



## AMGA NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2017  
Volume 19, Issue 3

### Message From Harry

If you didn't attend our February membership meeting, you missed out on a lot of great food and yummy deserts at our annual potluck, seed exchange and photo recap from last summer. It was a real treat on a snowy winter evening to view so many nice photos of members' gardens.

You also missed some good news on the C.E.S front. After months of uncertainty, it has been confirmed that there will be a new Master Gardener's class to be held in Anchorage this fall. Many thanks go to our new Hort. Agent, Steve Brown (Palmer), Julie Riley (Fairbanks) and DeShana York, our Urban Extension Director at the Anchorage Outreach Center (C.E.S.). Working together, they will be coordinating the large effort involved in producing this new class. This is indeed great news for us, a new group of Master Gardeners and a much-needed lift to our spirits. I just might have to break out that special bottle of Ginger Ale to celebrate!

Don't delay too long if you are planning to attend the 2017 Alaska State Master Gardeners Conference being hosted by our friends to the north, the Mat-Su Master Gardeners. Registration has begun for the conference slated for Saturday April 22 in Palmer and is limited to 100 attendees. Check out the details at [matsumastergardeners.com](http://matsumastergardeners.com). It looks to be a great conference with a full schedule of interesting topics and speakers.

Another upcoming conference that might be of interest to the hardcore amongst us is the 2017 International Master Gardener Conference to be held this year in Portland, OR, July 10-14. This event includes an incredible array of speakers and seminars, a trade show, film festival and optional tours of local gardens, farms and nurseries. Registration is well underway; more info can be found by searching on-line for the 2017 Intl MG Conference.

As spring approaches, I am starting to receive requests from the community asking for help from our Master Gardeners. Some of these groups are asking us to conduct a few gardening classes on various topics or acting as consultants or planning assistants for their projects. Others are asking for hands on digging in the dirt assistance. And I know that many of us are already heavily involved in various volunteer projects and could use some help ourselves. As our volunteer coordinator, I will try to help publicize the requests as they arrive and I hope I can count on our members to step up once again.

*"People who volunteer often agree that in the beginning that they thought they were doing something for others. It doesn't take them long to realize that they are the ones who are richer for the experience"*

Harry Smith- American Journalist



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# Hydroponic Gardening - First Year's Results

By Laura Emerson

Last year, our biggest gardening experiment was the addition of a hydroponic garden. We were pleased with the results. If any reader is considering such a project, perhaps the following notes will help.



Bryan installed ten, 4" ABS (plastic) pipes vertically, along the north wall of the greenhouse, above the 12x4 raised bed. He perforated each tube with 20 - 30 two inch holes (facing SE, S, and SW), over which he glued a patented, angled flange (designed by an inventor friend in Texas) to position a small, plastic basket with a peat pot so each one is gently saturated by

the sprinklers above. Because we have no running water in our greenhouse, we use a 35 gallon food grade drum as a reservoir. Into it, we sank a small pump to propel water up through a one inch pipe to a filter and then to a row of little sprinkler heads above the vertical tubes. There is no soil in the system.

### Advantages:

1. It was so easy to monitor, test, and adjust pH and plant food - much easier than soil sampling.
2. It was a wonderful nursery for tiny or skinny seeds and small plants, especially herbs. Three types of basil, sage, and lavender all grew beautifully. In fact, the lavender in the hydro system far outperformed those I planted in soil in the same building.
3. None of the lettuces bolted, even though the greenhouse was hotter than the exterior gardens where they DID bolt. The leaves were also more delicate. Great success!
4. Plants I started and transplanted (like forget-me-nots and cosmos) were much more robust than those I started in pots in the greenhouse..
5. The sprinklers provided some welcome humidity in the greenhouse.
6. Any excess water dripped onto the raised bed below.

### Disadvantages:

1. Large seeds, like nasturtiums and peas, just got moldy.
2. Once the tomatoes in the raised bed garden below started shading out the hydro tubes, we had to harvest or transplant those being obscured. It was amazing to

see the lush roots of the lettuce which had grown 31 inches long and the basil 14-17 inches long!



3. Our water reservoir and filter gunked up with algae, which dripped in the tubes.

### Tweaks:

1. This spring we will trim the tubes by about 2 inches to reach the sprinkler heads more easily.
2. I will replace sun loving herbs with shade loving plants once the tomatoes get tall. Any suggestions?



## Treasurer's Report

Balances 12/31/16	
Checking account	16905.16
Savings account	<u>11721.09</u>
	\$28626.25

Dedicated Funds	\$8530.17
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Revenue:	
Dedicated Donation	500.00
Interest	1.73
Membership	<u>1111.43</u>
	\$1613.16

Expense:	
Education/Programs	100.00
Hospitality	100.00
Operations	272.54
Pioneer Home	<u>347.20</u>
	\$819.74

Balances 1/31/17	
Checking account	7696.85
Savings account	<u>11722.71</u>
	\$19419.56

Dedicated Funds	8530.28
Interest Bearing CD	<u>10000.00</u>
	\$18530.28

## Meet The New Boss

by Sheila Toomey

Steve Brown, the new Anchorage CES Agent, is a specialist in geospatial technology -- i.e., finding stuff with satellites.

This is a good thing. He's going to need space-age technology to map his new territory.

Brown -- he's Dr. Prof. Brown -- has been the Mat-Su agriculture agent for nine years. That makes him responsible for Mat-Su's 25,000 square miles, plus Gakona, Copper Center, Kenny Lake, non-borough Valdez -- "scattered pockets of suburban, and rural and subsistence lifestyles," to quote the website.

In September the big brains at UAF College of Natural Resources and Extension added the state's largest urban area, with its 300,000 residents, to his assignment. His response was to take off for Africa and climb Mount Kilimanjaro.

Alright. He's an avid mountain climber so that may have been a coincidence, not cause and effect. In fact, Brown seems unexpectedly upbeat about his added responsibilities.

"I see my assignment as insuring the continuation of the Master Gardener program," he said in a recent phone interview. And paramount is getting a 2017 Master Gardener class organized, he said.

Brown already had a full time job when AMGA got dumped on him so managing Anchorage -- especially doing so from Palmer -- is going to take some juggling. Also, his primary background is in agricultural engineering, not home gardening. He figures out how to get satellites to run tractors.

On the plus side, he inherited some moribund programs in Mat-Su, he said, which should go away, leaving him space for us. He says he's learned a lot from the Mat-Su MGs, and his resume suggests a high-energy, climb-every-mountain (literally) person who will make an honest effort.

Brown, 53, has a BS in Recreation and Parks Management from Texas A&M (1987), an MS in Environmental Science from the University of Texas (1992) and a Ph.D. in Environmental Science from SUNY (1999).

Before coming to Alaska, he worked for Cooperative Extension Services in New York (Cornell University), the University of Texas at San Antonio, and as a County Extension Director for Kansas State University. He used his expertise in geospatial technology of help locate bodies and debris from the Columbia space shuttle disaster in 2003. He's a prolific contributor to scientific journals and conferences on wide ranging subjects:

("Small Scale Poultry Production Education in Alaska," "Mapping Climate Change in a Yupik Eskimo Village," "Growing Grass on Gravel Runways.")

He writes about agriculture for the *Frontiersman* and the *Greatlander*, and is active in the rhodiola development program.

He is currently president of the Journal of Extension Board of Directors and president of the Alaska State Fair board.

So, what has Fairbanks given us to replace Julie Riley? A nerdy egghead, right? Stuck-up academic type? Wrong.

He has a cornball sense of humor: See "Tips for Gardening on Denali" elsewhere in this newsletter. And he grows giant cabbages.

Reporter Zaz Hollander, who covers agriculture for Alaska Dispatch, included the following about Brown and his wife, Eva Cohnen-Brown, in a 2015 State Fair story.

"The couple, married for 28 years, planted the seeds for their entry on Valentine's Day. The secret to the cabbage: a shady spot that kept it from the sun. The secret to the marriage?

'Fertilize each other with love,' Brown volunteered, prompting an "awww" and a soft look from his wife."

In his spare time -- that should be a joke but apparently isn't -- Brown climbs very tall things all over the world: Orizaba in Mexico (18,490 ft.), Aconcagua in Argentina (22,837 ft.) Mt. Elbrus (18,510) in Russia and nine other big ones, including Denali.

Checking out Steve Brown raises two obvious questions: First, where will he find time for Anchorage CES needs? He says he can do it. He won't be a presence at all our meetings or the on-the-spot advisor we're used to, but he'll be available by phone and e-mail, and here when we need his particular expertise.

The second question is, how did Alaska score an over-achiever, rocket-in-the-pocket type like him? In other words, why is he here?

He claims Alaska is a plum spot for someone in his field. But the real answer to that question is easy, Brown said: "Cause I love mountaineering."

Note: Steve Brown can be reached at 745-3639 or [scbrown4@alaska.edu](mailto:scbrown4@alaska.edu)

## Seeds and Bees: Book Reviews

By Amy Reed

The "Magic School Bus" television series was a very popular science based children's program that ran from 1994-1997. The episodes are based on the book series by Joanna Cole and Bruce Degen. If you are familiar at all with the books or television shows, a class of students is taken on adventures by their eccentric teacher, Miss Frizzle, and learns in exciting ways. Their school bus always magically transforms to transport the children through whatever science theme is explored during the episode. I was very excited to find two Magic School Bus adventure books to read to my six year old that explore plants and beehives.

The first book, *Plants Seeds: A Book About How Living Things Grow* (1995) published by Scholastic, has the children learning how to care for a school garden. However, one of the students named Phoebe had a beautiful plant at her old school across town that she wished she could bring to her new school's garden. Miss Frizzle overheard and hatched a plan to not only obtain the plant from Phoebe's old school's garden but also teach the class about seeds and plants along the way. The children boarded the school bus, and it magically transformed into a small ladybug with the class shrunk proportionally! The bus/ladybug flew across town to Phoebe's old school and landed on one of her flowers. The children stood next to the anther of the flower and saw pollen balls collected by bees. They were small enough to slide down pollen tubes! The bus climbed onto a seed and was carried by the wind back to their school's garden. The bus and class magically grew back to proper size again and the seed grew into a beautiful plant. This book required the reader to use their imagination to be transported to insect size as they learned about pollination, parts of the flower, and seed transportation. It is a great introduction to plants and seeds for grades kindergarten to second grade and can be combined with having children look at the parts of different flowers and growing seeds themselves.

The second book, *Inside a Beehive* (1996) published by Scholastic, was particularly excited to read to my child as we are planning on having beehives on our property this spring. I wanted to use this book to introduce her to hive structures, different types of bees, and honey production. Zany Miss Frizzle transformed her Magic School Bus into a tiny beehive. The children, who were now the size of bees, learned at eye level "who's who" in the beehive. The Queen lays eggs, while the workers who are all female bees do all the jobs in the hive. The drones are all male and their only job is to mate with the queen. The book describes how pollen is turned into honey, how bees communicate with each other, the different sections of the beehive, and the metamorphosis of an egg to a larva, then a pupa and adult bee. It was an incredible book to lay the basics of a beehive layout and honeybee jobs for children ages first through

fourth grade. I was so super proud of my child regurgitating information she had learned from the book to my husband.

"Well, Daddy, did you know that there can't be two queens in a hive? They will fight each other."

The "Magic School Bus" series by Joanna Cole and Bruce Degen span over 160 cartoon and chapter books, television shows, and interactive games found on the website <http://www.scholastic.com>. The two books I reviewed in this newsletter are a fantastic introduction to parts of the plant and seeds and beehives for young children.



Amy Reed and a few friends dedicated their costumes to Verna Pratt at "Ski for Women" this year: they were the Alaska Wildflowers. From left: Amy Reed, Cindy Kumle, Sandra Harley, and Michelle Tatela. Sandra was interviewed by KTVA. Photo from Amy Reed.

### March Holidays to Enjoy

Sunday, March 5	National Multiple Personality Day
Saturday March 11	Nat'l Johnnie Appleseed Day
Sunday March 12	Nat'l Plant a Flower Day/Daylight Savings Begins
Tuesday, March 14	National Potato Chip Day
Wednesday, March 15	Buzzards' Day
Thursday, March 16	Everything you do is Right Day
Friday, March 17	St. Patrick's Day - Ireland
Saturday, March 18	Nat'l Awkward Moments Day
Monday, March 20	SPRING BEGINS! [Lower 48]
Wednesday, Mar. 22	Nat'l Goof Off Day
Tuesday, March 28	Nat'l Something on a Stick Day / Nat'l Weed Appreciation Day
Thursday, March 30	Nat'l Take a Walk in the Park Day

Have fun!



## Tips for Gardening on Denali

Editors note: This is a shortened version of a tongue-in-cheek article written by Steve Brown after summiting Mt. Denali in 2010.

Nationally, CES and its Master Gardener Programs have done a pretty good job reaching the diverse needs of gardeners across the nation...or so we thought! It turns out that almost no information exists for mountaineers wishing to garden while attempting to climb Denali... The University of Alaska Fairbanks quickly dispatched two Ag/Hort Agents (myself and Heidi Rader) to the 14,000 foot camp to assess the needs of this overlooked population.

As suspected, we found virtually no evidence of gardening activity anywhere on the upper slopes of Denali. After interviewing many mountaineers as to why they did not live their camps with gardens ... their puzzled looks and frequently repeated expletives made it evident they simply had no knowledge of glacier gardening. The following tips should be useful:

1. Contrary to popular belief - wind, not cold - is the gardener's biggest enemy on Denali. Windbreaks that can withstand sustained 120 mph winds are crucial to a successful garden. ... Also important is for the Denali gardener to remain roped up for safety while gardening.

2. Despite repeated attempts, we did not find that raised beds or mounding significantly increased planting temperatures. The easy solution to this problem was to place chemical hand warmers beneath the root system. However, they do have to be replaced about every 8 hours.

3. It is a common misconception that organic gardening is not possible on Denali. Nothing could be further from the truth! Socks worn for a week provide all the nutrients needed to support healthy plants. Simply pour warm water through your socks to produce nutrient rich "sock tea". However, don't be tempted to try this with underwear worn for 3 weeks. Compost them first as they may burn your plants.



"Growing your own garden while climbing Denali is fun, exciting and an easy way to cheer up your camp during storms, avalanches or waiting to be medically airlifted off the mountain." Steve Brown and Heidi Rader 'gardening' at 14000 feet on Denali; photo from Steve Brown.

## Volunteer Opportunities



- \* **Spring Garden Show** at the Sears Mall, April 15th: Answer MG questions at the CES/AMGA booth; Contact Harry: denali542@yahoo.com
- \* **Pioneer Home:** Help plant and maintain front gardens of the Pioneer Home during the summer; Contact: Julie Ginder jkginder@gci.net or Lynne Opstad: lopstad@gci.net
- \* **Muldoon Town Square Park:** Help plan, build, maintain, and enjoy the Community Orchard and Community Garden. Contact Kristi Wood at 278-2453 or bikemoredriveless@hotmail.com for details.
- \* **Anchorage Senior Center:** Help plant and maintain gardens at the Anchorage Senior Center; Contact: Bonnie Tisler: bonniewevrpt@gci.net
- \* **Anchorage Rose Garden:** Help maintain the Alaska Rose Garden on the Park Strip; Contact Debbie Hinchey: dhinchey@alaskan.com
- \* **Alaska Botanical Garden:** Help maintain garden at the ABG; contact ABG @ 770-3692
- \* **Instructors needed** on topics such as Seed Starting, Organic Soil Amendments, Vegetable Gardening, etc. Contact: Harry Deuber: 440-6372 denali542@yahoo.com
- \* **Lutheran Church of Hope Garden:** Help plant and maintain gardens to donate fresh produce to local food pantries. Contact Don Bladow: dfbladow@gmail.com

*"The meaning of life is to find your gift. The purpose of life is to give it away."*  
— William Shakespeare

## Master Gardener Volunteers in Action



A new school garden area is in the works for the recently refurbished Airport Heights Elementary School. A group of AMGA volunteers recently met with 6th graders from the school to listen to their ideas for the new garden and to give feedback.



The students researched what kinds of features they would like to see in a school garden and then built scale models out of clay. The expert advisers, including MGs Sheila Toomey, Tony Flores, and Elise Huggins, asked the student presenters questions and offered advice.



The students took copious notes and really enjoyed the chance to meet with the garden connoisseurs.

Photos from Emily Becker



## Bird Chatter

**OFFICIAL THEME . . .** Is it just BC, or is the theme for the 2017 Alaska State Fair kind of naughty? "Do It With Someone You Love."

So, no one-night stands? Plan on repeat performances? And, yes, our Kathy Liska is once again Queen of the Harvest. No, that's not her official title. It's something boring like Superintendent of Crops. Now's the time to get in touch with Kathy and volunteer to help out fondling florets or carting cabbages or whatever. BC is assured it's actually a lot of fun.

Volunteer Entry Clerks are needed Aug. 23 & Aug. 30 starting at noon. Judges Clerks are needed Aug. 24 & Aug. 31, starting at 8 a.m. Kathy can be reached at [akliska@aol.com](mailto:akliska@aol.com) or call 337-2196. Volunteers get in free!

**SO PROUD. . .** Speaking of fairs, did you know our's is routinely named one of the top ten state fairs in the country? Currently we're at #2. (Iowa is #1) This according to Steve Brown, the new Anchorage CES Agent, who is also President of the Alaska State Fair Board. (Read about Steve elsewhere in this newsletter).

**CHECKING IN. . .** Julie Riley, banished to Fairbanks for sins against the mother ship, has hit the ground running. She's already organized and is teaching a Master Gardener class up there. She almost had to cancel it when only nine people signed up, but went ahead when 15 actually showed up.

The 2016 Anchorage class -- normally 40+ students -- was canceled. Somewhere in the universe, on a planet far far away, maybe this makes sense?

Some good news: There will definitely be a 2017 Anchorage class. Julie, Steve and DeShana are putting it together.

**OH NO!** . . . Tree-hugging past president and ubiquitous MG volunteer Nickel LaFleur is leaving us. She and her banker husband have bought a house out in the Back of Beyond (aka Wasilla) and she will be trading us in this spring for the Mat-Su MGs. Our meetings will never be the same.

**QUOTE OF THE MONTH. . .** Marya Morrow said it at the February members meeting -- talking about radically reducing her annual dahlia planting, which includes digging them up to store indoors for the winter -- and she wasn't joking: "Last year we cut back to 850; This year we hope to get down to 700."

**WATCH FOR IT . . .** Brenda Adams has a new book coming out soon. "Cool Plants for Cold Climates, A Designer's Perspective." (Univ. of Alaska Press). Because it's being printed in Canada instead of the usual China, Brenda says we should have copies in our local bookstores in May although the official publication date is June 1.

## February Herb Study Group Meeting: Hops By Elaine Hammes

Debbie Hinchey treated the February Herb Study Group to lots of information and some samples of hops, *Humulus lupulus*. Michelle Semerad provided interesting history and a wide variety of recipes. Gina Docherty, Jane Baldwin and others noted they have successfully grown hops in Anchorage. The International Herb Association had chosen Hops as Herb of the Year for 2018.

The hop plant is an herbaceous perennial. They are most often dioecious with the male and female flower developing on separate plants. Occasionally fertile monoecious individuals appear. The hop vine is also referred to as a "bine." Rather than tendrils and suckers to attach, hops have strong stems with stiff hairs to climb. The bines and leaves feel like sandpaper.

Cultivation of hops has a long history in Europe. In the 13th century hops became more commonly used than gruit (composed of a wide variety of bitter herbs and flowers) to provide flavor and bitterness in beer. In the 1500s, the Catholic church did not tax hops (unlike gruit) so the Protestants preferred hopped beer. In addition, beers made with hops were less prone to spoilage, and hops are now known to have antibacterial properties. English and Dutch farmers brought hops to North America in 1629. Over 50 varieties of hop plants are available in the U.S. Some of the more common varieties are Willamette, Columbia and Cascade. The majority of cultivation in the U.S. occurs in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and some in Pennsylvania, generally preferring the same soil conditions as potatoes.

Hop vines can be trained to grow up trellises of supporting strings or wires that allow the plants to spend more energy on crop growth. They can grow as much as a foot each day. Plants need to be pruned regularly to keep air



Hop vine on a 12 foot pole in AK. Photo by Gina Docherty

circulation and to encourage stronger bines. Young shoots can be cut in spring for culinary use. Hops (cones) are harvested as they mature and become papery during late summer and fall before the plants go dormant. Plants are grown most quickly from rhizomes. First year plants spend most energy growing extensive root systems. Hop plants can live for over 25 years.

# Garden Event Calendar

## MEETINGS and EVENTS

### Wednesday, March 1

Alaska Botanical Garden Annual Meeting. Learn how the Garden Operates, Who and What the Programs Support, the Mission of the New Greenhouse and the State of the Garden. 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm at BP Energy Center, Seward Hy and Benson Blvd. Details at: <http://alaskabg.org/event/abg-annual-meeting/>.

### Thursday, March 2

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

### Friday, March 3

Herb Study Group Monthly Meeting: Starting Seeds. 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm at Anchorage Cooperative Extension Service, Chugachmiut Building, Room 116, 1840 Bragaw Street.

### Monday, March 6

\*\*Alaska Native Plant Society Monthly Meeting: Climate Change; Tree Line Shifts by Roman Dial. Plant Family: *Oxytropis kobukensis* by Dennis Ronsse. Mini Botany: *Loiseleuria* and *Kalmia* by Megan Keller. 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.matsumastergardeners.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, March 7

Valley Garden Club Monthly Meeting: The Uses and Care of Rhubarb by Bruce Bunch. 10:30 am at First Baptist Church, 900 Leatherleaf Loop, Wasilla.

### Thursday, March 9

Wildflower Garden Club Monthly Meeting: Garden Design by Carroll Samuelson. 10:00 am - 11:30 am at Central Lutheran Church, 1420 Cordova Street. Details at: <http://www.alaskagardenclubs.org/apps/calendar/>.

### Saturday, March 18

Alaska Rock Garden Society Monthly Meeting. 2:00 pm at Central Lutheran Church, 1420 Cordova Street.

### Monday, March 20

Anchorage AMGA Monthly Meeting: Organic Soil Amendments by Julie Riley, CES Horticulturist, and Advanced Master Gardeners. 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm at Anchorage Cooperative Extension Service, Chugachmiut Building, Room 116, 1840 Bragaw Street. Details at: [http://www.alaskamastergardeners.org/AMGA\\_Programs\\_2017-2018.pdf](http://www.alaskamastergardeners.org/AMGA_Programs_2017-2018.pdf).

### Tuesday, March 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

### Saturday, March 4 - Saturday March 25

Alaska Mill and Feed Spring Classes. 1501 East First Avenue. Reservations are required. Register at: <http://www.alaskamillandfeed.com/#!events/>.

March 4: Potatoes by Greg Kalal, Local Potato Farmer at 10:00 am - 11:30 am and 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm. Cost: \$5.00.

March 11: Dahlias and Begonias by Stephanie Flynn, Master Gardener at 10:00 am - 11:30 am and 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm. Cost: \$5.00.

March 18: Grafted Melons by Rob Brown at 10:00 am - 11:30 am and 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm. Cost: \$5.00.

March 25: Bee Keeping by Greg Groeneweg at 10:00 am - 11:30 am and 12:00 pm - 1:30 pm. Cost: \$5.00.

### Wednesday, March 15

Co-Creative Gardening with the Joyful Spirits of Nature by Ellen Vande Visse. 10:00 am to Noon. Tuition Costs and Location Details at: <http://ellenvandevisse.com/classes/?ee=148>.

### Tuesday, March 21

Cooperative Extension Service: Greenhouse Heat by Art Nash, CES Energy Specialist. Learn How You Can Use Common Materials to Extend the Growing Season. 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm at Anchorage Cooperative Extension Service, Chugachmiut Building, Room 119, 1840 Bragaw Street. Cost \$10. Register at least 5 days prior to the class. Details at: [https://alaska.augusoft.net/index.cfm?method=ClassInfo.ClassInformation&int\\_class\\_id=2892&int\\_category\\_id=3&int\\_sub\\_category\\_id=1060&int\\_catalog\\_id=0](https://alaska.augusoft.net/index.cfm?method=ClassInfo.ClassInformation&int_class_id=2892&int_category_id=3&int_sub_category_id=1060&int_catalog_id=0).

### Saturday, March 25

Organic Gardening Basics: Fertilizers, Pest Management and Composting by Ellen Vande Visse. 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm at Mat Su College, 8295 E. College Drive, Palmer. Tuition Costs and Details at: <http://ellenvandevisse.com/classes/>.

### Tuesday, March 28, April 4 and 11

Alaska Botanical Garden: Basics of Garden Design. Learn the Basic Tenets of Garden Design and Walk Away with a New Garden Plan. 6:00 - 8:00 at BP Energy Center, Seward Hy and Benson Blvd. . Cost \$100 - \$125. Preregistration is required. Details at: <http://alaskabg.org/event/workshop-basics-of-garden-design/>.

## SAVE THE DATES

### Saturday, April 22

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

### Monday - Friday, July 10-14, 2017

2017 International Master Gardener Conference - details at: <http://blogs.oregonstate.edu/2017imgc/>

July 10-14, 2017 | Portland, OR | Oregon Convention Center - Master of Ceremonies:

• Ciscoc Morris (Author, Radio Host, TV Host, Gardener)

Keynote Speakers:

• Dr. John Marzluff, Professor of Environmental and Forest Sciences, University of Washington

• Dan Hinkley, Plantsman, Author, Plant Collector, Lecturer

• Renee Shepherd, Seed Developer, Gardener, Entrepreneur and Author, Founder and Owner of Renee's Garden.



Steve Brown teaches at the CES "Chicken University". A recent ADN article, "Alaska's population of backyard chickens is booming", February 17th, featured an interview with Steve. He is also Anchorage's new CES Agent. [See article on page 3: "Meet the New Boss" by Sheila Toomey.]  
- Photo from Steve Brown.

**Anchorage AMGA Monthly Meeting:  
Organic Soil Amendments  
Monday, March 20th**



Julie Riley, CES Horticulturist, and Advanced Master Gardeners will talk about the best soil amendments for your garden. 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm at Anchorage Cooperative Extension Service, Chugachmiut Building, Room 116, 1840 Bragaw Street.

There is a rumor that the refreshment's theme is "IRISH". Come, join the fun, and learn something! See you there!



AMGA regularly meets at 7:00pm 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. Anchorage

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

The Alaska Master Gardeners Anchorage 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  
AMGA Web Site: www.alaskamastergardeners.org

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:  
[ak.jbaldwin@gmail.com](mailto:ak.jbaldwin@gmail.com)

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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

**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:

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907-440-6372

