

# Georgeson Botanical Garden, Letters Seeking Support


<TARGET><BILL></BILL><SUBJECT>Georgeson Botanical Garden,  
Letters Seeking Support</SUBJECT><COMM>HEDT27</COMM></TARGET>

## Kevin Harun

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**From:** mbaldwin@gci.net  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 10, 2011 11:37 AM  
**To:** Kevin Harun  
**Cc:** Rep. Berta Gardner  
**Subject:** RE: Agricultural education grant of \$50,000

*Pat is at UAF  
(907) 474-1944*



Hi Kevin,

I think she would be good -- Pat Holloway was involved in the viability/feasibility research behind the Peony work (which is why the Georgeson is so valuable!).

As a result of that work showing the viability of the market -- an Alaskan Peony Growers Association has formed. I don't believe I personally know any of the people involved in the Peony Growers Association, but I'm sure someone from the organization would be also be glad to help present (and probably have lots of great photos!). Their website (with contact information) is <http://alaskapeonies.org/>

Between the two, I think you would have some great information on an emerging industry!

If I can help track something down, or try to help make connections, please let me know.

Mike  
907-250-7736

On Thu, Mar 10, 2011 at 7:23 AM , Kevin Harun wrote:

> Thanks, Mike. I'll keep you posted on whether we get a presentation  
> before the committee. It is going to be up to the Committee Chair,  
> Bob Herron, to see if it will work. We are now in the last five weeks  
> of session, so I'm not sure on the timing -- but I've checked in with  
> the committee staff and we are looking into it. Would Pat Holloway be  
> the best person to present?

>  
> Kevin

> -----Original Message-----

> From: mbaldwin@gci.net [mailto:mbaldwin@gci.net] Sent: Thursday, March  
> 10, 2011 7:15 AM  
> To: Kevin Harun  
> Cc: Rep. Berta Gardner  
> Subject: RE: Agricultural education grant of \$50,000

> Hi Kevin,

> Thank you very much for the update on the work with Rep Guttenberg and  
> the contact with Chancellor Rogers. I know the budget is a challenging  
> process, from what I've been able to follow. It's also very exciting  
> to hear about the possible testimony on peony cultivation! If you're  
> able to get a presentation set up on peony cultivation, and it's  
> teleconferenced, I'd be interested in listening.

> I (and I'm certain many others!) really appreciate Berta's efforts to  
> help Georgeson BG! I will pass on your update to folks.

> Mike  
> 907-250-7736  
>  
>  
> On Wed, Mar 9, 2011 at 3:06 PM , Kevin Harun wrote:  
>  
>> Hello Michael,  
>>  
>> I work for Rep. Berta Gardner who asked me to look into the Georgeson  
>> BG issue. I wanted to let you know we are working with Fairbanks  
>> Rep. Guttenberg (who sits on the House Finance Committee) to see that  
>> both the \$50,000 in operations and capital funding are included in  
>> the upcoming budget. Also, UAF Chancellor Brian Rogers was down here  
>> recently and pledged to keep Georgeson up and running, saying he  
>> would never let it deteriorate under his watch.  
>> I will also contact Rep. Herron who chairs the Economic Development,  
>> Trade and Tourism Committee on which Rep. Gardner sits, to see if we  
>> can have someone from UAF testify before the committee on the  
>> economic opportunities presented by peony cultivation.  
>>  
>> Thank you for bringing this issue to our attention. Horticulture has  
>> a valuable role to play in diversifying our economy.  
>>  
>> Kevin  
>>  
>> -----Original Message-----  
>> From: mbaldwin@gci.net [mailto:mbaldwin@gci.net] Sent: Saturday,  
>> February 19, 2011 7:41 AM  
>> To: Rep. Berta Gardner  
>> Cc: psholloway@alaska.edu; Kevin Harun  
>> Subject: RE: Agricultural education grant of \$50,000  
>>  
>> Hi Berta - thank you for the suggestion that GBG supporters connect  
>> with Rep Herron; I will pass that on to folks.  
>>  
>> I know Pat will be able to bring you up to speed on the Peonie  
>> market. I don't want to steal Pat's thunder, but if for some reason  
>> you can't connect with her, the Georgeson BG website has a number of  
>> their documents/reports on the Alaskan economic Peonie research.  
>> <http://georgesonbg.org/research/peonies/index.html>  
>>  
>> Again, thank you for your time and consideration on this issue.  
>>  
>> Michael  
>>  
>> Michael Baldwin  
>> 907-250-7736  
>>  
>>  
>> On Fri, Feb 18, 2011 at 10:21 AM , Rep. Berta Gardner wrote:  
>>  
>>> Thanks, Michael, for your follow up and information sharing. I sit  
>>> on Resources, Community & Regional Affairs, and also Economic  
>>> Development Trade & Tourism so I'm intrigued by the peonie reference  
>>> and will call Pat about. I think also that supporters of the  
>>> Georgeson Botanical Garden should try to work with Representative  
>>> Bob Herron. He is very focused on economic development and might be

>>> in a position to take up the mantle on this one.  
>>>  
>>> Berta  
>>>  
>>>  
>>> Representative.Berta.Gardner@legis.state.ak.us  
>>> Alaska State House, District 24 Midtown Anchorage House Democratic  
>>> Whip  
>>> (907) 465-4930  
>>> (800) 331-4930  
>>>  
>>> -----Original Message-----  
>>> From: mbaldwin@gci.net [mailto:mbaldwin@gci.net] Sent: Tuesday,  
>>> February 15, 2011 10:36 PM  
>>> To: Rep. Berta Gardner  
>>> Cc: Noah Hanson; Sen. Johnny Ellis; psholloway@alaska.edu  
>>> Subject: RE: Agricultural education grant of \$50,000  
>>>  
>>> Hi Berta -- thank you for your interest, and response.  
>>>  
>>> After your email I did a little follow-up checking with Pat  
>>> Holloway, the director of the Georgeson Botanical Garden.  
>>> Apparently, unfortunately there is not an increment in Universities  
>>> budget. It would be a shame for Alaska to lose this key resource in  
>>> northern latitude plant science and horticulture as a result of  
>>> short-sightedness. Not only is the GBG a key resource in the state  
>>> for addressing issues related to Alaskan grown food, but it has been  
>>> a key figure in identifying the feasibility and development of a new  
>>> internationally marketable horticulture based economic resource for  
>>> Alaska (ie., Peonie farming). I've copied Pat Holloway on this  
>>> email, should you want to contact her with any specific questions.  
>>>  
>>> I know it will be tough, but I and others, greatly appreciate any  
>>> assistance you and Senator Ellis can provide in protecting this  
>>> valuable Alaskan resource.  
>>>  
>>> I appreciate your support of the Anchorage Botanical Garden also...  
>>>  
>>> If I may help answer any other questions, please let me know.  
>>>  
>>> Michael  
>>>  
>>> 5340 Tudor Top Circle  
>>> Anchorage, AK 99507  
>>> 907-250-7736  
>>>  
>>>  
>>> On Mon, Feb 14, 2011 at 9:14 AM , Rep. Berta Gardner wrote:  
>>>  
>>>> Hi Michael,  
>>>>  
>>>> Thank you for your letter supporting the Georgeson Botanical  
>>>> Garden. Do you know if the University budget request includes this  
>>>> increment? Without such a request and support, it is difficult for  
>>>> legislators to add projects to the budget.  
>>>>  
>>>> In the meantime, I've been working with folks from the Anchorage

>>>> Botanical Garden who are looking for funding to maintain and expand  
>>>> their education and research work.  
>>>> I appreciate your advocacy.  
>>>>  
>>>> Berta  
>>>>  
>>>> Representative.Berta.Gardner@legis.state.ak.us  
>>>> Alaska State House, District 24 Midtown Anchorage House Democratic  
>>>> Whip  
>>>> (907) 465-4930  
>>>> (800) 331-4930  
>>>>  
>>>>  
>>>> -----Original Message-----  
>>>> From: Michael Baldwin [mailto:mbaldwin@gci.net] Sent: Sunday,  
>>>> February 13, 2011 8:06 PM  
>>>> To: Rep. Berta Gardner  
>>>> Subject: Agricultural education grant of \$50,000  
>>>>  
>>>> Rep. Berta Gardner  
>>>> State Capitol, Room 424  
>>>> 120 4th Street  
>>>> Juneau AK 99801-1182  
>>>>  
>>>> Dear Legislator,  
>>>>  
>>>> For the past 3 years state funding has remained flat, costs have  
>>>> escalated and the Georgeson Botanical Garden now faces a shortfall  
>>>> that threatens it's existence.  
>>>> The director has been forced to take 2 summer months off without  
>>>> pay. Another staff member has been forced to take one summer month  
>>>> without pay, leaving only one staff employee to maintain the garden  
>>>> and do desperately needed research in support of Alaska's largest  
>>>> agriculture research station.  
>>>> Because of the budget cuts, the vegetable and flower trials will be  
>>>> discontinued, the annual flower garden will not be planted and  
>>>> there will be no research carried on in the garden this summer.  
>>>>  
>>>> The garden is a valuable resource to the community for its beauty  
>>>> (much enjoyed by tourists), for weddings and community events, and  
>>>> for the necessary research for home gardeners and the horticultural  
>>>> industry.  
>>>> The Georgeson Botanical Garden Society was formed to enhance and  
>>>> supplement the Georgeson Botanical Garden research facility on UAF  
>>>> Campus. Our membership has fundraising events to purchase specific  
>>>> items as needed but does not have the funds to cover the salaries  
>>>> for the summer. This grant would give us the time to restructure  
>>>> and plan for the future of the garden.  
>>>> Many community groups support the garden including volunteers from  
>>>> the Georgeson Botanical Garden membership, the Boy Scouts, local  
>>>> schools, The Herb Bunch, Tanana Valley Master Gardeners, and 4-H.  
>>>> These volunteers spend thousands of hours helping maintain the  
>>>> garden.  
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>>>> Note: this email was sent as part of a petition started on  
>>>> Change.org, viewable at  
>>>> [www.change.org/petitions/georgeson-botanical-garden-research](http://www.change.org/petitions/georgeson-botanical-garden-research). To  
>>>> respond, email [responses@change.org](mailto:responses@change.org) and include a link to this  
>>>> petition.  
>>>>  
>>>> Michael Baldwin  
>>>> 5340 Tudor Top Circle  
>>>> Anchorage, AK 99507