



Anchorage Chapter



Volume 12, Issue 4

# ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER April 2010



## Message From Jane

Jane Baldwin, AMGA President

March is only a memory, but what a month of great gardening activities!

The Mat-Su MG conference had great speakers. I now have a renewed motivation to take more GOOD garden pictures with tips from Julie Riley's garden photography session!

Annie Nevaldine's March MG program on container veggies provided a whole new spectrum of container possibilities beyond garden pots: 5 gallon buckets, 3-lb. coffee cans, garbage cans, Rubbermaid style storage tubs, old barbecues, tires, wheelbarrows, wagons, and even cardboard boxes. The cardboard box is intriguing and worth trying this summer. Maybe I'll put a couple of storage tubs of veggies on the driveway, too. The possibilities for gaining a bit more gardening space seem endless when you turn your imagination loose.

Annie also reported success in controlling those pesky little fungus gnats by growing carnivorous plants (butterwort aka pinguicula) alongside windowsill herb pots. A butterwort's modus operandi is a sticky leaf surface which catches and eventually digests the fungus gnats. How's that for an organic, least toxic means of insect control? Pinguiculas will even flower on your windowsill! To find out more about on carnivorous plants, check out the website of the International Carnivorous Plant Society, [http://www.carnivorousplants.org /index](http://www.carnivorousplants.org/index). While you're there, click on About the ICPS and then on Board of Directors, and surprise! The President of the ICPS Board is none other than an Alaskan from the Master Gardener class this past December. And yes, we do have several carnivorous plants native to Alaska, including pinguiculas.

The Seed Swap and Garden Talks at the Red Beet Bistro offered seeds, good gardening info and a wonderful sack lunch from Sally Koppenberg of the Red Beet. The red and yellow beet and apple salad with a balsamic vinegar type dressing was out of this world yummy. (I'm going to grow beets this summer and try to do this salad, too!) Did you know that potatoes are a member of the nightshade family, along with tomatoes, pepper & eggplants and that there is indication there may be a relationship between eating foods from the nightshade family and arthritis, fibromyalgia and other inflamma-

tory conditions flare-ups? Thank you, Jodie Anderson for that interesting tidbit.

This past weekend brought the Alaska Botanical Garden's Spring Seminar, another array of intriguing gardening topics. One of my favorites was the session on Alaska Bats by Marian Snively of Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game. Marian is the Wildlife Biologist responsible for coordinating the Alaska Citizen Science Program. This is a partnership of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Chugach National Forest, The Alaska Zoo, and The Alaska Natural Heritage Program which provides for private citizens to assist wildlife biologists in collecting important information that will be used to support future research and conservation planning. Local projects include Wood Frogs, Loons and Grebes, and Alaskan Bats. For more information, search for Alaska Citizen Science at [google.com](http://google.com) or <http://www.wc.adfg.state.ak.us/> Or google Alaska Bat Club.

There might be too much snow to garden outside right now, but we can always grow our gardening knowledge!

## North Root Big Lake Garden Club Spring Gardening Symposium



Alaska gardeners making presentations at the 2010 Symposium: Les Brake, River Bean, Verna Pratt, Jaime Rodriguez, Steve Brown, Fran Durner, Julie Riley, Chris Wagner, Brooke Heppinstall, Sally Koppenberg, Christine & Bob Greig, Catherine Inman, Florene Carney, Cheri Ables, Jill Parson, Barbara Montgomery, Randi Perlman, Mark Fisher, Jennifer Davis, Talya Johnson

PLUS! A special appearance by the MOOSE BUSTERS!

Held at Houston Middle School. Tickets: advanced (\$25); at the door (\$35) with all proceeds going to the Mid-Valley Seniors & Houston Middle School. Contact Linda Lockhart at 907 892-8119 or email: [lockhart@mtaonline.net](mailto:lockhart@mtaonline.net)

Visit: [www.northroot.net](http://www.northroot.net) for more information, including driving directions to Houston Middle School.

## Container Vegetable Gardening

By Mary M Rydesky  
March 2010



Cooler temperatures and a shorter growing season are challenging but not daunting to Alaska gardeners. Many have investigated container gardens, as illustrated by the amazingly largest crowd ever (72!) of Master Gardeners who congregated to hear Annie Nevaldine discuss her experience at the March meeting. Annie engaged the MGs

in consideration of reasons to plant in containers, choice of containers and soils, better choices for successful growth and harvesting in Alaska, and pest management. With the plethora of invaders (from aphids to weeds) to challenges (from sun exposure to aching backs), achieving a good harvest presents great sport for the Alaska gardener. Annie offered a series of hard-learned tips for success:

- Think of hanging containers to avoid rabbits, kids, dogs, cats, and other invaders. Hanging containers are easy on the back, too. Plant in almost anything, from bags to boxes, pots, and baskets, ground level or hanging.
- Dark pots, usually warned against in gardening literature written for the lower 48, may be a boon in cold climates. Dark pots get warm and hold warmth. There is the downside of faster drying, however, so remember to water frequently. Mulching with newspaper will decrease evaporation.
- Basil will root in water. Place several six-inch pots on a sunny windowsill to have an ongoing supply. Verna Pratt and several other MGs added that they have rooted basil, using grocery and Aerogarden™ cuttings.
- *Pinguicula vulgaris* (butterwort or bug violet) eats fungus gnats, so have a few near your inside container garden groupings.
- Have a store of three-pound coffee cans? Paint, pierce, and plant for a celery 'hedge'.
- Intermingling root crops and crop tops efficiently uses space. Carrots make beautiful foliage. That topsy-turvy method of planting tomatoes works. Adopt a clean garbage container for planting potatoes in multiple layers using leaves, as did Jane Baldwin. She planted peanut potatoes in a combo of dry leaves, newspaper, and grass clippings layered in three-inch stripes. Some MGs suggest that you can plant tomatoes on the very top.
- What soil mediums do the MGs use? Experience with compost, chicken manure, potting soil (Miracle Gro™), ProMix™, vermiculate/perlite, hydro gel crystals mixed at least 3 inches below the surface were all volunteered. Try what you like, but think about clean and green choices that lead to good health of your plants AND their consumers.

Container gardens are familiar to house plant lovers: they get us through the dark months! Ever try an Amazon Lilly? They (the *Eucharis grandiflora*) do not go dormant. Perhaps they help by holding the promise of flowers and vegetables on the deck and in the garden. Want to know more? Google is a terrific way to search, using terms like "Alaska container gardening vegetables" and "Alaska hanging basket vegetables". Even so, read carefully: suggestions that work for the lower 48 gardeners may lead to limited success in Alaska!

With the reading and experimenting, MGs may wish to

go one step further: keep a journal just as if doing a science experiment. Note dates, conditions, facts that describe your container gardening. With cameras built into almost everything (including cell phones), make it a habit to take a photo on a regular schedule from seeding to harvesting and end of season clean up. Label these photos, add them to your journal, and you will more clearly remember what worked for succeeding years.

### Resources

Before You Make Your First Container Garden

<http://tinyurl.com/y9w3qag>

Container Vegetable Gardening (pdf)

[aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/.../E-545 vegetable\\_gardening\\_containers.pdf](http://aggie-horticulture.tamu.edu/.../E-545_vegetable_gardening_containers.pdf)

Vegetable Gardening in Containers

<http://tinyurl.com/yj462gr>

AZ Master Gardeners Manual

<http://tinyurl.com/clzcya>

Container Vegetables & Herbs <http://tinyurl.com/ykefk4y>

Growing Vegetables in Hanging Baskets

<http://tinyurl.com/yzdlvnx>

Growing Fresh Vegetables (pdf)

<http://tinyurl.com/yhzw2pc>



## Lilies in Milk Cartons

By Debbie Hinchey

The perfect pots for lilies are actually recycled half-gallon milk cartons. I figured this out many years ago when I had lots of lilies to pot up but not much potting soil.

I wanted a pot deep enough for the roots that develop under the bulb and those that originate from the stem.

Milk cartons are perfect. When the milk (or orange juice) is gone, rinse them out (replace the caps) pull the sealed tops apart for maximum depth, and let them dry. When spring comes they are ready to go.

I can write the variety name on each carton with a Sharpie felt tip pen, stab holes (with scissors and a twist) one to one-and-a-half inches from the bottom for drainage, and stack them closely together. Of course, they stack perfectly in milk crates - but add up to a lot of weight.

When they are blooming I move them into decorative pots or wooden planters so that those tall top-heavy stems are firmly "rooted" in the closely packed decorative pot. I especially love to have Oriental and other fragrant lilies by my front door. So, as they start to bloom I move them up front. As they fade, they are moved back to less conspicuous place that still gets good sunshine to produce a high-quality bulb for next year.

Later in the season I eventually get them planted in someone's garden - maybe mine! The cardboard paper is getting soft by this time and the seam down the edge easily peels away to gently release the brittle roots from the sides. Dig the hole deeply and water in.



## Master Gardener Focus: Dana Klinkhart

By Cheryl Chapman



Spring is busting at the Klinkharts' just south of Huffman Road: Snow has melted back from window sills, the young worms in the utility room are humming worm songs of amor, and the lettuce in the fridge has disappeared under trays of germinating seeds.

"This year, like every year, I say to myself, 'Dana, you might have overdone it,' " says Dana Klinkhart as she pulls a lidded plastic expapaya container, now incubating primroses, off the top of the refrigerator and hands it to husband Ed. Out of the gravel in each compartment, a brave green thread of baby primula reaches for light. Within weeks, *Primula saxatilis*, the rock primrose, and *Primula cortusoides*, the Siberian primrose, will be ready to go outside.

Antique sweet pea seeds, nicked, are germinating in damp paper towels and baggies; climbing sweet pea vine and bleeding heart vine squeeze together next to the milk along with *Nomocharis pardanthina*, a Highland flower from Les Brake, moodily stratifying in a large plastic bag. This freckled perennial will bask outdoors in pots come summer.

Geranium cuttings bloom on window ledges. An airplane plant lifts striped leaves from a demitasse cup over the sink. A different kind of plant, *Lacto-bacillus*, or sourdough starter, burps on the counter. Enameled pails await wheat berries, which will spring into grass Easter gardens for grandchildren. Every room in the house, like almost every shelf in the refrigerator, is fresh and green with plants in different stages, including half the garage, where Dana and Ed have set up bakers' racks filled with young plants: Lemon Gem marigolds ("They mind better," says Dana); a tray of seed dahlias; over-wintered begonias; a *Passiflora* (Passionflower) vine; Christmas cactus; more geraniums; scarlet runner beans planted by a grandson; nasturtiums from the hand of a 3-year-old granddaughter.

This is where Ed builds sturdy cedar garden benches and loveseats, painted or natural, for indoors or out, with planters on both sides. And though it's a tight fit, somehow there's room for the car.

The Klinkharts moved in a decade ago to the growl of earth-moving equipment. Their back yard sloped sharply down to their new home, so drainage was an issue. They built up soil to the level of the street behind them, stepped the hill down in terraces and added a tall fence as a visual backdrop and heat reflector.

Now their Christmas tree shoulders up through snow over a small pool. A reindeer adds Northern ambiance. But it won't be long until the summer music of the pond fountain replaces the drip of melting ice.

For 25 years the Klinkharts lived in a lofty Bavarian-style A-frame on the Hillside. Their gardening was in containers -- "lobelia baskets everywhere. It fit the

Hillside. It was really quite handsome, but it wasn't practical to fence it so we had a vegetable garden only once, for the moose and rabbits," says Dana.

The 900-foot drop to their present neighborhood added two weeks of growing season to each side of summer, and a fence now protects their gardens from critters.

Dana was born and grew up in the fishing village of Cordova, "not an easy place to garden; we had a lot of rain. And bedrock." A grandmother in Snohomish, Wash., had a big garden, though, and that's where young Dana caught the bug. When she was 18, she moved to Anchorage to attend what was then Alaska Methodist University, then diverted to the romantic life of a flight attendant for Cordova Airlines, then met Ed, a Fish & Game biologist, "and he clipped my wings."

In 1999 she signed up for the Master Gardener class, and has filled every year since with sharing her delight in gardening with others, with presentations ranging from pond-building to making living wreaths to vines, and also with stunning photographs of her own plants, those of others, and those living out in the high, wide and lonesome on their own. One of her coffee-table books, "Meander Garden," pictures chocolate lilies from Seward, a *Mimulus*, or yellow monkey flower, from near Girdwood, and a scarlet and yellow columbine, also from Seward, transplanted for a brief, hostile period to Anchorage, then returned to Seward.

"I'm a shoot-from-the-hip planter," says Dana. "If it looks good, it stays. I'm kind of loose with my gardening. From the time things begin to grow, what shows its face right then is my favorite plant - until the next one comes along.

"Alaska is its own story. Different parts of Anchorage are their own story. Different parts of my own yard are their own story. There's always something new to learn."

This spring the Klinkharts are learning worms. Dana and Ed attended a wiggler workshop in the Valley, "and we're now the proud parents of 100 worms" who live under strips of damp newspaper in a cooler. Once a week, they get a red wiggler buffet of chopped cabbage, banana peels, and other vegetable scraps that will, eventually, become worm castings, like B-12 for plants.

Dana served as Master Gardener president for four years, from 2004-2007, and has been on the board for eight years. She's now helping put together garden tours for this summer - "VERY popular" - and the second advanced class, "on soils."

For those new to Alaska gardening, or wanting to know more, she says, they can hardly do better than hook up with local gardening clubs devoted to their particular interests; the Cooperative Extension Service will have a list. The Master Gardener classes and programs are a great support system, Dana says, for tender and hardened-off gardeners alike. And also, before buying a house, it's a good idea to be informed about the drainage, the soil, the zone and the sunlight, because these four things will determine the gardening opportunities there.

## Festival of Flowers - City of Flowers

by Nickel LaFleur

As most of you know, the budget for our flowers in Anchorage has been cut by \$50,000. We all love being known as the "City of Lights and Flowers". It's rewarding to take our visiting guests around to see the gorgeous hanging baskets and artistic displays of vibrant color gardens throughout town. In order to maintain our status, we have to do something NOW.

A group of concerned citizens have come up with ways to raise money to build a 'flower endowment' - like a PFD for Flowers. One way to accomplish this are the \$20 raffle tickets for a chance to win a very cool 6'x9' potting shed valued at \$4,000. The shed is being built by King Career Center. Alaska Mill and Feed has outfitted it with all the gardening goodies. There are also other businesses and individuals who are contributing to this one-of-a-kind potting shed. Be on the look-out for the shed to be at upcoming events (like the Women's Home Show) and be on display in the downtown 5th Avenue Mall before it is awarded to the lucky winner on June 5th. You do not have to be present to win. The tickets are available downtown on the 6th floor of City Hall in the Parks Department as well as with the Anchorage Downtown Partnership. You can also contact me: tagalak@alaska.net.

Another fund raising event that is happening right now until April 5th is the selling of flats and baskets of flowers. Since we all plan on buying flowers for our homes, this is a perfect opportunity to get those flowers PLUS support the flower endowment. It's a win-win situation. However, due to this newsletter coming out at the beginning of April, (and the fund raising for this event ends on April 5th) hopefully you have had a chance to get in on these flats and baskets of flowers while at the Mall at Sears Garden Days on April 3rd, if not before.

The 5th of June has been set aside for a whole day of fund raising events for our flower fund in the city of Anchorage. This is where we need help from Master Gardeners. We will be looking for MG's to help out by answering questions and putting on demonstrations of planting flowers, identifying flowers, selling flowers and helping children pot them up. For those of you that are working on your volunteer hours, this is a good place to help. It would be nice to have Master Gardeners hold a prominent place in this worthy event that we hope to hold annually.

Also, there will be a booth at the June 5th event that you will be able to register for to enter into 'landscaping contests'. An entry fee of \$25 for each event will get your home or business in a contest. There will be a prize for container garden, residential landscape, business/professional landscape, volunteer-garden plot and more. Plaques will be made to display the name of the winners each year and placed in a prominent location in the downtown area.

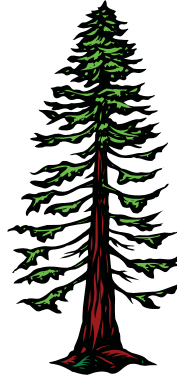
Calendar in the 5th of June to spend your day in and around the Town Square (5th & 6th, E & F Streets) to enjoy a full day of celebrating flowers. All monies donated to this will be tax deductible and all of it will be put in a fund for JUST the flowers -- it will not be mixed in the slush fund of City money. It's all about the flowers - and your help!

If you are a vendor and want to have a booth, get with

Cheri Spink with the Anchorage Downtown Partnership at 279-5655 or email [CSpink@anchoragedowntown.org](mailto:CSpink@anchoragedowntown.org) to get set up. For those that are going to pay by credit card, call Ruth Quinlan at 279-5650.

If you are ready and available to help on June 5th (or before), let one of us know! Please contact our President Jane Baldwin: [jbaldwin@alaska.net](mailto:jbaldwin@alaska.net) or me: [tagalak@alaska.net](mailto:tagalak@alaska.net), phone: 337-5651 for more information. Your dedication and help is needed and appreciated.

### Suggested Tree Species and Important Consideration for the Upcoming Planting Season



Spring is coming and the planting season is right around the corner. Many of us are already planning our gardens and some might be thinking about planting a tree or two to add a little extra foliage to the yard. Here are a few important considerations when deciding what tree or shrub is right for your landscape.

When it comes to picking out a tree or shrub, its mature size is important. Will there be enough room for the tree to grow without encroaching on overhead or underground utilities, making contact with buildings, or interfering with pedestrian and vehicular traffic? Pick a species that will fit in the place you intend to plant it.

It is also important to make sure that the tree or shrub can thrive in the soil it will be planted in. Some species don't tolerate soils that stay saturated for long periods of time, and others don't like the soil to dry out. Know the soil characteristics that you will be planting in and talk to your arborist or nursery person about what species will thrive in your soil conditions.

Select a tree that has one main trunk from the ground all the way to the top of the tree and has branches evenly distributed throughout the crown. Look for trees that have branches attached to the trunk with angles between 45 and 90 degrees from vertical. Narrow angles between a branch and trunk may result in splitting, cracks, or trunk damage as the tree grows. Don't choose trees with wounds on the trunk or branches or that have signs of insects or disease.

The quality of the root system is the most important consideration when it comes to making the final selection. A healthy, symmetrical and fibrous root system with no girdling or circling roots will help the tree or shrub thrive. Pull the tree or shrub out of the pot to inspect the roots. There should be roots all the way to the edge of the growing medium. If there are circling roots larger than a quarter of an inch thick, pick another one. For balled and burlap trees, check the depth of the root system by probing the ball with an engineers chaining pin, tent stake, or a similar device. You should feel roots within a couple inches of the soil surface. If not, go for another one. If you can, opt for trees or shrubs that come as bare root. There are many benefits; they are cheaper and you can see the root system and you can be sure to get it planted right; with the trunk flare above the soil.

Continued on page 6





## Central Peninsula Master Gardener News

By Rosemary Kimball

It's spring! The Alaska Botanical Garden had their "do" the last weekend of March. The keynote speaker was Toby Hemenway, author of "Gaia's Garden: A Guide to Home-scale Permaculture." His talk Friday night was on a world-wide scale and he finished it up on Saturday with a slide show of what can be done on a local level, this time in Portland, Oregon. It was hard to choose among the 20 different classes that were available on Saturday. If you didn't go this year, you must go next!

It's spring! The MG web site got its first gardening query of the season.

It's spring! People down here are starting to assemble grow lights and compare seed orders. My neighbor MG Mark got purple artichoke seeds and I got green. They're up and this will be the year of the artichoke in the 'hood. He's also going to use a bunch of windows and cause a greenhouse to appear in his yard. I can hardly wait to move my stuff in.

It's spring! I succumbed and bought one of Jiffy's starting trays with the little pellets and got an education. First is that everything planted in there must have the same requirements for light/dark and temperature for sprouting. Then, trying to take the pellets out of the tray for transplanting can be hard on the seedlings as the pellets are firmly wedged into their holder. Then, what does one do with the pellets that didn't sprout. And what about buying replacement pellets? The tray used 30mm pellets, the replacements in a bag were 40mm and there was no way they were going to be made to fit. I did find that I can get twelve 30mm and eight 40mm pellets in a cell and that's the way I will go from now on. I also learned that ordering pellets on-line is costlier than buying locally.

It's spring! Go cut some cottonwood twigs for forcing. If their perfume were in a bottle, that would be the scent I'd choose for the rest of my life.

February seemed like March and the front part of March like February except for the heat in the sun. Then came the Ides of March. It may have been 25° but with the sun, it was too warm to zip a light coat. Something happens to the quality of the air about then and it almost feels balmy. Even the birds notice it and start to sing their honey-here-I-am songs. Garrison Keilor described Minnesota in March as what God designed to show people who don't drink what a hangover is like. He needs to move to Alaska and get a sunny-day high with no bad consequences!

Only one person down here got the Thompson and Morgan seed catalog this year. I went to the T&M site and ordered one but still haven't gotten it. I did get the Parks and Burpee catalogs and then tried to

order on-line. That was a colossal pain and I sent off whiney notes to both companies through the ease of the "contact us" link. And there really was someone on the other end reading and replying! Parks even called. I ended up phoning in my order to Burpee and talked to a very nice Latoya but what happens then is that they lose my impulse purchases which make up at least 1/3 of my order as I've lost all my markers in the catalog. Both companies said they were having trouble with their web site and I know when I went back to Park's it was improved.

My husband caused a large sunny area to be created in our forest last summer and it will become a fenced orchard. I ordered two quince on-line from One Green World ([www.onegreenworld.com](http://www.onegreenworld.com)) because one of the things I read while noodling around was that that particular quince had produced in Anchorage. Does anyone know who has a quince?

Got a good idea from a friend who doesn't have a greenhouse and likes tomatoes. Last year she put her tomato in a ceramic pot on her deck and had tomatoes outside. Got to thinking about that and I'm wondering if the ceramic didn't act as a heater and heat storage device. I thought I'd give that get a trial on my deck this summer.

You know the tune, so sing along to "It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas Breakup, everywhere I go..."

## Poa Annuua

By Rosemary Kimball

Other people have chickweed in their gardens; I have annual bluegrass, poa annua. In the lower-48 it is a cool-season winter weed as it needs coolness to be happy. We have that in the summer and we can grow it far better than I've ever seen Outside. Ditto chickweed but that was a story several months ago...



The plant produces hundreds of seeds that live forever and should it get a foothold in your garden, like chickweed, you've got it forever. Unfortunately some varieties can be perennial even with annua in its name. Hultén lists 38 different varieties of Poa in the state. Not pleasant to think of.

Controlling it chemically is probably not worth the effort and certainly can be awkward if the grass is in the garden, as mine is. I got disgusted last year and mowed it with the mower set very low to collect the seeds. This spring will tell how annual it is. I also tilled under half of my carrots because I couldn't tell the grass from seed leaves of the carrots without more effort than I cared to expend. Just don't ignore it for a summer like I did as it can grow from seed to reseeding in six weeks!



## Bird Chatter

- Check out the new stuff at Christine Bingham's garden blog: [lastfrontiergarden.blogspot.com/](http://lastfrontiergarden.blogspot.com/)

MG's of note:

- Recent MG class graduate, Michael Baldwin (son of Jane Baldwin), is serving as President of the Board of Directors for the International Carnivorous Plant Society

- Primula Study Group leader, Mary Jo Burns, serves on the American Primrose Society's Board of Directors

- Beginning in April, watch for gardening-related stories by Roy Neese in the Alaska Star newspaper [www.alaskastar.com/](http://www.alaskastar.com/)

## Garden Humor

[www.gardenhumour.com](http://www.gardenhumour.com)

Used with permission from David Hobson,  
Garden Columnist

- *The best way to garden is to put on a wide brimmed straw hat and some old clothes. And with a hoe in one hand and a cold drink in the other, tell somebody else where to dig.*
- *How to stop a dog from digging in a garden. Start right! Never let the dog see you digging . . . Doggy see, doggy do.*
- *Grass is just a flower bed in waiting.*
- *New gardeners learn by trowel and error.*
- *Compost is best aged a little like a fine wine. I mean, would you prefer to drink a nice 97, or something that was made last Thursday?*

*I'm a gardener and I'm OK  
I sleep all night and I plant all day!  
I dress in grubby clothing, and hang around with slugs.  
Oh I'm happy in the garden  
With dirt and plants and bugs . . .  
(to the tune of Monty Python's "I'm a Lumberjack")*

*A toddler who was found chewing on a slug. After the initial surge of disgust the parent said, "Well . . . What does it taste like?" "Worms," was the reply.*

### Two Friars and a Flower Shop

*Two friars are having trouble paying off the belfry, so they open a florist shop.*

*Everyone wants to buy flowers from the men of God so business is quickly booming.*

*The florist across town sees a huge drop in sales and asks the two friars to close their shop, but they refuse.*

*A month later the florist begs the friars to close because he's having trouble feeding his family.*

*Again, they refuse, so the florist hires Hugh McTaggart. Hugh is the roughest, toughest thug in town and is hired to "persuade" the friars to close.*

*Hugh asks the friars to close their florist shop. When they refuse, he threatens to beat the crap out of them and wreck their shop every day they remain open, so they close.*

*This proves once again that Hugh and only Hugh can prevent florist friars. ~ Paul*

## Suggested Tree Species . . . cont. from page 4

Consider adding more diversity to your landscape by planting some not so common trees found in the Anchorage area. Some suggested trees are:

**Northwood Maple** *Acer rubrum* Northwood  
This medium sized tree has a broadly oval to rounded shape. The foliage is medium green. The tree can tolerate harsher winters than most, but fall color is not as reliable as other red maples. Reaches about 40 feet tall and 35 feet wide. Hardy to -40 degrees Fahrenheit.

**American Linden or Basswood** *Tilia americana*  
Basswood is a large tree with large heart shaped leaves. It tolerates moist soils and prefers full sun or partial shade. It has dense foliage, and can completely block out the sun in its shadow. Basswood can reach 80 feet tall by 50 feet wide and is hardy to zone 2

**Littleleaf Linden** *Tilia cordata*  
Littleleaf lindens are pyramidal, rounding with maturity. Leaves are generally smaller, 2 to 3 inches long and wide, finely serrated and turn yellow in fall. Trunks are usually straight and bark smooth. They prefer well drained alkali soils, but are pH adaptable and tolerate pollution well. Grows to about 45 feet tall and has a similar spread. Hardy to -30 degrees Fahrenheit.

**Ironwood** *Carpinus caroliniana*  
This multi stemmed shrub or single stem tree reaches a mature height around 30 feet and a similar spread. Leaves are dark green turning yellow, orange, and red to reddish purple in the fall. It prefers rich, moist slightly acidic soil, but is very adaptable. It does well in heavy shade. Hardy to zone 3.

**Norway Spruce** *Picea abies*  
Norway spruce, with its pendulous branchlets, is a graceful alternative to white spruce. I am not saying that white spruce isn't graceful, just the pendulous nature of the branches of Norway spruce add an attractive character to this tree. Norway spruce can reach over 60 feet tall and 35 feet wide. Prefers full sun or slight shade and moderately moist, sandy, acidic, well drained soils, but is adaptable. It is hardy to zone 3.

**Swiss stone Pine** *Pinus cembra*  
Swiss stone pine is a five needle pine reaching 40 feet tall by 25 feet wide. Needles are about 3 inches long and are green on one side, and bluish on the other. It is a slow grower and needs full sun and well drained soil. Hardy to zone 3.

More information about these and other trees can be found in Landscape Plants for Alaska, produced by the Cooperative Extension Service. The content of this guide has been recently revised and now includes several more species of trees and shrubs that are appropriate for Alaska. The updated content will be included in the Landscape Plants for Alaska website, which will be launched this spring.

Written by Stephen Nickel, Community Assistance Forester for the Alaska Division of Forestry, Community Forestry Program. The Community Forestry Program, with financial assistance from the USDA Forest Service, helps establish and sustain local community forestry programs throughout Alaska and supports Anchorage TREErific and other community forestry groups statewide. For information about the program and on tree planting and care, visit <http://www.forestry.alaska.gov/community/>



# Garden Event Calendar

## April 5, 6, 7

Dimond Greenhouses - Hanging Baskets & Patio Planters Class: How to plant baskets & containers & plant suggestions - 7-9pm; no cost; RSVP (space) - Dimond Greenhouse, 1050 W. Dimond Blvd, 349-2552 www.dimondgreenhouse.com

## April 6

\*Mat-Su Garden Club Meeting; Ornamental Grasses, Christine Bingham. 10:30am, Sacred Heart Church, Wasilla.

\*Central Peninsula Garden Club Meeting; Garden Planning and Layout; Janice Chumley & Tom Jahns (CES). Open to the public. Meeting location: Cook Inlet Aquaculture Bldg., 40610 K-Beach Road, Kenai. Contact Marion Nelson mmkn@ptialaska.net www.cenpengardenclub.org

## April 8

Wildflower Garden Club Meeting - Hardy Roses for Anchorage, Debbie Hinchev - 10:00 am, Central Lutheran Church, 15th & Cordova - 243-1961

## April 10

Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers; Grafting Workshop; 12:30 pm; Dimond Greenhouse. Open to public. Instruction & scionwood is free, each rootstock is about \$6 or so. <http://apfga.org/index.html>

## April 12 - 14

Dimond Greenhouses - Vegetable Gardening Class: How to start seeds indoors, outdoor garden prep & what vegetables do best in Alaska - 7-9pm; no cost; RSVP (space) - Dimond Greenhouse, 1050 W. Dimond Blvd, 349-2552 www.dimondgreenhouse.com

## April 15

Fritz Creek Gardens, Homer - season opening - Rita Jo Shoultz <http://www.alaskahardy.com>

## April 17th

\* North Root Big Lake Gardening Symposium. See page 1, or visit [www.northroot.net](http://www.northroot.net) for more details

\* Alaska Rock Garden Society Meeting: Native Rock Garden Plants of Healy, Alaska, Verna Pratt. 2 pm, MTA Building, Palmer-<http://www.args.org/>

## April 19

**Anchorage Master Gardeners Meeting:** Drip Irrigation, Amy Olmstead (MG); Garden Snaps Map, Lynne Opstad & Anna Denis (MGs) - 7pm; CES, 2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd. [www.alaskamastergardeners.org](http://www.alaskamastergardeners.org) 786-6300

## April 22

40th Anniversary of Earth Day - Watch newspapers for information.

## April 23-25

Alaska Women's Show - Sullivan Arena

## April 26, 28

Dimond Greenhouses: Lawns and Landscaping Class, Getting the lawn green & keeping it green; starting a new lawn; landscaping tips - 7-9pm; no cost; RSVP (space) - Dimond Greenhouse, 1050 W. Dimond Blvd, 349-2552 www.dimondgreenhouse.com

## April 28

Organic & Community Gardening Workshop Series: Healthy Watersheds & Gardening, Fred Sorensen of UAF Cooperative Extension, Cherie Norton Anchorage Waterways Council, Ellie Vande Visse. 7-9pm; Anchorage Senior Activity Center (ACAT), 1300 East 19th Ave., space limited, \$10 suggested donation. Register information call ACAT, 222-7714.

## May 3

Alaska Native Plant Society Meeting; Fungi, Kate Mohatt; 7:30 pm, Campbell Creek Science Center. <http://aknps.org/>

## May 6

Anchorage Garden Club Meeting; Dish Gardens; Gretchen Fowler; 7:00 pm, Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd & Eagle. AGC hotline: 566-0539 [www.alaskagardenclubs.org](http://www.alaskagardenclubs.org)

## May 11

WoolWood Studio & Gardens - season opening; T-W-Th-Sat, 11a-5p or by appt; Palmer. Contact: Brook Heppinstall; 907-746-3606 [woolwood@mtaonline.net](mailto:woolwood@mtaonline.net) [www.WoolWood.com](http://www.WoolWood.com)

## May 15

In The Garden Nursery - season opening - 10-5pm; Check website for updates on plant lists & class schedules. Contact: Lorri Abel; [www.inthegardennursery.org](http://www.inthegardennursery.org)

## May 17

\* Arbor Day Celebration - 11:30 - 1:00 pm; Valley of the Moon Park, 610 W. 17th Ave. - (17th & E Streets). Watch newspapers for other Arbor Day events. Contact: Nickel LaFleur 337-5651

\* **Anchorage Master Gardeners Meeting** - Maples & Beyond; Scott Stringer, Municipal Forester, Certified Arborist; 7pm. CES, 2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd. Contact: 786-6300 [www.alaskamastergardeners.org](http://www.alaskamastergardeners.org)

\*\*Note\*\* There might be new meeting location by this date

## May 21-22

Juneau Master Gardeners Conference; Juneau. <http://www.sealaskamastergardeners.org/>

## Permaculture Workshop <http://www.balancealaska.com/>

Are you interested in learning more about Permaculture and how to apply it in your home and garden? Join Saskia Esslinger and Matt Oster for this hands-on workshop series, designed to give you the skills you need to begin applying Permaculture in your garden.

April 3: Permaculture Design Basics

April 17: Forest Gardens

May 1: The Soil-Food Web

May 15: Instant Gardens

May 29: Integrating chickens

June 12: Greenhouse design

All workshops are Saturday mornings 9am to 12-noon at the Williams Street Farmhouse in mid-town Anchorage. The cost is \$150 for the whole series or \$30 per workshop, including refreshments and handouts. Space is limited! Pre-register by e-mailing [alaskaskia@gmail.com](mailto:alaskaskia@gmail.com)

## Notices

\*\*The 2010 AMGA Directories should be delivered this month

\*\*The April Newsletter deadline is April 24th. Consider writing an educational article for our newsletter

\*\*Please send in garden related tidbits for the Bird Chatter column - we need to know what's happening!

\*\*If you would like to be on the list to answer gardener related questions generated from the "Ask a Master Gardener" section of our web site, let Gina know: [AMGA@alaska.net](mailto:AMGA@alaska.net)



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

Mail: 14051 Fejes Road

Anchorage, AK 99516

Phone: 345-4099

Email: [amga@alaska.net](mailto:amga@alaska.net) (NEW EMAIL)

AMGA Web Site: [www.alaskamastergardeners.org](http://www.alaskamastergardeners.org)

(The Newsletter will be on-line in living color!)

To send concerns or information to the AMGA directly, mail to:

AMGA

P.O. Box 221403

Anchorage, AK 99522-1403

For information about membership or upcoming programs, contact:  
Cooperative Extension Office  
2221 E. Northern Lights Blvd.  
Anchorage, AK 99508  
Phone: 786-6300  
Fax: 786-6312



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Dana and Ed Klinkhart stand behind Ed's handiwork: garden benches with Dana's geraniums. Dana is the subject of our MG Focus this month. Article on page 3.  
Photo by Dana Klinkhart.

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Alaska Master Gardeners Association, Inc.  
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