

## President's Message by Susan Negus

Looks like winter is trying to appear. I have to say I was slow to get everything put away because so many things were still blooming. I finally bit the bullet and put everything to rest about two days before it froze and snowed. Now I have many cut flowers in vases around the house.

I'm also one of more that 50 Alaska gardeners registered for the online Advanced Master Gardening class "Permaculture for Alaskan Gardeners" underway on Tuesdays from 6-8PM. The class goes through November 24, 2020.

Speaking of classes, I did have a typo in the last newsletter regarding 2021 Master Gardening classes. With Covid-19, there have been a lot of delays, denials and maybes. However, there seems to be enthusiasm for an early winter online 2021 Master Gardening class within UAF/CES. Sufficient demand for online classes exists in other Alaska communities. UAF/CES recently distributed a survey for interested Anchorage/Mat-Su area gardeners to fill out. The survey ended just prior to publication of this newsletter. Survey results will help determine if UAF/CES will hold the winter MG class.

This year's fall 2020 online Master Gardening class taught by Heidi Rader has taken on 45 students instead of the usual 25. Registration for next year's course begins in mid-April 2021.

The Pioneer Home Garden was a big success in 2020 with the residents and anyone lucky enough to walk through the garden. Residents were very thankful to have the gardens to look at throughout the summer. Big thank you to Lynn Opstad, Ginger Hudson, Julie Ginder and all the volunteers who made it possible.

Our October monthly meeting on "How did your Garden Grow?" seemed like a big success with more than 40 people attending on Zoom. Emily Becker kept the slide show of AMGA member photos very well organized. Members have been keeping themselves busy with spectacular flowers, interesting yard projects, water fountains and layered retaining walls with flowers layered throughout. It was all great to see and impressive. The

slideshow will go online soon.

The topic has changed for our next monthly meeting to "Stump the Expert!" Experts include Julie Riley, Debbie Hinchey, and Mark Wolbers from the Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association. Start to gather your questions so we can try to Stump the Experts.

Since we are having the monthly meetings on Zoom, taking attendance has been challenging. Please sign your name in on the chat box.

I have had lots of positive feedback on Ginger's garden video tours. And she still has more videos of garden tours to put on YouTube. Thank you so much, Ginger.

Regarding the AGMA board, four members are terming out: Susan Negus, Nancy Grant, Elaine Hammes and FX Nolan. We do have four prospective board members: Troy Weiss, Kathleen Kaiser, Keenan Plate, and Nick Riordan. Their bios are included in this issue. New board members will be elected at the November meeting. We will probably vote by raising your hand. So, people will have to unblock their picture or agree on the chat.

To secure future meeting space at the Energy Center, when it reopens, Elaine Hammes has diligently been applying for the BOD meetings and the monthly meeting. This has to be done one year ahead every month. We will just have to wait and see.

Time for everyone to renew their memberships. Please complete the renewal form in this

*(continues next page)*

Top: The striking contrast of purple Heuchera with Artemisia 'Silver Brocade' in Sharon Davies garden. Photo by Ginger Hudson.

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# October Meeting Highlights



Top: A few of nearly 100 Peony varieties cultivated by Troy Weiss and his family. Above: Troy has been using sawdust as a winter mulch. Photos by Troy Weiss.

The Monday October 19 AMGA Membership meeting was enjoyed by 40 people attending by Zoom.

On an additional positive note, and with enough interest, a Master Gardener class is possible for this winter and/or early next year, on-line. The online survey to gauge interest in this class has now closed, so stay tuned.

The current Advanced Master Gardener class on Permaculture was actually over-enrolled with a waiting list.

**Send your "Stump the Expert" questions to Emily Becker for next month's membership meeting.**

The November AMGA Newsletter will have bios of board nominees for 2021-2022. **The annual election will take place by Zoom at the November Membership meeting.** At some point in the future, the Energy Center may be open for in-person meetings so stay tuned! **And remember to renew your membership for 2021!**

**THE SHOW:** Thanks to Emily Becker for organizing this show of 2020 summer photos from AMGA members. It was so much eye candy!

Stay tuned for the show to be made available on-line for those who didn't get to see it at the meeting or who want to see it again. Especially this summer, gardening has been one of the brightest spots of activities. Limiting photos to five per person must have been a challenge!

Susan's photos included morel mushrooms, two varieties of Himalayan poppies and more. Sharon explained parts of her Jack in the Pulpit and showed False Sunflowers, a cultivar of *Heliopsis helianthoides* with variegated foliage. Two of Janice's photos were of a bell-shaped clematis and some second-year foxglove flowers she grew from seed. Two of Deb Blaylock's photos were mouthwatering Polbig tomatoes and spaghetti squash plus an amazing bearded iris. Christine, Teresa and "Mother of 3 Boys" provided more summer photos that this writer is sorry she missed.

*(continues next page)*

## AMGA Treasurer's Report, September 2020

By Nancy Grant

### Balance 08/30/2020

Checking S-88	\$14,361.76
Business MBR Shares	\$5.25
Business Premium Shares	\$16,888.66
CD Education 5yr.	
1.650% (12/20)	\$5,392.22
CD General 2yr.	
1.95% (1/21)	<u>\$10,554.36</u>
	\$47,202.25

### Revenue:

Membership	\$40.00
Perm. Class	\$450.00
Interest/Dividends	<u>\$77.09</u>
	\$567.09

### Expenses:

Operations	\$140.29
Perm. Clas	<u>\$1,350.00</u>
	\$1,490.29

### Balance 10/01/2020

Checking S-88	\$13,361.47
Business MBR Shares	\$5.25
Business Premium Savings	\$16,891.44
I 60 Certificate 5yr.	
1.650% (12/20)	\$5,414.65
I 24 Certificate 2yr.	
1.95% (01/21)	<u>\$10,606.24</u>
	\$46,279.05

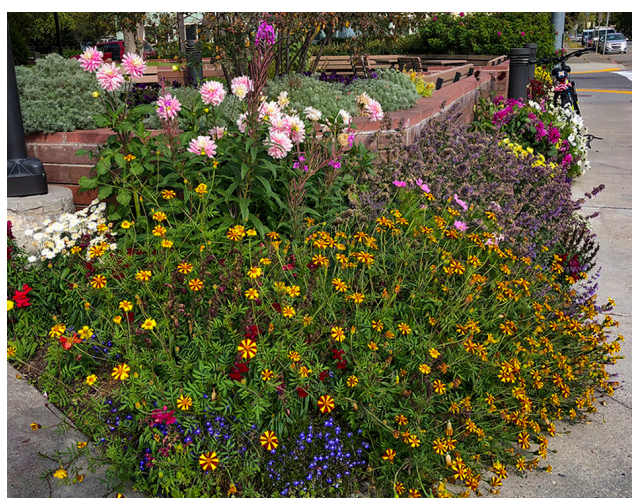
*(Message, continued from previous page)*

issue or you can go to the website and pay online at [alaskamastergardeners.org](http://alaskamastergardeners.org).

In order to get into the member directory, you need to have renewed by the end of December 2020. Janice Berry and Alexis St. Juliana work very hard on the directory. I am often asked about just putting it online. We cannot put the directory online because of confidentiality.

Please renew now!





Left to right: A good example in successional blooming at the Pioneer Home: chives and lobelia show off as the French Legion Marigolds get started in June. By late July and into September, topped with dahlias, the marigolds exploded in size! Photos by Ginger Hudson.

*(Highlights, continued from previous page)*

Jan provided photos from a construction point of view including his house number from a re-purposed spruce tree and a curved concrete block retaining wall with plantings at different levels. Some of Troy's favorite peony photos (of the 180 he has in the ground) didn't show the bad insect problems and likely artillery fungus he found this year. Lois' photos included a succulent with many orange blooms and a group of 'Lolipop' lilies that she may soon be dividing. Linda has a shade garden with nearly all possible varieties of hostas, plus ferns and ghost lamium. Check out the AMGA video tour of her garden to see more.

Two of Sandy's photos were of pink Calla lilies that she

overwinters and a yellow hybrid (herbaceous and tree) peony 'Bartzella' Itoh peony. Barbara repurposes old headboards as backdrops for her groupings of flowers; next year she will be adding vines. In addition to flowers, Rosa designed her rock and marble fountain project, approved by the redpolls.

Ginger rounded out the slide show with extraordinary photos of the Pioneer Gardens with blooms in succession, donated plants and work of many volunteers over the summer. What a way to end a great show and inspire us for summer gardening in 2021!

*Compiled by Elaine Hammes*

## Herb Study: Transition to Winter Meetings by Elaine Hammes

Many thanks go to Gina Dionne, CES, for hosting the October 9th Herb Study Group (HSG) via Zoom.

The group is still transitioning from the garden to meetings. As of this writing, HSG members are awaiting leaves to be mulched for the Herb Garden and hoping it will be soon as temperatures have been cooling off.

Marjorie will be working on formatting information sheets for plants in the Herb Garden and HSG will be discussing this at the November meeting.

Information may include how the plants are used now or in the past, including for cooking, medicine and dyes. The sheets will

have botanical and common names and may help with updating garden signage.

Lisa will be leading discussion on Wild Blue Indigo (*Baptisia australis*) at the November meeting.

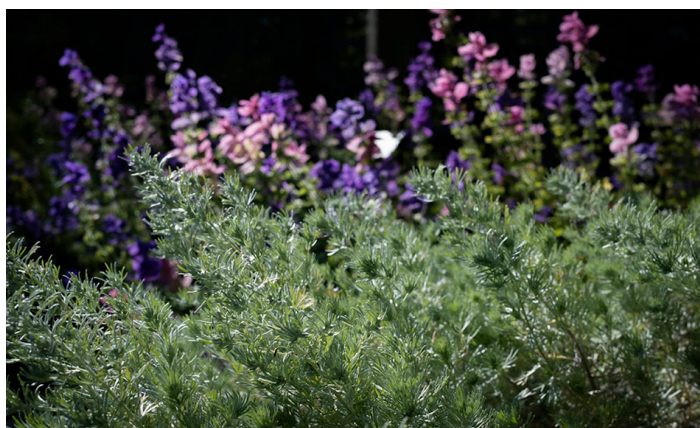
This plant overwintered in the southeast bed this past winter.

Numerous suggestions were made for topics for the remaining meetings this season, but have not been scheduled yet. Stay tuned!

The Herb Study Group meetings are open to anyone who is interested in discussing herbs. The Zoom link will be emailed to those on the email list for the next meeting on Friday, November 13, 12:00 - 1:30pm.

If you may be interested, have questions or are not receiving notifications of the Herb Study meetings, please

email the Herb Study Group at [anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com](mailto:anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com) or call Elaine at 276-4295 and leave a message.



Artemisia and sage at the ABC Herb Garden in 2020. Photo by Ginger Hudson.



# AMGA Board Candidates

## Keenan Plate

Hello! My name is Keenan and I have been an Anchorage Master Gardener since fall 2019. I moved to Anchorage from Stockton, CA in August of 2018 to serve as the JV Americorps member at Refugee Assistance and Immigration Services (RAIS), a program of Catholic Social Services.



After my year of volunteer service, I was hired on as the Refugee Agriculture Program Coordinator at RAIS. Part of my desire for joining AMGA was to increase awareness of the refugee agriculture program and to help our gardeners connect with the larger Anchorage gardening community. I am excited to serve as a board member and look forward to spreading more good food and good soil around Anchorage!

## Kathleen Kaiser

Hello, my name is Kathleen Kaiser. I completed the Alaska master gardener program in December of 2018. I was born and raised in Alaska in South Anchorage, and I currently reside in Peters Creek with my husband and two young children.

We moved into our house about five years ago and I took it upon myself to cultivate our back yard into an awesome place that we could escape to and entertain in. That really got me into gardening and wanting to reverse my black thumb! Turns out it wasn't black, but needed a lot of help! In that time, I've become an avid house plant lover and have over 200 plants as well (much to my husband's enjoyment I'm sure.)



I am a stickler for organization and having things just right so I'm hoping I can lend a hand with whatever is needed from me on the board. I'm also excited to learn from other Master Gardeners and broaden my growing horizons! It's always been a dream of mine to teach people how to grow in their own gardens, and learn about growing everything from vegetables and flowers, to keeping pests out of their houseplants here in Alaska.

## Nick Riordan

Nick Riordan grew up in Anchorage and is the organic gardening coordinator at Alaska Community Action on Toxics where he runs Yarducopia, a community gardening program that specializes in pairing up enthusiastic gardeners with available land, materials, and know-how.



Nick has a permaculture design certificate from the Cold-Climate Permaculture Institute, is an Alaska Master Gardener, and is on the board for the Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association.

In his past life, Nick taught geology for various universities including the University of Alaska, and holds a masters and doctorate in soils, sediments, and paleoclimate research.

## Troy Weiss

Troy graduated in Chemical Engineering from Oklahoma State University, got married, and moved to Alaska in 1986. He worked 9 years for ARCO all in Alaska. He then worked 21 years for BP in Alaska, Gulf of Mexico, and Egypt.

After retirement, he became an avid gardener. He completed the Master Gardener program and started a small business focused on peonies ([www.opasgarden.com](http://www.opasgarden.com)). They presently have 180 peonies in their garden and expect to have around 1000 blooms in 2021. He has sold peony roots are the BP farmer's market.

Troy has served on the board for Habitat for Humanity in Anchorage. He presently leads the project committee for Habitat and participates on the finance committee.

He enjoys coaching and mentoring young men leaving HS and going into the world. He and Janet have volunteered with the HS Youth Group at church, they are supporters of YoungLife, and he is mentoring cadets through Alaska Military Youth Academy (AMYA).

Troy's main job is being an Opa (Grandpa) to his 2 year-old granddaughter Juliet.



## Bird Chatter

**HOUSE PLANTS...** just don't cut it. Sorry to lovers of leaky pots leaving rings on furniture and brown leaves screaming for water, but BC doesn't do house plants.

So, where did those green things crouched up against the living room windows come from?

Well, you know, you can't throw away a perfectly good Pelargonium just because the temperature drops below freezing, right? That would be cruel. And it isn't the Snake Plant's fault it didn't die when you put it out for the summer with that secret, shameful hope. And the cactus that hasn't been watered in six weeks is still alive....and... Sigh.

Yep. It's winter again. House plants.

Check Jeff Lowenfels' Dec. 14, 2017 ADN column for useful info about plants that make the house smell nice.

**SHE'S A STAR...** Did you catch Emily Becker's slide presentation at our last meeting – Zoomed of course. Among the fab photos of members' gardens were a couple from Ginger Hudson of this year's Pioneer Home results.

It reminded BC to send a big, overdue shout-out to the incredibly generous member who quietly donates money every year to buy many of the flowers the PH volunteers plant:

Thank you Bonnie Tisler!

Message to Bonnie: You Rock!!

**FEAR KITTY KITTY...** Apparently those starving caterpillars that show up by the thousands in April to eat the leaves on BC's old cherry tree aren't an evil enough curse to satisfy the Gods of Gardening. Now we have the "puss caterpillar."

Why "puss?" Because it has a cute, fluffy coat. Thick. Furry. You really want to pet it.

Oh, did BC neglect to mention the hairs are hollow and contain a toxin that can cause an itchy rash, vomiting, swollen glands and fever, according to bug people at the University of Michigan.

"It'll also put you in a world of pain," said one victim.

"Like a scorching-hot knife," said another.

Good news is they're not here yet. Bad news is they seem to be following the delights of global warming. Big in Virginia for a

while, but they're now showing up in Missouri and Texas.

Hmmm. Don't Texans sometimes come to Anchorage?

P.S. A giant Monster Hornet nest was wiped out in Washington state last month (almost?). Report is the hornets are making their home in "the Pacific Northwest."

Aren't we sort of in the Pacific Northwest? Is this the worst year ever or what!

**CALL THE SHRINK...** Does anyone blame Board President Susan Negus for tying her sanity to a tree in an effort to keep it? Seems like the MG class is on again for next year.

Oh, really?

Susan is flirting with mental whiplash, courtesy of CES. Yes there's going to be a class; no there's not going to be a class; oh, yes, there is going to be a class; well, maybe we should send out a questionnaire about whether we should have a class . . . blah blah blah.

Let's be very clear: BC has no idea if there's going to be a class and doesn't want to discuss it further.

**ONE DAMN THING AFTER ANOTHER..** Thank the Unmasked Avenger (aka Covid) for yet another irritating hassle (that's redundant, right?): What are we supposed to do with all those perfectly usable #3-#7 plastic pots our plants wore home from the nursery? There was no giant ALPAR/ABG recycle event outside the garden this August. Kayleigh at ABG said the garden is fully stocked and doesn't need any. Faltz Nursery had to stop accepting them because ALPAR – the actual recycler – stopped accepting them.

Anita Nelson at ALPAR said a combination of Covid and bottomed-out marketability of the pots means they have nowhere to send them, so they're not collecting them. She said they hope things will get back to normal next summer but . . .

So, Nelson and Kayleigh suggest: Find a way to re-use the pots yourself. Start an indoor herb garden this winter? Save them for spring seeding? Or stick them in a corner of the shed/garage and hope for the best next year.

Words to live by.



### Community Compost now **CLOSED** for drop-off!

**The Anchorage Solid Waste Services  
Community Compost station closed for  
the season on Oct. 30.**

Remaining materials will continue to compost and be available  
in the 2021 season. Learn more at:

[www.muni.org/Departments/SWS/Recycling/Pages/Community-Compost.aspx](http://www.muni.org/Departments/SWS/Recycling/Pages/Community-Compost.aspx)

### ALASKA FOOD FESTIVAL & CONFERENCE

**Friday and Saturday, November 6 - 7**

Creating awareness of Alaska food issues. Training, resources and networking opportunities. [akfoodpolicy-council.org](http://akfoodpolicy-council.org)





# November 2020 Garden Event Calendar

**NOTE:** All events subject to cancellation or rescheduling due to Covid-19 precautions. Please check group websites or other social media to find out if there are alternate arrangements to events. Be mindful of the Muni's health mandates.

## Classes /Workshops

**Mondays, September 30 – November 18 @ 6:00 – 8:00 PM** - Registration is open for the Fairbanks gardening class. First Presbyterian Church, 547 Seventh Avenue, Fairbanks. [Here is a link to the website.](#)

## Meetings and Events

**Tuesday, November 3 @ 7:00 PM** - Monthly meeting of the Greater Eagle River Garden Club at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church at 18444 Old Glenn Hwy (Meetings have been by Zoom lately.)  
[Here is a link to the Facebook page.](#)  
[Here is a link to the website.](#)

**Thursday, November 5 @ 7:00 – 9:00 PM** - "Holiday Gnomes," Anchorage Garden Club Program. 437 E 3rd Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99501.  
[Here is a link to the website.](#)

**Friday and Saturday, November 6 - November 7 @ 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM** - 2020 Alaska Food Festival and Conference. This is an annual two-day conference that seeks to generate awareness of Alaska food issues and provides training, resources and networking opportunities. [Register at the website.](#)



**Thursday, November 12 @ 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM** "Share Pictures of Your Summer Garden" by Wildflower GC. Meet at Central Lutheran Church. 1420 Cordova, Anchorage. [Here is a link to the website.](#)

**Thursday, November 12 @ 7:00 PM** - Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association membership meeting with yearly reports and board elections.  
[Here is a link to the website.](#)  
[Here is a link to the Facebook page.](#)

**Tuesday November 17 @ 6:30 - 8:30 PM** - Ketchikan Garden Club Program Meeting. Ketchikan Public Library, 1110 Copper Ridge Lane, Ketchikan, AK 99901. [Here is a link to the website.](#)

**Wednesday, November 18 @ 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM** Fairbanks Garden Club Program Meeting. Members only. [Here is a link to the website.](#)



Visit and subscribe to the new [AMGA YouTube channel](#) to see fellow gardeners' landscapes. We may not have been able to socialize in person, but we can still share and learn from each other.

To arrange a future virtual garden tour, contact Ginger at [ginger@growingtall.llc](mailto:ginger@growingtall.llc)

If you know of events coming up or organizations not mentioned in this calendar, please contact Teresa Stephenson at [stephenson.teresa@gmail.com](mailto:stephenson.teresa@gmail.com) so she can add it to the list!

A reminder that CES has moved to a new office: 219 E. International Airport Road, Anchorage. CES is only seeing people by appointment during Covid. Check their web site for the schedule: [www.uaf.edu/ces](http://www.uaf.edu/ces).



## ALASKA MASTER GARDENERS ANCHORAGE

Membership/Membership Renewal Form for the Year \_\_\_\_\_

**AMGA's membership year is January 1st through December 31st**  
**To ensure listing in the next MG Directory, dues must be received or postmarked by December 31st**

\_\_\_\_ Individual (\$20)

\_\_\_\_ Dual\* (\$30)

\_\_\_\_ Voting: MG Class Year/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Associate/Non-voting \$20

\_\_\_\_ Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Last/First: \_\_\_\_\_

Day phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Other phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Dual Membership (Two current AMGA members living at same address).

Last/First: \_\_\_\_\_

Day phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Other phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Voting: MG Class Year/Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Associate/Non-voting

Cash and/or check payments can be made at AMGA meetings with completed form.  
If paying by mail, send form & payment to: AMGA, P. O. Box 221403, Anchorage, AK 99522-1403.  
Make checks payable to Alaska Master Gardeners Anchorage.

Memberships, renewals and donations may also be submitted online at [www.alaskamastergardeners.org](http://www.alaskamastergardeners.org)  
Gift membership forms are also available online.

### AMGA runs on volunteer power!

Needs vary, and may include such tasks as writing educational articles or postings, presenting monthly programs, Pioneer Home gardens' maintenance, photography, social media, web design, annual plant sale, workshops, etc. Volunteer opportunities will be provided as they occur for which AMGA will very much appreciate your support.

Your suggestions for educational program topics of interest and speaker recommendations are also welcomed: \_\_\_\_\_

AMGA Use: Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Check #: \_\_\_\_\_ Amount: \_\_\_\_\_ Cash: \_\_\_\_\_ Donation: \_\_\_\_\_

Rev/ Oct 2017

**Please wear a mask.**



**Maintain a distance of 6 feet  
whenever possible.**

## Time to Renew!

**Memberships are based on calendar year.**

If you have not renewed, fill out the form on our website, or print and mail the membership form in this month's newsletter. Questions? Contact Alexis St. Juliana at [astjuliana@hotmail.com](mailto:astjuliana@hotmail.com)

## Next AMGA Meeting, online

November 16, 7pm. Stump the Experts via Zoom.

**Watch your email, check our website or Facebook page for connection instructions.**

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

Meetings are held at the BP Energy Center, 1014 Energy Court, Anchorage, accessed through the BP tower parking lot, the Energy Center is just south of the main building.

**\*NOTE: meeting location may change\***  
**2020-2021 meetings currently being held online**

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 at:

Mail: AMGA, Newsletter  
P.O. Box 221403  
Anchorage, AK 99522-1403

Email: [newsletteramga@gmail.com](mailto:newsletteramga@gmail.com)

## 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.

AMGA Web Site: [www.alaskamastergardeners.org](http://www.alaskamastergardeners.org)

Facebook: [facebook.com/Alaska-Master-Gardeners-Anchorage](https://facebook.com/Alaska-Master-Gardeners-Anchorage)

Youtube: [www.youtube.com/channel/UCvZehJprKkQzQvNDKopQ](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvZehJprKkQzQvNDKopQ)

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 Alexis St. Juliana at: [astjuliana@hotmail.com](mailto:astjuliana@hotmail.com)

## AMGA Board of Directors

Susan Negus	President
Emily Becker	Vice President
Nancy Grant	Treasurer
Beth Norris	Secretary
Elaine Hammes	At Large
F.X. Nolan	At Large
Faye Stiehm	At Large
Jan Van Den Top	At Large

## Committee Chairs, Program Coordinators & Volunteers

CES Liaison:	Elaine Hammes
CES Master Gardener Program Liaison:	Steve Brown or Gina Dionne
Broadcast Email:	Faye Stiehm
Calendar of Events:	Teresa Stephenson
Advanced MG:	Don Bladow, Emily Becker, Fran Pekar
Directory Editor:	Janice Berry
Meetings and other educational programs:	Emily Becker
Garden Tours:	Emily Becker
Google Group:	Mary Rydesky
Managers:	Gina Docherty and Jane Baldwin
Grants Program:	Elaine Hammes
Hospitality:	Lynn Hansen, Ruthe Rasmussen, Sharon Schlicht, and Wendy Willie
Membership & Database:	Alexis St. Juliana
Newsletter Editor:	Ginger Hudson
Website:	Gina Docherty
Lifetime Achievement and Grants:	Lynne Opstad
Pioneer Home:	Lynne Opstad, Ginger Hudson
Volunteer Coordinator:	Julie Ginder
Volunteer Coordinator:	Susan Negus

