on hand. Then why was my flower order to Thompson and Morgan \$100? Easy to get there too! The major portion of our home garden is food production, not flowers! We don't mention all the seed packets I've ordered from the North American Rock Garden Society. In all truth, some of those are packets my neighbor wanted but ran out of choices (limit 15 packets). Now, if he thinks he's going to pry them out of my hand when they come, he's nuts. Possession being 9/10ths of the law he will get some plants if I can sprout them...and I will probably row them out in his garden.

Merrie sing coccoo

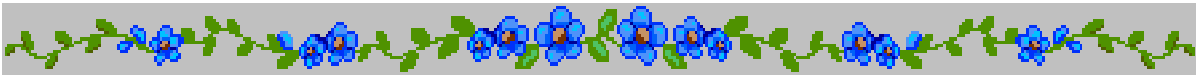
BUTTERCUP, POPPY, FORGET-ME-NOT
 BY EUGENE FIELD (1850-1895)

Buttercup, Poppy, Forget-me-not—
 These three bloomed in a garden spot;
 And once, all merry with song and play,
 A little one heard three voices say:
 “Shine and shadow, summer and spring,
 O thou child with the tangled hair
 And laughing eyes! we three shall bring
 Each an offering passing fair.”
 The little one did not understand,
 But they bent and kissed the dimpled hand.

Buttercup gambolled all day long,
 Sharing the little one's mirth and song;
 Then, stealing along on misty gleams,
 Poppy came bearing the sweetest dreams.
 Playing and dreaming—and that was all
 Till once a sleeper would not awake:
 Kissing the little face under the pall,
 We thought of the words the third flower spake;
 And we found betimes in a hallowed spot
 The solace and peace of Forget-me-not.

Buttercup shareth the joy of day,
 Glinting with gold the hours of play;
 Bringeth the Poppy sweet repose,
 When the hands would fold and the eyes would close;
 And after it all—the play and the sleep
 Of a little life—what cometh then?
 To the hearts that ache and the eyes that weep
 A new flower bringeth God's peace again.
 Each one serveth its tender lot—
 Buttercup, Poppy, Forget-me-not.





Bird Chatter

Here's some real bird chatter..."Hummingbird caught by a mantis!" For photos check out the following web site <http://www.rlephoto.com/birds/hummer01.htm>

MG Martha Galbreath was heard recalling a story from her days working as an expeditor on the pipeline . "We had a number of different grass seed mixes that were used in revegetation. In Fairbanks you could tell who had visited the warehouse and taken seed. Their home lawns were all coming up in brome."

A CES client on the phone recently complained about the lack of Alaska gardening information on the web. He was looking for "everything" all in one place. The AMGA links, calendar and list of clubs stopped his grumbling. (thank goodness).

The Old Streaker

Two old men were sitting on a park bench outside the local town hall where a flower show was in progress. One leaned over the other and said, "Cripes, life is boring! We never have any fun these days!" For a fiver, I'd take my clothes off and streak through the flower show!"

"You're on!" said the other old boy, holding up a five pound note. As fast as he could, the first old man fumbled his way out of his clothes and, completely naked, streaked through the front door of the town>hall.

Waiting outside, his friend heard a huge commotion inside the hall, followed by loud applause. The naked old man burst out through the door surrounded by a cheering crowd.

"How did it go?" asked his friend. "Great!" said the streaker, "I won first prize as a dried arrangement!!!"

Vocabulary Lesson

opsimath (OP-si-math) noun

One who begins learning late in life.

[From Greek opsi- (late) + math (learning).]

Let us be grateful to people who make us happy; they are the charming gardeners who make our souls blossom.

- Marcel Proust

2002 SELECTION OF PLANTS

Park Seed Company and Stokes Seeds will be carrying Sunset Magazine's four favorite All-Americas for 2002 which are:
'Chilly Chili' ornamental pepper. Compact plant with loads of pods turning from yellow to orange to red as they mature. Color from midsummer to fall.
'Magical Michael' spicy clove like basil. Ornamental as well with purple-and-white blossoms in midsummer fading to bronze.
Rudbeckia hirta 'Cherokee Sunset'. Large (3-4.5" across) double and semidouble flowers in shades of bronze, gold, mahogany and orange.
'Sparkler Blush' *cleome*. Multibranching hybrid 3'x3' with large fluffy pink blossoms in late Spring.



Mike Rheinschmidt hobnobbing with Ed Hume in Juneau at the MG Conference last year.

A Riddle:

There was a green house.
Inside the green house there was a white house.
Inside the white house there was a red house.
Inside the red house there were lots of babies.

What am I?

Answer on next page.....



**"HEARTS AND FLOWERS"
ANCHORAGE HORTICULTURE COALITION
FUNDRAISER EVENT**

A "Hearts and Flowers" fund-raiser for the Anchorage Horticulture Coalition will be held at Bell's Nursery on Specking Avenue on Sunday, February 10, 2002, from 4 to 6 p.m.

There will be great appetizers and chocolate (and other) desserts, music, and friends new and old. A \$25 contribution is suggested. Please come out to support the Horticulture Coalition, whose mission is to promote municipal support of horticulture. (333-2100)

UAA OFFERING ORGANIC GARDENING CLASS

Introduction to Organic Gardening
Ellen Vande Visse, instructor
Friday, February 22 from 6:30-9:30pm
Saturday, February 23 from 9am-4pm
CRN 30884 HME A001-041 \$99
Held on UAA campus

Covers Alaska growing conditions and organic growing methods such as soil preparation, organic soil amendments, pest management and composting.

Call 786-6755 for course information or 786-6721 for registration information. You may also register Monday – Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. at:
4500 Diplomacy Drive, Suite 501 @ Tudor Center Drive & Tudor Road.

Visit the Website:
<http://training.uaa.alaska.edu>

[Answer to riddle on page 6: *A Watermelon.*]

Gardening Calendar

February 7:

Anchorage Garden Club meeting: *"Getting to Know Roses"* by Tom Throop; Pioneer Schoolhouse located at 3rd and Eagle at 7:30 pm - Public welcome.

February 10

Hearts and Flowers fundraiser for the Anchorage Horticulture Coalition at Bell's Nursery on Specking Avenue, (see article)

February 16

Alaska Rock Garden Society meeting: *"Planting Alpines in Pots and Troughs"*, by Rhonda Williams. 2 p.m., Mat Su Community College, Room 205, Palmer

February 18

Alaska Master Gardener meeting: *"Seed Starting Basics"* by Ellen Schwenne; 7 p.m., Cooperative Extension Service, 2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd., Carlton Trust Bldg., Conference Room 130. Contact: 786-6300 - Public welcome.

March 2

Alaska Rock Garden Society meeting: Dr. Finn Haugli, Anchorage Museum of History and Art Auditorium. Presentations will be: 1 PM "My alpine garden at 70 degrees north", 3 PM "The arctic and alpine flora of North Norway—wonders of natural beauty from arctic shorelines to high mountains." There will be a brief intermission between the two talks, with refreshments served in the lobby. Dr. Haugli is Director of the Arctic-alpine Botanic Garden in Tromso (say "Tromsooo"), Norway, the world's northernmost botanic garden at 70 degrees north latitude

March 7

Anchorage Garden Club: "Common Perennials, Unusual Species" by Julie Riley - Pioneer Schoolhouse located at 3rd and Eagle at 7:30 pm - Public welcome.

March 13

Anchorage Garden Club: Sears Garden Day held at the Sears Mall, Pioneer Schoolhouse located at 3rd and Eagle at 7:30 pm - Public welcome.

March 18

Alaska Master Gardener Meeting: To be Announced; 7 p.m., Cooperative Extension Service, 2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd., Carlton Trust Bldg., Conference Room 130. Contact: 786-6300 - Public welcome. [stay tuned]

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

AMGA Web Site: www.corecom.net/~gardener

Printable AMGA renewal form on line

Alaska Cooperative Extension
2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd.
Anchorage, AK 99508
Phone: 786-6300 Fax: 786-6312

Newsletter deadline: see article on page 3



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