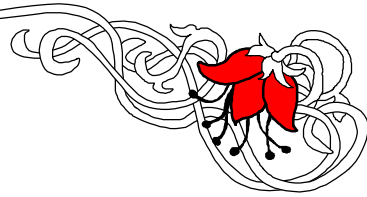


Anchorage Chapter



Volume 6, Issue 8

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER July 2004

From the President's Corner by Dana Klinkhart, AMGA President

Just when my garden seems to be at its best, other perennials burst into bloom. A new bearded iris and a peony will open for the first time and the garden looks better than it did the day before. Summer! Isn't it grand? Our tours have been beautiful and inspiring this season. Their beauty pays tribute to your talent and energy, gardeners. And speaking of gardens, The Alaska Botanical Garden is on my list of places to visit frequently this summer. Visitors to our city will also enjoy the spectacular display of perennials now and as the season progresses. The Garden Fair held for two days in June was an event to remember. The gardens were gorgeous and a seemingly endless variety of booths tempted those who attended. New and interesting plants and garden related items made the event the best that I can remember. Because we parked and took the free shuttle, our trip was doubly fun. I have already marked my calendar for next year and plan to take the shuttle again. Master Gardeners! There are more tours on the calendar. Our summer potluck and garden tour is just around the corner, on July 19. I look forward to seeing you there.



Photo of Mary Shier's red rhododendrum by Dana Klinkhart



July Garden Tours and Potluck Monday, July 19th at 6:00 pm

Hope you made it out to the June garden tours. All three gardens were wonderful and you couldn't have asked for better viewing weather! The July tours promise to be as spectacular, plus we are having our summer potluck! There are 3 gardens all in walking distance from each other. We are starting earlier (6:00), so we won't keep the neighborhood up too late. View the gardens, and then end up at Camille's for the potluck (about 7:30 ish). Bring something tasty to share. Punch, plates, utensils, etc. will be provided.

Marge Olson

3922 Apollo Drive

From Patterson (between Tudor and Northern Lights) go west on Madelyn Way, right on Apollo Drive. She is on the left.

Marge has lived in her home for 32 years. And she has been busy tackling a challenging space. You will see minimal grass, lots of perennials, creative use of old concrete, and how she deals with "gardening on a slope", large dogs in the yard, and lots of shade.

Pat Anderson

3849 Apollo Drive

Go a little farther on Apollo, she is on the right.

Pat has been in her home 33 years. She has really been enjoying more time in the garden since retiring in 2003. You will see rock gardens, raised beds, a wall made with broken cement, lots of shade plants, giant delphiniums and a great viewing deck.

Camille Williams

7049 Saturn Circle

Saturn Circle is just before Pat's house (between Marge's and Pat's on the right).

Camille has $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre made for entertaining. And she has graciously invited us for our annual potluck! After the kids were raised, Camille had about 200 trees cut down and started putting in gardens. You will see over 150 different shrubs and trees, over 12,000 perennials, 5 water features, trails and more.

You can also park at Scenic Park Elementary School, cross Patterson at the marked crosswalk and enter Saturn Circle right by Camille's house.

Bonus August Tour

Monday, August 2nd at 7:00 pm

Since the summer garden tours are always so much fun, we decided to throw in another one. It's not our usual meeting night, but hope you can make it!

Alyeska Resort Gardens

We will see what Master Gardener, Robbie Frankevich, has been working on out there and see "the great wall of Nina". Come be a tourist for the night.

We will meet in the courtyard behind the hotel for Robbie's tour. There is parking past the hotel on the left. Park in lots A, B or C. Take the shuttle (to tramway) which takes you right to the courtyard.

Enjoy!

Linda Klinkhart



SPRING IN TURNAGAIN

Want to have an enjoyable evening? Join the Anchorage master gardeners on their summer tours. Graced by good weather, June 21 found us touring three unique gardens in the Turnagain area.

Judith Hassinger and Larry Peterson awed us with the white garden in their front yard. There are spectacular white bleeding hearts, white roses, white pelargoniums and even a light, near white, trollius. A white gate and garden art lend to the charm. In the back are brick paths leading through lovely cottage gardens and a central patio dining area. Hops, clematis, cerastium, and scabiosa thrive; and there is a 12 year-old hosta to envy. The greenhouse is Larry's project, and it is filled with tomatoes to die for. Judith's favorites are her roses. She loves the old-fashioned ones, in particular the Bourbons. Judith says that they nearly live outside in the summer, and we could certainly see why.

Our eyes lit up at the sight of the Japanese maple in Sherry Tomlinson's front yard. Sherry has been nursing it through three winters and it is a showpiece in burgundy. We were drawn to the blue anemone in the front yard, and we were delighted to see more anemones – pink, red, lavender and purple – in the back. Of course there are plenty of other blooms, malva, Canterbury bells and pelargoniums to name a few, and there are shade plants galore. Paths lead through the gardens and by a pond stocked with elegant varicolored goldfish. Incidentally, Sherry and Derek heat and insulate the pond through the winter, and the fish are seven to eight years old. Sherry likes the vertical look. She loves vines and has hops, clematis and even bittersweet in abundance. Always busy, Sherry runs a bed and breakfast, raises basil commercially for a local greenhouse and still keeps her garden in tip-top shape. We didn't see a single chickweed.

Mary Jo Burns' gardens are large and varied. From sun to shade, from terraced to level, her yard is full of thriving flowers and plants. There are gorgeous mature peonies and lilacs. Wide pathways lead through gardens, one bursting with colorful primroses accented by balls of purple allium. There are stately meconopsis that Mary Jo has grown from seed. She has trillium, hellebore, and Herman's Pride lamium – even an apricot tree that bears fruit. We could only imagine how striking it would be once the Stargazer lilies bloomed. Mary Jo loves trying new plants. Regarding her beautiful primrose garden, eventually she wants to have primulas everywhere.

Microclimate verses Inertia

By Sally Tilton

I have broken through the dense wall of inertia! Many times I have been inspired to write an article for our newsletter only to find when I sit down with pencil and paper/keyboard and computer, I go blank. This time, inspired by Linda Klinkhart's paragraph to Bird Chatter in the May issue regarding heated sidewalks and early blooms, I decided to write about a little microclimate area in our white garden. This area lays over our septic tank. The ground warms up early in this area thanks to a common byproduct of human consumption. By the second week in April, the blossoms of crocus and snowdrops as well as scilla brave it out on their little island of heated soil surrounded by large fields of deep snow. White narcissus and leucojum shortly follow them.

Today, May 27, the peony stands a hip height loaded with buds, seven stems of the cross hybrid lily is waist high, the astilbe forms large mound of feathery leaves, the columbine is about to bloom, and the hosta is vigorously pushing through the ground and unfurling. There are other companions as well. Dicentra Formosa blooming and spectabilis budding, false Solomon seal is behaving itself, and dianthus promising to spill out its most sweetly of floral fragrance. We love this little area of our garden. After another long Alaskan winter (37 winters for me, 46 for Pat), it announces the arrival of our beloved growing season!



Company Man

Submitted by Sue Lincoln with permission from the author:

David G. Cassidy
Editor, Turf West

A couple of years ago, I wrote a simple, little editorial about the horrors of moderns day air travel. No big deal. Just a little puff piece about my frustrations at what are my too frequent opportunities to subject myself to the cattle prodding that is the current state of commercial aviation. I vented, made a few (I hope) humorous observations and moved on.

During the course of t his column, I casually mentioned that I was sitting in an airport bar, drinking Bacardi and Coke (with a twist of lime, please). What I was drinking wasn't vital to the story. It was one of those little bits of details that writers are supposed to drop in a story to provide realism.

Lo and behold, several weeks later, I received a nice package from the advertising agency that handles Bacardi Rum. They were so pleased at my mentioning their client in my editorial, they gifted me with a fifth of their client's finest.

I've been writing and editing most of my adult life, and this was the first time I had experienced this. Freebies. Consideration. Payola. I love it! Heck, all I did was sip the fact that I prefer Bacardi Rum in my Cuba Libres into an editorial and quicker than you can say "last call," I'm drinking for free. I could get used to this.

With this episode in mind, I would like to share the following:

This morning, I was browsing Amazon.com on my Apple computer, when my Motorola cell phone rang. It was my friend Steve, and he wanted to know if I'd like to hope into my new Ford F-150, drive down to his place and take a ride in his Pro Line fishing boat. Since he had brand-new MerCruiser engines on the thing, how could I refuse?

After stopping for some Mobil gas and a nice hot coup of Green Mountain Coffee, I turned on my Sony Mini Disc player (which I have plugged into my Kenwood car stereo) and cruised to the tunes of Clint Black's new release on Equity Records. That reminded me that I had to make reservations with Delta Airlines and Hertz for my next trip to Nashville, where I always like to stay at the Best Western Downtown/Music Row.

Since my Valentine One radar detector enabled me to get to his house early, Steve was just finishing mowing his lawn with his John Deere garden tractor. We parked at ol'John Deere in the shed and I couldn't help but admire his full complement of yard care equipment by such names as Toro, Stihl, Ariens, Husqvarna, Bush Hog, Kawasaki, Shindaiwa and Kubota.

After I helped him change the oil in his Honda 750 motorcycle, we noticed it was starting to rain, so we hopped into his Dodge Viper and headed down to our local Olive Garden for a delicious lunch.

With boating activities curtailed for the afternoon, we stopped at Home Depot and browsed the many fine power tools available from such fine companies as Makita, Black & Decker, DeWalt, Bosch and Porter Cable. While Steve looked for the fine selection of Anderson replacement windows, I wandered over to check out the Weber grills and ... (to be continued)



Central Peninsula MG News

By Rosemary Kimball

The very last plant sale that my neighbor, Master Gardener Mark White, and I have had each year, is over; a victim of its own success. It got too big to be fun. We had too much good stuff. The sale started with perennials dug from our yards, then it progressed to plants that we wanted one or two of but had to buy a flat of 32. Now we have the problem of disposing the plants that we don't want to put in the ground. I'm brought to mind of a wad of kittens: "Free to good home", and at this point, any home. What sold very well were items on the Dollar Table, seedlings that were going to be for sale next year; and the Five Dollar Flats, all sorts of things that Mark wanted out of his life and didn't want to pretty up for the plant sale. One could get a fortune in primroses for not very much. There were even some mystery plants that weren't weeds.

The garden seemed a little less like a tyrant after the potatoes were finally planted and we could harvest the first of the salad greens. With all the sunny weather at the end of last month, I'm hoping for peas by mid-July. Friends that I haven't seen in 30 years are coming to the peninsula and the Gardens. Their impending visit is a wonderful incentive to weed a row a day. It isn't hard when it is sunny, that's for sure. Only when the temperature hits the mid-70's, I don't "dew" - I run rivers of sweat.

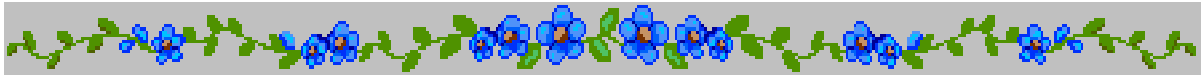
I shredded my 2-year-old compost into a fluffy brown pile, looked at it and purred. Then I started shredding last year's pile which I hadn't covered over the winter. The top, which had dried somewhat, went through easily and then I went on to the next layer. That layer did seem rather soggy as I started it through and the shredded material balled up at the exit chute. I stopped the machine, cleaned out the opening and then tried to start it again. No way was that rope going to pull against all the compo-goo in the machine. That's when I moved the beast to the hose end and became a proctologist for an MTD 8-horsepower shredder. Oh my! The compost had completely wadded up in the chamber and I pulled it out handful of black goo by handful of black goo while squirting a strong stream of water in and dumping. I'll never make that mistake again- until the next time!

On the news front be it known by all men that Soldotna's Kathy Tarr's meconopsis bloomed for the first time this year. She is ecstatic. If you haven't seen a blossom with a low sun lighting it from behind, you've missed one of the joys of life.

Sweating and swatting and weeding; summer in Alaska this year.

Internet Update: Home and Garden Stories on line

The Anchorage Daily News site (adn.com) features links to home & garden stories that are quite interesting. **Scroll down to the Life section, and click on 24-hour home and garden stories** for an enjoyable read.



Bird Chatter

Who thinks that Rhododendron are not growing in Anchorage? Mary Shier's garden pays testimony to the fact that they do and in fact are blooming. The gorgeous rose-red blossomed this past month (see photo on page 1). Mary remembers it being eight years old now and having it bloom this year and a couple times prior. Patience and just the right garden could be the magic ingredient for success.

Gardening Rule: When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it is a valuable plant.

My cousin who is temporarily stationed in Enterprise, Ala. told me that she saw an unusual local bumper sticker today. (Enterprise is the town that erected a statue to the boll weevil because it destroyed the cotton crops and forced the area to pursue other crops and industries.) The bumper sticker proclaims: "We fear no weevil".

I can complain because the rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorn bushes bear roses!

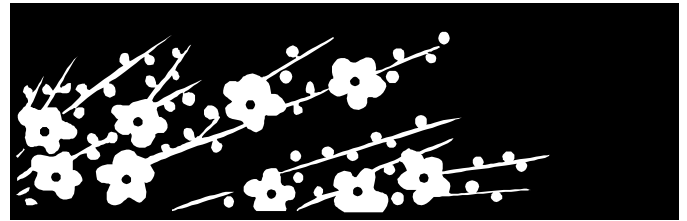
There is music in the garden among the flowers and the earth, and when our hearts listen closely we can hear it.
Flavia

A Note from Michelle Campbell

I attended the Reno Garden Society meeting this evening and joined as a member, only \$5 annual dues. (I'm supposed to take the Nevada Master Gardener course next spring, but until then I can help with special projects. The fall class is in Carson City, too much driving.) We had a pot luck and toured a local nursery. The horticulturist spoke on pests and diseases. Boy are there lots more bugs here than Anchorage! Spider mites love the dust, heat and roses. They "blow" in from the sage. I am surprised they have powdery mildew here though. Thrips are terrible, too. Slugs and HUGE SNAILS. I bought a small ornamental grass to add some spice to the potted flowers on the patio.

Free Tree and Washington Seedlings Offered

Michael Webb, MG, is offering 50 maple tree seedlings, unknown variety, collected from his neighbor's yard. They were brought here in a suitcase from the east coast in 1965 or 1966 by a resident of Government Hill. The address is 241.5 E. Cook, in Government Hill. The maple tree can be seen next door at 231 E. Cook. The Washington Orchids, will grow to 5-6 feet tall, and have a delightful popcorn smell.



In Memory Mardane Connor

September 8, 1953 – May 11, 2004

It is with great sadness that we tell of Mardane's sudden passing from a heart attack. She was serving her family at the time of her death. Mardane had some health issues for a number of years though few knew it because of her cheerful attitude. Mardane worked as an advocate for people with disabilities in a number of capacities since her twin sons were born almost 14 years ago. She was president of the Alaska Chapter National Down Syndrome Congress for several years, worked for P.A.R.E.N.T.S., Inc. for 2 years, and recently, a member of the Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities. Her positive attitude made people feel welcome and helped them realize "the glass really is half full" (stated by Cynde DeLauder, previously of Anchorage). During a visit a couple of weeks after J.D. and Tommy were born, Mardane had the smile for which she is so well known. She stated she had grieved over the Down syndrome that J. D. was born with, but now it was time to get back to enjoying her blessings. Mardane also had a love of growing things and became a Master Gardener in the 98/99 class. Mardane taught classes on composting and was instrumental in establishing a community garden in her neighborhood. "She had magic in her hands that flowed from her heart," stated a good friend. Mardane had a joyous spirit that radiated gladness, acceptance and love to all who knew her. Although she leaves an enormous hole in her family, she deserves her heavenly rest. She will be missed.



Gardening Calendar

July 6, Tuesday

Alaska Native Plant Society Weed Pull along Seward Highway, 6:30 pm. Meet at Potter Section House. Adults only, bring hand digger and heavy-duty scissors, 333-8212.

July 8-11

Pacific Regional National Garden Clubs convention - "Wild about Growing" held at UAA Campus. Contact Liz Rockwell @ 277-7150.

July 9 – 11, July 13 – 15 OR July 16 – 18

Wild Herb Workshop with Janice Schofield, author of Discovering Wild Plants, Alaska's Wild Plants and Nettles. Choose one of three sessions (one evening 7-9 pm and two days from 9 am – 5 pm). Identifying and harvesting wild herbs, making tinctures, foot baths, salves and teas. Contact Good Earth Garden School, Palmer, 907-745-0758; goodearthgardenschool@hotmail.com.

July 10 & 11, Saturday & Sunday

*Blue Poppy Garden Tour, 8 am – 8 pm, fundraiser for the Alaska Botanical Garden, come see professional growers Stan & Dona Ashmore's beautiful garden filled with many varieties of poppies, including those striking blue poppies. (Mile 9 Wolverine Road, Palmer) Admission \$10 per person. 770-3692.

*Wild Edibles Weekend, Stonehill Gardens and Conservatory, seminars Sat and Sun afternoon (option of Sat only), 16751 E. Huntley Rd, Palmer. Learn to identify, harvest, use and cook wild edibles and medicinals, 907-745-7071.

July 11 – 17

Alaska Invasive Weeds Awareness Week. Contact the Cooperative Extension Service for more details, 786-6300.

July 12, Monday

Alaska Native Plant Society Dandelion Pull, 7 pm – 9 pm, at the Alaska Botanical Garden along the Lowenfels Family Nature Trail. Meet at the garden entrance; bring a hand digger, trash bag and bug repellent, 243-5425.

July 13, Tuesday

Alaska Rose Society plant sale, 7 pm, 7435 Old Harbor Road, Contact Lonnie Chace, 345-5725 or president@alaskarosesociety.org.

July 17 & 18, Saturday & Sunday

Coyote Garden Tours, Saturday 10 am – 5 pm, Sunday 12 pm – 5 pm. Visit Les Brake's beautiful Coyote Garden which has been featured in Horticulture Magazine, Sunset, Country Gardens and Gardens Illustrated. Mile 7, Willow/Fishhook Road, Willow, donations requested and benefit the ABG and Willow Garden Club. 770-3692.

July 19, Monday

Alaska Master Gardener Association member tours - see article page 2; contact Dana Klinkhart: 346-1631

August 2, Monday

Anchorage Master Gardener Association, Alyeska Resort Tour of Grounds, 7:00 p.m. Girdwood, 783-2382.

August 5, Thursday

*City of Flowers 2004 contest entries postmark due. Photographs must be mailed to City of Flowers Contest, P.O. Box 196650, Anchorage 99519. Categories include 1) City of Flowers theme "The Aurora – A Bright Northern Blast of Color", 2) Garden beds, 3) Best before and after, 4) Use of containers, 5) Garden settings/environment. Contact MOA Parks and Recreation, Kathy Anderson, 343-4387.

(August 5th cont.)

*Anchorage Garden Club meeting, "Designing Your Garden", a public education program open to all. Virginia Rush will speak on garden design. Pioneer schoolhouse, 3rd & Eagle, 7:30 pm – 9 pm, 566-0539.

August 7 & 8, Saturday and Sunday

Anchorage Garden Club 61st Annual Flower Show, "Salute to Broadway", Saturday, 10 am – 8 pm, Sunday, 12 pm – 6 pm. Alaska Botanical Gardens. Public is welcome to place entries; booklet with rules and categories available by calling 566-0539.

August 7, Saturday

Wild Ponding, Stonehill Gardens and Conservatory, 16751 E. Huntley Rd, Palmer. Learn how to design and build a wild/natural pond, 907-745-7071.

August 16, Monday

Anchorage Master Gardener Association, UAA Campus Tour of Grounds, 7:00 p.m. call for meeting location, 346-1631.

August 20-21, Friday and Saturday

Stonehill Tree and Shrub Fair, Stonehill Gardens and Conservatory, 16751 E. Huntley Rd, Palmer. Devoted to the wonder of trees and shrubs. There will be ongoing FREE classes in subjects like pruning, planting, pleaching, propagation, tree/shrub identification, tree medicinals and nature walks, 907-745-7071.

August 26 – September 6

Alaska State Fair, Palmer, "Garden Hearty Party", Flower and crop entries due Wednesday August 25 & Wednesday September 1, noon – 10 pm, Cabbage Contest will be Friday, September 3. Call Pamella 907-746-7159 for more info.



Guest Authors Needed

Do you have an interesting garden related story or news to share? Here is your opportunity! The AMGA newsletter editor is always open to share stories sent by readers via snail mail or email, whether they are written by a member or not. If you find something interesting & want to share it, please forward it to the editor. Remember to obtain permission from the author if it is not your own work before submitting it. And don't forget to send in snippets for Bird Chatter - write it down now & send it later.



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

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

For information about membership or upcoming programs, contact:

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

Phone 786-6300
Fax Line 786-6312

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