



## AMGA NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2017  
Volume 19, Issue 2

### Message From Harry

Here we are at the beginning of February. Many of us are still enjoying our winter naps while also keeping an eye on the calendar, knowing that spring isn't really that far off. It's a great time to start planning our gardens for the upcoming season and checking out the seed racks, sure to be sprouting in our local nurseries and stores. Many of us who need to have their fingers in the dirt at the earliest opportunity will be setting up our indoor growing areas and preparing to sow those early-bird plants.

I know that many are wondering what the upcoming year will look like for the AMGA. The loss of our longtime Horticultural Agent Julie Riley and other cutbacks at the C.E.S. office will become more noticeable as the gardening season arrives. Things won't seem quite the same as we are used to. The lack of a Master Gardener class in 2016 will mean a membership loss for the AMGA. Anchorage will lose 50 valuable citizens willing to contribute 2000 hours and more of their expertise to our community.

It will be necessary for the AMGA to reassess our priorities and continue to develop partnerships with others in the gardening community. Organizations such as ours, the Cooperative Extension Service and the Alaska Botanical Gardens as well as the various clubs and other like-minded groups would do well to better coordinate at least some of our work so as not to be unnecessarily duplicating each other's work.

The AMGA will be seeking to continue our partnership with Cooperative Extension, working together and coordinating our outreach efforts to the community. Their success will be our success.

I will be assuming the duties of volunteer coordinator for the AMGA this year. I'd like us to explore the best, most efficient ways in which we can not only carry on our traditional activities but also how best to respond to the multitude of request for help from the community

that are already starting to appear. We will make every effort to help publicize the various volunteer opportunities as they arise.

If you are a current member of the AMGA or not, I will be asking our Master Gardener community to identify yourselves and what community minded projects you are involved with. I'd like your efforts to be recognized and to find out if you are in need of support.

Whether it is for the comradery and friendships that we develop, the educational opportunities or the chance to volunteer in our community, it is important to remember that this needs to remain an organization that our members feel proud to belong to. As always, we on the AMGA board seek your opinions and ideas that will help foster our continued success.

*"As you grow older, you will discover that you have two hands — one for helping yourself, the other for helping others." — Audrey Hepburn*



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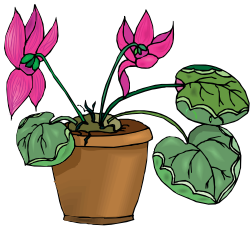
**THIS 'n THAT**  
Sheila Toomey

An attack of old-fashioned winter cut into attendance at our January Membership Education meeting, held at the BP Science Center on Jan.16th. (CES offices on Bragaw were closed because of the MLK holiday.) The BP facilities were quite nice -- a big, light classroom with nice AV equipment and a built-in coffee station. It was a bit of a walk through the woods from the parking lot, but on a heated, thus snowless, sidewalk all the way. It's nice to have money.

As is our practice, the first meeting of the year began with the annual report to the membership. Given the state of crisis we've been thrown into by Fairbanks, it was pretty positive. The President's report, sent out in a Constant Contact email, goes into detail but record-breaking membership, a fantastically successful Spring Conference and a plant sale that hit the mark despite lousy weather were highlights.

And then came the depressing news: Julie Riley's gone, a punitive transfer to Fairbanks (where 14 people expressed interest in the Master Gardener program). Harry noted how her absence, paired with the "drastically reduced staffing and operating hours at C.E.S." has gutted "the important community outreach and resource availability that the largest community in the state has relied upon for many years." He then promised that Master Gardeners would be working to remedy the situation -- details to come.

With the evening's business done, we were treated to a presentation from Monica Emerton of The Green Connection -- a program that took an unexpected turn. Billed as a talk on house plants, it was assumed we'd be discussing the care and feeding thereof. But it turned out to be way more interesting.



Starting with a discussion of science developed by NASA, we learned that indoor plants are actually beneficial to health -- physical health, not just mood -- because they filter out harmful indoor air pollution.

Think you don't have air pollution in your pretty living room, your spotless kitchen? Think again, said Monica. Almost everything processed gives off tiny amounts of one noxious substance or another. They're called VOCs, for "volatile organic compounds," and include anything painted, washed with scented or chemical cleaner, laundry soap, dye, clothes back from the dry cleaners, hair spray -- you get the picture. Both NASA and the American Horticultural Society have found through testing that live plants significantly reduce this harmful pollution.

And if you think this nasty but invisible stuff isn't that harmful, you'd be wrong about that too.

It was a compelling presentation. If you missed it, or just want to know more, consult Professor Google. There's a whole bunch of sites on the subject.

Anyone have a spare Dracaena?



Photo from Wikipedia, By KENPEI, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=802206>

**Treasurer's Report for February, 2017**

Balances 11/30/16	
Checking account	15450.28
Savings account	<u>11719.60</u>
	\$27169.88
Dedicated Funds	\$8503.90
Revenue:	
Donation	130.00
Education/ADV MG	35.00
Interest	27.76
Membership	<u>1710.00</u>
	\$1902.76
Expense:	
Membership	231.43
Newsletter	32.34
Operations	49.99
Website	<u>85.00</u>
	\$420.12
Balances 12/31/16	
Checking account	16905.16
Savings account	<u>11721.09</u>
	\$28626.25
Dedicated Funds	\$8530.17

## Silverberry For Garden Contrast

Text and photos by Ginger Hudson

Among the many sentiments I heard at the celebration for Verna Pratt's life was the appreciation for her teaching, sharing, and answering the same plant i.d. question over and over. A magnificent figure in the botany world left us abruptly this month. Verna was a walking Alaska plant encyclopedia, surpassing even Hultén. Thankfully, she and her husband Frank left us with several books documenting Alaska's native wildflowers and berry plants.

Many of Verna's followers spoke of their endless use of her books to the point of having to replace them. I kind of feel embarrassed that my first copy of her *Field Guide to Alaskan Wildflowers* is still in-tact. My process has been to take as many pictures in the field as I can, then refer to the books in the quiet and clean setting of the car or home office. When I participated in the Wildflower Class led by Verna and Dr. Marilyn Barker, it was all I could do to keep up with note taking. I also took photos, causing me to lag behind the crowd and probably missing valuable information.

I didn't give up on details of the class, or learning about the plants Verna and Marilyn presented through the Native Plant Society meetings. But now I wish I had also gone to the Rock Garden and Wildflower Garden Club meetings, and Denali hikes. It will take me a few weeks, or months, to get over regret, but in the meantime I will not stop learning. I look to teachers like Verna for inspiration to keep exploring and sharing.

I love learning about native plants anywhere I live. After living in water-starved states like California and Texas, I stopped to look around with other native plant enthusiasts and found the tough natives warmed our gardening hearts. It is this appreciation I want to share with gardeners, to find the beauty in the plants that like to live here. Hopefully this will be the start to a monthly native plant series to help gardeners learn about plants that will thrive in the garden, provide benefits to wildlife, and beauty when used in the right place.

Silverberry, *Eleagnus commutata*, is a medium to large shrub with silvery leaves, clusters of small, fragrant, whitish flowers with yellow tips, and silvery berries. This shrub is native to central and interior Alaska, cutting east across the north edge of the Chugach Mountains. It then covers a long range down through Minnesota, South Dakota, Colorado, and Utah. I have seen it growing on the Coastal Trail, in neighborhoods all over Anchorage, and books purport it to grow in rocky areas, on south facing slopes, and in sand bars.

Silverberry makes a shimmering contrast to all the evergreens and big leafy green flowering plants of the summer. Since this deciduous bush spreads from the roots, it can cause thickets. This is a good feature if



A great color and contrast addition to the garden!

Be mindful of pruning time—do you want to enjoy the flowers or berries? It blooms in June and berries are ready in October. Trim in late fall or early spring. The berries are edible, but as Verna said, "they don't don't taste like much."

This native shrub has an invasive cousin, *Eleagnus angustifolia*, which I am familiar with from gardening in the lower 48. *E. angustifolia* was sometimes called orange shrub due to the flower scent. I think our *E. commutata* has a similar aroma, maybe a little more spicy and woody. If you buy silverberry commercially, be sure it is labeled with the proper latin name.



Silverberry fruit. Leaves and berries can range between shiny silver and silver-green depending on environmental conditions.

This hardy shrub does not ask much from a gardener. As long as it has good drainage and receives at least a half day of sun, it will thrive. Mix some compost with native soil where you plant it to get it started, but don't baby it. Native plants are susceptible to being loved to death!

Mix silverberry fruit with dried meats or fish, or use it in stew dishes. Alaska is covered with many useful, valuable, beautiful native plants. We as garden messengers should help promote the use of the local flora in an effort to preserve it and reduce expenses and the use of resources to ship in foreign plants, plants in foreign soil that could also carry invasive seeds.

Until next time, 'Say it With Wildflowers'.

## Growing Young Gardeners: Going to the Tropics without Leaving Anchorage Photos and Text By Amy Reed

While I love Alaska winters more than most, there are times that I can't board the plane to Hawaii fast enough. Not being blessed enough to have a private jet and second home in a sunny local, I found a little known mecca of the tropics set on a quiet East Anchorage hill at the entrance of Russian Jack Springs Park; Mann Leiser Memorial Greenhouse and Horticultural Complex.

The Municipality of Anchorage's Parks and Recreation Website, <https://www.muni.org/Departments/parks/Pages/Greenhouse.aspx>, lists many interesting facts regarding the complex and greenhouse:

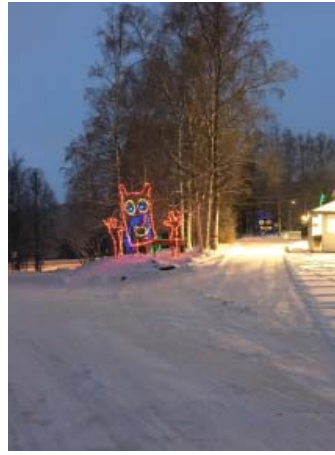
The Horticulture Section is responsible for:

- Planting and maintaining 461 flowerbeds and baskets with more than 76,000 annual flowers at 81 sites.
- Operating six plant production greenhouses totaling 52,000 sq. ft.
- One landscape material nursery of 6,000 trees & shrubs.
- Maintaining 179 tree/shrub landscape sites containing 21,600 trees, 39,525 shrubs, 1,135 perennials, and 3,007 feet of hedge.
- Mowing and fertilizing 215 acres of turf at 96 sites and along 79.4 miles of road right-of-way.
- Irrigation of all of the above flowerbeds, containers, landscape sites, and turf sites.

The tropical greenhouse is open for public viewing and available for event rental. The greenhouse staff typically grows herbs and vegetable plants for the Alaska Botanical Garden. The plants are started early in the year from seed. The department has learned plant varieties that perform well here in Alaska as they have been in operation for over 50 years.

The greenhouses are named after Mann Leiser, who built a commercial growing operation near Muldoon and DeBarr in 1969. In its prime, Mr. Leiser's Alaska Greenhouse, Inc. was a popular 'park' for east Anchorage residents. Fish and ducks were a big attraction in Chester Creek next to his nursery. His son carried on the business until 2004. Today the Leiser family property is part of the Muldoon Town Square Park redevelopment. Mann Leiser wrote two books, *Alaska Gardening*, Vols. 1 and 2, that are available to loan from the Anchorage Public Library. His expansive gardening knowledge on every topic from pruning, composting, fungicides, and varieties of fuchsias are covered in these volumes.

When we first visited the Greenhouses, it was around Halloween. The staff had decorated the entire space festively with cobwebs, pumpkins, and spiders. Recently, the entire outside of the greenhouse was in the holiday



spirit with lit-up holiday monsters exclaiming "Happy Happy Joy Joy" out of lights. They brightened the woods surrounding the greenhouse complexes. The inside balmy 70-degree temperature prompted my six-year-old Alaskan girl to instantly throw off her coat and hat. She marveled at the decorated tree and railings around the koi pond. "It feels like Hawaii in here!" Palm, banana, and papaya trees also beckoned images of the islands. We even found pineapples growing in one corner of the complex! My daughter and I enjoyed meandering through the rows of succulents and cactuses, which include one cactus almost touching the ceiling. The one feature I practically had to tear her away from was the apiary that houses many beautiful colorful birds. She was mesmerized by their sounds and activity. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to the greenhouse. It's a free activity that is family friendly, handicap accessible, and very educational. The staff provided a laminated binder to use as a self-guided tour of the plants grown in the complex.

The Mann Leiser Memorial Greenhouse and Horticultural Complex are located at 1321 Lidia Selkregg Lane, Anchorage. The Greenhouse is open to the public 8-3:30pm Monday-Sunday and closed Holidays. It is a warm tropical atmosphere that will leave you taking your coat off and defrosting during the deep winter months!

**Did you know:** Buckwheat is a relative of rhubarb and is not a wheat product?

## William the Worm

By Cheryl Chapman



Since William's bloated carcass has not floated to the top of his Carrs cantaloupe chunk container, I assume he's still doing his earthworm thing among the coffee grounds, moldy blueberries and shredded newspapers on the heat mat by the front door.

This is not a story of a woman and her intentional worm. William volunteered, shaken out of farmers market celery two months past its prime during washing back in December. The leaves and ribs went into the refrigerator, leaving behind an inch-long creature doing laps around the sink. It appeared to be wearing a bow tie, though that turned out to be what wormologists (formally, "Oligochaeteologists") call the clitellum, a cross between a jock strap and a g-string - but more later on earthworm sex.

The ground outside was frozen stone; friends with heated greenhouses declined custody. With help from CES handouts "Worms in a Tote" and "Composting With Worms," an ice pick and MG worm expert Dana Klinkhart on speed dial, I set to building emergency accommodations: suitable small lidded condo (check); shredded, moistened newsprint at the bottom (check); quarter-cup of composted steer manure (check); half-cup of organic topsoil with kelp (check); two tablespoons of coffee grounds (couldn't hurt); two chopped antique grapes (probably hungry); and William, his last sighting. He dived.

I rolled a heavy towel around the condo against sudden temperature changes, crossed my fingers and noticed that the lid had clouded up and was showering the contents. "Good," I thought. "Mother Nature is keeping William moist," and she would have if he had lingered at the top. Though earthworms aren't aquatic and can drown like any of us, they depend on consistent moisture to produce their slippery mucus for gliding, and for transferring oxygen in, carbon dioxide out through their skins, and by the time I discovered his condo mist was superficial, William may have suffocated in the Arizona heat at the bottom.

His pedigree is unknown. There are about 17 earthworm species in Alaska, all but two introduced, and though not much research has been done, it appears they help us with what we want to grow but their influence on northern forests isn't benign. The three most of us know about are the small but common octagonal-tail worm (*Dendrobaena octaedra*); the deep-burrowing night-crawler that can stretch to 14 inches (*Lumbricus terrestris*) and the red wiggler (*Eisenia fetida*, or "smelly worm"), sold by the pound for worm farming. The red wiggler is the only one of the trio that can't take Alaska winters.

An earthworm is a stomach in a sleeve; Aristotle called them "the intestines of the earth." Decomposing material goes in the front end and comes out the other as castings, or black gold, or worm poop, but whatever you call it, it's elixir for your garden. A mature earthworm can have between a hundred and 150 ringed segments, each working independently and each with retractable bristles, the setae, that can either hitch the worm forward or anchor it. When motivated, they can kick into reverse, but under their own power they don't move fast or far (Matt Bowser of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, says between 15 and 30 feet a year). But where people go, so do earthworms: bedding plants from Outside, fishermen discarding their unused but still wiggly bait at day's end, tires, break-aways from compost heaps. As they quietly proceed with their task of eating the world underfoot, their tunnels aerate packed soil, loosening it and allowing in more oxygen and nutrients for plants.

Earthworms don't pal around together. They are not herd animals but they are hermaphrodites; perhaps being both male and female is generally enough companionship, though they do share romance. When one greets another in love, they cuddle, swap sperm, then disengage. In due course the clitellum of each begins to produce an enveloping collar, like egg white, that gradually slips the length of the worm, picking up the sperm taken aboard and joining it to the worm's own egg, then drops off its progenitor. The freed collar breaks into tiny cocoons like little lemons, and in due course, one or two baby earthworms shoulder their way out of each and take up adult responsibilities. I hope William is preparing himself for a busy summer.

In East Texas where I grew up, buying earthworms was unheard of. If you wanted a lot of them you enlisted a worm charmer, who would moisten a likely patch of soil, drive in a wooden stob and rub a rooping iron back and forth across it until worms started busting out of the ground. By the time I left the worms had taken their revenge on most of the old worm charmers and the craft was no more, but worm charming has been a competitive sport in England since 1980, and the British and European Federation of Wormcharmers might welcome an Alaska chapter.

Worth considering.



William's Condo  
photo by  
Nickel LaFleur



## Bird Chatter

## January Herb Study Group: Cilantro By Elaine Hammes

GONE BUT NOT. . . BC can report several Julie Riley sightings this past week. One was officially a sad occasion --- the memorial gathering at UAA's Lucy Cuddy Hall for Verna Pratt. Julie was among dozens who shared Verna stories with the more than 200 people gathered there.

BC wonders if "sad" is the right word for the event. Verna seemed so forever, that "sad" doesn't quite cut it. What if we all woke up tomorrow and Sleeping Lady was gone? There'd be shock and a space that couldn't be filled; but once we accepted the emptiness, we'd spend the rest of time telling stories about the great, gone lady.

See why "sad" doesn't cover it?

THE NEW BOSS. . . His name is Steve Brown. He cruised by for a visit last week. His primary assignment is CES Agent for the area from Palmer to the Back of Beyond. More or less. UAF dumped Anchorage's 300,000-customer load on him despite this, but he seems OK with his suddenly expanded duty roster. Your transition committee will hopefully be working with Steve on issues raised by the "reorganization." Stay tuned.

BACK TO JULIE. . . Some of the people who showed up for an Herb Study Group class on cilantro were attracted more by the promised teacher than the plant. Alas, Julie Riley had travel problems so appeared from Fairbanks on Skype instead of in person. It was our first chance to see how the new "distance teaching" is going to work now that all the live bodies have been disappeared.

BC found it an unsatisfying substitute for an actual teacher in the room. To be fair, it was the technicians' first use of the system, so it will probably get better. (That's about all the enthusiasm BC can muster.)

As for the class, it was good. So, is BC the only avian who didn't know cilantro and coriander are the same plant? In the U.S., cilantro is the leaves and coriander the seeds. How cool is that! (Yes, BC is exceptionally ignorant about anything that has to do with cooking).

WOW! . . . Long-time member Erna Rousey recently celebrated her 61st wedding anniversary. BC looked up the appropriate gift for the 61st -- you know, like paper is for 1st, tin for 10th, china 20th, silver 25th, etc. Turns out 60 and everything beyond is diamonds, diamonds, diamonds! Rousey friends and relatives, take a hint!

ON THE MEND. . . Member Margaret Love fell on Christmas day and ended up with a fractured pelvis. Friends report she's doing well, but a card couldn't hurt, right?

Horticulture Agent Julie Riley opened the January Herb Study Group (HSG) video-conference by modeling two lovely Fairbanks winter hats, then quickly launched into a packed presentation of her Cilantro Production: Bolting Trial. While at twenty-five, Julie learned she didn't like cilantro, after HSG got her rolling on three years of cilantro study trials, she has found a cilantro variety, Rani, with a minty after-taste that she likes.



Goals for this project were to find varieties of cilantro that would make leaves rather than seeds, to find varieties with good taste that do not bolt. Bolting in this case means premature flowering. Cilantro is generally recognized as the basal leafy portion of the plant while the seed from the same plant, *Coriandrum sativum*, is referred to as coriander. Cilantro is a facultative long-day plant that tends to bolt with longer daylight and will eventually flower even if the daylight is not long.

A few of the varieties planted at Alaska Botanical Garden (ABG) experimental area were Slow Bolting, Slo Bolt, Santo, Calypso, Fiesta Green, La Reina Baja, Leisure, Longstanding, Vietnamese, Marino and other seeds identified only as Cilantro. Observations found that varieties with fewer basal leaves went to seed sooner than those with more robust rosettes of basal leaves. Santo was one of the least likely to bolt, while Calypso produced leaves without bolting three weeks longer than Santo.

The first year, plants were thinned to four inches apart in rows one foot apart. Later, seeds were sown in a density of up to 153 seeds per square foot without thinning and resulted in no detriment to the plant growth. This clumping technique worked well for growth and harvest. Thirty healthy bundles were cut three times from an area just two feet by two feet.

Taste testing, such as at ABG Harvest Day, has resulted in a wide range of comments for different varieties. La Reina Baja was picked as one favorite for flavor. Santo had tasted somewhat bitter or with an aftertaste earlier in the trials. Many people favored Rani and Calypso. Flavor is influenced by growing conditions of the plants as well as affected by individual taste buds, genetic variants, and other personal or cultural preferences.



## Home Made Seed Starting Mixes By Gina Docherty

I've had varying results with 'store bought' seed starting mixes. Some are better than others, and some are definitely worse than others.

If you want to blend your own, here are recipes from various sources:

Rodales: <http://www.rodalorganicle.com/garden/blend-your-own-seed-starting-mix>

\*\*4 parts screened compost

\*\*1 part perlite (a mineral available at most garden stores)

\*\*1 part vermiculite (a mineral found at garden stores)

\*\*2 parts coir (coconut fiber)

Brooke Edmunds, a horticulturist with Oregon State University CES: [http://www.oregonlive.com/hg/index.ssf/2016/01/seed\\_starting\\_mix\\_osu.html](http://www.oregonlive.com/hg/index.ssf/2016/01/seed_starting_mix_osu.html)

\*\*one-third pasteurized soil or compost,

\*\*one-third sand, vermiculite or perlite,

\*\*and one-third peat moss.

Garden Betty: <http://www.gardenbetty.com/2011/03/how-to-make-your-own-seed-starting-and-potting-mix/#HdohC7lhZ87srCaQ.99>

\*\*1 part sphagnum peat moss (or coir)

\*\*1 part perlite

\*\*1 part vermiculite

Of course, if you have to buy quantities of all these ingredients, it might be cheaper to just purchase a name brand bag of seed starting mix! Just make sure you are using quality stuff or you might be disappointed. Plain old Pro Mix will work too.

## "Best Cool Seeds" Survived! By Gina Docherty

An email was sent to check on the status of Denali Seeds and Best Cool Seeds. This was the seed company that Jeff Lowenfels wrote about in a recent article for the ADN. Since the owner, Reg Yapple passed away recently, I sent an email to see if they were, in fact, still in business. Here is the reply:

*We are still open, we have closed the Anchorage warehouse and are shipping direct from the packing facility in Michigan where the seeds have been packed since 1980. I have taken over the company; we plan to carry on the tradition that Reg started, quality seed for Alaska, prompt and courteous service. I have worked with Reg since 1980. So yes Denali seed and Best Cool Seeds are alive and well. If you go to our Facebook page (Best Cool Seeds.com) we published a little article about Reg. If you are planning to order seeds we are running a special until the end of January. Just enter the coupon code FB10 at check out and receive a 10% discount. We appreciate your business.*

*Thanks, Don*

## Garden Event Calendar

### MEETINGS and EVENTS

#### Thursday, February 2

Anchorage Garden Club Monthly Meeting. 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm at Pioneer Schoolhouse at 437 E 3rd Avenue, Anchorage. Details at: <http://www.alaskagardenclubs.org/anchorageclub.htm>

#### Friday, February 3

Herb Study Group, Topic: Hops (To Be Herb of the Year, 2018) by Debbie Hinchey. 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm at Anchorage Cooperative Extension Service, Chugachmiut Building, Room 116, 1840 Bragaw Street, Anchorage

#### Monday, February 6

\*\*Alaska Native Plant Society Monthly Meeting: Rare Plants by Justin Fulkerson; Plant Family: Vaccinium and Oxycoccus by Glenn Brown. 7:00 pm at Campbell Science Center, Anchorage. Details at: <http://aknps.org/Pages/Meetings.php>

\*\*Mat-Su Master Gardener's Monthly Meeting. 6:30 pm at MTA building, Palmer. Details at: <http://www.matsumaster-gardeners.com/calendar-of-events.html>

\*\*Meadow Lake Bloomers Garden Club Monthly Meeting. 10:30 am at Meadow Lakes Senior Center, 1210 N Kim Drive, Wasilla.

#### Tuesday, February 7

Valley Garden Club: Caring for Peonies by Rachel Christy of Alaska Blooms. 10:30 am at First Baptist Church, 900 Leatherleaf Loop, Wasilla.

#### Thursday, February 9

Wildflower Garden Meeting: The Bigger the Picture, How It All Works Together by Becky Hassebroek, Alaska State Garden Clubs. 10:00 am - 11:30 am at Central Lutheran Church, 1420 Cordova Street. Details at: <http://www.alaskagardenclubs.org/apps/calendar/>

#### Monday, February 20

Anchorage AMGA Meeting: Summer Photo Recap of Summer Gardens and Tours Plus Seed Exchange and Annual Potluck. 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm at CES - Chugachmiut Building, 1840 Bragaw St., Suite 100; Details at: <http://www.alaskamaster-gardeners.org - Program Calendar>

#### Wednesday, February 22 - Sunday, February 26

NW Garden Show, Seattle, WA. Details: <http://www.garden-show.com/>

#### Tuesday, February 28

Alaska Orchid Society Monthly Meeting. 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm at BP Energy Center, Seward Hy and Benson Blvd. Details at: <http://www.wayne-toups.squarespace.com/events/>

### CLASSES and WORKSHOPS

#### Thursday, February 2

Food Forest Gardening: Learn to Grow Fruit, Berry Bushes, Perennial and Annual Flowers That Work Together as A Forest by Yarcucopia. 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm at 505 West Northern Lights, Anchorage. Cost: \$10. Details at: <https://yarcucopia.org/2017/01/09/2017-beginning-organic-gardening-classes/>

#### Saturdays, February 4 - March 4

Organic Gardening: The Comprehensive Course by Ellen Vandevisse. 10:00 am - 12:30 pm at UAA Chugiak-Eagle River Campus. Tuition Costs and Details at: <http://ellenvandevisse.com/classes/?ee=140>

Continued on next page....

### Thursday, February 9

Sheet Mulch Gardening: Learn to Build Instant, Amazing Gardens with Sheet Mulch by Yarcucopia. 7:00 pm - 8:00 pm at 505 West Northern Lights, Anchorage. Cost: \$10. Details at: <https://yarducopia.org/2017/01/09/2017-beginning-organic-gardening-classes/>.

### Friday, Feb. 10 - Mar. 10 & Saturday, March 4 Field Trip

Organic Gardening: The Comprehensive Course by Ellen Vande Visse. 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm or 6:00 pm - 8:30 pm; Saturday 8 am - 4:00 pm at Mat Su College, 8295 E. College Drive, Palmer. Tuition Costs and Details at: <http://ellenvandevisse.com/classes/?ee=140>.

### Saturday, February 11

Alaska Botanical Garden: Ice Candles and Luminarias by Mike Monterusso. Learn How to Make Beautiful Structures Out of Ordinary Household Items. 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm at Alaska Botanical Garden, 4601 Campbell Airstrip Road, Anchorage. A Portion of the Class Will Be Held Outside, Dress Warm. Cost \$40 - \$45. Preregistration is required. Details at: <http://alaskabg.org/events/>.

### Saturdays, February 18 - March 4

Gardening 101: Seed Starting, Container Gardening, Plant



AMGA regularly meets at 7:00 pm every third Monday of the month, September through May (except for December).

Meetings are held at the Anchorage Cooperative Extension Office Chugachmiut Building, 1840 Bragaw St., Suite 100 Anchorage

Monthly educational programs are free and open to the public. Visitors and guests are welcomed and encouraged.

#### **AMGA Board of Directors**

Harry Deuber	President
Marilyn Barker	Vice President
Cindy Walker	Treasurer
Sheila Toomey	Secretary
Kathy Liska	At Large
Fran Pekar	At Large
Marjorie Williams	At Large
Cheryl Chapman	At Large

#### **Committee Chairs, Program Coordinators & Volunteers**

CES Liaison:	Harry Deuber
Broadcast Email:	Fran Pekar
Calendar of Events:	Martha Farris
Advanced MG:	Ginny Moore
Directory Editor:	Janice Berry
Programs:	Marilyn Barker
Field Trips:	Sheila Toomey
Google Group:	Mary Rydesky
Hospitality:	Marjorie Williams
Volunteer Coordinator:	Harry Deuber
Membership & Database:	Jane Baldwin
Newsletter & Website:	Gina Docherty
Lifetime Achievement:	Lynne Opstad
Grants:	Marilyn Barker
Pioneer Home:	Erma MacMillan (design)
	Lynne Opstad
Volunteer Coordinators:	Julie Ginder, Joyce Smith, Lynne Opstad

Propagation and Composting by Alaska Botanical Garden Staff. 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm at Alaska Botanical Garden, 4601 Campbell Airstrip Road, Anchorage.. Cost: \$90 - \$95. Preredistration is required. Details at: <http://alaskabg.org/event/workshop-gardening-101/>.

### Tuesday, February 21

Non Toxic Pest Management by Ellen Vande Visse. Learn to Deal with Your Garden Pests Organically. 7:00 pm - 9:45 pm. Details at: <http://ellenvandevisse.com/classes/?ee=156>.

## **CONFERENCES**

### Tuesday, February 21 - Thursday February 23

2017 13th Annual Alaska Sustainable Agriculture Conference

## **SAVE THE DATE!**

### Saturday, April 22

Alaska Master Gardeners State Conference "Every Day is Earth Day When you're a Master Gardener" at the Palmer Community Center (The Depot), 610 S. Valley Way, Palmer, AK. <http://www.matsumastergardeners.com/calendar-of-events.html>.

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

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

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## **Newsletter Submission Deadline**

The deadline for submitting an item for publication in the following month's edition of the AMGA newsletter is the 20th of every month. Items arriving after this date may or may not be included.

Educational or garden related articles, Bird Chatter, calendar items and announcements are always welcome.

For information about membership or upcoming programs, contact:

Harry Deuber, President  
907-440-6372

