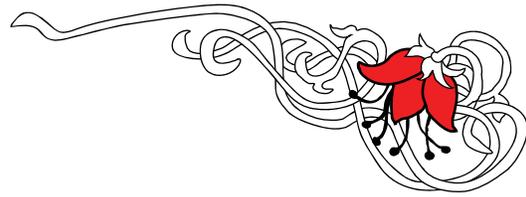


Anchorage



Volume 15, Issue 7

ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ANCHORAGE NEWSLETTER

July 2013



A Nickel's Worth from President LaFleur

Wow! What a wonderful summer!!! June started off with decent weather for the annual Festival of Flowers. Thanks to the Master Gardeners who volunteered for the cause. I haven't heard how much money was raised for the endowment, but I feel confident our involvement helped it succeed.

I lost a lot of my perennials over the winter and a lot of the annuals with the crazy conditions they've have to live in the last month to month and a half. Poor plants freeze at night and get sunburned during the day. Then, thanks to me, they dry out due to lack of moisture and the addition of wind. It's been a struggle with the record setting weather temperatures but really, I'm NOT complaining. I feel fortunate to be able to landscape in 70+° weather! I see it as a gift from Mother Nature and enjoy each day as it comes.

I hope everyone has been going to the wonderful garden tours that are arranged most every Monday through the summer. Take a look at our wonderful directory for what is coming up as well as check with email on updates. Lynne Opstad sends out helpful reminders about 5 days before the next tour to keep everyone in the loop. Speaking of, there's a change on our Potluck location - we'll meet at Madge & John Oswald's instead. Thanks to all in keeping tours organized for the rest of us! I enjoyed going to tour the Healing Garden over at South Central Foundation the end of June. Though the garden was small and fairly young, it was inspiring to see the plants with names and pictures of what they look like. An added bonus was the artwork inside the building. Check it out if you haven't already done so.

As an arborist, I've been pruning off dead branches on lilacs and roses that have died over the winter. I occasionally would see girdling done by voles tunneling under the snow and munching on the plant stems but also a lot of die back from freezer burns on the trunks and branches. Some of the branches on the lilac that still hold last year's leaves are dead and others are struggling to grow. It's been a wait and see kind of summer with the landscape around Anchorage where I garden. How about you, how are your trees and shrubs reacting to the past year's hardships?

After reading about the 'flexible hose' comments from MGs on the Google Group, I went out and bought one, too. As a commercial gardener, I really liked the neon

green color of the hose and wasn't too turned off with the plastic ends. So far this year, this hose has been used more than the others and I haven't had any problems or complaints with it. I do appreciate being able to carry a hose with only a few fingers, too.

Like many of you, I've had summer guests to entertain. Every day I would wake up exclaiming how it's the nicest day all week and my guests from Texas and Oklahoma would look at me wondering how come I told them not to bother to pack shorts for the trip. Luckily, they brought those pants that have zippers to do double duty as shorts and appeared to be quite comfortable, too. I cherish all the summer days and just hope we don't use up our ration of them before my favorite Uncle arrives in the 2nd week of July.

Enjoy our summer season and I look forward to seeing you!

Treasurer's Report

Balances 4/30/2013

Checking 5-88	1799.98
Savings 5-19	15154.18
CD- (ABG)	3363.14
CD-(Education)	3014.76
	<hr/>
	\$23332.06

Revenue	
Interest	2.56
Membership	79.70
	<hr/>
	\$82.26

Expense	
Newsletter	293.84
Operations	25.00
Pioneer Home	475.00
Website	625.00
	<hr/>
	\$1418.84

Balances 5/31/2013

Checking 5-88	2960.84
Savings 5-19	12656.74
CD-112.1(ABG)	3363.14
CD-126(Education)	3014.76
	<hr/>
	\$21995.48



Summer Garden Tours - June

By Barbara Baker

Master gardeners are rediscovering the beauty of Anchorage's public gardens this summer.



Photo by B.Baker

ties underway. Incorporating many elements of the ABG Master Plan, paths have been upgraded, making accessibility much easier. Our guides pointed out the new



Photo by G.Docherty

the 100th anniversary of Anchorage. As we walked through the gardens, the influence and involvement of many local garden and tree clubs was apparent. For example, Master Gardeners had readied the Herb Garden for our tour. An extended dormancy and winter kill were lively topics among the hosts and tour group. Patience, or perhaps impatience, to see spring burst forth was on everyone's mind.



Photo by B.Baker

tulips were blooming, as we stopped by to visit Master Gardener, Courtney Ruckel, at her nursery in Indian. A large yellow and violet butterfly, crafted from thou-

We began the tour season at the Alaska Botanical Gardens (ABG) with Elise Huggins, as our tour guide. Elise (former ABG board member) and Julianne McGuinness (ABG executive director) walked us through the awakening gardens and all of the activi-

ties underway. Incorporating many elements of the ABG Master Plan, paths have been upgraded, making accessibility much easier. Our guides pointed out the new research garden being developed, revamping of the upper perennial garden (Lyle's Garden) into features of broad swaths of color and texture, and the planned development of a Heritage Garden to celebrate

the 100th anniversary of Anchorage. As we walked through the gardens, the influence and involvement of many local garden and tree clubs was apparent. For example, Master Gardeners had readied the Herb Garden for our tour. An extended dormancy and winter kill were lively topics among the hosts and tour group. Patience, or perhaps impatience, to see spring burst forth was on everyone's mind.

The winter doldrums were erased with the tour of Forget Me Not Nursery and Alyeska Resort. The weather was perfect and the

sands of tulips, could be seen in the garden. The grounds were alive with spring perennials and the nursery was filled with colorful baskets, annuals and perennials. We continued down the inlet to Alyeska Resort and toured the grounds with Master Gardener, Jodie McPhie, who supervises the grounds crew for the resort. The late spring had delayed some of the garden's perennials, but the bulbs and primulas were spectacular, creating a vibrant tapestry of color.



Photo by B.Baker

Our tree tour of the University Alaska, Anchorage (UAA) was filled with the waft of fragrant pine trees and splendor

of crabapples in bloom. Containing over 30 species of trees, Master Gardeners, Catherine Shenk (grounds supervisor) and Pat Leary (retired supervisor) lead us on a tour of this marvelous



Photo by B.Baker

urban campus with its park-like feel. UAA is part of the Arbor Day Foundation's national Tree Tours network.

Evergreen, deciduous, fruit bearing and flowering trees can be found of both native and other tree specimens.



Photo by B.Baker

There are at least ten different varieties of crabapple that bloom and bear fruit, for example. The campus is used as a laboratory to test the hardiness of different varieties of trees for this climatic zone and has also been the test site for pest management, such as utilization of a wasp to attack birch aphids. If you're planning to add a tree to your garden, UAA is a great destination to view the mature stage of the tree.

Continued on page 3



Photo by B.Baker

The Native people of Alaska have fed and healed themselves with native plants for thousands of years. The award winning Traditional Healing Garden located at the Southcentral Primary Care Center is a passive educational tool used at the Traditional Healing Department for its customer-owners. Buz Daney (manager) and staff member and Master Gardener, Laura Kotelman, provided a tour of this unique garden pointing out the use of plants and weeds in traditional healing. The plants, and the poultices and teas made from them, have been demonstrated to contain therapeutic value, according to the scientific Natural Standard Research Collaboration.



Photo by B.Baker

Devils Club, for example, is considered an important medicinal and spiritual plant. With over fifty traditional uses, western herbalists are currently using it for such things as a respiratory stimulant, treatment for eczema, type II diabetes and rheumatoid arthritis. And, before you curse the Horsetail in your garden, it is considered an effective diuretic!



Photo by B.Baker



Photo from Wikipedia: *Leccinum aurantiacum*, an ectomycorrhizal fungus

Another Reason why Mycelium Rocks! By Mike Baldwin

You've all heard about it - mycorrhizal fungi and the important role it plays in horticulture and agriculture.

Mycorrhizal fungi provide those important mineral nutrients to plants in exchange for any carbons or sugars they are able to provide to the fungi. A recent article published in the journal *Ecological Letters* highlights new work by researchers out of the United Kingdom that suggests that not only do both the plant and fungi benefit from their relationship, but that the plants may have extra benefit for being friends with the fungi - increased predator protection!

As you probably remember from the Master Gardening class many plants produce chemicals that repel insect pests, or even attract predators that will come and consume the pest that is attacking the plant. Scientists have observed that when the bean plant (*Vicia faba*) is infested with aphids it produces chemicals to repel the aphids and that also attracts wasps that prey on the aphids. Interestingly, they observed that even plants that are not currently being attacked by aphids, but are near AND connected by a mat of mycorrhizal fungi, also produce the protective and attractant chemicals. How cool is that?

The investigators still aren't quite sure about how the chemical communication works between the plants and fungi, but are positive that this will have major implications for food growing - and the green, and non-pesticide based, control of aphids. While they don't mention Alaska, we do have plants and we do have mycorrhiza; it is likely that this same process could possibly be happening here. At any rate it's a good reason to pay attention to the health of your soils - be nice to your soils and they will be nice to you! Treat that mycorrhiza with respect!

Those interested in reading the journal article abstract can find it at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/ele.12115/abstract>

A Summer of Recovery By Jane Baldwin

Talking among gardeners and following the Google group threads on spring gardens have noted heavy casualties and some early-thought-to-be-toast trees, shrubs and plants reported as 'coming-back', albeit very slowly. Others have shown some signs of life, but are so severely damaged, they either have been or will be removed since they are not likely to recover full vitality. Some normally late to break ground plants have not yet shown, yet advice consensus is still for PATIENCE, PATIENCE & MORE PATIENCE before removal -- with the season being from 2 weeks to a month behind normal (anecdotal reports vary with location), things could still happen!

Losses are strange, almost inexplicable. With a plant lost and 16" away the same plant (age & size) surviving. Some perennials that had proved hardy for 8 to 10 years failed for some and survived for others. Shrubs that looked dead a month ago began leafing out 2 weeks or so ago.

Theories abound as to the why of it all: super cold spell last fall before plants had completed their winter preparation; no snow cover drove the frost deeper; mid-winter warming period fooled the plants; then heavy snow cover and we segued into a very long, cool and late spring with slow snow melt because melt water wasn't able to be absorbed or to run off and ice sheets formed on top of soil setting up perfect spring rotting conditions.

Perhaps no single cause, but a confluence of events that drastically aggravated a situation ; i.e., a perfect storm. ref: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Perfect_storm

It has indeed been a strange beginning to our normal summer season. One wonders if we will see the season extended in September/October by the time lost in April/May!

The garden is growth and change and that means loss as well as constant new treasures to make up for a few disasters.

-- May Sarton

More Summer Garden Tour Photos



Photo by G.Docherty



Photos by B.Baker



Central Peninsula Master Gardener News By Rosemary Kimball

When summer came at the end of May it stayed. From complaining about the cold, it was the heat that was the topic of conversation. How quickly we forget. AND THE MOSQUITOES! When I asked Margaret Simon how they were out in Nikiski she replied that they were sucking blood as fast as they could. My gardening plans flew out the door as the mosquitoes flew in. Kathy Wartinbee said she is carrying rocks in her pockets so they don't carry her off.

Don St. John also remarked on the mosquito's thirstiness. He built a new moose fence but said that the mosquitoes still passed through it.

Janice Chumley's garden started slowly but the garlic planted last fall is looking good. Her rainbow chard in a barrel is the same (see the recipe below). What a nice accent for a porch and how handy!

Kathy Wartinbee got a new tall fence around her cabbages which will make life smoother. Her badly gnawed fruit trees are showing some flowers. Her greenhouse is fecund and she gave me a zucchini to sauté! That's the nice thing about visiting people this time of year... what can be scored.

Got a huge and tender Sweet Success cucumber from Margaret---who also shared a dead ripe fig from her "tree". That fig was a bit of heaven on earth as it dissolved in my mouth! I also keep an eye on my neighbor Mark's greenhouse filled with tomatoes... fortunately not many of them are "named". Those I leave in place but the little ones, not. He started some parthenocarpic zucchini and since it was my seed I feel no compunctions about raiding that patch if I only knew where it was! His Iris missourienses, "Miss Claude Barr", is just gorgeous. It just keeps spreading.



Mark White's Iris missourienses - photo by R. Kimball

Kathy and Don are experimenting with some dirt made by a local guy that is a mix of compost, sand, fine chips of alder and aspen, waste from growing mushrooms, and used brewer's barley. Even if the plants don't reach the sky, it sounds like they'll be happy here on earth.

For the first time a few weeks ago I went to my lower garden. The mature yellow raspberries are complete toast but the new shoots are maybe six inches tall. The white currants are blooming like crazy and the red currants aren't far behind. Even the black ones are doing well. The honey berries have never looked so good. The weeds are classic. The stinging nettles are ready for soup. My 15-year-old Sea Buckthorn is dead but a hip-high one is in full leaf so I planted her (?) groom next to her (?). That's the trouble with the sex life of sea buckthorns, you can't tell the sex from the shes until the fruit starts to grow. Their four underground wanderers into the garden that I was going to plant in another friend's yard aren't to be found! I didn't know they could be killed. Stella d'Oro is alive and well as is the veronica spicata. The geraniums are purring. Think I'll move the Victor Reiter geranium to the rock garden. There's no rhyme or reason to having survived the winter. The rock garden plants on the east side of the new rock garden didn't fare well but the west side did better. That's OK. I went to Washburns' and I got "new opportunities".

There's no weeding for me with the increase in buzzing livestock. Later...

Pasta with Sausage and Greens

Cook some bite sized pasta of some sort.
Sauté some crumbled Italian sausage.
Add a generous dollop of diced garlic
Add chopped greens of your choice.
Add the pasta and 1/2 cup of Parmesan cheese
and stir until gooey.

Rhubarb Upside Down Cake with apologies to Betty Crocker

Warm 1/4 c. butter and 5/8 c. of brown sugar in your cake pan.

Finely slice some rhubarb and scatter it fairly thickly in the butter/sugar mix

Then you need "some" drained pineapple: rings, crushed or chunks.

Pour a white cake over all making sure the it goes to the edges of the pan.

(I use a 12-inch sauté pan). Bake for about 45 minutes at 350°. You know the cake is done when the sides pull away slightly from the edges on the pan.

Two acid fruits sounds like heart burn but the combination cools each fruit nicely.

I do add a bit more brown sugar with the rhubarb, but not too much... "some".



Bird Chatter

--MG celebrities? If you watch TV, you may have seen some of our members in commercials recently: Jill Shepherd and Dana & Ed Klinkhart were all featured as the stars in medical ads. Well done!

Raspberry Tips and Trivia

Did you know that the loganberry is a cross between a blackberry & a raspberry?

Raspberries are often described as "summer bearing" or "ever bearing". Summer bearing produce fruit on 2 year old canes; everbearing raspberries produce fruit on 2 year old canes, but will also produce berries in the fall on new canes.

Plant raspberries in full sun with good air flow, not too close to your garden or lawn as they send out suckers to establish new plants. Canes also need protection from high winds.

Raspberries prefer a slightly acidic soil (pH 5.8).

Fertilize summer bearing raspberries in early spring & again 2 months later. Everbearings can use an additional feeding in mid to late summer. You can also use mature compost & mulch around the canes.

After summer bearing raspberries have finished, prune out the old grey 2 years old canes to ground level. Thin out new canes to at least 6-8" apart. Keep only the strongest & healthiest canes.

Everbearing raspberry canes can be pruned to the ground in late winter to produce a huge crop in the fall.

Don't plant raspberries in soil that was used to grow potatoes, roses, bulbs, or tomatoes. These plants can harbor diseases that could spread to raspberries.

[Source: "Raising Raspberries" by Ward Teulon, Gardens West magazine, July/August 2013]

Plant a slice from Freddie's...

Michelle Semerad bought hothouse tomatoes at Fred Meyers in late May/early June. When she cut them open they were full of sprouts! So what did she do? She planted a slice!



Mosquito Repellent Recipe From Cindy Walker

Combat the mosquitos with this chemical free natural repellent spray:

3 1/2 ounce Witch Hazel
1/2 teaspoon Lemongrass oil
1/2 teaspoon Eucalyptus oil
1/2 teaspoon citronella oil

Home Made Mosquito Trap

You will need:

1 cup of water
1/4 cup of brown sugar
1 gram of yeast
1 2-liter bottle

Assembly:

1. Cut the plastic bottle in half.
2. Mix brown sugar with hot water. Let cool. When cold, pour in the bottom half of the bottle.
3. Add the yeast. No need to mix. It creates carbon dioxide, which attracts mosquitoes.
4. Place the funnel part, upside down, into the other half of the bottle, taping them together if desired.
5. Wrap the bottle with something black (mosquitoes are drawn to the color black), leaving the top uncovered, and place it outside in an area away from your normal gathering area.
6. Change the solution every 2 weeks for continuous control.



Helpful Hints & Chicken Manure Trivia

Ever have trouble remembering what the N P K on fertilizer packages represent? Think of this ditty: "Up, Down, All Around". Nitrogen (N) promotes upward growth of stems & leaves; Phosphorous (P) stimulates root development & big blooms (hanging down). Potassium (K) helps plants stay strong all around.

Chicken manure has the biggest 'NPK' percentages of all barnyard animals:

Chicken manure: N 1.5 P 1.2 K 0.7

Horse manure: N 0.66 P 0.23 K 0.69

Cow manure: N 0.47 P 0.15 K 0.53

Source: "Nature's Garden Allies", by Shannon McKinnon, Garden's West magazine, July/August 2013

Volunteer Scholarship Opportunity

Dr. James Matthews, former director of Alaska's Cooperative Extension Service considered volunteers to be an extremely important part of the CES educational system. Upon his retirement he set up a scholarship fund that Extension volunteers can apply to twice a year. The next deadline is August 1st. Dr. Matthews hoped this fund would be a catalyst to encourage volunteers to take advantage of leadership training opportunities in which they otherwise might not be able to participate.

The latest application can be found by following the link <http://www.uaf.edu/ces/info/volunteer/MatthewsApplication.pdf>

Questions may be directed to Steve Brown, Ag/Hort agent in the Palmer CES office, 745-3360 or sc-brown4@alaska.edu.

Summer AMGA Tours

July 15 - ABG Mid Summer Gardens
July 22 - Neighborhood Gardens: drip irrigation, gardening & dogs, lasagna gardening
July 29 - UAA Anchorage Campus: annual beds

August 5 - Downtown Visitor Center: Green Roof Talk
August 12 - Green Connection: Living Plant Wall

Watch your email for directions & further information.

Change in Venue for August 19th AMGA Potluck & Plant Swap

The Plant Exchange & Potluck on August 19th will not be held at Franny Junge's place; instead, it will be held at the home of John & Madge Oswald:

12001 Audubon Dr., Anchorage
Questions? Call 345-5144

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

Visit the web site for the complete calendar and monthly programs. The newsletter will be 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 Jane Baldwin at: jbaldwin@alaska.net

Garden Event Calendar

Monday, July 1st

AMGA Summer Garden Tour - 7:00 - See directory and email for additional information.

July 5-7

Alaska Native Plant Society: Edible and Medicinal Plants with Janice Schofield. Please visit www.alaskageographic.org or call 907-683-6432 for more information or to register.

July 6&7 or 13&14

Alaska Native Plant Society: Wildflowers of the Chugach: Meander through the Chugach National Forest with wildflower expert and author Verna Pratt. Please visit www.alaskageographic.org or call 907-683-6432 for more information or to register.

Monday, July 8th

AMGA Summer Garden Tour - See email for additional information.

July 11th - August 29th

Alaska Botanical Garden Secret Garden Series - The 2013 series features eight private gardens, some of which focus on container gardening, rock gardens, landscape designed yards, peonies and much more. \$20 per tour or \$110 for the whole series. Visit <http://www.alaskabg.org> for more information.

Friday, July 12th

Alaska Botanical Garden: Lighthouse Gardens Tea - 3:00 PM - 7:00 PM. Reservations required, 770:3692

July 12-14

Alaska Native Plant Society: Reserve your spot now in Janice Schofield's Wild Plants Workshop at Kenny Lake. For more information, contact Janelle Eklund, (907) 822-3282, jeklund@cvineternet.net, or the WISE office at (907)822-3575, runderwood@wise-edu.org

Saturday, July 13th

Anchorage Garden Club: Public Flower Show Workshop - help will be provided for those wishing to enter the August flower show. The workshop is free, but advanced registration is required. 1:00 pm - 3:30 pm, Pioneer School House - 437 E 3rd Avenue

Saturday, July 13th

Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association: Tour, to be announced

Monday, July 22nd

AMGA Summer Garden Tour - Neighborhood Gardens: Drip irrigation, gardening and dogs, lasagna gardening. See email or directory for more information.

July 19-21

Alaska Rock Garden Society - Road Trip, Thompson Pass and Valdez.

Saturday, July 29th

Anchorage Garden Club Annual City Garden Tour Noon - 5pm

July 29th

AMGA Summer Garden Tour - UAA Anchorage Campus Annual Beds - See directory or email for more information

Monday, August 1st

Anchorage Garden Club - Growing an Alaskan Native Plant Pantry and Medicine Cabinet: Alaska Plant Materials Center's Ethnobotany Teaching Garden presented by Peggy Hunt - 7:00 PM, Pioneer School House - 437 E 3rd Avenue

August 3-4th

70th Annual Flower Show will be held at the Northway Mall. The show is open for viewing from 1-6pm on Saturday and Noon - 5pm on Sunday.

August 3-4th

Homer Garden Club - Gardener's Weekend - information at www.homergardenclub.org

Friday, August 5th

AMGA Summer Garden Tour - Downtown visitor center, green roof talk. See email for more information

For information about membership or upcoming programs, contact:
Cooperative Extension Office
1675 C St, Suite 100
Anchorage, AK 99501
Phone: 786-6300
Fax: 786-6312



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Mayor Dan Sullivan with MGs Cheryl Shroyer and Nickel LaFleur at the downtown Festival of Flowers on June 1st, 2013.
Photo submitted by Nickel LaFleur

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