

April 2009

# Homer Garden Club

## Newsletter

### Pest Management and Identification Slated for April 26th with Janice Chumley!!!

#### Special points of in- terest:

- Janice Chumley will help us learn to deal with our pesky pests, Sunday, April 26!
- Plant Sale June 6! Let us know what you think you will be able to contribute!
- *Volunteer, Please!!!*

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Roni Overway

Please join us Sunday, April 26th at the Best Western Bidarka Inn for a presentation on Pest Management and Identification as well as Updates on New Pests here on the Kenai Peninsula. After a brief slide show on this topic, Janice will highlight new publications from the Cooperative Extension Service and she will be open for discussion. At the end of the presentation, Janice is also a hobby beekeeper so if anyone has questions on ordering, raising, and benefits of bees, now is the time to ask!

Janice Chumley is the Integrated Pest Management technician for the UAF Cooperative Extension Service here on the Kenai Peninsula. She is enjoying her NINTH year as Integrated Pest Management Technician. Her interests are in home and garden pests, invasive plants, forest health, plant disease, and commercial crops. She is a master gardener, mushroom hunter and curious visitor to the natural world.



### Plant Sale Information

The Homer Garden Club Plant Sale will be Saturday, June 6, 11am-12:30pm in the parking lot of Homer City Hall.

This is the Garden Club's major money making event of the year. It underwrites the speaker program as well as the newsletter. We hope you have started your seeds and planted some extras for the garden club or plan to divide some perennials. Please let us know what you hope to provide by calling or emailing Pam. The more plants you bring, the more successful the sale will be. We always have plenty of customers!

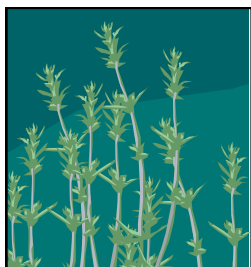
We still need a few more volunteers to help receive, price, and place plants; dig and pot plants before the sale; help with clean-up; and to act as cashiers and parking lot attendants. Please sign up at the next garden club meeting or contact Barb or Pam. Thanks for volunteering!

~ Barb & Pam

Pam Voeller, 299-2721,  
pvoeller@horizensatellite.com  
Barb Kennedy, 235-4347 (after May 3)  
barbara.homer@gmail.com

## Spicing Up Your Ornamental Garden

Brenda Adams President



There's a fun trend afoot in garden design – adding food crops to ornamental gardens. The folks who design and implement all the wonderful, public gardens in Anchorage have done this for some time to great effect. One combination they do that is particularly inspiring uses curly parsley as an edging plant, cardoon as a central focal point and some brightly colored annuals between. (A cardoon is similar to an artichoke, but is more robust and has more pronounced spines.) This is a very simple yet dramatic design, largely due to the strong architectural nature of the cardoon. An artichoke will work as well; at least until you can't resist cutting the central choke from the plant.

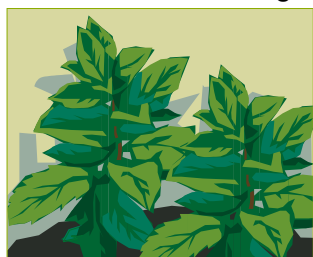
Unfortunately, the first spice that many gardeners have tried using in their ornamental gardens is the yummy and useful chive. Spiky foliage and those cute little purple pompom flowers are quite decorative. Sadly, those nifty flower heads are chock full of seeds that propagate freely, creating years of weeding headaches. If you've had this experience, don't let it dissuade you from trying other, less troublesome herbs. Then, so you don't miss out on all the positive attributes of chives, put them into a pot on the deck where they are easy to manage.

“Many, like sage, rosemary, oregano and marjoram have soft gray-blue foliage which looks great with scarlet, true red, or orange if you want an intense, warm-hued scheme.”

Most of the common cooking herbs are native to the Mediterranean. This makes them ideal for drought tolerant gardens. Many, like sage, rosemary, oregano and marjoram have soft gray-blue foliage which looks great with scarlet, true red or orange if you want an intense, warm-hued scheme. A good, edible, annual for this look is *Nasturtium* which adds large contrasting foliage as well. Gray-blues also combine nicely with white, blue and pink for a restful, quiet vignette. Mixing them with perennial *Dianthus* and *Cerastium tomentosum* (Snow in Summer) can make an effective, patchwork groundcover.

There's no need to limit yourself to herbs, however. Vegetables and greens can also be effective additions. Lettuce, with its wild assortment of foliage colors can easily find a home in your ornamental garden. The deep burgundy of 'Outrageous', a romaine type, is striking with a light green butter lettuce. If you harvest your lettuce by the leaf, rather than cutting or pulling the entire head, you can eat your design without sacrificing it. Alternatively, replace a harvested head with a second succession of lettuce plants started from seed.

Ornamental kale is fabulous as a foliage plant and has found a home in ornamental arrangements for some time. Just as wonderful as an eye-catching addition is cabbage or cauliflower. After you harvest it, fill in the gap with a container full of annuals or a piece of garden art – even a nice rock will do. At the other extreme of the foliage spectrum are dill and fennel. Their lovely, airy foliage can work as filler nearly anywhere. They make attractive partners in container combinations, adding height as well as silky softness.



If you don't want to think about adding a new element to the garden as you harvest your food plants, tuck them around late developing perennials. Here they'll add fullness to the garden in the sparse early part of the summer, then add fullness to your tummy as the garden fills out. (Sorry, couldn't resist that one.)

As always, when you plan your combinations, consider the horticultural requirements of all the plants. Beyond that, let your creativity run wild. Try different food crops to see what works best for you. The really good news is you can eat your mistakes!

If you're willing, please photograph your favorite food/ornamental creations. I think it would be fun if we all bring photos of what worked best to the Harvest Dinner in September. Then we can share ideas, enjoy our successes together and learn from each other.

## Spring Clean Up

Teena Garay Vice President

I am trying to decide if it feels like spring or not. I see more birds at our feeders, in fact a whole flock of juvenile Pine Grosbeaks were here eating a few days ago, and there is a new pair of Varied Thrushes under our big spruce tree.

The ground is going through its spring motions of thawing and heaving, especially the newer beds. I have already been out looking for plants being pushed out of the ground. I gently step on them to settle them back in and I smooth the cracked and split soil. This time of year, I have lost more plants

than I have from the cold of winter. The smaller plants are especially vulnerable and the cold, soggy soil and cool temperatures can be a quick death. It is not too late to put spruce boughs, straw or even just dead foliage from last year's plants over the top of the perennials or exposed soil. Anything to protect them from the cold spring weather will help.

I will be cutting down all my ornamental grasses this week to 1 inch. They really like this shearing and look so much better. I have been scratching some of the ash into to the



Photo by Teena Garay

soil and scraping off the large thick clumps while it's still semi-frozen. I will be cutting down last year's foliage and weeding beds as they thaw. I like to have every bed weeded and cleaned by June. I have high hopes it is going to be a better summer this year.

Cross your fingers.

\* Veggie starts \* herbs \* flower starts \* hanging baskets \*

### Baycrest Greenhouse

Opening May 7th 10:00am

Located on the Sterling Hwy-Baycrest Hill

Tuesday-Sunday 10am-6pm

399-2007



\* artichokes \* tomatoes \* peppers \* squash \* cucumbers

Treasurer's Report      March 2009  
 Peggy Craig

**Income**

Membership	\$195.00
Book	30.00
Newsletter Ad	<u>40.00</u>

**Total Income                    \$265.00**

**Expenses**

Newsletter	\$ 68.71
Meeting	<u>200.33</u>

**Total Expenses                (269.04)**

**Beginning balance 3-1-09      \$7,564.66**

Income                                265.00

Expenses                             (269.04)

**Ending Balance 3-31-09        \$7,560.62**



HOMER GARDEN CLUB  
 OFFICERS

President ~ Brenda Adams @ 235-3763

Vice-President ~ Teena Garay @ 235-2150

Secretary ~ Rachel Roe @ 235-9454

Treasurer ~ Peggy Craig @ 235-0631

Social Chair ~ Roni Overway @ 226-3404

Historian ~ Patrick Church and Barbara  
 Kennedy

Publicity ~ Barbara Landi @ 235-1809

Newsletter ~ Pam Voeller @ 235-8078

and Kim Smith @ 235-6703

**ANCHOR POINT GREENHOUSE**

- ❖ Annuals, perennials, vegetables
- ❖ Fishy Peat & Alaska Earth soil
- ❖ Steer manure, lime, fertilizer
- ❖ Baskets & pots
- ❖ Garden supplies including T-tape and fittings, IRT plastic mulch, floating row cover (Remay)
- ❖ Animal feed & supplies

Rose Avenue in Anchor Point      Open every day 1-6pm until April 27, then 10am-6pm

## Information, Updates and News from Club Members

### Get Your Vitamin D At The Overlook

Mark your calendar for May 16<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 for CLEAN-UP DAY at the Overlook Garden. Bring your favorite weeding tools. We will cancel if ash is falling. Remember, many hands make light work!

The Kenai Peninsula Cooperative Weed Management Area (KP-CWMA) will host the 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Weed Workshop on April 28<sup>th</sup> 2009 at the Rae Building on 3<sup>rd</sup> Street in beautiful downtown Seward (right by the Sealife Center). This yearly event highlights invasive plant species that threaten our wild lands and creatures that depend on them. This year's FREE workshop will highlight a Weed Identification Workshop, Integrated Vegetation Management, White Sweet Clover on Floodplain Habitats, Weed Whackers Educational Curriculum, Weed Free Forage, and much more. There will be speakers from across the state and Utah too! Learn what is happening in Alaska. Come for one presentation or for all, lunch provided. **YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN ALASKA'S INVASIVE PLANT CONTROL EFFORTS!**

Need more information? Call Homer Soil & Water Conservation District at 235-8177 ext. 5. Hope to see you there.

Janice Chumley, Ag/Hort Program

UAF-Cooperative Extension Service, Kenai Peninsula District

43961 K-Beach Rd. Suite A, Soldotna, AK 99669

907-262-5824, [rnjic@uaf.edu](mailto:rnjic@uaf.edu),  
[www.alaskapestmanagement.com](http://www.alaskapestmanagement.com)

### From Rita Jo at Fritz Creek Gardens:

The Cooperative Extension announces a new DVD, "Seed Starting with Mara Bacsujlaky." The DVD covers all aspects of seed starting for the home gardener—from planning and equipment purchase to planting, thinning, and transplanting. Filmed at Mara's home, the DVD takes an informal down-home approach. Jeff Fay produced, directed and edited the 58 minute DVD. Copies will be mailed to districts and additional copies may be ordered through Communications."

Barbara Landi recommends a film called **Greenfingers**, "an uplifting and mostly true story about gardening. It's from 2000 with Clive Owen and Helen Mirren, very British." Barb calls it a "feel good, well made film."

### FROM JANICE CHUMLEY:

Popular Garden author Tracy DiSabato-Aust will be bringing 30 years of experience from across the globe to Alaska for a 3 hour presentation on "The Well Designed Mixed Garden", to be held Friday May 1st from 5-8pm at the Kenai Peninsula College in Soldotna, Room 108.

This presentation includes design concepts, color use, garden art, plants, lessening maintenance, and much more. This is a great opportunity to plan for the coming season. All three of Tracy's books will be available for sale and autographing. The cost of seminar is just \$10.00 at the door. So grab a pal, pen and paper and join us at KPC for an energizing presentation.

Hosted by the Central Peninsula Master Gardeners, Homer Garden Club, Central Peninsula Garden Club, and other generous helpers.

### From Brenda:

Though quite pretty and fragrant, **cocoa mulch** can be **extremely toxic** to pets if ingested. Even if you don't have a pet, please avoid using this mulch as it will attract animals from the area to your garden.

# OCEAN EARTH

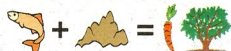
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Jim Van Oss  
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[vanoss@xyz.net](mailto:vanoss@xyz.net)  
48750 East End Rd  
Homer, AK 99603



## Summer Gardener's Weekend Report



**“we can always  
use more  
volunteers to  
help make this  
event run as  
smoothly as  
possible.”**

The Summer Gardener's Weekend Committee met on April 7 to begin organizing mini-committees to handle the tasks associated with planning what has become a major Garden Club event. This year the weekend chosen is that of August 1st and 2nd. We will be hosting Don Engebretson, the “Renegade Gardener”. ([www.renegadegardener.com](http://www.renegadegardener.com)).

As is usually the case, we can *always* use more volunteers to help make this event run as smoothly as possible and to provide our members and visitors with a really fun and inspiring summertime activity. Thank you to those of you who signed up to help during our last regular meeting. We will be sending another sign-up sheet around at the next general meeting, but this time we'll be looking primarily for members who would be willing to act as garden host/hostesses and/or to provide help with refreshments. Hosts/hostesses are those terrific folks who spend 3 hours of our 6 hour tour day, either 11:00 until 2:00 or 2:00 until 5:00, welcoming visitors to the garden, selling tickets if necessary and helping with parking. Horticultural expertise is not required! We are determined this year to have better signage to make *finding* the gardens an easier task.

In the past we've had just one host or hostess at each garden but this year, since we are attracting more gardeners each year, we are hoping to have two; instead of 12, we are looking for 24. We are also determined to make hosting in the rain a more pleasant experience on the off chance that the weather fails to cooperate! Big umbrellas are on our list of must-haves.

Last year the Bear Creek Winery reception offered refreshments essentially provided the committee members, along with some purchased and donated food items. Some members contributed to the refreshment table even though they hadn't been asked to do so.....Hooray for them! The second sheet, then, will be for those of you who would like to help out in this department.

Thanks to all of you who go the extra mile to our Garden Club experience ever richer. If you won't be able to attend the next meeting, but would like to volunteer, please feel free to call Saraphine Bailey at 235-1402 (hosting), Lorna Olson at 234-5107 (Bear Creek Reception) or Roni Overway at 226-3404 (with other questions).

## We have:

- *Remay row cover*
- *Mushroom Kits*
- *Red Wiggler Worms (for compost)*
- *Purple Ninebark*
- *Veggies from Lucky Star Garden*
- *AND Much more ~ Come see us!*

## Opening April 22

*Hanging Baskets and Perennials*

**Cookie's Country**

**GREENHOUSE**

[www.cookiescountrygreenhouse.com](http://www.cookiescountrygreenhouse.com)

**(907) 235-8915**

Ron & Cookie Broste  
2340 East End Road  
Homer, Alaska 99603

## Thank You to Our Business Supporters!!

Michael Bavers	Lucky Star Gardens	Edna Farsdahl
Gardens By Design	Patrick Church	Fritz Creek Gardens
Baycrest Greenhouse	Cookies Country Greenhouse	Ground Control Landscaping
Homer Brewing Company		Alaska Timberframe

## Notes from the Board

The Bylaws require that the Board of Directors publish a resource guide every two years. The purpose of this guide is to distribute membership information and encourage the sharing of our gardening knowledge and wisdom with other members. When you join or renew your membership with the Homer Garden Club, we request information about your gardening experiences. This information is entered in our membership database and only

shared if you indicate your willingness to have your information published.

This June we will again publish the resource guide. We ask that if you would like your membership information updated, please email or call Brenda, Kim or Pam. This resource guide can help and support everyone with their gardening success.

Please start thinking about contributing plants for our Plant Sale, June 6. Think about it with your seed starts and when you divide! This is a great fundraiser for the Club and your contributions to the sale are essential. Please let us know what you might be able to bring and Kim will publicize the plants that will most likely be available in the May Newsletter. Email or call Pam and Barb.

*"Whether you spend the morning gardening or a few minutes searching for four-leaf clovers, find a way to get grubby today. The germs in all kinds of soil trigger your body to produce more immune-boosting white blood cells, says Mary Ruebush, PhD, Author of the new book *Why Dirt is Good*. That means you'll be better able to fight off colds and more serious illnesses down the road." So go ahead and start digging.*

Submitted by Linda Willard from the May copy of Shape Magazine.

### FRITZ CREEK GARDENS HOME OF ALASKA HARDY® PERENNIALS



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# THE HOMER GARDEN CLUB - MEMBERSHIP FORM

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

New or Renewal    Month/Year \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_    \_\_\_BASIC \$10    \_\_\_SUPPORTING \$15    \_\_\_BUSINESS \$25

**Please make check payable to "Homer Garden Club" and mail, along with form, to:**

**Homer Garden Club, PO Box 2833, Homer, AK 99603.**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Resource info:** May we put this information into our *Resource Book* for distribution to members?    \_\_\_OK    \_\_\_Not OK

May we include your Email address in our *Resource Book*?    \_\_\_OK    \_\_\_Not OK

**May we send your Newsletter via Email?**    \_\_\_Yes    \_\_\_No

Gardening skill level (Make a guess):    \_\_\_Master    \_\_\_Advanced    \_\_\_Intermediate    \_\_\_Beginner

# Years Gardening \_\_\_\_\_ # Years Gardening in Homer \_\_\_\_\_ Elevation of your Homer Garden \_\_\_\_\_

Gardening Conditions \_\_\_\_\_

Gardening Specialties \_\_\_\_\_

Gardening Goals \_\_\_\_\_

**How would you like to participate in the Garden Club?**

\_\_\_ Refreshments    \_\_\_ Spring Plant Sale    \_\_\_ Newsletter    \_\_\_ Autumn Harvest Dinner

\_\_\_ Telephone    \_\_\_ Pioneer Avenue Garden    \_\_\_ Baycrest Garden    \_\_\_ Program Committee

\_\_\_ Nominating Committee    \_\_\_ Officer/Board of Directors    Other \_\_\_\_\_

Homer Garden Club

P.O. Box 2833

Homer, Alaska 99603