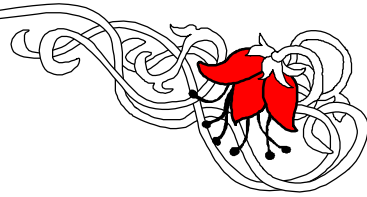


Anchorage Chapter



Volume 8, Issue 2

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER February 2006

From the President's Corner

By Dana Klinkhart

It was one of those cold, dark winter evenings in January when we gathered for the first program in 2006. While many of us can barely recall the warmth of last summer, we were treated to several of our local gardens as portrayed in the television spots from last season on Smart Gardening. Gardeners Amelia Walsh, Annie Nevaldine, Mel Monson, Carmel Tysver and Don Dinkle shared their garden ideas and 'secrets' with the television audiences nationwide. These Alaskan gardeners demonstrated shining examples of gardening in South-central Alaska. Our community is fortunate to have these gardeners as both teachers and ambassadors in the gardening community. Kudos to each of them.

Elections for board members are always on the agenda at our January meeting. Four of the eight terms ended. Those ending terms were served by Eva Hancock, Amelia Walsh, Marge Olson and I. Marge Olson and I accepted a nomination for another term while Eva and Amelia moved on to serve our community in other ways. Thank you to Amelia and Eva for sharing their service and energy with AMGA. The slate of nominees included: Carol Ross, Anita Williams, Patricia Anderson, Marge and me. Special appreciation is expressed to all who so willingly accepted a nomination this year.

Your Board of Directors for 2006 will be Marguerite Barnard, Blythe Campbell, Linda Klinkhart, Sue Lincoln, Pat Anderson, Anita Williams, Marge Olson and I, Dana Klinkhart. Your AMGA officers are: PRESIDENT-Dana Klinkhart, VICE PRESIDENT-Marge Olson and TREASURER-Sue Lincoln. Our SECRETARY will be selected at our next board meeting.

The seeds of spring have already sprouted, at least in my heart. The catalogs are once again tempting me to select seeds for colorful blooms and tasty vegetables. I'm prompted to order way more than I need. A road trip will save me from ordering more than I can possibly plant as I'll have to delay planting any seeds. Just 'browsing' the catalogs and dreaming of my 2006 garden will have to do until I return.



Gardeners, mark your calendars for our meeting on February 20th. We'll begin our evening at 7 pm with our annual potluck and at 8 pm Scott Pettit will share his expertise on creating beautiful begonia baskets. Bring your favorite dish and be prepared to enjoy the evening. The great food, fellowship and gardening ideas should be just the ticket for an evening in February. I hope you can attend.



NEWSLETTER RECIPES

Julie Riley

Ski Olsonowski has made a suggestion that the newsletter contain a recipe section. Not recipes that you cook but horticultural recipes for potting mixes, seed starting mixes, and pest control remedies.

At the January AMGA meeting one of the SMART GARDENING television segments that was viewed was of Carmel Tysver making a hypertufa trough. Below is Carmel's hypertufa recipe and directions on how to make these containers that resemble stone.

To make "Garden Recipes" a regular newsletter column, please send your favorites to Gina (amga@gci.net) for publication. Thank you.

Hypertufa Troughs Carmel Tysver Style

Supplies: Peat
Perlite
Portland cement
Cement fibers
Water
Cement dyes and liquid bonding agents are optional.

The actual mixture varies a lot. I frequently change the recipe. Lately I have been using 3 parts peat, 3 parts perlite and 2 parts Portland cement. The original recipe I followed used sand instead of perlite. I prefer perlite because it makes the end product lighter.

In a wheelbarrow, mix the dry materials well. Then add a handful of cement fibers to a bucket of water and mix with the peat, perlite and Portland cement. Continue to add water until when a handful of the mixture is squeezed, water appears between your fingers. Let everything sit for a few minutes and then check the moisture content again. I find that as the mixture sits, the peat absorbs more water. If too dry, add more water.

If you want to add cement dyes or bonding agents it can be added to the water with the fibers in it. I have not used a bonding agent in my hypertufa mixture but know some people who do.

Forms: Use any container with a shape that you like. The hypertufa mix can be packed on the inside of the container or on the outside. I have learned that covering the container with plastic will prevent the mixture from sticking to the form. I use lightweight plastic such as bags from the grocery store. When making a trough on the outside of a form, I cover it with a slightly heavier weight plastic than grocery bags, as I like the look of the wrinkles on the edge of the trough.

For large troughs I have used blue board cut to the length and height I want. I stand the pieces along a lengthwise edge and duct tape them together. I may also use nails to hold the form together.

Drainage Holes: I prefer to use a fairly large object for a drainage hole. I tried using sticks but found that they were not large enough and had a tendency to plug. Presently I use small cat food cans. The can needs to be placed with the open end facing up.

Drying: Curing the hypertufa will depend on temperature and humidity. I prefer to allow the trough to dry about 48 to 72 hours before I try to remove its form. If the mixture dries too fast it will crack; I have not had that problem. If I make a trough on a warm day I place it in the shade or garage to dry. According to some articles, bonding agents also seems to prevent cracking. Remove the drainage hole can when the trough is dry and the form taken off. Use a pair of pliers to grab hold of the can and twist.

Decorating: If you want to decorate your trough, remove it from the form after 48 hours. Then use a brush or other object that will give the outside surface an interesting texture. I have found you can also add objects to the outside, such as rocks, marbles, glass pieces, and shells. Add these materials to the trough at the time it is being formed. Trying to make hand or foot prints in the hypertufa does not usually work. If you want to make a shape in the hypertufa, use a firm object and cover it with plastic so it can be removed after the drying process.



Mulching ... By Debbie Hinchey

There are a lot of different garden practices all called mulching. Most of them can be divided into summer and winter mulching. When someone asks if you mulch, it is often that the person asking is not talking about the exact same practice that you are.

The idea of breaking down what one calls mulching into winter and summer mulching is an idea that Lenore Hedla had in one of her popular gardening books. I think it helps to use these terms when talking about mulching. After that distinction is made, it can still be a little confusing, but not as much.

I am a fan of summer mulching with organic material but detest the use of "landscape cloth" or plastic placed under the roots of plants that I want to thrive.

I will winter mulch with Christmas tree boughs and sometimes in areas that do not get any snow cover, but not in areas that can be smothered by snow on top of wet leaves. If an area may have its snow blown off or be subjected to temperature swings, I may mulch the south sides with leaves in or out of bags to shade them.

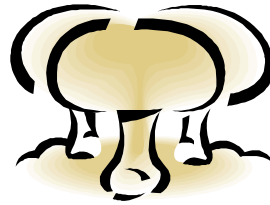
There are people that swear that if you do not winter mulch with leaves thickly over all perennials they will not make it through the winter. We continue to have success if we do it our way and not if we do it their way. Are we misinterpreting what the other is doing? Are our conditions so different that the results can be opposite of theirs? All of this is possible.

I would like to have a good deep discussion about mulch and see if we can come to any conclusions about this "controversial subject" (as Julie Riley calls it.)

I hope you will mail or e-mail your techniques and conclusions about mulching various types of plants. I wonder if there are points that we can all agree on. I am also curious if there are little differences in our growing conditions that will give us some fairly reliable predictions to the success of different mulching materials, timing, or other variables.

I would truly love to hear ALL of your experiences, thoughts, and deep meditations about mulching. If enough of you tell me your mulching ideas, it will turn into a presentation for Rose Society this February 21. If your thoughts do not coalesce before that, send your ideas anyway; we all want to keep learning.

Thanks for your help in advance. (dhinchey@alaska.com)



Portabellas By Herb Spencer, MG

Never having [intentionally] grown mushrooms before, I looked around carefully to see if anyone was watching. Seeing that no one was looking in my direction, I began reading the instructions.

One line jumped out at me immediately: "*Follow all directions completely and save these instructions for later reference,*" they admonished.

I felt as if my reputation for doing things my own way must have extended at least as far as San Francisco; it seemed as if *Mushroom Adventures* had inserted that command into the directions specifically for me.

Knowing how I love to eat Portabella mushrooms [raw... in salads ... on burgers... sautéed in butter or butter-and-garlic... etc.] Linda had ordered a mushroom growing kit from them for me as a Christmas present. The present had been late; since *Mushroom Adventures* could not guarantee the viability of mushroom spores delivered directly to Alaska, Linda made arrangements for her daughter – on a holiday trip to the family home in Bellevue Washington – to bring the package north on her return flight.

January 4th we had finally opened the package. Already drooling as I opened the self-contained kit, I had rapidly scanned the instructions for one item in particular: "... the first of the mushrooms are ready to be picked within 3 to 4 weeks after starting the mushroom growing kit ..." Okay. I could wait that long for sautéed portabellas – or pick some up at the Red Apple market if absolutely desperate!

Some generic information about mushroom growing is provided with the kit [This much I could read openly without danger to my macho-ness]: "the mushroom crop fruits at intervals of approximately 10 to 20 days..." "... mushrooms fruit faster at warmer temperatures ... best quality and quantity of mushrooms are grown between temperatures of 63 to 68 degrees F..." "... constant temperatures higher than 75 degrees [F] usually prevent mushrooms from growing..." "... cooler temperatures below 55 degrees retard or stop the growth of mushrooms..." "... the larger the size of the mushrooms the fewer of them will grow..."

Hold it!

Portabellas are large mushrooms – caps four to six inches across are common; occasionally you'll find one up to twelve inches across. This kit was obviously not going to be the horn-of-plenty I'd hoped, but the kit says it's designed to grow several crops over an eight to twelve week period. [After thinking about it for a few seconds, I decided that two to three months of at least a few portabellas per month was worth the effort!]

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



Subsistence Gardening

By Annie Nevaldine



Before I owned a home and had some earth of my own to create outdoor gardens, I had to keep my thumbs green solely by contenting myself with houseplants year round. Now that I live where outdoor gardening is virtually impossible for six or seven months a year, houseplant gardening provides all the soil my fingernails need under them during these indoor months.

I could hardly wait to get my first apartment after I left home so that I could incorporate houseplants into the décor. My impatience for growing houseplants was seeded and cultivated by a dear grandmother-like family friend, who had a sunroom that was crammed full of exotic, tropical and subtropical houseplants.

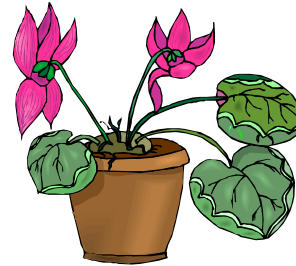
As a little and not-so-little girl, I would ask Mrs. Hull on each visit to her home to take me into that sunroom and tell me all the plants' names, which is where I began learning secular botanical Latin. (Attending a Catholic school, I was simultaneously being taught liturgical Latin. Sometimes it seemed as if Latin was my first language.)

Mrs. Hull grew luxurious black-stemmed *Adiantum*, or maidenhair ferns, with which I fell in love for their dainty, delicate leaves. She never mentioned that they had a reputation for being challenging houseplants, leaving me completely fearless about cultivating them myself. A maidenhair from her was among the very first houseplants she provided me, and I have never since been without a complement of several different species of them. Being seedless, they self-spore prolifically— I even have maidenhair ferns underplanting a *Ginkgo biloba*, the maidenhair tree.

In addition to ferns, flowering plants comprised the rest of Mrs. Hull's houseplant collection. She nurtured many African violets, *Saintpaulia* (gardener's Latin for this genus sounded awfully like liturgical Latin to a child, except that I thought his name was "Saint Paul"), and kept handy a bottle of rubbing alcohol and a fine paintbrush to thwart promptly any aphid or mealy bug infestation from running rampant. A large shrimp plant, *Beloperone guttata*, fascinated me as much for its culinary common name as for its showy red bracts.

What reminds me of Mrs. Hull now in the dead of Alaska winter are bulb and corm flowers. What she grew in her cool sunroom are perfect houseplants for Alaska homes and are thriving contentedly on my windowsills. During the winter, she always had planters filled with captivating and showy amaryllis. Mine are beginning to form bud stalks now and will regale me in a few weeks. The aroma from her

hyacinths in tight-necked vases and paperwhite narcissus rooted among small pebbles in deep saucers was heavenly. Olfactory memory is reputedly long, and I see her now as I inhale the paperwhites' delicious sweet fragrance. In another month or so, after I remove my hyacinths from the fridge and they bloom, I'll again be reminded of her.



Cyclamen plants were also permanent fixtures in Mrs. Hull's sunroom. Grown from corms, cyclamens with their hovering-butterfly flowers flourish indoors during cold, dark Alaska winter days. Though their scent does not begin to compete with that of paperwhites and hyacinths,

they do have their own faint, pleasant odor. I enjoy many pots of them, as I plant some seed every year to keep both my home and my office well stocked with them.

I appreciate the legacy that Mrs. Hull has left me, her inculcation of indoor houseplant gardening in me. She didn't know, when I was a child, that she was teaching me basic survival skills for withstanding Alaska winters. Without my houseplants, I don't know how I'd survive subarctic winters when there is no outdoor gardening. Thanks to her, I flourish in the winter with subsistence gardening: growing houseplants.



MG Advisory/Review Committee Formed

Beginning in January there will be a review of the Anchorage Master Gardener course application, syllabus, registration cost, volunteer projects and management (not including AMGA projects), and volunteer office space. Additional topics for discussion are advanced/continuing training, certification options and a MG mentoring program.

The committee is made up of current AMGA Board members, one MG from the most recent class, someone who completed the course prior to 2005, a Master Gardener who has taken the course via correspondence and a home gardener who has not completed the course.

A special thanks to Marge Olson, Dana Klinkhart, Sue Lincoln, Mary Marshburn, Herb Spencer, Pat Anderson and Sara Bergquist, for volunteering to provide insight during this process.



Central Peninsula Master Gardener News

by Rosemary Kimball

January is still fun in spite of winter– or maybe because of winter and the “not-much-is-going-on” mind set. But the month really is busy!! Did you read in the Anchorage Daily News of January 25th of “Matanuska Red”: Rhubarb juice with a hint of strawberry? The nutrient list is way beyond better than cranberry juice! If it is one thing that we can grow without effort, bugs or moose it’s rhubarb! But also speaking of strawberries... I finally got around to checking the soil temperature thermometer in the garden now that we have some snow. Ominously it read 5°. I ran another check a week later and it said -18. It looks like the thermometer has problems. If it doesn’t, perennial plants (my 350 feet of strawberries in particular!) have a problem– Big Time. We had that period of green grass for a good part at the front of December and I’m afraid that all the snow that melted didn’t evaporate but went into the ground to become cold-conducting ice.

We traded Pad Thai down here for sushi in Soldotna and had another good lunch. We worked on the speaker schedule for the spring: now we just have to get people to say yes. Since it was so late in the (planning) season we decided instead of a January speaker we’d do a field trip to Barron Butler’s and see how he makes his clam fertilizer gut. (He uses the word *entrails* which really is “nicer” but who says I’m nice?) Fragrant and interesting. A plus’ the fertilizer has is the use of crab shells. I just figure anything that might have trace minerals in it is a ‘Big Plus’, especially in my greenhouse growing beds. He is willing to foot the Master Gardeners, for a fund raiser, packages of the various formulations of fertilizer on consignment at our big meetings. That includes you folks in Anchorage too. We did decide on speaker subjects for this spring and our Ramrod, Janice, has been reeling in the talent. We will have Roseann Leiner in February, Julie Riley for herbs in March, Bill Campbell, Mr. Potato, in April, with Janice ending the season with a talk on late blight which we don’t have down here (so far) AND DON’T WANT!!!

I’m off the hook mostly. The Oxalis of my neighbor’s that I liberated and repotted has sprouted. The Eucharist lily bulbs are not growing leaves but they are not pulling out of the soil when I yank on them so I will make the assumption they are growing roots. I hope so! My garden is defined by what has died in it and it would be a shame to waste my talent for extinction on his stuff too.

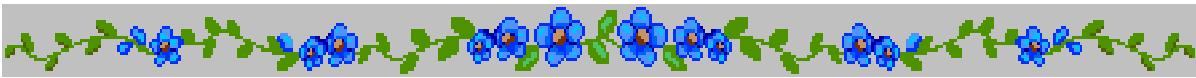
Gina gave me the hilarious “Gardening au Naturel” calendar from the Kitsap County Master Gardeners and just for fun I thought I’d see if they have a web site. They do and it’s a nice one. Google their name and wander around.

I don’t know why it is so hard to actually order seeds. An hour after a new catalog arrives I’ve gone through it and marked what I would like to have. Since I haven’t ordered fresh seed for several years, this year I’ll get anything I desire/need. But then comes the actual lifting of the receiver and dialing that 800 number. For some reason, that is the hardest thing to do. I screwed my courage to the sticking point, finally, because I wanted the Kossak kohlrabi from Pinetree. The people on the other end of the phones are always nice and pleasant to do business with but it is still hard for me for some reason to make that call.

The Master Gardener state meeting will be at the Fair Grounds in Palmer on July 21st and 22nd. Check your guest list (as in Oh! I know someone in Alaska, let’s go) and plan on it. If you didn’t get one of the Diggits we had for sale down here at the last “Do”, we will have them up there. I talked to another woman (a MG, natch) at the second mushroom club meeting down here and she said the Diggit was wonderful for getting mushrooms from the ground. Whatever works.

And as you read this I will be thawing in southern California, Arizona and New Mexico followed by Oregon and the Western Winter Study Weekend of the North American Rock Garden Society. One of the things I will be doing when I get to Seattle is to go with my friend Carolyn to one of her Master Gardener classes in Anacortes, Washington. I can hardly wait because it’s always interesting to hear input from different people and different venues.

Keep warm.



Bird Chatter

- The 2006 Alaska Master Gardener Conference is scheduled for July 21 & 22 at the Alaska State Fair in Palmer. It is being held in conjunction with the Second Annual Alaska Garden & Arts Festival.
- Master Gardeners who participated in the Anchorage Police Department's 2005 Citizens Academy include Anita Williams, Linda Ewers and Linda Vick. The academy promotes better relationships between the community and the police.
- Two artists with MG connections had oil paintings at Alaska Pacific University in January, Judith Hoersting (MG '94) and Joe Nedland (husband of MG Patty Joyce Nedland, MG '05).
- Garden author Lenore Hedla entertained Annie Nevaldine, Jill Shepherd and Julie Riley at her home in January.
- February is National Potato Lovers Month. Celebrate by attending Extension's Potato Lovers Bash, Saturday, February 25.
- Anchorage CES Office Manager DeShana York has taken a job with the University of Alaska Corporate Programs.
- The Southeast Alaska Gardening Conference is being held April 27-29, 2006 in conjunction with the Alaska State Federation of Garden Clubs' annual meeting. Check out the Southeast Alaska Master Gardener website at <http://www.seakmastergardeners.org/index.html>.
- Tip from a Web cast that Michigan State University did on starting seedlings: Water tomato seedlings with 50° F water to keep them stocky.
- Mark your calendar for May 2007 for the Alaska Master Gardener Conference. Blythe Campbell has just volunteered to chair the conference planning committee.
- MG Elizabeth Hays had two chores when she was growing up- make her bed each day and pick a quart of which ever berries were ripe.
- The Homer Garden Club's new book can be mail-ordered from the Book Store, 907-235-7496. The cost is \$29.95 plus \$5 mailing. To participate in a group order contact Julie Riley.
- **Planting Seeds** is scheduled to play at the nightspot The O in mid-February. What kind of music do they play? Probably not folk.
- Presidents/representatives of garden clubs in Southcentral Alaska met on February 1st to talk about networking with the Alaska Botanical Garden.
- The Alaska Botanical Garden has a new Executive Director, Ann Rothe. She just started working this month.
- In the Anchorage Daily News "Dear Wayne & Wanda" column on Friday, January 27, Wayne suggested that to meet women "join a real club that attracts people of similar interests...[like] a gardening club (lots of babes here- in rubber clogs!)".
- According to CES Horticulture Specialist Dr. Roseann Leiner, the word "garden" has the same root as paradise- a garden is one's own personal paradise!- Marion Owen, Kodiak Master Gardener, (author, photographer and radio personality) sent bumper stickers to Anchorage via Jill Shepherd that read "Practice Random Acts of GARDENING".
- Cornell University and the Agricultural Research Service have reported the first-ever identification on this continent of the "killer fly", *Coenosia attenuata*, which has a taste for fungus gnats, leafminers, and fruit flies.

MG Volunteer OPPORTUNITIES

Community School Classes. Teach a topic for adults or youths. The upcoming quarter covers the prime spring months, late March, April and May. Your ideas need to be submitted to Community Schools by the END OF FEBRUARY. Julie can help you plan what you'd like to teach. Most classes are held in the evenings, M-Th for 1 to 2 hours. Kid's gardening classes often work best if scheduled right after school. Think spring and any topic will do.

Alaska Women's Show, April 21-23, 2006.

Presentations are 50 minutes in length and are offered on the hour from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Friday through Sunday. Topics to fit this year's theme include window boxes, landscaping, gourmet salad greens, herbs. Other ideas can also be entertained. The DEADLINE IS MID-FEBRUARY.

Alaska Pioneer Home is looking for 1-2 Master Gardeners interested in working with their new garden club in the nursing home wing. The group will meet twice a week during the day throughout the year. They have access to a greenhouse and a wonderful outdoor raised bed garden area. You would work along with one of the Pioneer Home staff members, and if twice a week is too much, once a week or every other week would help.

Alaska Botanical Garden, ABG Fair. Donna Basinger is hoping to find two volunteer coordinators to help with the ABG Fair scheduled for June 24 & 25, 2006. These jobs both begin right away. 1) **SPEAKER/DEMONSTRATION COORDINATOR** - choose theme and topics, find speakers and presenters, make schedule, mail parking passes, write thank you notes (the office has a list of potential speakers and topics) 2) **CHILDREN'S VILLAGE COORDINATOR** - Choose botanical craft projects for children, secure supplies (the office has many books). Please contact Donna at ABG if you are interested, 770-3692, events@alaskabg.org and let Julie know you are going to putting in a big chunk of volunteer time in this capacity.

4-H Talking Plant will be offered to all second grade classrooms starting the end of March after spring break. 30-50 minute presentations work best. You will have the Talking Plant model at your disposal. Call or e-mail Julie so she can set up a training before the season begins. One request has already come in. Would someone like to do it now?

Boys & Girls Club in Eagle River has a gardening club and would like Master Gardener assistance either as a one time guest speaker or on a regular basis. Kids range in age from K- 6th grade.

Kids in the Garden: ABG School field trips. Susan Brusehaber is hoping to find Master Gardeners who can assist with one of the 4 rotations that school groups will be doing on Tuesdays and Thursdays during May and September. Your task would be to lead a 40-minute field trip around the garden. Classes are scheduled from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. Volunteers would need to come a bit earlier. If you can't commit to the regular schedule, even participating once would help a lot. Susan is a retired elementary school teacher and can be reached at 694-9772 or sbrusehabe@aol.com. CC: Julie too.



Portabellos....CONT FROM PAGE 3

The kit is designed for ease of use – a good thing for us mushroom-growing novices. The box in which the kit is packaged is the “pot” in which the mushrooms are grown. Inside the box is a layer of compost and mycelium and a separate package containing “casing” – a mixture of calcium carbonate and peat moss. To start the kit, you mix a little of the compost/mycelium with the casing and water. This mixture is spread evenly across the remainder of the compost about an inch thick. Once spread, place the open box in a dark location in which a constant temperature between 60 and 74 degrees is maintained. Mist it daily, providing about as much moisture on a daily basis as dew would provide had the kit been planted outdoors.

[If you are growing the mushrooms in the winter in Alaska, you’ll undoubtedly want to provide more moisture than dew provides; cold temperatures reduce the ambient humidity indoors unless a humidifier is constantly running.]

Don’t water your mushrooms as you would other indoor plants. Instead, use a spray bottle to provide the moisture.

The kit states that the mushrooms will start appearing within 7-14 days. We noticed the first tiny “shroom” buttons at eight days. Two days later the buttons had matured into recognizable mushrooms. As I write this (January 21st), eight of the portabellas have caps in the 2-3 inch range. Since mushrooms nearly double in size daily – especially when they are tiny – harvest time (when the veil covering the gills is completely separated from the cap) should be in about a week.

Sixty or seventy more “buttons” have just appeared as the next crop begins its journey to my sauté pan. If I can type and eat at the same time I’ll let you know how they taste ...

To order your own kit, contact:

Mushroom Adventures
355 Serrano Dr., Suite 9J
San Francisco CA 94132
(415) 586-4082
www.mushroomadventures.com

Favorite Seed Catalogs Recommendations Wanted

Janice Nyman asked for recommendations on seed catalogs at the January Anchorage Master Gardener Association meeting. If you have a favorite, please let her know, nyman@uaa.alaska.edu, and Julie Riley too so she can include it in the AMGA newsletter. Thanks.

Gardening Calendar

Monday, February 13

Growing & Selling Christmas Trees in Alaska, 9 a.m. – 4 p.m., Alyeska Resort, Girdwood. Special guest presenters Chal Landgren, CES, Oregon State University CES and Robert Wheeler, CES Forestry Specialist, UAF. Preregistration required \$50 (includes lunch), contact CES for a registration brochure, 786-6300.

Tuesday – Wednesday, February 14 & 15

Alaska Greenhouse and Nursery Conference, 2006, Alyeska Resort, Girdwood. This event is geared to the interests of Alaska’s horticulture industry, but home gardeners may be interested in hearing the bulb presentations by Brent Heath from Brent & Becky’s Bulbs, Gloucester, Virginia. Preregistration required, \$100 or \$50 for one day (includes lunch), contact CES for registration information.

Monday, February 20

Anchorage Master Gardener Association meeting, “**Begonia Baskets**”, Scott Pettit. 7:00 p.m. Also includes potluck supper, CES conference room 786-6300.

Thursday, February 23

Composting Techniques, 7 – 8:30 p.m., Julie Riley, Extension Horticulture Agent, CES conference room, free, but call to register, 786-6300.

Saturday, February 25

Potato Lovers Bash, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Includes information on growing, harvesting, late blight, the Alaska commercial potato scene, potato trivia, cooking and tasting different varieties. Speakers: Jeff Smeenk & Roseann Leiner, CES Horticulture Specialists; Bill Campbell, Alaska Plant Materials Center; and Julie Cascio, CES Home Economist, Palmer. CES conference room, Anchorage, \$5, preregistration required. 786-6300.

Thursday, March 2

Growing Strawberries and Raspberries, 7:00-9:00 p.m., Abbot Loop Community School. Patty Joyce Nedland, Master Gardener, fee, \$8, register in advance with Community Schools at <http://www.akcommunityschools.org>.

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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Phone: 345-4099
Email: amga@gci.net

AMGA Web Site: www.alaskamastergardeners.org
(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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Mr. Butler showing the evaporation trays for the puréed clam viscera used in plant fertilizer.
See "Peninsula Master Gardener News" for related article.

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