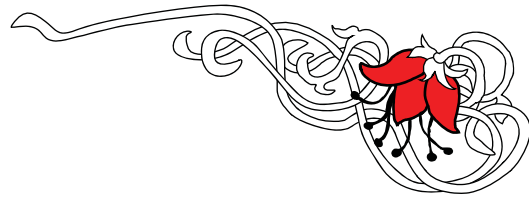


Anchorage Chapter



Volume 12, Issue 5

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

May 2010



Message From Jane AMGA President

"One of the most delightful things about a garden is the anticipation it brings."

W. E. Johns, *The Passing Show*, 1937

Exhaustion - and we haven't even gotten to the best part of gardening yet! Planting seeds, transplanting seedlings, starting dahlias, begonias and lilies, running out of soil, buying more soil, using up soil in left over pots, fighting aphids, watering - why is it that in a flat of seedlings, they never all need watering at the same time?

Excitement -- As of April 25th, the snow in most places has melted (again), except for some large berms and in shady areas. Admittedly it looks pretty grim out there and the grass is still soggy. With day time temperatures regularly hitting the mid-forties, we've finally reached the next step in garden prep: outside in the actual garden, albeit in sweatshirts, fleece vests, and maybe even down jackets.

Determination -- Overwhelming the gardener says with dread while surveying their yards: so big with so many beds to clean. Was that much mulch really necessary? To start or not to start is the question or maybe the question is where to start? Thinking about doing the whole thing is totally overwhelming and makes it hard to even begin. So it's time to use the 4' square coping mechanism. One can do a 4' square easily. When that's done, and one discovers it really wasn't so bad and besides look at all the green growing once the mulch is pulled - one can do another 4' square! A couple of days of multiple 4' squares and there will be a noticeable dent. Now surveying your kingdom you will see lots and lots of little green plants popping up. Some of my primroses have flower buds!

Enthusiasm -- With the number of recent spring gardening seminars and workshops and a couple of great MG monthly programs, gardeners' brains must be full of plans, new ideas and plants to try this summer. Are we having fun yet? Add weekend garage sale cruising to your "to do" lists in search of creative containers to plant some veggies in - thanks to Annie Nevaldine's March MG program on container veggies. And don't forget to regularly cruise the local nurseries to see what's new!

Motivation -- The April program on drip irrigation systems was EXCELLENT. Although Amy Olmstead just might be

a very dangerous person because her demonstration made putting together a drip system look easy enough that I'm thinking I can do that. How many of you have been sketching out the design puzzle for installing drip irrigation systems in your garden beds? This week's to-do list includes figuring out all the component pieces and sprinkler head things needed as well as trying to be practical about the priority of which beds to do first.

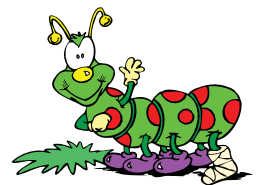
Knowledge -- The May program will bring on Maples and beyond - with local tree growing info gathered from some local notables - and an opportunity to get to know our Municipal Forester, Scott Stringer. The usual 7pm in Room 130 at Cooperative Extension Service has been reserved. Watch for email notices should any change in location occur.

Generosity -- The Pioneer Home Gardens coordinators Mary Shier & Judy Christianson report that they've moved most of the seedlings to the PH greenhouse. Stay tuned for the planting out date. Rumor has it this year will be a colorful burgundy and yellow color scheme. There are still some open slots for the summer maintenance - contact Alice Campbell, Volunteer Coordinator to sign up: alchickens5@yahoo.com

Anticipation -- See you in the garden, the nurseries or at the plant sales - it's time!

Entomology Advanced Master Gardener Training Reminder

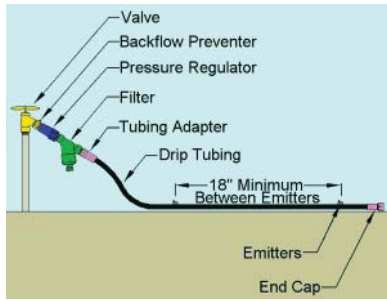
If you have completed the CEUs required, you can submit the CEU reporting form now. The required volunteer service hours can be submitted when you have completed that requirement.



Reporting forms were recently sent as email attachments to Entomology class participants. Paper copies of the forms can also be printed from AMGA's website at alaskamastergardeners.org. Click on "Advanced Master Gardener Information" and then select the appropriate reporting form. Instructions for completing and submitting the forms are provided on the forms. Be sure to retain a copy for your personal records. If you did not receive or retain the email and attached reporting forms, please contact Dana Klinkhart at klinkhart@gci.net

**Water, Water, Everywhere...
Thanks to Drip Irrigation
Mary M Rydesky, MG Meeting 4/25/10**

Amy Olmstead's excitement about tubes, punches, and attachments is infectious: at the April AMGAA meeting, she enthralled MGs with the value - and ease - of creating a system of drip irrigation for every gardening situation. Time dedicated to watering chores, plant health, and environmental conservation are three good reasons for creating a drip system.



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A small bed takes about an hour to install and around \$50.00 to get started. Starting, however, is the important step! Here is how:

- Decide where you want it and draw a sketch. Make your layout.
- Select drip, mist, or sprinkler - how will your plants get the water delivered?
- Create a shopping list. Tubes, attachments, tools, accessories.
- Prepare the grid of main lines, from spigot to plants.
- Attach secondary (smaller "lateral") tubes for delivery of water to specific areas. Nothing sounds so satisfying as the 'pop' of insertion!
- Attach heads for spray, mist, or drip.
- Install and test your system.

The decision making seemed daunting at first. Amy developed a kit of supplies - not unlike any crafter's kit - to make the process easier. With kit in hand, you can customize your system and change it as the garden changes. Measure wrong? Twist in a plug and the main line is sealed! Changes are easy so long as you have plugs to close off the previously installed tubes and heads.

Once you create your first system, you will see more clearly how every watering need can be solved with drip irrigation. Use it for perennial beds, annual beds, garden beds, trees, shrubs, hedges, decks and planters, and greenhouses or sunrooms. After your first go, you will advance to upgrades and parts that previously seemed extraneous: anti-siphon sanitation pieces; parts for regulating the pressure (especially important for a long system), timers, parts that deliver fertilizer all become engaging!

Amy offered several tips:

- The main line is hard plastic. For about \$30.00 Amy did her back yard. You do not have to bury the tubing even in Alaska. Stakes hold it in place one you lay it out on top of the garden surface.
- Using branch cutters, clip the end at an angle and attach the piece that attaches to the spigot. Push in and twist and it is done! At the first split, add an exterior "T" junction to go two directions. At bends, connect with a 90° exterior piece. No glue is needed. Exterior connectors take more pressure than interior. Remember to secure the end of the line. Amy folded a 4" section of tubing back on itself and used a zip tie in place of a seal, finding them more reliable.
- Get the tool that looks like a leather punch, and the quarter inch tubing pieces. These attach to heads for sprinkler patterns, mist, and drip. Save the house and the asphalt by picking the right degree of water direction. You can also pick

the flow rate from $\frac{1}{4}$ to a gallon per hour. Mister heads and drippers (trees and peonies like these) are also available. Put a quarter inch barb fitting on the quarter inch line, then poke a hole in the main line, and insert the barb into the line. Add a stake and it will stay where you place it. A drip head, by way of contrast, has no quarter inch tubing; it attaches directly to the main line.

- The punch tool has an ergonomic version that is easier on the hands. Instead of using human force, the tool's lever delivers the power to make the hole.
- Got a raised bed? Use the 90° angles to run the main line up the side and over the edge of the bed, or drill through the side of the bed.
- These systems work off well systems, too.
- Put in a timer - you can even go out of town with assurance the gardens will be watered.

With Alaska's climate, gardeners routinely roll up the garden hoses for storage over winter, and just as regularly, re-install them each Spring. A drip system stays in place! Consider this routine for maintenance:

- In the Spring, attach to the main faucet, check for winter wear.
- In the Fall - detach from main facet, mark sprinklers with stakes so you can find them in the Spring.
- Sometimes the heads get dirt clogging the flow. Just take a toothbrush to it to dislodge the dirt and the head should work again.

Want to know more? Pick up the free booklet by RainDrip (available at Far North Gardens) that gives layout designs and information. Want to do trees? Or hanging baskets? Ferns? Vegetables? Raised beds? The book helps.

**Gel Mix Seed Planting
Submitted by Tracie Brown
Homer Garden Club Newsletter**

During the January 24, 2010 Garden Club meeting, a question was asked, "Has anyone pre-germinated carrot seeds?" I shared that I had used the gel mix recipe mentioned on page 145 of Lenore Hedla's 1994 book *The Alaska Gardener's Handbook*. I have used this method for planting carrots with excellent results for at least two seasons. The planting was fast and easy, the seeds stayed moist for their relatively long germination time and there was little thinning needed.

Here is the Gel mix small seed planting method: 1 Tablespoon cornstarch mixed into 1 cup of cold water in a small saucepan. Bring it to a boil, whisking. Let the gel cool to room temperature. Or, if in a hurry, remove from heat and keep whisking while cooling the pan over ice water. Place a sandwich size plastic bag into a cup with one corner down, and pour in about half a cup of cooled gel. Add carrot seeds to the gel, seal the bag, gently massage bag to evenly distribute seeds. To plant: Have furrows ready. Cut a small corner off the bag, just large enough for the seeds to pass through but not too big a hole. Be prepared to walk along the row at an even pace as you squeeze the seed laced gel into the furrow. Cover lightly with seed soil and keep moist.

One year, several days passed while the gel/seed mixture sat in my approximately 65 degree entry. I noticed that the seeds began to germinate in the gel mix in half the time the seed package said they would. Though the seed gel mix had begun to thin, I planted them and the carrots grew well.

So far, I have also used this method for lobelia (in January-February due to long growing time) and grass seed used to turn 3/4 egg shells into "grass heads" for Easter decoration. This method is particularly suited for small seeds, especially those difficult to keep moist.

Master Gardener Focus: Marge Olson
By Cheryl Chapman

For Marge Olson, Mother's Day means "expedition" - a traditional yearly spree to Valley greenhouses and gardens and a



return home with the SUV sagging on its springs and wallowing perilously at curves from its burden of plants. She and her garden accomplices have found that they can clip six baskets on a line across the back and pack the rest of the vehicle to the roof, "and that's how plants come into our neighborhood," she says.

That would be the Apollo Drive neighborhood, an enclave of passionate gardeners

and a thoroughfare for moose and bears just south of Northern Lights and east of Patterson. Regulars at summer garden tours know it well; Marge's gardens and those of her neighbors are constants on any tour of notable Anchorage gardens, in Marge's case, perhaps, because so many people like to see the impossible knocked to its knees and given a good beating.

The Olsons moved into their home 38 years ago. They came from Phoenix, where, she says, "trying to garden was really dumb because it was 117 degrees."

They found their Apollo Drive home in August, a dark-brown house different from others on the block that had garages under the dwellings - a terrible idea when grade and winter joined forces.

"We'd sit in our home and hear 'rrrrrrrrrr, rrrrrrrrrrr, RRRRRRRRR,' people trying to get their cars up their driveways to the street." But the Olson garage sits atop pilings at street level with a wooden driveway that Marge has to paint, like siding.

The house looks normal from the front. Flowers. Perennials. Amur maples. Curving beds organized in blues and yellows. Planters. Pretty. It's out back that the drama starts. Some houses have sloping yards: Marge's home has a precipice. The back yard is so steep that it cannot be seen from any house window. She's put a mirror at the foot of the yard to reflect the view of what's going on with her property.

The Olsons started with grass. They liked grass. They thought grass was what everybody had, and by golly, they'd have it, too. This lasted until the Flymo mower broke down. Flymo, says Marge, used to make a lawn mower that hovered. It didn't have to be pushed. It didn't have any weight to speak of. It was the answer to mowing vertically. Not that Marge did much of that when she and the Flymo stepped out.

"Men would stop their cars on the street and beg to try it," she says. "I'd say, 'Sure, try it here - now there -- wait, you missed a corner. Now let me show you how it does in the back.'

I was like Tom Sawyer whitewashing the fence."

This lasted for three years until the Flymo gasped, died and couldn't be fixed, and Marge started trying to mow her cliff with a traditional mower, which up-ended and chased her. And so the anti-grass crusade began on Apollo Drive.

"Get over the idea that grass is fun," says Marge. "Grass is green and wants to be cut every four days. That's grass. Flowers are pretty, and they don't want to be cut every four days. Grow flowers."

She now has a 6-foot grass strip in the front, another in the back, "and it takes 10 minutes once a week to deal with it."

But her back yard isn't just a precipice. It's a dark and shadowy precipice, and, left to itself, dank.

"I'm surrounded on three sides by people who don't garden, whose yards are nothing but trees," she says. "I took 19 trees out of the back yard so I would have a sun oasis, but our sun circles around on the horizon - it's never directly overhead, so I still don't get any sun."

Marge got tired of not being able to stand up behind her own house and decided to terrace the place about the time the city started upgrading Sunset Drive. Eureka! Free chunks of broken concrete!

"That was my first flower bed," she says. "I thought I was going to die, my calves and legs hurt so bad." She developed a system for moving the chunks on tarps, with the help of gravity. Now her back yard is a series of terraces with specimen plants, separated with soft bark paths that are kind to the feet. She's famed for her collections of Hostas and Ligularias. "Some aren't supposed to grow here, but part of my yard against the house is a Zone 6, and plants that need warmer temperatures do fine." She's got monkshood in blue, pink and ivory, and a favorite, Trollius, "like little roses," in ivory and yellows, and red plantain, a short foliage plant with dark red leaves.

"I designed my garden; I've been here long enough to garden every inch of it, and this year I'm trying miniature hostas in the spaces between some of the concrete chunks," she says. "I design other people's gardens as well. The important thing is to design a garden for how it's used."

She's trying rugosa pavement roses against the dark brown fence at the bottom of her garden and they are doing as well as the dogs let them, "but my Siberian iris never blooms."

This woman who has taken an impossible spot and personally made it a showplace has a few other suggestions for would-be gardeners in addition to "No grass." First, read instructions. If a 10-inch tree is going to be 60 feet tall with a spread of 45 feet at maturity, it's good to know this before planting it against the house.

Second, don't plant beside the driveway. Chemicals from vehicles and oil from tires mean anything there will have to be replaced every few years. And third, don't plant within 10 feet of the street: The city thinks that's theirs.

Late Blight and the Home Gardener
From Janice Chumley, IPM tech/Research tech
UAF-CES, Kenai Peninsula District

As a vegetable gardener I would like to help us all avoid introducing a devastating disease into our gardens, greenhouses and state. In Alaska we are fortunate in being relatively disease free but we now need to be aware of Late Blight or *Phytophthora infestans* in our potato patch. This disease has been found in potato fields throughout the world (think Irish potato famine) but was first identified in Alaska in 1953 in Wrangell. In 2009 it decimated potato and tomato crops along the east coast. The first report in the Matanuska Valley was in 1995, again in 1998 and in multiple locations in 2005. This fungus-like pathogen can be found on many members of the nightshade family including potatoes, tomatoes, peppers and eggplants. In 2005 it was identified on tomatoes from two separate home locations. Due to the ability of this disease to be rapidly transferred from plant to plant and field to field by wind or water we need to review some information about Late Blight before the planting and growing season starts for 2010.



1. Avoid introduction. Grow your own tomato plants from seeds or purchase tomato transplants that were grown from seed in state. Imported tomato transplants grown in areas where blight is a problem could transfer the disease here to either tomatoes or potatoes. Ask where the transplants come from and don't purchase imports that have not been state inspected. **DO NOT PLANT POTATOES THAT WERE GROWN AND SOLD FOR EATING.** If you bought them in the grocery store or from a local farmers market or wherever, these potatoes are supposed to be eaten and not planted. Eat and enjoy them. It doesn't matter where they were grown or that you have done this in the past or that they are full of sprouts. Late Blight can over winter on live plant tissue; this includes the tubers we eat. Plant **ONLY** certified and inspected seed potatoes. Purchase seed from a reliable local source such as nurseries, greenhouses and garden centers, not from out of state mail-order catalogs. Just because a seed source is organic does not mean it is disease free, organic producers have the same problems with late blight. If you had disease problems in your garden last year or your potatoes showed signs of rot while in storage do not plant saved seed. Importing potatoes from outside the state is not only risky for introducing disease it is also against our quarantine laws. This information can be found at the Division of Agriculture website along with a list of certified seed producers: http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_is.htm
The easiest way to avoid introducing Late Blight is to not unwittingly plant it.

2. Increase Plant Space. Plant your garden to include more space between plants to increase air circulation. Late Blight thrives in the cool, wet conditions often found when potatoes have grown up and form a dense canopy. Water early in the day to increase evaporation on the leaf and if possible, use drip irrigation. In the greenhouse the same applies for tomatoes. Allow more space for the full-grown plants for air

Continued on page 6

Robot Versus Slug

LONDON (Reuters) - For centuries the humble slug has eaten its way through the world's vegetable patches, frustrating farmers and gardeners alike, but thanks to British scientists the great plant muncher is about to be munched.

Scientists at Britain's University of West England have developed the "SlugBot," a prototype robot capable of hunting down more than 100 slugs an hour. It operates after dark when slugs are most active and uses their rotting bodies to generate the electricity it needs to power itself.

The SlugBot is the brainchild of engineers at the university's Intelligent Autonomous Systems Laboratory who wanted to build the world's first fully autonomous robot.

"Slugs were chosen because they are a major pest, are reasonably plentiful, have no hard shell of skeleton, and are reasonably large," Dr. Ian Kelly, SlugBot's creator, said in a statement.

The 2-foot-high machine uses an image sensor that beams out red light to pinpoint the slugs, which emit a different infra-red wavelength from worms and snails. It then uses a carbon fibre arm with a three fingered claw grabber to pick up the slugs and store them in a tank.

After a hard night of slug busting, the robot returns home and unloads its victims into a fermentation tank. While the SlugBot recharges, the fermentation tank turns the slug sludge into electricity.

But the robot, voted one of the best inventions of the year by Time magazine, has attracted some criticism. One Time reader called the invention "reckless" in a letter to the magazine. "To create robots that devour flesh is to step over a line that we would be insane to cross," he said.

Gardeners were more welcoming. Adam Pasco, editor of the BBC Gardener's World magazine, told the Daily Mail: "Anything that would prove a fool-proof method of destroying slugs would be fantastic."

A spokeswoman for the university told Reuters on Wednesday there were no plans to release the SlugBot on the commercial market. "It was a proof of concept machine only," she said.

The news will disappoint Britain's farmers who spend an average 20 million pounds a year trying to eradicate the slimy creatures.

Make A Splash MG Display From Julie Riley,

The Anchorage Public Library expects to have 1,500 people attend their 10th Annual Reading Rendezvous on Sat, May 15. They have put in a request to Master Gardeners to set up a booth and answer gardening questions. It would be great if I could get 2-4 people to help out for a couple of hours each between 12 noon and 4 p.m. The event will be outside by the fountain, so you'll need to dress for the weather. 'Water Your Mind—Read' is the message for kids. You will be discussing gardening with the adults. Contact Julie at afjar@uaa.alaska.edu or call in through Dora at 786-6319. The CES office is closed for packing Friday, April 30 and I need to get this taken care of right away. If it's sunny, someone should take a kiddy pool and watering cans.
[Contact CES (763-5300) for more volunteer opportunities.]



Central Peninsula Master Gardener News By Rosemary Kimball

Yes, cold and windy as it has been, it is spring. The neighborhood birds are back in force. The robins are yelling their territorial imperative from the spruce tops. My husband and I watched a couple of robins in the May Day tree in front of our new deck "talk" to each other. They were not at the spruce tops so we were betting they were females and, like our guineas (when they aren't shrieking) twittered to each other with comforting voices.

Why is it that the snow on the garden is the last place to leave? Breakup was rather benign and we didn't have our usual large pool(s) of standing water. The thermometer probe buried six inches down keeps rising degree by degree and we sink deeper and deeper in the muck each day when we go to feed the birds. We use the soil temperature measurement to decide whether we need to reorder strawberries for the summer...below a winter low of 24°F damage to the older plants begins to happen. We've seen it get to 12°F for a week and everything except the trollius and Shasta daisies died. Our normal winter range is 28°- 24°F.

Still not much is happening down here outside of the greenhouses as we wait for snow to finish melting and the ground to warm up. I went into our greenhouse in early April to start cleaning it out in preparation for the new year. I couldn't believe the chaos and destruction left by two small guineas last fall! They went through that place with lead boots with spikes on the bottom: pots were dumped on the ground, sacks torn open.

I bought an Evens cherry on grafted roots from Costco last year. I went down to the lower garden to check it several weeks ago and it was still alive so I'm going to go back for another. I'm not sure where the logic in that lies as we do have "years" and then we have YEARS! but after picking a desiccated cherry from Dan Elliot's tree one year, I have lusted after them. If he can grow them in Wasilla, then I can grow them in Sterling, right?

The potato seed swap goes on and my seed potatoes are nestled in a box behind the wood stove where it is dark and warm. I like them to get sprouts at least an inch long and when they do, I put them in the sunroom on the floor to start greening up. That way, when I do get the garden ready for them they are a couple weeks ahead of the growing game.

And then there are leeks lessons learned. My neighbor Mark gave me four packets of alliums to start and I did in four-inch pots. The transplanting started and went on and on and on. Those seedling are long and skinny and just plain boring to work with so Auntie Rose says start them in a six-pack to begin with.

A vegetable that our garden will never be without any more is Tuscan Black Kale (Nero de Toscana) It looks stronger than Atlas but is mild and sweet and goes so well with so much, plain or incorporated into something.

I got a good look at the shape of the tomato roots when I started cleaning out the growing beds in the greenhouse and

my old tomato pots that were on the floor. The roots in the growing bed whose soil was about a foot deep were just on the surface and grew out flat. The roots in the pots grew down-- and one of them grew out of the pot another foot.

It was hard to wait until mid April to start seeds for our vegetable garden but I want only five true leaves when I plant out my cole crops as that is the thriftiest size for them to continue their growth.

Garden buddy, MG Kathy Wartinbee, and I went up to the "do" in Houston towards the end of April. Spring is neat with all the "flings" going on and one can learn a lot! One of the best things I learned was from Anchorage's own MG Judy Christianson...use a flame thrower on weeds. That should be the perfect answer to my poa anna problem in the lower garden. I can hardly wait to play with fire.

I wonder when the box stores are going to put someone who knows something about gardening as the head of the department - especially someone who has some sympathy for plants and knows that they need water, especially on warm days.



Matricaria matricarioides By Rosemary Kimball

Now there's a weed, Pineapple Weed, you really shouldn't dislike because it is so useful. It's an annual from the Aster family and the name comes from Latin meaning "dear Mother". The tea from the flowers and/or leaves is used for female complaints and after childbirth. This female complains because it is sporadically in the garden!

Pineapple weed is a first cousin to chamomile, Matricaria chamomilla, and can spread so fast in a sunny garden that it will make your head spin. Fortunately it is easy to identify from its aromatic ferny leaves. A hint for people quitting smoking is to munch on one of the flower heads. Janice Schofield, in her book "Discovering Wild Plants" says to use the flower heads to remove fishy odors from your hands. The plant, when bruised and rubbed on skin, provides an effective, yet temporary insect repellent. That's fine, but pull it from your garden as soon as you see it and you will be a happier person with no bugs around your ears.

A Few Weed Quotes

"Criticizing another's garden doesn't keep the weeds out of your own"

"A good garden may have some weeds"
Thomas Fuller

"May all your weeds be wildflowers"





Bird Chatter



• Last month new Master Gardener Denise Corcoran got stranded in Iceland from Eyja volcano ash. To see some spectacular pictures of the eruption go to: boston.com/big-picture/2010/04/more_from_eyjafjallajokull.html. MG Elaine Hammes has a more tranquil photograph she took while the volcano was dormant.

- Joyce Palmer appears to have taken up another hobby. A photograph of her holding a fly rod was published in the Anchorage Daily News April 24, 2010.
- The first spring flowering bulbs this year were reported by AMGA members Carmel Tysver (*Bulbocodium vernum*) and Debbie Hinchey (crocus) the week of March 21—wow!
- Get your seed potatoes now. Word from ag-land is that Alaska produced seed may be in short supply. If you are unable to find seed, don't plant potatoes from the grocery store. Purchase certified seed from another state and ask for a phytosanitary certificate.
- The Anchorage CES office is full of packed boxes. An email will be sent out once we're up and operating at our new location. Bets are being taken on how much stuff Julie Riley is willing to part with.
- IPM trapper Sherry Lee Bottoms is back in the saddle after spending winter in the milder climate of Vashon Island, Washington. Gypsy moths beware.
- A new farmers' market is opening in Spenard Sat, May 22 under the windmill at Chillkoot Charlie's.
- Sue Bailey has a bushy 5 year old Meyer lemon tree that needs constant care and therefore a new home. If you're interested, give her a call, 339-9511 or get in touch by email akgardengirl@hotmail.com.
- Watch for the new Anchorage Daily News's new magazine 61Degrees North on May 23. It will contain a calendar of gardening events.
- Happygardener@alaska.net had a bit of a scare with atrial fibrillation. Upon getting home from the hospital she writes, "Growing old sure ain't for sissies!"
- Plan to plant earlier rather than later—especially seeds, but warm up the soil with clear plastic first.

*"Kind hearts are the gardens, Kind thoughts are the roots,
Kind words are the flowers, Kind deeds are the fruits,
Take care of your garden And keep out the weeds,
Fill it with sunshine Kind words and kind deeds"*
Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Volunteer Opportunities for MGs Needing Hours From Julie Riley, Extension Horticulture Agent

May 22, Spenard Farmers Market. Master Gardeners are needed to help staff an 'Ask the Expert' booth throughout the summer. MG Laura Minski is helping to coordinate the schedule. Please get in touch with her if you want to be part of the fun, lminski@corvus-design.com, 222-5335, 222-2859.

June 5, Festival of Flowers, Town Square, Anchorage. Looking for MGs to be part of the event. The planning committee is interested in having mini-presentations/demos of 20 minutes of length each hour between 12 noon and 5 p.m. Ideas that have been tossed about (thanks to MG president Jane Baldwin) include the Talking Plant for the kids, Flowers for Spring, Summer & Fall, Non-toxic Pest Control, Organic Fertilizers & Soil Amendments. MGs will also have a table of publications and answer questions. Someone can even float about wearing an outrageous hat and a nametag that says, 'Ask me a Gardening Question'. Email both Jane Baldwin, jbaldwin@alaska.net and myself, afjar@uaa.alaksa.edu, if you're not a shop-the-garden-club-plant-sales-fanatic that Saturday.

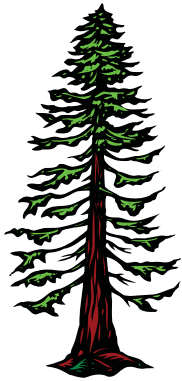
June 26 & 27, ABG Fair IPM & MG Display. Join CES IPM staff Saturday, 11 a.m. - 6 p.m. & Sunday 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. under a tent canopy in the Alaska Botanical Garden Rock Garden. This is a great clinic to work because everyone is having so much fun. Mark your calendars. Michelle Coburn will be doing the scheduling again. Thanks Leslie Patrick for organizing the speaker's tent!

May 22, Working with kids to grow a garden at the Boys & Girls Club in Spenard, giving a presentation to DAR working with a hort therapy group and growing a demo plot at the McPhee Street Community Garden to do year two of determining the "\$\$\$ value of the vegetables grown". Details coming at a later date or call me if you're intrigued.

Late Blight.....cont. from page 4

- circulation and water at the ground level, not overhead. If you have the room allow 14 inches minimum between plants and 2 feet between rows.
3. Destroy Volunteer Plants. Because Phytophthora infestans requires live tissue to grow and reproduce you can stop its spread by getting rid of any volunteer potato plants that appear in your garden from last year's crop. These need to be removed and either burned (use safe burn practices) or double bagged and taken to the landfill. Volunteer and diseased plants should NOT be composted.
 4. Become familiar with Late Blight. The UAF Cooperative Extension Service has a FREE publication "Late Blight Disease of Potato and Tomato in Alaska." You can find this publication online at: <http://www.uaf.edu/ces/pubs/> or at your nearest Cooperative Extension office. Late Blight lesions are not restricted to leaf veins, spores develop on the underside of the leaves and stems turn brown quickly and have a distinctive "bad" odor. Tubers show symptoms with brownish-black discoloration under the skin, while tomato fruits turn brown, then smelly mush. Because this fungal like disease spreads rapidly it is important not to wait. This disease can knock a field down in a week. The earlier it is removed the less time there is for spread by wind or water.
 5. Finally, what to do if you find it. Remove and destroy all infected plants. They can be double bagged and taken to the landfill or burned. It is important to not spread the spores during plant removal, use caution when bagging diseased plants. There is a list of fungicides available that effectively prevent Late Blight and some are acceptable for organic growing, however they are time consuming, costly and not effective once the plants are infected. Please contact your local Cooperative Extension Service regarding fungicides and schedules of application.

Make the Day All About the Trees
From Nickel LaFleur
Anchorage Garden Club Arbor Day Chair



Alaska celebrates Arbor Day on Monday, May 17th and we are having a celebration at Valley of the Moon Park (located off Arctic and 17th) from 11:30a - 1p. Municipal Forester Scott Stringer will be presenting four important awards. TreeCity USA to Anchorage, TreeCampus USA to University of Alaska-Anchorage, TreeLine USA to Chugach Electric and TREERific Landscape award to three local businesses that have done a good job utilizing existing trees in their landscape plans. Mears Middle School 7th graders will be on hand to celebrate all their hard efforts in improving the landscape at Valley of the Moon Park. The previous week they eradicated Mayday trees

along the creek and replanted native conifers and deciduous trees to help with screening the neighborhood from the park. Our program will conclude by planting a couple more trees with assistance from the group. Come early, bring a lunch and browse the information tables that will be set up.

At 7pm, Certified Arborist & Forester Scott Stringer will be at our May Master Gardener meeting talking about Maple Trees & Beyond. He'll discuss which maple trees to try, as well as focusing on varieties of shade trees that should work well in South Central. This would be a good opportunity to bring your notepads to write down the recommendations so when you get to a nursery or big box store that is trying to sell trees, you get one that will work for you. He plans on leaving lots of time to answer your questions about trees - the symbol of life. Join Us!

Garden Snaps
Mary M Rydesky, MG

Garden Snaps: the 2010 Calendar is available! MGs Lynne and Anna previewed the map and website at the April AMGAA meeting, telling a bit of their story. They have gardened here for over 20 years. Out of the need to remember year to year where to find their favorites, they started a map project in 2009 for Anchorage and the MatSu. This year, they added Fairbanks and the Kenai to their coverage. The name Garden Snaps came about out of a love for snaps plus the idea of getting snapshots of gardening...a snapshot that is growing statewide!



The project supports locally owned businesses, farmers markets, and public gardens. Have places or events to add to the list? Contact Lynne and Amy at 529-1039.

The website includes current events on the home page. Area maps are online and can be downloaded as a pdf version. A calendar of gardening events, garden clubs, garden meetings and classes is featured, and draws the dedicated gardener back for multiple visits year-round. Plant sales are listed, too.

Garden Event Calendar

Tuesday, 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 www.WoolWood.com

Saturday, 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

Monday, 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

* **Master Gardeners Meeting - Maples & Beyond;** 7pm. Alaska Master Gardeners Assoc. Contact: www.alaskamastergardeners.org 786-6300 ***Note** Might be new meeting location by this date. . watch for emails

Friday, Saturday, May 21-22

Juneau Master Gardeners Conference; Juneau. http://www.sealaska-mastergardeners.org/

Saturday, May 22

* **Alaska Rock Garden Society Anchorage Plant Sale;** 7435 Old Harbor Ave; 9a-4p. Alaska Rock Garden Society. 33-8237 www.args.org

* Alaska Botanical Garden: Season Grand Opening. Annual Plant Sale & membership drive; 10a-4p. Members only preview 9a-10a. Container Gardening workshop with Carmal Tysver. 770-3692. www.alaskabg.org

* Lobelia Basket Workshop; Anchorage Garden Club; advance registration required. AGC hotline: 566-0539; www.alaskagardenclubs.org

Saturday, May 29

* **Alaska Rock Garden Society - Valley Annual Plant Sale** 9 am - 4 pm; features plants grown by experienced Club members. Snowfire Gardens, 3379 Inlet Vista Circle (Mile 5.2 Fairview Loop Rd), Wasilla

* **Valley Garden Club - Annual Plant Sale** 9 am - 3 pm Plant Sale location: Boys and Girls Club, 3700 E. Bogard Road, Wasilla
* Alaska Botanical Garden - Alaska Public Gardens Day - "Free Day" at ABG. Visit the new APGA (Alaska Peony Growers Association) member gardens. 770-3692

Thursday, June 3

Anchorage Garden Club; Underwater Designs, Letti Delk; 7:00 pm; Pioneer Schoolhouse, 3rd & Eagle

Saturday, June 5

* **Anchorage Garden Club - Annual Plant Sale,** 9am - 5 pm, 3734 W. 35th Avenue, Anchorage; Lots of perennials and some annual hardy plants. 566-0539

* **Wildflower Garden Club - Annual Plant Sale** 9 am - 4 pm; Features plants grown by experienced Club members. Winter-hardy perennials, wildflowers, Native Alaskan plants, hardy roses, trees, shrubs, herbs and other specialty plants will be available. 243-1961 - 7435 Old Harbor Road, Anchorage

* Festival of Flowers - Town Square; Music, flower auctions, educational programs, vendors and more. Celebrate and support our City of Flowers - Information: Nickel LaFleur 337-5651

* **Mat-Su Master Gardeners - Plant Sale (Valley);** Palmer; www.matsumastergardeners.org

Saturday, June 12

* **St. Alexis Church - Annual Plant Sale** - 10 am - 4 pm Features Alaskan grown plants including hardy perennials, native Alaskan plants, wildflowers, rock garden plants, annuals, vegetables, herbs, berries, hardy kiwis, hardy roses, trees, hanging baskets and garden-related items. Call 333-1481 for more information.

Plant Sale held at St. Alexis Church, 5801 Arctic Blvd., Anchorage
* **Central Peninsula Garden Club - Annual Plant Sale;** 1st Annual Plant Sale! Purchase plants locally grown by garden club members at reasonable prices. 11:00 am - Kent and Sullivan parking lot, 312 Tyee Street, Soldotna - 283-4632



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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Anchorage, AK 99516

Phone: 345-4099

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AMGA Web Site: www.alaskamastergardeners.org

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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Spring is Here!

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