



Anchorage Chapter



Volume 14, Issue 3

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER March 2012



Message From Nickel

The days are getting longer, the Iditarod dogs are on their way to Nome and we are looking forward to hosting "GARDENING REALITIES - a knowledge based approach to gardening" - the theme for this year's Master Gardener Conference on April 14th.

With free parking and easy accessibility to this year's location at the Anchorage Senior Center @ 1300 E 19th and a fantastic array of speakers and vendors, we are anticipating a full house. Please fill out the attached registration form & speaker questionnaire and return it promptly (enclosing a check for \$60) so the Conference Committee can finish firming up the day's agenda. Your checked responses will determine how to best appropriate the rooms and speakers to accommodate seating for the registered participants - sweet deal, huh? Speaking of sweet, a buffet lunch is included in your registration fee. NO credit cards so please have correct change or a check for your admission!

For those of you who went to Seattle in 2011 for NWFGS, Linda Chalker-Scott (key note speaker) is no stranger to you. MG Jane Baldwin enjoyed hearing Linda so much that she bought two of her books: The Informed Gardener and The Informed Gardener Blooms Again and shared them with me. I enjoyed both books and definitely recommend them. I'm glad to report that Linda will bring them both plus her book, Sustainable Landscapes and Gardens to the Conference.

Alaskan Marion Owen will demonstrate ways to make photography easier and more enjoyable for the novice along with sharing tried and true techniques for the home vegetable gardener. Marion lives on Kodiak Island and co-authored Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul. As well as teaching at the college in Kodiak, she co-hosts successful gourmet dinner cruises, creates mosaic artwork and is a true volunteer. As a Kodiakan myself and a fan of Marion's work, I'm proud to have her join us at our 2012 Conference.

To welcome our guests to town, we are having a MEET & GREET party on Friday, April 13th from 6:30p - 9p at GREEN CONNECTION @ 804 E 15th. Tickets are \$5 each and guests are asked to bring along a finger-food to share. Beverages, prizes and entertainment will be provided. There are only 50 tickets for sale and can be purchased from Julie Riley or me, Nickel LaFleur. We will be having signed copies Linda's books as door prizes

along with a chance to 'stump the expert' at the Meet & Greet party. Paper will be provided to guests to write their problem/question and dropped into a box for Linda and Marion to draw from and answer. GREEN CONNECTION donated the wonderful greenhouse atmosphere for us to drink up - a huge thanks to them.

It's time to get going on the Pioneer Home plantings and we need your help for this project to be successful. Thanks to Bonnie Tisler, a Pioneer of Alaska who donated a generous sum of money for the plantings in memory of her mother Katie Wiemer. Katie spent her last few years at the Pioneer Home and she looked forward to spring and the arrival of ALL the Master Gardeners that donated their time and talent each year. Please get a hold of Marge Olson @ 333-5868 or Camille Williams @ 338-2945 to see where and how you can be of assistance in this worthy community project.

Thank you to all who brought seeds and snacks to our February meeting. Many thanks to the lovely Master Gardeners that brought door prizes for us to share at the meeting. One last thing, be sure to get your \$20 dues paid to be included in our yearly directory.

And don't forget to attend the AMGAA meeting on March 19th. Marilyn Barker, a longtime professor of biology and botany at UAA, will present "Charismatic Microflora: Mosses". 7pm, at the CES.

Be there, or be square!



Treasurer's report

Checking acct. balance 1/31/12	1364.95
Revenue (memberships)	+ 260.00
Checking acct. balance 2/15/12	\$1624.95
Savings acct. balance	9356.01
CD balances	10455.78
Total	\$21436.74

Perennial Partners AMGAA Meeting 2-20-12 By Pat Anderson

Judith Brendel presented "Perennial Partners" to a room full of Master Gardeners who were eagerly awaiting spring and perennial viewing! Judith graduated from MGs in 2010, and is now retired from her job as a biologist at her environmental permitting business.

She grew up in Wisconsin, and is enjoying gardening at her eastside Anchorage home. Judith's program explained how we can group flowers and plants to enhance our gardens, our paths, our borders and places in the yard that we wish to off-focus!

Perennials as well as annuals must be placed in viewing areas according to their height, color and texture. Compatibility is important for garden conditions such as sun, shade, wet and dry areas. Disappearing paths are inviting with taller plants in the background and short flowers in front to provide interest. Repeat patterns are desirable along borders and paths. Delphiniums, Goatsbeard, vines on fences are happy backgrounds to shorter, border plants such as Trollius and Butterfly plants and annuals.

Throughout her presentation, Judith used slide outlines of rectangles, ovals, squares and different sizes of rounds as a starting point to organize plantings. Some slides had plantings using strong colors of orange with variations of the same color to provide beauty to the eye and symmetry. Or three strong colors can be used tempered by neutrals such as white or green. Containers can give height where it is needed, while cool colors make things look far away.

Use bold color away from some unattractive part of your yard, with perhaps some bright flowers and garden art to further detract. Slides were presented with combinations of annuals, perennials and some flowers mixed with colorful vegetables. Judith pointed out that tall pointy, spikey leaves and large leaves such as hosta and wonderful. Ferns also give marvelous contrast to regular plants. Shady gardens are enhanced by blues, greens, gold, bright gold and salmon.

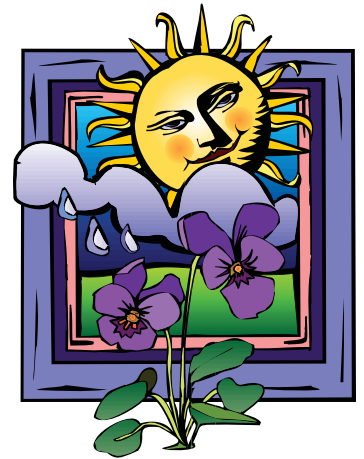
Judith explained that CES has wonderful publications outlining Alaska's best perennials, the height and blooming time of plants, great annual descriptions, and other exciting information to help gardeners select just the right plants for their gardening experiences. Your favorite nursery will be eager to help you also!

Judith stressed that the most important thing is to have fun and enjoy your garden experience. Her favorite flower is the Alaska State Flower, The Forget Me Not! She says at her home it follows the water drainage in her yard, and is a surprise every year!



The Slightly Spring Equinox By Jane Baldwin

Spring begins in the Northern Hemisphere on March 20, 2012 -- 5:14 UTC (Coordinated Universal time) with the Vernal Equinox. Considering adjustment for time zones, that translates to spring arriving in Anchorage on Monday, March 19, 2012 at 9:14 pm (aha! Monthly MG Meeting night!). Will my 3+ feet of snow be gone and little spring flowers be blooming then? Not likely. More likely a collision between fantasy and reality as far as spring in Anchorage goes!



Vernal means basically "of or pertaining to spring" and equinox means basically "equal night". OK, equal night: looking at the US Naval Observatory's 2012 duration of daylight chart for Anchorage indicates we should have 12 hours and 12 minutes of daylight on March 19th. Check: basically equal hours of night and day. But "of or pertaining to spring"? Not a chance. Unless we changed the name to "Slightly Vernal Equinox" since it is the time many of us will be or should be starting our seeds early indoors and that's conceded to be a 'slightly spring' activity.

Please, no one ask if it's true that one can stand and balance a raw egg on end on the first day of spring. 'Tis true the egg is an ancient symbol of fertility and rebirth that has long been associated with spring (think Easter Bunny and Easter egg hunts). The balancing the egg bit is folklore apparently derived from the notion that because of the sun's approximate equidistant position between the poles of the earth at the time of the equinox, special gravitational forces apply. Not so - there is no scientific reason for the special gravitational forces rationale.

None the less, there is something about passing through the official vernal equinox that speaks to a season of rebirth and provides us with a lift to our spirits and attitudes that summer really is on the way and we have indeed survived yet another long Alaskan winter.

Now... about that snow - Maybe all gardeners can unite and channel some energy from out there in the chaos to hasten the snow melt. How about every day at noon all gardeners face the sun (or wherever the sun should be if not visible) and everyone all at once concentrate and project your thoughts TO MELT THE SNOW!!

Master Gardener Focus: Pat Leary By Cheryl Chapman



Photo from ADN
by Fran Durner, 2009

After 30 years of rousting out her snowplow drivers and shovelers at 4 a.m. to clear roads and sidewalks at UAA, groundskeeper and Master Gardener Pat Leary set her call list aside this winter, and retired on Halloween.

Nowadays 15,000 students attend class on the main campus, more than four times the 3,500 in the combined student bodies of UAA and Anchorage Community College back in 1981 when Pat, then the young founder of a small Anchorage landscape company, had an epiphany while toiling on a new lawn at midnight in Ocean View: This. Is. Not. Fun.

"My family came to Alaska from the Midwest in '63 to homestead when I was 7," she says, "but that turned out to be way too much work so we moved into town and had a small leatherworking and shoe repair business. Eight of the 11 siblings still live here." She wanted to stay too - though not as owner plus staff of a landscape operation, of course - so she used a background in art, greenhouse work and courses at the University of Wisconsin at Madison to jump to the UAA grounds division under Lorri Abel, now owner of In the Garden Nursery.

And Pat never looked back but rather, forward, along with staff and supervisors over the next three decades, to develop the UAA campus as a laboratory for Far North landscaping.

"Art teaches you to see a lot, to be very observant," she says, "and when you're dealing with plants, well, that teaches you to notice things, too."

Her family was a gardening family ("Mom came from a farm and was always gardening") but it was her mother's mother, Granny Collin, who was the top gardener among the gardeners.

"She was third-generation Chicago and had all these African violets always around her, and even though she had just a tiny bit of land, she grew tomatoes and flowers there every year," Pat says.

"My sister asked her once what her violet secret was, and she said 'Coffee grounds. Egg shells. And once a month, I put a little piece of raw liver in each pot along with the juice.' This sounds really strange until you think of her additions in terms of phosphorus, calcium and blood meal."

Granny Collin came to Alaska at 93 to visit, and while here, took her little sister, 80, to Denali Park.

"Always remember," she advised Pat, "Nothing is more beautiful than women and flowers."

As the university grew so did the dreams of the landscaping department, which were evolving from a conventional decorative approach ("Plant these annuals here,

plant those shrubs there") to "What's going to make a difference in 20 years?"

That would be trees.

"We used to plan five years ahead, but then we took a page from Wally Hickel and started thinking ahead 10, 15 and 20 years," says Pat. "Lorri was encouraging, and we got a lot of help and inspiration from Patricia Joyner of the Alaska Department of Natural Resources' Community Forestry Program."

"'Give us more names,' we'd say, 'Tell us more we can try,' and we'd experiment with tree donations from nursery folks, and gifts. We got more arboriculture as we tried new things and expanded from what had been a very small palette."

Pat became grounds supervisor in 1990, the year UAA planned to build Rasmuson Hall on land that 193 trees and shrubs already called home. Bulldozers and chain saws figured in the work order, but Pat and Lorri had a better idea.

"We moved all 193 of them and lost only three or four of the birches," Pat says. "The cost of moving them was about the same as knocking them down, and the turf crew helped us out. It was a joint effort. Some of those trees were 30 years old and they're growing still."

In 2009, the national Arbor Day Foundation awarded UAA its coveted designation as a Tree Campus USA. The award honors excellent campus tree management and student and community involvement.

"UAA is such a wonderful working environment," Pat says. "The people I worked with, the students, there was so much energy, so much that was positive, so many doors to open."

The last thing she did, she says, before closing her office door that last time, was apply for the Tree Campus USA designation for 2011. "There's lots of support from the students for this," she says. "In 20 or 30 years, these trees we've set out will be something."

The UAA campus covers 385 acres, and its 90 acres of developed land will increase to 120 when the sports center is finished. There are between 14,000 and 15,000 trees and shrubs, around 125 different varieties, in the landscaped areas, she says.

Periodically, there are guided tree tours around campus to show off varieties that people may not be aware can thrive here, and for those who'd rather not wait, there's a self-guided tour that can be downloaded: <http://www.uaa.alaska.edu/fcs/maintenanceoperations/operations/landscaping.cfm>

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Organic Cheerleader
Story and Photo by Jill Shepherd

As usual, MARION OWEN caught me off guard.

"I'm glad you called," she said. "It's February 22, and I'm celebrating."

"What's the occasion?" I asked, hoping I hadn't forgotten her birthday again.

"Today Kodiak gets 10 hours of daylight. That's when plants start to grow," she said gleefully. "Eliot Coleman said so."

For the uninformed, Eliot Coleman is an organic farmer and author who harvests food year-round in Maine, with little or no heat. He's also the featured speaker at ABG's spring garden conference in March.

Marion pays attention to things like day length, important if you harvest spinach and lettuce in March, like she does. One of her tricks for extending the vegetable growing season is to cover her 10 raised beds with plastic hoop houses, not just during the winter but in summer, too.

"My yard is filled with little white Calistoga wagons," she told me once, as she described her garden snuggled down for winter. In summer, she pulls the covers off and on, according to the weather. She also protects newly planted beds with fish net to keep the crows from pulling up the emerging seedlings.

Marion is a local celebrity, known for her showcase garden, her long-standing garden column in the Kodiak Daily Mirror, and for Chicken Soup for the Gardener's Soul, a book that spent more than three months on The New York Times best-seller list and has been translated into three languages. Hundreds of islanders have taken her photography, mosaic art, and organic gardening classes at Kodiak College, a satellite campus of UAA where she has been an adjunct instructor for 26 years.

If there is a message Marion wants to spread, it's that gardeners, actually anybody, should not be afraid to try new things. Marion herself is an example.

About 20 years ago, she turned entrepreneur and created and patented an organic plant food in a tea bag; she named it PlanTea. To market her new product, she built the website www.plantea.com, on which also appeared her popular online newsletter, "UpBeet Gardener" (since replaced with a blog www.marionowen.wordpress.com) Subscribers from 70 countries wrote to her. "They were timid, even fearful, about trying something new," Marion observed.

When Marion first started giving advice in her newspaper column, she made a conscious decision "not to be a horticultural voice."

"I want (people) to understand gardening, be curious, and not be afraid to try. I just want to be the cheerleader," she said.

About the same time as Marion began gardening, she sold her first photograph to ALASKA magazine, launching a commercial photography career. Since then she's sold photographs to clients such as Better Homes and Gardens, Audubon, TIME, Readers Digest, Kodiak Foot-

wear (Canada), Patagonia, National Geographic Traveler, Pillsbury, Business Week, and Fred Meyer/The Kroger Co.

If you ever visit Kodiak, you can see her mural-size photos of the island's diverse habitats at the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge visitor center. You should also consider staying at the Owen's new Cliff House B&B. If you rent a car and drive out Pasagshak Road to see the buffalo herd, maybe you can stop and collect some manure for her compost pile

"Our guests love it when I hand them a 5-gallon bucket and a pair of gloves and ask them to pick up buffalo chips for me," she confided.

Marion and her husband, Marty, who also is Kodiak's harbormaster, offer summer tours on the Sea Breeze, their 43-foot yacht. If you take the dinner cruise, Marty, who switches his captain's garb for a waiter's apron, will serve you one of Chef Marion's famous salads fresh from her vegetable garden.

"We do 80 to 100 dinner cruises each year," said Marion. "I try to have 15 to 20 different greens in each salad, and then I get people to guess what they are."

The afternoon I called Marion for this interview, she was working in the kitchen, pressure canning venison and a locally grown 28-pound turkey. I was beginning to think I was talking to Martha Stewart.

"How do you get so much done?" I asked. "I just don't watch TV," said Martha, er, Marion.



Marion Owen admires the view from her garden overlooking the entrance to the Port of Kodiak.
Photo by Jill Shepherd



Central Peninsula Master Gardener News By Rosemary Kimball

We can't even say it was an interesting month because nothing is happening down here garden-wise... still. We did have the -25° mornings replaced by cloudy skies & temperatures in the 30's. For a few days, towards the end, it seemed more like March weather than February. We could deal with that. I could tell it was still a nada month because I got out all my spices & herbs & they are now in alphabetical order. One has to be unengaged in life to do something like that... trust me.

Talking to someone who knows something about fluorescent lights, I learned that I wanted to replace the light over the kitchen sink with one rated at 5000 Kelvin. I got one. It's a grow light (I want my orchids to bloom - they grow, but that's about it) and further more it is an Ecolux bulb which can be disposed of in the dump without guilt. I don't know what is different in the interior of the bulb, but since my internet is down, I can't find out. But it would be something to research. I don't know how people at the dump (our garbage system down here) would distinguish between the bad and the new 'good' were they to see it in the bin's detritus.

It's still a "Hare-y" year, but not as bad as last year, I don't think. My neighbor Mark didn't get his 5-foot weeping Spruce protected before the deep snow and now the tree looks like a mushroom. The weeping needles occupy only the top foot of the plant. I get resentful of the hares using my blown-clean paths around the house for their convenience. In a couple places across the driveway, it looks like the Lepus (botanical for hare) version of Interstate 5.

MG Barb Jewel is getting ready to go down to Seattle in March and is thinking about (another?) trip to Molback's in Woodinville near Seattle. It's almost a religious pilgrimage if you've been there before. It's big, airy, open, warm, full of flowers, & full of gardening goodies. It's worth the gas going there just for the eye candy.

MG Kathy Wartinbee is something else. She, & Margaret Simon are probably the most organized of the gardeners here. Kathy says that the 3' of snow on her greenhouse has slid down to lodge at the walls. She wishes that the snow would just GO AWAY! She does have tomato seedlings about 3" high under her lights downstairs. Her new tomato experiment is "Black Pearl Hybrid" from Burpee. The catchy description says that there are 2 different flavors... one before chilling, and the other extra sweet after chilling. The advertising piqued her interest. Now that's a gardener. Get a teaser in the catalog, and she succumbs. I wonder if she has extra seedlings....?

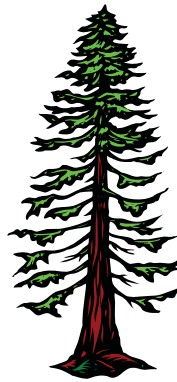
MG Margaret Simon is recuperating from knee surgery & timed it so she wouldn't be set too far back for gardening this summer. She's harvested a mess of romaine from her Aerogarden fixture. She'll be seed starting soon. Love that word "soon" as in "when I get around

to it". She will, & I watch her in awe, as I look at my unopened seed packets. She did bring up an interesting point about the Aerogarden. The only way now to get seeds and plugs is to order directly from them at inflated postage prices. She felt it was time for Alaskan gardeners to rise up & fuss. If you have an Aerogarden, do it now.

And being here on the Central Peninsula, Kathy W. put together a trip down to the Homer Garden Club's February presentation. The 'hook' there was the talk on grafting tomatoes... However, Sunday dawned with an early 5" of steadily falling snow, and plans for tomato grafting were put in the compost pile. But anytime Kathy says, "Do you want to go?", she doesn't get any further than that, because my answer is always "YES - When, where & what time?" She's au courant on neat stuff happening. We're going out to the Western Winter Study Weekend of the North American Rock Garden Society (and don't I love to have those words tripping off my tongue!) in Everett, Washington, by the time you read this.

Enjoying the spring thaw... soon for you I hope.

Tree Seedling Sale



The Society of American Foresters—Cook Inlet Chapter will hold its annual Arbor Day tree seedling sale Saturday May 19, 2012 - starting at 9 am at R.E.I.'s front entrance in the parking lot at W. Northern Lights Blvd and Spennard Road in Anchorage.

Use the form at the link below to order (and pay for) seedlings prior to the Public Tree Seedling Sale. Pre-paid orders will be distributed on Saturday, May 19 at the Anchorage REI location.

Seedlings are available in bundles of 20 and are 8 inches tall (for most species), and shrink-wrapped in plastic. Cost is \$25 per bundle of twenty (20). Seedlings available are:

lodgepole pine, Siberian larch, Colorado blue spruce, paper birch, and white spruce. Paper birch and white spruce are from a Mat-Su seed source.

To help ensure that your pre-paid order is filled, this form with full payment must be postmarked by May 14, 2012 and received at Cook Inlet Chapter's P.O. Box (address on order form). More information can be found at <http://www.aksaf.org/>.

"I like trees because they seem more resigned to the way they have to live than other things do."
~ Willa Cather



Bird Chatter

-- MGs active in local government include Margaret Klatt (11/12), Old Seward/Ocean View Community Council, Mary Miner (09/10), Mid-Hillside Community Council, Ann Ballow (02/03), Hillside East Community Council and Don Smith (05/06), Anchorage School Board. Thank you for caring about what happens in Anchorage.

-- Someone brought amaryllis seed to the AMGAA February seed exchange. It's 9 years from seed to flower. If you'd like to test your amaryllis growing prowess, contact Julie for seeds. She's not up to the challenge.

-- Ginny Jacober (04/05) stumped the Extension Horticulturist by bringing gardening catalogs she'd never seen before--The Natural Gardening Company (mostly vegetables, but also herbs, flowers, supplies) and NeSeed (vegetables, flowers, herbs, one page of organic seed).

-- Thanks to Journey Home, 322 E Fireweed Lane, for continuing to support Master Gardeners by providing door prizes for the monthly meetings.

-- What do the numbers behind people's names mean? The first number is the year someone completed the MG course and the second is the year when most complete their volunteer hours, i.e. 11/12 means someone who took the course last fall in 2011.

-- New AMGAA Treasurer Cindy Walker (02/03) is the Anchorage representative for Burpee. She says Home Depot has a HUGE display of Burpee seeds and they can also be found at Target.

-- Rita Jo Shultz (MG 97/98) suggests adding unflavored gelatin to the seed packet when planting really tiny seeds. Just shake it up a bit and then the seed is much easier to broadcast.

-- Craft stores, like Michaels, sell little bags for beads that work great when sharing seeds. So do coin envelopes.

-- A quote and picture of Carol Ross can be found in the Anchorage Community Land Trust's report on "Revitalizing Mountain View". The huge peachy dahlia she's showing off in the photo was an AMGAA meeting 'left-over', <http://anchorageandtrust.org/our-programs/>.

-- Lydia Clayton will start her new position as Ag/Hort Agent for the Kenai Peninsula on June 1st. Lydia has 3 years experience as an agriculture agent in Idaho where she has worked with small farmers, Master Gardeners and pesticide applicators.

-- The Alaska Botanical Garden Spring Conference, March 10, includes ten speakers that completed the Master Gardener course or are AMGAA members—Laurie Constantino (93/94), Verna Pratt (86/87), Elise Huggins (89/90), Debbie Hinchey (AMGAA), Mel Monsen (94/95), Jane Baldwin (99/00), Amelia Walsh (90/91), Dohnn Wood (11/12), Annie Nevaldine (94/95), and Marilyn Barker (08/09). There's lots of talent here!

-- The Herb Study Group's March 2 meeting will include special guest Leslie Shallcross who will be presenting the herbal uses of Roses: Herb of the Year for 2012. The Friday meeting is from 12 noon - 1:30 p.m.

-- Would anyone like to tour Cedar's Floral Wholesale & Imports, 6151 B Street, Anchorage? You no longer need a business license or minimum order to purchase cut flowers from them. To select dates you're available go to <http://www.doodle.com/ppe9u3ifqha99d6q/>.

-- The motto of the BAG LADIES is 'No junk' in the MG Conference registrant bags. If you have an idea for items you'd like to see included, please contact Gina Docherty, Julie Riley or Jo Anne Banta who is getting ready for summer by sunning in Hawaii for the month.

-- THANK YOU, THANK YOU Green Connection for providing the venue for the preconference Meet & Greet on Friday, April 13, 6:30-9:00 p.m. (Tickets, \$5, and finger-food required to attend.)

Ice Age Flower: *Silene stenophylla* Submitted by Jane Baldwin

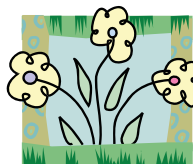
Russian scientists have regenerated an Ice Age flower. Their finds were published in "Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences" of the United States (February 21, 2012).

Seed buried for over 30,000 years in an Ice Age squirrel's burrow, 90 feet below the surface, was regenerated through a tissue culture process. The tissue was grown on as plants which eventually flowered and produced seeds.

The fruit (seed) was excavated from the lower Kolyma River area in Siberia. This ancient species, *Silene stenophylla*, known commonly as the narrow-leafed Campion, still grows in Siberia and northern Japan.



Interesting differences between the ancient plants and the modern relatives were reported: The Ice Age plants produced 1.5 to 2 times as many buds than the modern species; the ancient plants were slower to grow roots; and the ancient flower petals were narrower than the modern petals. Some of the flowers from plants from the 30,000 year old tissue were exclusively female - while the modern flowers had both male and female parts.



[Editor's note: Photo not available due to not obtaining written permission by newsletter deadline. Just google "*Silene stenophylla*" for a myriad of websites with the interesting photo and further information.]

MG Focus: Pat Leary.... cont. from page 3

With a lifetime in public gardening under her belt, Pat gives sound suggestions:

1. Sign up for Master Gardener training - it's invaluable. "It was mandatory for all staff I've ever had full time; that class opens doors."
2. Walk around and look at other people's gardens; keep up with what's going on at the Alaska Botanical Garden.
3. Experiment: Every year try something different. If it flourishes in other gardens, why not in yours?
4. Plant containers. You get a lot of bang in a little bit of space.
5. Have a plan. Garden centers are overwhelming, and if you go in without a plan for your plants, you'll get too many, or you'll get too few, or you'll get a mishmash.
6. Dream about it. Gardening's like a vacation: Half the fun is the anticipation.
7. Start small, and don't make it complicated. Gardening shouldn't be a chore.

"You'll never get rich," says Pat. "Gardening is a labor of love, and Alaska is a great place to be in love with gardening because in the winter, there's a lot of time to plan; plants flourish in the long days and cool nights of summer; there aren't all that many insects to fight; and the growing season is a lot longer than most people think."

"Gardening isn't about today, it's always about tomorrow, beyond now."

"Anchorage Receives Record Snow Fall"

How long is it going to take for all this snow to melt?

I don't know, but here's something that helps:

For a refreshing video on watching snow melt, go to Youtube to see:

"Time Lapse Winter Aconite Flowering, Snow melting"

www.youtube.com/watch?v=kO53r-IMjxE



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 (NEW EMAIL)

AMGA Web Site: 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

If you have questions or want to make address or email corrections, please contact Barbara Baker at: bbaker@alaska.net

Garden Event Calendar

Thursday, March 8

"New and Interesting Perennials" - Wildflower Garden Club Meeting 10am, Central Lutheran Church, 1420 Cordova St., Anchorage

Saturday, March 10

Spring Garden Conference 8:30 am - 5:30 pm - UAA Consortium Library; Guest speaker Eliot Coleman and many Alaskan garden experts will present on a variety of subjects. Lunch included. ABG members \$90, non members \$105 - Registration required. Call 770-3692 for info.

Tuesday, March 13 - Thursday, March 15

Eighth Annual Sustainable Agriculture Conference - Fairbanks, Princess Riverside Lodge; for details and registration: www.uaf.edu/ces/ah/sare/conference

Thursday, March 15

Willow Garden Club Meeting, 7 pm, Willow Community Center - Presentation by Kathy Mailer: "Delphiniums, Majestic Beauties of the Northern Garden"

Saturday, March 17

Alaska Rock Garden Club Meeting - Speaker Carmel Tysver "Tufa and its uses". 2 pm, CES Anchorage office

Monday, March 19

Alaska Master Gardener Association Meeting, "Charismatic Microflora: Mosses", presented by Marilyn Barker. 7pm, CES

Tuesday, March 27

Orchid Society Meeting 7pm, BP Energy Center, 900 E. Benson Blvd.

Wednesday, March 28

TREErific, 5:45pm announcements and Moose's Tooth Pizza; 6pm - 7pm Presentation by Debbie Hinchey. Debbie will discuss ways to incorporate habitat into your landscape to attract birds and other wildlife.

Wednesday, March 28

Gardening with Nature class, take home vegetable seedlings, 9am - 6pm; Instructors: Ellen Vande Visse, Mariana Gonzales-Rul, Becky Fox-Krogstad. 3105 West 29th, \$65. See website www.goodearthgardenschool.com for info and registration

Saturday, March 31 and Saturday April 7, 10am - 5pm

Brenda Adams teaches "Northern Garden Design and Implementations - Kachemak Bay Campus of Kenai Peninsula College Course # OSE-AC019. Fee is \$80; Contact Brenda 907-235-3763 for more info.

Thursday, April 5

Anchorage Garden Club Meeting Dohnn Wood presents "Containers and Window Boxes" - 7pm, Central Lutheran Church, 1420 Cordova, Anchorage.

Saturday, April 7

Spring Garden Show - 10am - 5pm Mall at Sears

Saturday, April 14

Alaska Master Gardeners 2012 Conference: "Gardening Realities": 8:15am - 4:30pm Anchorage Senior Center, 1300 E. 20th Avenue; Salad and sandwich buffet included - \$60 until 3/31, \$75 starting 4/1. Visit: www.alaskamastergardeners.org for details and registration

Alaska Master Gardeners Association, Anchorage
University of Alaska Cooperative Extension
P.O. Box 221403
Anchorage, Alaska 99522-1403

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For information about membership or
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Anchorage, AK 99501
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Fax: 786-6312



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Pat Leary enjoyed some sun in Don Elliot's orchard, 9/22/10. See Cheryl Chapman's "Master Gardener Focus" article on page 3 for Pat's interesting story. Photo by Patricia Joyner