

***Happy Holidays & Best Wishes
In The New Year!***

PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT by Emily Becker

2021 was the year of persisting! Luckily, gardening was never canceled by Covid. This year we continued to adapt to pandemic limitations and our organization was bustling as usual.

We have 300 AMGA members this year and we're happy to see the Master Gardener education program is thriving. CES sponsored two basic MG classes this year: Steve Brown and Gina Dionne's in the spring and Heidi Rader's online fall class. Together, the classes had around 125 students. This year's Advanced Master Gardener class was taught by AMGA member Brenda Adams on "Mastering Garden Design." About 50 people attended the course, and about 30 fulfilled the Advanced MG requirements. The Advanced course is organized by our members and hosted with help from CES. Special thanks to the volunteers who organized registration and graded the student projects.

We held nine Board of Director meetings, plus related work in committees on the budget, grants and scholarships, Lifetime Achievement awards, Advanced MG courses, and a new tech committee. Enormous thanks are due to all of the volunteers serving on the Board and committees!

We hosted eight educational member meetings on a wide variety of topics, via Zoom, with 40+ attendees each time. While we miss the social aspects, we can't deny that online meetings are efficient and accessible.

Elizabeth Bluemink, our new newsletter editor, produced 12 issues of our fabulous newsletter, and Janice Berry once again created our useful member directory.

Happily, our garden tours resumed this summer! Fourteen sites volunteered for our curious members to enjoy, enough for weekly events throughout the growing season. The gardens were inspirational and educational. Hey, why not offer to share yours in summer 2022?

We disbursed \$2,586 in grants: to Grace Christian School, Polaris K-12 school, St. Francis House Food Pantry, Create Academy at Pacific Northern Academy, and two students in the Master Gardener course. The projects advance our primary mission of gardening education. Grant reports have been published in the newsletter if you'd like more information on these

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HELP WANTED!! Be our next AMGA Calendar of Events Coordinator

DESCRIPTION: Compile monthly events from roughly 7 different local organizations (URLs and formatting template will be provided). Submit in Word or Google Doc to newsletteramga@gmail.com by 20th of each month. **Estimated time commitment: ~1 hour per month.**



President's Report, continued from previous page

projects, with the final report in this edition.

We hosted two plant sales, one in May at the Midtown Mall and one in August at the ABG parking lot. These are critical fundraisers for our organization and a chance for our members to earn some cash! AMGA members also share tons of advice with the general public at these events. We raised \$1,900 for AMGA at plant sales this year.

We also made some changes under the hood recommended by the tech committee. We migrated our documents to a Google for Nonprofits workspace and began using the features to keep ourselves organized, with new emails for Board members and new methods for tracking membership. Thanks to Alexis St. Juliana for helping us through this and keeping track of membership! We also applied for and received discounted non-profit rates for PayPal and Adobe Suite.

In December we welcomed two new Board members: Megan O'Mullane and Kat Karabelnikoff. I will return as President, Troy Weiss is staying on as VP, and Jan van den Top remains our Treasurer. Nick Riordan is our new Secretary, and Kathleen Kaiser and Keenan Plate return as at-large members.

Thank you outgoing Board members Faye Stiehm and Beth Norris for your service to AMGA.

As always, this work is made possible by enormous amounts of volunteer time! AMGA members continued our commitments to the Pioneer Home, the Alaska Botanical Garden's herb garden, and many, many other gardens and projects, including donating plants, pots, and labor for the St. Francis House Food Pantry in a time of increasing need in our community.

Thank you, everyone! 🌱

NOV. 2021 AMGA TREASURER'S REPORT

Balances on 11/01/2021

Checking S-88	\$19,271.74
Savings S-1	\$5.25
Savings S-19	\$16,928.11
CD General 2 year 1.95%; 1/23	\$10,742.83

Total Assets \$46,947.93

Interest/Dividends \$2.78

This month's revenue	
Membership	\$1,311.38
Donations	
Fundraising/Plant sale	
Advanced M.G. course fees	\$2,586.55
Total revenue	\$3,897.93

This month's expenses

Grants (scholarships)	
Hospitality	
Operations	\$102.00
Website	\$255.00
Plant sale	
Public Relations (State Fair)	
Newsletter	\$52.99

Total Expenses this month \$409.99

Balances on 11/30/2021

Checking S-88	\$22,759.68
Savings S-1	\$5.25
Savings S-19	\$16,930.89
CD General 2 Year 1.95%, (1/23)	\$10,742.83

Total Assets on 11/30/2021 \$50,438.65

Prepared by Jan van den Top on 12/11/2021

BOOK REVIEW: Wildflowers for Northern Gardens

We garden for many different reasons: to cultivate beauty for our souls; to provide food and medicine for our bodies; and to attract and enjoy wildlife, birds and insects. We gain a satisfying sense of accomplishment when we achieve even one of these.

Even more satisfying than just installing a plant is nurturing a seed, cutting, or runner, especially from the plants we find around us.

Now there's a handy booklet focused on northern plant species that can really assist us in this: *Wildflowers for Northern Gardeners*, by Patricia Holloway and Virginia Gauss, two long-time Alaska gardeners.

This concise booklet is a terrific reference for propagation methods and specific garden- and propagation-related characteristics of over 100 wildflower species. It includes a reference table suggesting different species to plant in different types of gardens, such as edible, pollinator attractor, water, or rock gardens.

On the topic of propagation, the authors guide us through different seed types (including exploding seed pods), providing tips on harvesting, cleaning, storing and, most important, dormancy, stratification, and germination. If you've ever wondered why you can't just

plant a berry and get a plant, here's some great information. Within this topic are also methods for propagation from stem and rhizome cuttings.

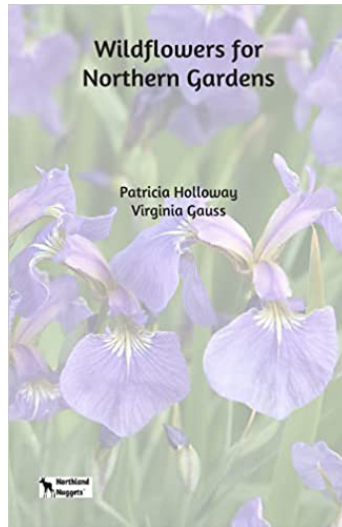
The careful description of each species include its blooming season; sun, moisture, and soil requirements; mature height; potential as medicinal or edible; and the beneficial insects it attracts as well as whether it might attract other creatures (moose, voles).

For each species, the authors describe the best techniques for treating the seed, including required periods of cold stratification and when to plant.

The reference table of plants provided for different types of gardens includes gardens with different moisture conditions, plants for cutting, dyeing and fragrance, and plants for specific uses, such as borders, ground covers, or hedgerows.

If you're looking to add some native plants to your garden and you can't find them at a plant sale or nursery, this book is just the ticket. — *Mel Langdon*

Editor's Note: This book is [available on Amazon](#) and copies will also be available from the Alaska Native Plant Society this spring.



2021 COMMUNITY GRANT REPORT by Claire Lubke

The St. Francis House food pantry second annual free plants event was a delight to volunteers, staff, and clients alike! Thanks to the organization and expertise of Alaska Master Gardeners, over 130 food pantry clients received a tomato plant, herb pot, or salad box in the last week of May 2021. These plants are especially meaningful for people on tight budgets who may not be able to afford these items at the grocery store.

During this event, Iva Karoly-Lister, who worked as a part-time employee of St. Francis House food pantry and was a recipient of an AMGA grant, identified ten food pantry clients who had their own gardening projects and expertise, but were resource limited in

completing their spring-time projects.

Using the AMGA garden project grant funds, each clients received a \$25 gift card to Alaska Mill & Feed. Clients used the funds to purchase compost, soil, pots, seeds, and fertilizers to support or expand their existing efforts.

Overall, the Alaska Master Gardeners provided the gift of growing one's own food to people who likely wouldn't have had this opportunity otherwise. Thank you!

Editor's Note: This is the final in a series of reports on AMGA 2021 Community Grants. AMGA awarded \$2,586 total to four organizations and two individuals.

HERB STUDY: BAYBERRY by Marjorie Williams

Bayberry is in the *Myricaceae* family and comes in both tree and shrub form. Other names include wax myrtle, waxberry or candleberry.

American bayberry, *Myrica cerifera*, grows in marshes and bogs along the Atlantic coastal areas and is the variety most often mentioned by herbalists. It grows 3 to 8 feet tall, but some time up to 20 feet tall, with lanceolate, shiny leaves that have dots on both sides.

Male and female flowers are borne in catkins on separate plants. Fruits are small groups of globular berries with a greenish-white waxy coating and numerous black grains. The leaves and bark have a balsamic odor when crushed. *Myrica cerifera* grows in zones 7 to 10 in peaty soils and full sun.

Myrica pensylvanica is a similar bayberry generally

grown in zones 3 to 7. It is native to eastern North America, from Newfoundland west to Ontario, and as far south as North Carolina. It grows as a shrub up to 15 feet tall.

Traditionally, bayberry candles were burned on New Year's Day to help bring prosperity into the home for the new year. Also, some believed that sprinkling bayberry bark and leaves on your wallet would bring money always flowing to you easily. Another belief is putting bayberry oil on a white candle placed in the fireplace to keep evil away in a new home.

The most common use of bayberry is boiling the fruit to extract the wax and oils for candle and soap making. Culinarily, the fruit is edible but is of poor quality. Fruit and leaves are used in some soups for flavoring. The leaf is a substitute for bay leaf and must be removed before serving food.

Medically, leaves, bark and/or root have been used internally to treat fevers, diarrhea and colitis, as gargle for common cold or sore throats, and externally to treat itchy skin. Other uses include leather tanning, wool dyeing and insect repellent. 🌿



Northern Bayberry (*Myrica pensylvanica*) is generally grown in zones 3-7. Photo courtesy Doreen Wyna via Monrovia Nursery Company.

Herb Study Group Meeting Topics

January 14, 2022: Marigolds (Tagetes)

February 11, 2022: Nasturtiums, Canarybird Vines

March 11, 2022: Native plants for ABG's Herb Garden

April 8, 2022: Herb Garden Plans for 2022

May 13, 2022: Yet to be determined

Anyone interested in learning about herbs is welcome to send an email to the Herb Study Group at anchorageherbstudygroup@gmail.com to receive our notifications. There are no dues or membership requirements.

Monthly meetings are via Zoom, noon to 1:30 p.m. on the 2nd Friday of each month, September-May. We also volunteer in ABG's Herb Garden during the growing season.

GRANT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRIVATE LANDOWNERS

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service is offering grants to agricultural producers and private landowners for three programs: the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP), the Conservation Stewardship Program, and the new EQIP Conservation Incentives Contracts Program.

The deadline for grant proposals is close of business, January 21. [Find out more and learn how to apply.](#)



BIRD CHATTER

Publish your flowers!

Have a favorite garden photo or two to share with members year round? Please send photos for possible inclusion in the 2022 AK Master Gardener Directory to Janice Berry at jberry6634@gmail.com by her deadline of January 15th.

Mark your growing calendars!

Don Bladow points out that gardening is just six weeks away. Also, Emily checked, and the 2022 Midtown Mall Garden Show is set for April 16.

What's new, interesting, confounding and delightful? Send your bits of interesting garden news to birdchatter@alaskamastergardeners.org.



This informative and exciting series is brought to you by a partnership between Kenai Soil and Water Conservation District and UAF Cooperative Extension Service to support Alaska growers.

From the Ground Up! Tuesday Evenings Starting January 18 6 - 7:30 p.m.

Join experts from all over Alaska for a 7-part series that will dig deeper into getting the most out of your land and improving local food security. Whether you are a home gardener, a small farm, or interested in land development, you don't want to miss this series of free workshops.

Register once and join any or all of the free online sessions.

<https://bit.ly/FromGroundUp2022>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. Accommodation requests related to a disability should be made with Deshana York five business days in advance.

For more information, contact:

DeShana York
907-786-6330
ddyork@alaska.edu

Teri Diamond
907-283-8732 ext 5
kenaiswcd@gmail.com

COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

KENAI SOIL & WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Jan 18
Soil Composition & Composting

Jan 25
BioChar Basics & Enhancing Soil Nutrients

Feb 1
What About Those Trees? Small Woodlot Management

Feb 8
Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for Growers

Feb 15
Benefits & Use of Cover Crops in Alaskan Soils

Feb 22
AKAgrAbility Overview & Resources

March 1
Conservation Programs and Other Resources that Benefit Producers

JANUARY 2022 EVENT CALENDAR

CLASSES/WORKSHOPS

Friday, January 14, 5:30-7:30 pm

Anchorage Parks and Rec: Houseplants 101. You'll learn how to take care of your plants, what to do if they get sad or sick and learn how to repot it when it needs a new home. Class will be held in the tropical Mann Leister greenhouse. Cost: \$15. [Register](#).

Tuesday, January 18, 6-7:30 pm

Cooperative Extension Service: From the Ground Up! Soil Composition and Composting. Join experts from all over Alaska for the first of seven free, online classes that dig deeper into getting the most out of your land and improving local food security. [Sign up](#).

Thursday, January 20, 4 pm

Mat-Su Cooperative Extension Service/Matanuska Experimental Farm & Extension Service: Organizing to Stay Ahead of Those Pests. Join Gino Graziano and Jozef Slowik to discuss which weeds and pests you should keep an eye out for. They'll cover how to organize a good defense to prevent them, or an effective offense to combat them if they've already arrived. [Zoom registration](#).

Tuesday, January 25, 6-7:30 pm

Cooperative Extension Service: From the Ground Up! BioChar Basics & Other New and Exciting Ideas for Enhancing Your Soils Nutrients. Join experts from all over Alaska for the second of seven free, online classes that dig deeper into getting the most out of your land and improving local food security. [Sign up](#).

Friday, January 28, 5:30-7:30 pm

Anchorage Parks and Rec: Houseplants 102. Learn about pruning and propagating. Class will be held in the tropical Mann Leister greenhouse. Cost: \$15. [Register](#).

Anytime (self-paced course)

Cooperative Extension Service: Bird vetch in Alaska. Self paced online course details the biology, impact, and management of the invasive plant bird vetch as well as decision tools for control and how to report invasive species. Cost: \$15. [Register](#).

Anytime (self-paced course)

Cooperative Extension Service: Orange hawkweed

in Alaska: Self-paced online course details the biology, impact, and management of the invasive plant orange hawkweed and decision tools for control and how to report invasive species. [Registration and more info](#). Cost: \$15.

Anytime (independent self study course)

Cooperative Extension Service: Spruce Beetle in Trees and Forests: Online course details the biology, impact, and management of spruce beetles in Alaska and decision tools for control. [Register](#). Cost: \$15.

MEETINGS & EVENTS

Monday, Jan. 10, 7-9 pm

Alaska Native Plant Society Meeting: "Alaska's berries and their changing seasons." [Get meeting link](#).

Thursday, January 13, 10 am-noon

Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska: Monthly meetings held the 2nd Thursday of each month. [Get details](#).

JOBS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, ETC.

The Alaska Botanical Garden is seeking speaker proposals for its virtual Spring Garden Conference on March 11-12. Do you have an area of expertise you would love to share with the larger gardening community? Send proposals to stacey.shriner@alaskabg.org by January 17. [Get details](#).

AMGA is seeking volunteer instructors for a four-session Olé (Opportunity for Lifelong Education) class in February. The 75-minutes classes begin Feb. 11 at 9 a.m. on the UAA campus. Contact Don at dfbladow@gmail.com if you are interested. You can also be an assistant if you are not interested in leading a class.

The Harvest of Hope Memorial Garden is seeking to fill volunteer roles: a grant writer, blogger, and volunteer coordinator. Also, the first HHMG planting date will be Feb. 5, for leeks and onions. If interested, please contact Don Bladow at (907) 830-5723 or email him at dfbladow@gmail.com.

AMGA has volunteer openings: Newsletter/Website Calendar of Events coordinator; Grants Committee member, and multiple volunteers are needed for the 2023 Conference Committee. [Get info and sign up](#).



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

Voting Membership (\$20)

Non-voting Membership (\$20)

Dual Membership* (\$30)

MG Class Year: _____

MG Class Location: _____

40 volunteer hours complete? Yes No

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 Membership

Non-voting Membership

MG Class Year: _____

MG Class Location: _____

40 volunteer hours complete? Yes No

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

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: _____



Bonus photo: Volunteer Pamela hands a salad box to a client during the St. Francis House food pantry's 2nd annual free plants event held in the last week of May 2021. Photo courtesy Claire Lubke.

AMGA Board of Directors

Emily Becker	President
Troy Weiss	Vice President
Jan van den Top	Treasurer
Nick Riordan	Secretary
Kathleen Kaiser	At Large
Keenan Plate	At Large
Kat Karabelnikoff	At Large
Meg O'Mullane	At Large

Committee Chairs, Program Coordinators & Volunteers

Emily Becker	CES Liason
Steve Brown, Gina Dionne	CES Master Gardener Program Liaison
Vacant	Broadcast Email
Vacant	Calendar of Events
Don Bladow, Troy Weiss, Emily Becker, Fran Pekar, Gina Dionne	Advanced MG Course
Janice Berry	Directory Editor
Kathy Liska, Cindy Walker	Facebook
Troy Weiss	Meetings & Educational Programs
Troy Weiss	Garden Tours
Mary Rydesky, Gina Docherty, Jane Baldwin	Google Group Managers
Jan van den Top, Sheila Toomey	Grants Program
TBD	Hospitality
Alexis St. Juliana	Membership Database
Elizabeth Bluemink	Newsletter Editor
Gina Docherty	Website
Lynne Opstad	Lifetime Achievement
Lynne Opstad, Julie Ginder	Pioneer Home Garden
Emily Becker, Keenan Plate	Volunteer Coordinators

Don't forget to renew!

Use our [online form to renew](#) and [pay online or by mail](#). Or you can return the paper form in this newsletter. Your membership supports AMGA and its mission of gardening education in partnership with the University of Alaska Cooperative Extension Service. We provide continuing education, grants for garden projects, garden tours, and more, all in service to the community.

Next AMGA Meeting via Zoom!

January 17, 2022

"Spruce Beetle — What's New in '22!"

Jessie Moan, CES Anchorage

Check your email, our website or Facebook page for connection instructions.

Member Meetings: 7 pm every 3rd Monday of the month, September through May (except December). Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, AMGA meetings are currently being held online via Zoom. These monthly educational programs are free and open to the public. **Visitors and guests are welcomed and encouraged.**

Board Meetings: 2nd Monday of the month, 6-7 pm, anyone is welcome to observe. Send an email to president@alaskamastergardeners.org for the meeting link.

The Alaska Master Gardeners Anchorage welcomes letters, opinions, articles, ideas and inquiries. Contact the editor at newsletteramga@gmail.com

AMGA, Newsletter

P.O. Box 221403

Anchorage, AK 99522-1403

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 (400-600 words ideal), Bird Chatter, calendar items and announcements are always welcome.

Connect with AMGA

Website: www.alaskamastergardeners.org

Facebook: facebook.com/Alaska-Master-Gardeners-Anchorage

Youtube: www.youtube.com/channel/UCvZehJprKkjQzivQvNDKopQ

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

Mail: 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

