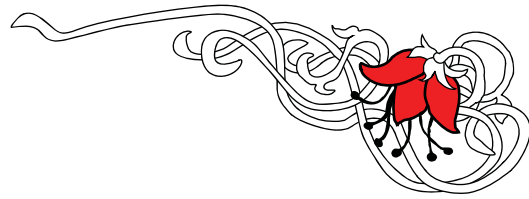


Anchorage



Volume 15, Issue 12

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ANCHORAGE NEWSLETTER December 2013



A Nickel's Worth from President LaFleur

It has been a year for the record books, hasn't it? With temperatures going from 30 above to 8 below in a matter of days, it couldn't have been easy for the trees, shrubs and perennials to live through. So when it snowed, I said a prayer to Mother Nature for the blanket of white mulch to provide some insulation to them all. And, it's been too cold ever since for it to melt.

Thanks to all the Master Gardeners that joined me in getting their registration in for next year's membership before the October 31st early-bird deadline. I heard that over 50% of the 2013 membership participated and I appreciate that. Drawing for the three prizes was done on November 1st and the lucky winners notified shortly thereafter. Here's the list: Marsha Korri won the box of purple gloves; Janice Berry won the dragon fly lights; and Annie Ronsse scored the purple extendo rake. Congratulations ladies....you ARE the winners! To the rest of our unpaid members, fill out the membership form at your earliest convenience and let's have a great year as Alaska Master Gardeners Anchorage. The price hasn't changed, still the great value for \$20. Don't forget - please take care of it today!

As you know, there is no program meeting in December and on January 20, 2014, we will have our Annual Meeting, the Election results, as well as finding out what's "New for 2014" from our very own CES horticulturist-extraordinaire, Julie Riley.

The able and active Board of Directors for the AMGA will meet to take care of year-end responsibilities and duties on December 9th, and I would like to take a minute to thank all the Board and Committee Chairs for another year's dedication. As a non-profit volunteer group, it takes a lot of people to make it run smoothly and thanks to all of you who give year- after- year to help promote gardening and the CES/UAF affiliation. Please take an active role in volunteering as a Master Gardener in your area.

A huge thanks to AMGA Board Jill Shepherd for completing her two year term and her willingness to continue to help out on various committees even though she will be stepping down from the Board duties. I look forward to working with Jill on a few different committees. Many thanks to returning Board Members Cindy Walker, Lynne Opstad, and Barbara Baker for being willing to come back for another two-year term and be

a vital part of our organization. It's comforting to have Cheryl Shroyer, Amy Olmstead and Greg Kalal as we all four complete the 1st year of our two-year term. Yes, it takes a village of people to make things run.

Believe it or not, this is my last article as President of the Alaska Master Gardeners Anchorage. After the voting is completed in early January, the new Board will meet after our January 20th program to choose Officer positions for the 2014 year. I look forward to assisting the new President in whatever way he/she needs. It's been a learning experience for me and a lot of fun getting to be involved with such a great group of gardeners. Thanks for letting me be your President for the past couple of years.

Each one of us has something special to offer as a Master Gardener and it's a privilege to be associated with equally passionate people. Please make 2014 the year to volunteer and I'll see you out there. It takes all of us to get it done!

Treasurer's Report Balances 9/30/2013

Checking	1578.45
Savings	12663.08
CD - (ABG)	3374.95
CD - (Education)	3034.28
	<hr/>
	\$20650.76

Revenue	
Donation	60.00
Interest	1.61
Membership Dues	1452.31
	<hr/>
	\$1513.92

Expense:	
Hospitality	265.00
Membership	22.00
Newsletter	293.82
	<hr/>
	\$580.82



Balances 10/31/13	
Checking	2509.94
Savings	12664.69
	<hr/>
	\$12664.69

Dedicated Funds	\$6409.23
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Mike Monterusso from ABG spoke to MGs at the November 18th meeting about Green Roofs.
Photo from Nickel LaFleur



AMGA members listen attentively to Mike Monterusso. His power point presentation was open to anyone who requested it.
Photo by Nickel LaFleur



Gina Docherty & Lynne Opstad pause to get their picture taken by Nickel.

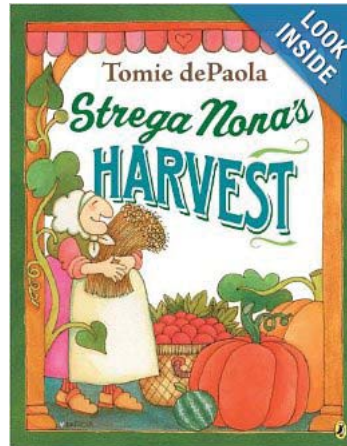
AMGA 2014 Membership Renewal Reminder

2014 dues are payable on or before December 31st, when current memberships expire. If you are uncertain whether your 2014 dues are current, please check your newsletter address label. Several lines below the actual address you should find: "Dues Expire: 2014-Dec 31". If you have questions, please check with Jane Baldwin.

Remember, to be included in the 2014 AMGA Directory, dues should be received or postmarked by December 31st. As of this newsletter, approximately 60% of our members have already renewed. Many thanks go to those folks - early renewals will help immensely in our efforts towards earlier distribution of the 2014 MG Directory.

Book Reports by Master Gardeners

Growing Young Gardeners by Amy Reed, Master Gardener



One of my most favorite things to do during these cold Alaskan winter evenings is to curl up in front of the fireplace with my three year old daughter and read her stories.

One of our favorite stories of late is a book titled Strega Nonnoa's Harvest by Tomie dePaola (G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2009). If you have young children or grandchildren, this is a terrific story to teach them the proper way to grow vegetables. The book is geared for children aged preschool to third grade and introduces and intertwines the beautiful Italian language throughout. Wise grandmother Strega Nonnoa consults her Garden Book to determine what she did the prior year. She rests her seeds, composts, cultivates, and adds her secret ingredient...a song to the moon, Bella Luna, and offers three kisses. As the season progresses, her garden grows beautifully. Her grandson, Big Anthony, observes Strega Nonnoa's gardening magic, however decides to grow a secret garden on his own. He isn't as organized, however, and his garden is a mess. Strega Nonnoa harvests her vegetables and organizes them in her root cellar and kitchen. When Big Anthony picks his garden, but he doesn't know what to do, he ends up leaving his harvest on Strega Nonnoa's doorstep! She is perplexed, but decides instead of keeping the vegetables, to donate them to the local convent and have a huge feast for her friends and family.

This is a wonderful story to teach children the importance of organizing your garden and sharing your harvest with those less fortunate.

New Books for Plant Lovers By Janice Berry

The Signature of All Things, by Elizabeth Gilbert

Gilbert, who grew up on a small Christmas tree farm, is best known for her best-selling memoir *Eat, Pray, Love* (also made into a popular movie). *The Signature of All Things* is a story of love, adventure and history that takes place in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It follows the fortunes of the Whittaker family led by the enterprising Henry Whittaker—a poor-born Englishman who makes a great fortune in the South American quinine (a bitter-tasting drug made from cinchona bark) trade, eventually becoming the richest man in Philadelphia. Henry's brilliant daughter, Alma becomes a botanist of considerable gifts. As Alma's research takes her deeper into the mysteries of evolution, she falls in love with a man named Ambrose Pike who makes incomparable paintings of orchids and who draws her in the exact opposite direction—into the realm of the spiritual, the

divine, and the magical. Alma is a clear-minded scientist; Ambrose a utopian artist—but what unites this unlikely couple is a desperate need to understand the workings of this world and the mechanisms behind all life. Alma Whittaker, who—born in the Age of Enlightenment, but living well into the Industrial Revolution—bears witness to that extraordinary moment in human history when all the old assumptions about science, religion, commerce, and class were exploding into dangerous new ideas.

The Heart of the Plate: Vegetarian Recipes for a New Generation, by Mollie Katzen

Katzen's 1977 *Moosewood Cookbook* not only introduced vegetarian food to mainstream readers, but it was the bestselling vegetarian cookbook in world history. Now Katzen is back with a fresh look at vegetarian fare. Its recipes display her ever-widening repertoire of flavors and ingredients. In *The Heart of the Plate*, Katzen unveils a collection of beautiful, healthful, and unfussy dishes — her “absolutely most loved.” Her new cuisine is light, sharp, and simple; her writing style is personal, helpful, clear, and funny. Whether it's a salad of kale and angel hair pasta with orange chili oil or a seasonal autumn lasagna, these dishes are celebrations of vegetables. For example: orange rice with black beans, or tiny buttermilk corn cakes on a Peruvian potato stew. Suppers from the oven, like vegetable pizza and mushroom popover pie, are comforting. Burgers and savory pancakes — from eggplant Parmesan burgers to zucchini ricotta cloud cakes — make weeknight dinners fresh and exciting. *The Heart of the Plate* is vibrantly illustrated with photographs and original watercolors by the author herself. Even though you may not be a vegetarian, you no doubt have tried a diet or two in your lifetime to improve your health, and one consistency in most diets is eat more fruits and vegetables. This book might be an inspiration to anyone looking to improve their health.

The Language of Flowers

By Vanessa Diffenbaugh
A review by Gina Docherty

This was a fictional story about a young woman, Victoria Jones, with a sad past: being abandoned as an infant & shifted through many (32) different foster homes while growing up. The story begins when she turns 18 and is emancipated as an adult. The book is written in two time lines, the present of course, and the past that lead up to circumstances in the present. She was a difficult child with many emotional and behavioral issues (mother daughter mainly), and she didn't handle things in her life well. At a young age, she was adopted (sort of) by a woman who owned a vineyard and who also taught her the meaning of flowers and some plants. Unfortunately, this adoption didn't come to fruition, and the main character was shuffled back into the state system. There were some parts that give you pause to think, and other parts that are almost painful to read. It most definitely is not a text book on the *Language of Flowers*, but more a thought-provoking afternoon of reading, with some information on the meaning of plants or flowers. And it was a good reminder to share our gardening knowledge with our children and grandchildren.

Here's what Wikipedia has to say about the Victoria Language of Flowers:

The language of flowers, sometimes called floriography, is a means of cryptological communication through the

use or arrangement of flowers. Meaning has been attributed to flowers for thousands of years, and some form of floriography has been practiced in traditional cultures throughout Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.

Plants and flowers are used as symbols in the Hebrew Bible—particularly of love and lovers in the *Song of Songs*,^[1] as an emblem for the Israelite people^[2] and for the coming Messiah^[3]—and of Jesus Christ in the New Testament.^[4] In Western Culture, William Shakespeare ascribed emblematic meanings to flowers, especially in *Hamlet*, Prince of Denmark.

Interest in floriography soared in Victorian England and in the United States during the 19th century. Gifts of blooms, plants, and specific floral arrangements were used to send a coded message to the recipient, allowing the sender to express feelings which could not be spoken aloud in Victorian society.^[5]^[6] Armed with floral dictionaries, Victorians often exchanged small “talking bouquets”, called nosegays or tussie-mussies, which could be worn or carried as a fashion accessory.

I did learn about the meanings of many plants and flowers by reading this book. For example, if you gave someone a bouquet of basil, lavender and peony, wouldn't you think you were sending love & good wishes? Not so! You would be telling them that you hate them & don't trust them! Basil means “hate” and Lavender means “mistrust”. There are also many plants & flowers which have 2 or more meanings; for example, lavender might mean 'mistrust' or it also might mean 'devotion', so you could really be sending 2 messages. Peony might mean “anger”, but it also might mean “shame, bashfulness, or masculinity”.

The book has a handy flower dictionary at the end - which is great if you purchase the book. I downloaded the book on my Kindle from the library & enjoyed it.

Tips from “Trowel & Error” by Sharon Lovejoy Reviewed by Nickel LaFleur

A book that boasts over 700 shortcuts for the gardener sounds like it is right up my alley. I found all sorts of tips in my reading and wanted to pass on a few of the more noteworthy ones to my fellow Master Gardeners.

1. Glue a small mirror on the end of a yardstick to check the underside of leaves for pests.
2. For mildew and black spot rust, dissolve 2 uncoated aspirins in a quart of water and use the mixture as a foliar spray. Another one for mildew is 9 parts water to 1 part milk... shake well and spray both sides of leaves thoroughly a couple times a week
3. Wrap some adhesives tape - sticky side out- around finger to blot off aphids
4. Instead of using salt as your 'ice melt' use complete NPK fertilizer and spread as you would salt.
5. Corn gluten meal is rich in protein and contains herbicide that suppresses weeds, crabgrass, dandelions by inhibiting root formation during germination.
6. Lure gnats into a bowl by putting in equal parts of water and apple cider vinegar together (1/2 cup water, 1/2 cup a.c. vinegar)... gnats will dive into the bowl and die.

Continued on page 6

2013 MG Christmas Wish List

- After seeing the pictures from Jane's iPhone with the lens attachment, I think it's on the top of my Christmas list. The lens is called the "Ollo Clip 3 in 1 Photo Lens" for Apple iPhone 5. It costs \$69.99 at Best Buy. Happy Holidays, Barbara Baker

- I want a warm wonderful summer. Kathy Wartenbee

- I want some Billbergia plants. Martie Black

- My knees would like to find a long, wood handled Cobrahead® Weeder and Cultivator under the Christmas tree! Narrower than traditional hoe styles, testimonials indicate it works well up close and personal for weeds and plants. A bit pricey, but available with handle length options of 48", 54" or 60"; tempered steel blade and ash handle are replaceable; limited warranty on workmanship and parts. It's also available in a hand held, 13" model, but my knees say no to that one. Have not seen it available locally, but it can be ordered from: <http://www.cobrahead.com/> Jane Baldwin

- I would like a pallet of flagstones and a fire pit. They won't fit in my stocking, so you can just drop them out by the garden. Gina Docherty

- A chipper/shredder. Alice Campbell

- Here is what is on my wish list: After the Advanced MG Taxonomy Class, books about Botany, including "Plant Identification Terminology" by James B Harris & Melinda Woolf Harris, Bonsai Plants, and another Composting Bin. Lynne O.

- All I want for Christmas is a Lithodora that survives my Zone 3 winters! Dawn Bishop-Kleweno

- I'd like Santa to protect our plants through the winter and bring us an earlier growing season! Fran Durner

- If Santa could bring me one thing for my garden, I would want a slug eradicator--something that would not harm plants or soil but would get rid of all those slimy little devils! Sharon Schlicht

- I want a GREENHOUSE but thought that was too extravagant to put in writing. I even told my hubby about it. I also want a drip irrigation system for my vegetable garden, 75-100 mature partial shade perennials for my new garden that was completed this fall. I want I want I want, the list is endless. Cindy Walker

- I would love to have another summer like the last one--except starting in May this time! Shirley Kelly

- I would like Santa to bring me a new porch and step for my shed in the backyard (which my husband named Ravenscrest). The old porch rotted away! Pat Anderson

- I'm hoping Santa can find me a large lot here on the east side that I can start a market garden on. Something with good sun and decent sub soil that I could long term lease for not a lot and start growing and selling veg. close to home. I hope I'm on the nice list and Santa can find this so I can share the gift of fresh food little more. Merry Christmas, Dohnn Wood

- I'd like my garden to be pest-free this year. To have the aphids, sawflies, current worms, slugs, etc. to not be part of my vocabulary would equal success in my world. Oh yeah, I could use some peace on Earth, too. Nickel LaFleur

- For Christmas, perhaps I'd like a bird bath to decorate my garden. Janice Berry

- I am reading, but nothing comes to mind... maybe someone to weed would be lovely. Paul Marmora

- 10 yards of good organic compost! Janie Taylor

- An organized Master Gardeners book. Judith Brendel



Christmas Poem

[Reprinted with permission
from Marianne Binetti]

[http://www.binettigarden.com/
christmas-poem.html](http://www.binettigarden.com/christmas-poem.html)

T'was the week before Christmas,
and all through the yard,
not a gift was given, not even a card.
The tools were all hung, in the carport with care,
with hopes that St. Nicholas soon would repair,
The shovel with blade all rusty and cracked,
the pitchfork still shiny, but handle it lacked.
When out on my lawn, (it's brown and abused)
I could see poor old Santa, looking confused.
No list had been left for Santa to see,
no gardening gifts were under the tree.
But wait there's still time, it's not Christmas yet,
and gardening gifts are the quickest to get.
You can forget the silk tie, the fluffy new sweater,
give something to make the garden grow better.
If she wants a gift shiny, then don't be a fool,
it's not a dumb diamond, but a sparkling new tool.
If fragrance is listed you can forget French perfume,
it's a pile of manure that'll make gardeners swoon.
Give night crawlers, not nightgowns,
the type of hose that gives water.
(Anything for the kitchen is not worth the bother.)
Give a great gift that digs in the dirt,
it's better than any designer-brand shirt.
Now look quick at Santa, this guy's not so dumb,
under his glove, he hides a green thumb.
His knees are so dirty, his back how it aches,
his boots stomp on slugs, (he gives them no breaks).
The guy only works winter, you can surely see why,
the rest of the year it's a gardening high.
Elves plant in the spring, pull weeds merrily all summer,
in fall they all harvest, but winter's a bummer.
And so Christmas gives Santa a part-time employment,
'Till spring when the blooms are his real life enjoyment.
So ask the big guy for garden gifts this year,
Seeds, plants and tools, Santa holds them all dear.
You see malls may be crowded,
vendors hawking their ware,
but visit a nursery, s
tress-free shopping is there.
Now Santa's flown off,
to the nursery he goes,
and his voice fills the night
with loud Ho! Ho! Ho! Ho!

Merry Christmas from Marianne Binetti



Central Peninsula Master Gardener News

This from our internet explorer, Kathy Wartinbee:
"Has anyone tried container sweet corn? I got a Stokes seed catalog and it was 8 degrees today. Someone is thinking way ahead."

Fungus may offer natural weed control:
A naturally occurring fungus may prove useful in the fight against Palmer amaranth, an aggressive southern weed that can grow at the rate of two inches a day and out-compete corn, cotton, soybean and other crops for resources, potentially reducing their yields. (11/18)
<http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/pr/2013/131118.htm>

From spent grain to kitty litter:
Kitty litter that's nearly 100 percent biodegradable can be made by processing spent grains left over from corn ethanol production. USDA scientists have shown that litter made with these grains as the starting material may prove to be more environmentally friendly than popular but nonbiodegradable clay-based litters. (11/22)
<http://www.ars.usda.gov/is/pr/2013/131122.htm>

(Freddy's carries it but in small containers down here in Soldotna and I go for cheap. I think I may experiment with a bag though. rk)

I have a Stokes catalog and some catalogs that are only online. Stokes came in the mail. Online, Renee's, Johnny's, and I can't remember the others."

This from Barb Jewell on her way out of town to Seattle for turkey day: "I've received Stokes and Pinetree." P.S. Plants seem far from my mind as I'm shoveling snow this morning."

And this from our mellowing curmudgeon, Don St. John: "Snow, snow, snow... who hid my shovel? This is making up for our mild fall in spades. If it keeps snowing I'll have to dig out my snow plow."

October 28th I walked out to check my outside garden and discovered that broccoli, celery and cabbage were growing! Now I had to process all this stuff!!! I picked enough broccoli for dinner. On Halloween I picked celery for my grandson... I picked him up at one Halloween party, he ate celery as I drove him to the next party. I ate some of his candy. Now it is time to drink some Sterling shine, good stuff... celebrating no more weed-ing!!! or something..."

From Rosemary Kimball: Quelles horreurs! Margaret Simon deep-sixed her fig tree! There are several of us who would have killed for it. She figured it was too big. I'm still mourning. This is the last time I will respond to Gina's nag for the newsletter. I will still harass the troops down here because they are doing all sorts of neat things but I'm retiring from monthly writing.

Dear Rosemary - The editor and all our readers thank you for your many years of contributing to our newsletter. We have been informed and entertained. You will be missed. Feel free to write something from time to time if the spirit moves you.

Love and Thanks,
The AMGA

Recipes from Master Gardeners

Healthy Kale and Berry Smoothie

A great way to use up extra kale!

- 3 or 4 stalks of kale, center ribs and stems removed
- 1 cup blueberries, strawberries or other berry of choice (fresh or frozen)
- 1 ripe banana
- 1 teaspoon grated ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground flax seed
- 1 cup yogurt or milk

Add all ingredients to a blender and process until smooth.

Submitted by Janice Berry

Thanksgiving Cookies

(They might last until Christmas!)

The cookies known as "Joe Froggers" were a favorite of the Mayflower voyagers and the generations that followed them. They were originally prepared by the families back home. Those who had baked the cookies usually cut their initials into each cookie as a fitting remembrance as the miles separated each family member. The "Joe Froggers" were stored in barrels on ship for sometimes several months. Even so, they were always soft and tasty. This is attributed to one ingredient to be found in the recipe. Can you guess what it is?* Here is the recipe:

- 1 cup shortening
- 3/4 cups water
- 2 cups sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon allspice
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 7 cups flour
- 2 cups dark molasses
- 1 teaspoon cloves
- 2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 tablespoon ginger
- 1/4 cup rum (more if desired)

Cream shortening and sugar until light. Dissolve salt in water and mix with rum. Add baking soda to molasses. Sift flour with spices. Add liquid ingredients alternately with flour mixture to creamed mixture. Stir well between additions. Dough should be sticky. Chill overnight. In the morning, flour board and rolling pin. Roll dough 1/4 to 1/2 inch thickness. Cut with cutter (each cookie should be the size of the inside of a coffee cup.) Bake in 375 degree oven from 10 to 12 minutes.

*(Did you guess correctly that the ingredient is rum?)

From Kathy Wartinbee



Bird Chatter

- Gina Docherty won an iPad mini by entering a KTUU survey that asked what Alaska Grown means to you.

- From The Word Origin Calendar of the day for November 20: Peach - The "peach" tree, a relative of the almond, is a native of Central Asia. The Romans called it *Persicum malum*, or "Persian apple," which was shortened over time to *persicum*. This became *pesca* in Italian and *peche* in French. English borrowed the word from the latter language, pronouncing it to rhyme not with "mesh" but with "beech".

- Vegetable Trivia: Purple carrots have 16 times the carotene of orange carrots.

JUST A THOUGHT From Sandy Harrington

Often, it's easy to take for granted the wonders of our lives. Recently thoughts were meandering through my mind focusing on our organization and how so much has been given to so many over the years. Being a Master Gardener is an opportunity to grow as a person and especially as a person who gardens. We have learned to pot and repot, pick what we think is the ideal location and then, much wiser, we pick a new location all as a means to offer the annuals, perennials, trees, and shrubs the best possible conditions to grow and thank us with their beauty and companionship. It would be difficult to repay the Alaska Master Gardeners of Anchorage for the knowledge that has helped us all become more accomplished caretakers of our environment.

It is a gift to share time and information with others whose love of gardening enhances the enthusiasm and passion for one's own gardening life. We are a fortunate group in that "count your blessings" isn't a cliché, it's a gardener's truth.

Tips from "Trowel & Error"...cont. from page 3

7. To remove salt residue on pots use equal parts of white vinegar, rubbing alcohol, & water and mix together and scrub on with a toothbrush
8. Tomatoes, peppers and eggplants like a booster of 2 Tbsp. Epsom salts to a gallon of water
9. Comfrey is rich in potassium and nitrogen. Use it in a mesh bag in a large can of water and stir it daily for at least 5 days to get a good brew.
10. Citrus contains limonene and linalool which are contact poisons for aphids, fleas, mites, fire ants, fruit and house flies, and mealy bugs.

Annuals Stage a Comeback by Annie Nevaldine

For a good ten years or so, I started as many as 2,000 annuals from seed in a windowless room. Beginning in January with the slower growing varieties, through April with the speedier ones, these seedlings grew under grow lamps with a fan for circulation until they got evicted in May to their outdoor summer home.

In those early years of gardening, my beds were composed mostly of annuals with just a dash of perennials peppered about. Gradually I added more and more perennials, leaving less and less room for annuals. So I scaled back the number of annual seeds planted until I quit growing any at all. Ultimately perennials comprised my gardens exclusively. It seemed a luxury that the gardens were lush enough with perennials to just grow "au-to-mat-i-cal-ly," as my immigrant neighbor used to say, enunciating each syllable with equal emphasis. I resorted to purchasing just a few annuals each spring, mostly for use in containers, but I was freed up from the seeding and seedling business myself for more than two decades.

Fast forward to 2013. The 2012-2013 winter provided the perfect storm of conditions that stressed and taxed perennials in ways they hadn't been for nearly 20 years. There were reports all across Southcentral Alaska of perennials, trees, and shrubs dying or being severely damaged. And death wasn't limited just to the marginal, tender zone 4 or zone 5 plants that aren't supposed to be hardy here and that only the innocent, the eager, and the doomed grow. Lots of tried and true, you-can't-kill-this-if-you-try perennials also succumbed. Devastation was widespread, worse in some areas and in some gardens than in others.

Mine were ones hit very hard. I was catapulted into philosophical musings about my identity as a gardener as I contemplated reconstruction. While studying my gardens, which easily sustained a 50 percent loss, I wondered in amazement about the previous luxury I had enjoyed of "automatic" perennial gardens. Then I remembered that it hadn't always been like that; I recalled the days when my gardens weren't so full with perennials and when annuals constituted the mainstay. I realized that I could press annuals into service to fill in the holes that pockmarked the gardens. They don't have to be understudies, either. They can play leading roles themselves and perform as an integral part of the main attraction.

How could I have forgotten about annuals and their value to a garden? Years of too-successful perennial gardening had rendered them unnecessary and had virtually removed them from my radar screen. But after a summer's worth of crying and sizing up last winter's perennial destruction, I am rethinking and reappreciating their utility. Since we don't expect an annual to return the following spring, we never lament its death in a harsh winter. After this season of grieving, that sounds like great insurance policy to me.

**Flower Power -
Vocabulary building
through a few floral inspired words
From Mike Baldwin**

As we move into the dark of winter there is no excuse for your mind to go dormant like many of our plants do. Here are a number of flora inspired vocabulary terms from the A Word A Day (AWAD) website (<http://word-smith.org/words/lotus-eater.html>) to keep your mind growing this winter. With the exception of the first word coined in the 19th Century, the words were first used in the 17th Century. How many do you recognize? How many have you used?

Lotus-eater (Pronunciation LO-tuhs-ee-tuhr): A noun describing a person who indulges in idle daydreaming or leads a life of luxurious ease, instead of dealing with the practical matters of reality. **ETYMOLOGY:** AWAD reports this is coined from the lotus-eaters, the people in Homer's *Odyssey*, who ate the lotus fruit that supposedly induced a dreamy forgetfulness.

Primrose path (Pronunciation: PRIM-rohz PATH): A noun that means 1) living an easy life, especially one that is devoted to sensual pleasure. 2) A path of least resistance, especially one that ends in disaster. **ETYMOLOGY:** AWAD believes it to come from the Latin *prima rosa* (first rose). AWAD also notes that while "...It's not clear why primrose was picked for naming this metaphorical path", the word seems to have first been used in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

Lily-livered (Pronunciation: LIL-ee-LIV-uhrd): Adjective, meaning cowardly or timid. **ETYMOLOGY:** AWAD indicates that in earlier times that it was thought that the liver was considered to be the seat of courage. So if the liver was lacking blood it was colored a white, and it indicated a lack of courage.

Amaranthine (Pronunciation: am-uh-RAN-thin, -thyn): Adjective, meaning 1) unending or everlasting. 2) Of deep purple-red color. 3) Of or related to the Amaranth. **ETYMOLOGY:** According to AWAD it comes from amaranth (an imaginary, undying flower), from the Latin *amarantus*, which comes from the Greek *amarantos* (unfading), from *a-* (not) + *marainein* (to fade). He reports it is ultimately from the Indo-European root *mer-* (to rub away or to harm), which is also the source of *morse*, *mordant*, *amaranth*, *morbid*, *mortal*, *mortgage*, *nightmare*, *ambrosia*, and *premonse*.

Sub rosa (Pronunciation: sub RO-zuh): Adverb, meaning secretly, privately, or confidentially. **ETYMOLOGY:** AWAD suggests *sub rosa* comes from the Latin *sub* (under) *rosa* (rose). The earliest documented use is approximately 1654. The English term "under the rose" is also used to refer to something in secret. The author notes that "...in Roman mythology, Venus's son Cupid gave a rose to Harpocrates, the god of silence, to ensure his silence about Venus's many indiscretions. Thus the flower became a symbol of secrecy. Ceilings of banquet halls were decorated with roses to indicate that what was said *sub vino* (under the influence of wine) was also *sub rosa*."

Garden Event Calendar

NO DECEMBER MEETING!
HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Friday, January 3, 2014

Herb Study Group - Topic: *Artemisia*: Herb of the Year, 2014; 12 - 1 p.m., Cooperative Extension Office, 1675 C St., Anch.

Monday, January 20

AMGA Annual Meeting, Election Results; Program: "New for 2014 - Herbs, Flowers, Vegetables", with Julie Riley. 7 p.m., Cooperative Extension Office - 1675 C St., Anch.

Friday, February 7

Herb Study Group - Topic: *Artemisia*, Part II; 12 - 1 p.m., Cooperative Extension Office, 1675 C St., Anch.

Monday, February 17

AMGA Meeting - Program "Seed Exchange and Summer Recap". Speakers: Master Gardeners. Refreshments: Annual Potluck. 7 p.m., Cooperative Extension Office - 1675 C St., Anch.



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

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Phone: 345-4099

Email: amga@alaska.net

AMGA Web Site: www.alaskamastergardeners.org

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

AMGA Google Group:

<https://groups.google.com/forum/?fromgroups#!forum/AkMGA>

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 Jane Baldwin at: jbaldwin@alaska.net

For information about membership or upcoming programs, contact:
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Seasons Greetings

If you haven't renewed your AMGA membership, now is the time. Renew before December 31st.

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