



MAT-SU MASTER GARDENER'S NEWSLETTER

Apr 2017



President's Patch By Rhonda Bowman, President

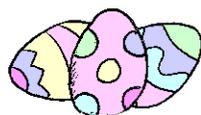
Well, it seems like spring is finally here! And we have lots of planning to do for the upcoming Statewide Master Gardeners' Conference on April 22nd. There has been lots of thinking and pre-planning done already, but so much more to do to prepare for the big event. If you'd like to volunteer, please contact Lois Rockcastle at tundracare@alaska.net or attend our upcoming meeting on April 3rd to request to help.

The Alaska State Fair is being held from August 24th through September 4th this year, and we always look forward to the great turnout of vegetables and flower growers to show off their expertise in the exhibits. Please make sure that you check the fair's website to ensure you submit your entries on time!

Don't forget that our upcoming annual plant sale will be held on June 3rd at the downtown Palmer Pavilion. It is a great opportunity to get your favorite starts and flowers.

I know many of you are so busy with your starts and small plants. I look forward to seeing your successes on Facebook using our group page of Mat-Su Master Gardeners.

Please make sure you attend our next meeting at the MTA conference room on April 3 at 7pm.



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GENERAL MEETINGS

FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

NEXT MEETING

MONDAY, APRIL 3RD, 7:00 P.M.

LOCATION: MATANUSKA TELEPHONE COMPANY (MTA) BUILDING, CONFERENCE ROOM (IN THE BASEMENT), 480 COMMERCIAL DR., PALMER, AK

DO NOT HAVE TO BE A MEMBER TO ATTEND

MEETING AGENDA

- TREASURER REPORT
- MEETING MINUTES
- CONFERENCE CHAIRPERSON UPDATE
- NOMINATING COMMITTEE UPDATE
- OLD BUSINESS
- NEW BUSINESS
- CONFERENCE WORK PARTY

TOPIC/SPEAKER:

THE APRIL MEETING WILL FOCUS ON PREPARING FOR THE UPCOMING 2017 ALASKA STATE MASTER GARDENERS CONFERENCE. PLEASE ATTEND AND HELP GET THE FOLDERS AND GOODIE BAGS READY FOR THE CONFERENCE!

PEASANT'S PERSPECTIVE: BY CURT MUELLER, MASTER GARDENER

Photos by the author

All these days of glorious sunshine might make one think that spring is nigh, although on the morning of the day this is written the thermometer showed -5F. We gardeners are patient people. Spring will get here in its own good time.

The peasant and his good helpmate are well immersed in growing things from seed, like most gardeners at this time of year. Some tried and true techniques are worth mentioning here. A good fine seeding medium will accommodate just about all the seeds we like to start. Redi-Earth has now become Sungro Propagation Mix, but it's still the same stuff. Plastic food wrap such as Saran Wrap is a big help. Bottom heat helps speed germination on many kinds of seeds.

The peasant uses food wrap to cover containers on everything he seeds, to keep the medium moist during germination. Allowing the medium to dry out once the germination process has begun will likely prevent the seed from germination at all. When seeds begin to sprout, the wrap can be turned over daily to get rid of the beads of moisture that form on the underside or left off for a time to allow condensation to evaporate. Bottom heat is good, but too warm a temperature may inhibit germination. Thermometers to monitor soil temperature are a big help.

A favorite spring flower that the peasant likes to share is the pasque flower. It blooms early to provide its lovely color and when the blooms have faded its fluffy seed heads continue to beautify the plant all during summer. If you grow the pasque flower, you'll discover that it likes some space and more aggressive plants encroaching on it will cause it to lose vigor and eventually to die out. Keeping an open area around the plant will allow it to thrive and make it stand out.



Pasque flower seedlings; three in bottom row still coming up.

Propagating this plant from seed has been a specialty of the peasant for years. Seed is collected in fall when it has ripened and is ready to fall off. It is stored in freezer bags with the tails attached. When our short days have begun to lengthen, the seed is planted into small plastic boxes, seeds spaced about a 1/2 inch apart. The tails are used in pushing the seed into the soil, with the top of the seed right at or just below the soil surface. The containers are covered with food wrap, placed in the potato bin [temperature about 40F], and forgotten for a month.

After the stratification process the boxes are placed on medium bottom heat for germination in light. The seeds will germinate over two to three weeks. When they have formed leaves and are actively growing, they are separated and transplanted to three-inch pots.

At this point, gardeners will need to begin exercising their patience. Growing in pots will mean caring for the plants for a couple of years before the plants will form flower buds. The peasant has found that a plant with a flower bud will sell readily or make a nice gift for a fellow gardener.

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2017 Alaska State Master Gardeners Conference

Saturday, April 22, 2017

8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Palmer Community Center
(The Depot)

610 S. Valley Way, Palmer, AK 99645

The Mat-Su Master Gardeners Association is proud to sponsor the 2017 Alaska State Master Gardeners Conference. We have an exciting and full slate of speakers, programs and vendors sure to titillate your gardening senses!

Lunch is included -
a delicious variety of soups and salads
provided by Turkey Red



Speakers

Key Note Speaker: Marion Owen – *Author, Gardener and Photographer*
 Ellen VandeVisse - Mat-Su Borough Solid Waste Division
 Craig Smith - USDA-NRCS
 Karen Ross - The Foundation for Functional Fermented Food
 Rob Brown - Flattop Farm
 Cindee Karns - Alaskan Cold Climate Permaculture Institute
 Jan Newman - Grow Palmer
 Stephen Brown - UAF Cooperative Extension Service

There will be vendors on site selling a variety of items. There are door prizes galore with drawings throughout the conference for these goodies!

Early Bird Registration is \$80 through March 31, 2017. On April 1, 2017, registration is \$100 per person. *Registration is limited to the first 100 people. Cancellation Policy: a full refund will be applied until April 15th.*



Visit the Mat-Su Master Gardeners Association webpage for more conference information and registration details:
www.matsumastergardeners.com
 Contact: matsumastergardeners@gmail.com



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Pasque flowers are a favorite of honey bees.

Pasque flowers are great in a rock garden. They are extremely hardy and like well-drained soil. The outside edge of a bed is a favored place and they fit well there as they are not tall plants. A little elevation enhances their beauty. A winter mulch will be appreciated. Your patience will be well rewarded when the buds begin to show and soon after they begin the bloom period.



Seedheads on pasque flowers in varying stages of formation. Seedheads remain on plant until fall.

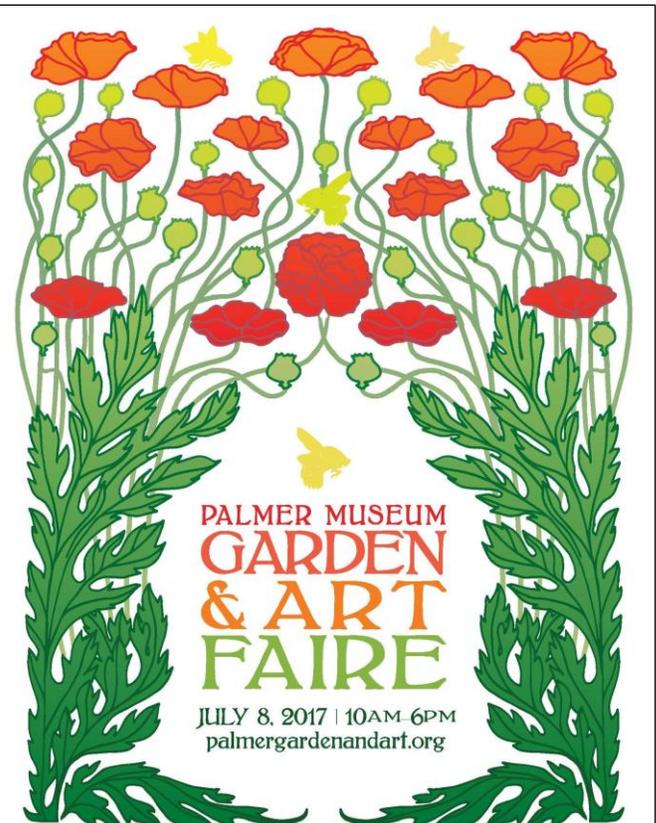
Thank you, patient folks.

CALL TO ALL MEMBERS

Baked Goods Needed

We're asking everyone to please bring some baked goodies (about 2 dozen) to the State Master Gardeners Conference on April 22nd. It would be great if you could use something in your freezers or shelves prepared from last year's harvest, i.e. muffins, some type of cookies or a finger food.

Even if you're not planning on attending, we welcome you to drop your goodies off at the Palmer Train Depot on the morning of the conference, April 22nd - between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. Your support is needed and appreciated!



Mat-Su Master Gardeners Meeting Minutes

The March 6 meeting of the Mat-Su Master Gardeners was called to order by Vice President Curt Mueller at 6:50 PM.

Curt brought up the issue of using Robert's Rules of Order and that a brief summary of the rules was published in the March newsletter.

Cathy Crew gave the Treasurer's report. There were no letters of intent provided by either Heart Reach or Grow Palmer for the grant money they requested. These were both tabled until the organizations submit letters of intent.

The next meeting of the Conference Committee is March 27 at 7:00 PM. The April MMGA meeting will be dedicated to stuffing folders and putting together "goodie" bags for conference participants.

A discussion regarding our beds was held about Matanuska Experiment Farm, Palmer Public Library planter, and the Pioneer Home flowers beds. Someone noted that Rhonda Bowman had already ordered the flowers but it was not known what she ordered. We need Rhonda to bring a list of what was ordered. Someone needs to contact the Pioneer Home and the Matanuska Experiment Farm to find out what the planting dates are. There needs to be a weeding and watering schedule set up for each project so we have participation from all available members. This is a good project for new Master Gardeners who need volunteer hours.

We discussed the plant sale and currently have 1000 yellow plant tags, and 3000 white tags on hand. A motion was submitted by Deb Blaylock to change the membership requirements for the plant sale.

Motion to amend plant sale participation requirements:

Eligibility for participation in the annual Mat-Su Master Gardeners Association (MMGA) plant sale: new and renewing members must have participated in a minimum of three MMGA meetings in the 12 months prior to the plant sale (June through May) OR have volunteered a minimum of 4 hours (documented) at any of the MMGA approved volunteer projects. Documentation would be provided by the volunteer and should include: project name/title, organization point of contact, date, and hours of work performed.

There was much discussion and concern on this issue. Meeting sign-in rosters would provide proof of meeting attendance. Proof of volunteer hours at other events would be provided by the member. There was discussion regarding what makes a member in good standing with the club? Also mentioned was grandfather rights for long standing members.

The motion was tabled and we will discuss more at our April meeting.

A Nominating Committee for board member elections was formed of Joan Redlin, Arlene Bowman, Wayne Bowman, and Dorte Mobley. A meeting needs to be planned.

Submitted by Joan Redlin, Secretary

Annual Spring Garden Show
April 15 @ 10:00 am - 5:00 pm
The Mall at Sears, 600 E Northern
Lights Blvd
Anchorage, AK 99503

Celebrate spring at the annual Garden Show! This event features informative displays and services of local garden experts, as well as businesses that will be on hand to give advice and answer questions. Many of the participants will be selling plants, seeds, gardening supplies and reference books.

Garden Links

Alaska Botanical Garden

<http://www.alaskabg.org/>

Alaska Community Agriculture

<http://www.alaskacommunityag.org/>

Arbor Day Foundation

www.arborday.org

Alaska Natural Heritage Program – Botany

<http://aknhp.uaa.alaska.edu/botany/>

Alaska Garden Clubs

<http://www.alaskagardenclubs.org>

Alaska Grown Source Book (online)

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/sourcebook/sourcebookindex2016.html>

Alaska Master Gardeners Association, Anchorage Chapter

<http://alaskamastergardeners.org/>

Alaska Master Gardener Blog

<https://alaskamastergardener.community.uaf.edu/>

Alaska Native Plant Society

<http://www.aknps.org/>

Alaska Orchid Society

<http://www.akorchid.org/>

Alaska Peony Growers Association

<http://alaskapeonies.org>

Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association

<http://www.apfga.org/>

Alaska Plant Materials Center

<http://plants.alaska.gov/>

Alaska Rhodiola Products Cooperative

<http://www.alaskarhodiolaproducts.com/>

Alaska Rock Garden Society

<http://www.akrockgardensociety.org/>

Eat Local Alaska

<http://akfood.weebly.com/index.html>

Good Earth Garden School

<http://ellenvandevisse.com/>

Grow Palmer

<http://growpalmer.org/>



Integrated Pest Management Program

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/ipm/>

Junior Master Gardeners

<http://www.jmgkids.us/>

Landscape Plants for Alaska

www.alaskaplants.org

Mat-Su Borough Rain Garden Program

<http://www.matsugov.us/environment/raingardens>

Mat-Su Master Gardener Website

www.matsumastergardeners.org

Master Gardener Research Link

<http://search.extension.org>

Master Gardeners of the Tanana Valley

<https://fairbanksmastergardeners.wordpress.com/>

Palmer Soil & Water Conservation

<http://palmersoilandwater.org/>

South-Central Alaska Beekeepers Assoc.

<http://www.sababeekeepers.com/>

Southeast Alaska Master Gardeners Association

<http://seak-mastergardeners.org/index.html>

Sustainable Agriculture – UAF

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/ah/sare/>

UAF Cooperative Extension Service, Palmer

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/districts/matsu/>

UAF Cooperative Extension Service Publications

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/pubs/catalog/>

UAF Georgeson Botanical Garden

<http://www.georgesonbg.org/>

UAF CES Citizen Pest Monitoring Portal

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/ipm/cmp/>

UAF School of Natural Resources

<http://www.uaf.edu/snre/>

University of Saskatchewan Fruit Program

www.fruit.usask.ca

USDA/NRCS Plant Data Base

<http://plants.usda.gov/java/>

Wasilla Soil & Water Conservation

<http://www.wasillaswcd.org/>

Announcements

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Need volunteer hours? The Association has committees which need members and/or committee chairs. Some require very little time – just a bit of coordinating on your part. If you're interested, send an email to matsumastergardeners@gmail.com or rbowman@gci.net

Thank you!!

Committee Chairs/Members Needed

Summer Garden Tours
Summer Weeding/Watering Schedule
Speakers for Meetings
Christmas Party

CLUB CONTACT INFO

President:	Rhonda Bowman	746-2948
Co-VP	Curt Mueller	745-6144
Co-VP	Hally Truelove	376-0909
Secretary:	Joan Redlin	206-604-4676
Treasurer:	Cathy Crew	632-4401
Member at Large:	Marge Mueller	745-6144

If you have gardening news, photos or information you'd like to share in the newsletter, please contact: Deb Blaylock at her email: kdblalock@ak.net

Website: www.matsumastergardeners.com/
Email: matsumastergardeners@gmail.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL 2017

- Apr 3**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, 2017 Conference Preparation - All hands on deck!
April 15, Anchorage, Annual Spring Garden Show (The Mall at Sears)
Apr 22, Palmer, Alaska State Master Gardener Conference

MAY 2017 AND BEYOND

- May 1**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD
May 2, Agriculture Day in Alaska
Jun 3, Palmer, Annual Plant Sale
Jun 5, Palmer, Palmer Library Planter Planting
Jul 10, Palmer, MMG Mtg TBD
Jul 8, Palmer, Palmer Museum Garden and Art Faire, <http://palmergardenandart.org/>
Aug 7, Palmer, MMG Mtg TBD
Aug 24 - Sep 4, Palmer, Alaska State Fair, <http://www.alaskastatefair.org/site/>
Sep 11, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD
Oct 2, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD
Nov 6, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD
Dec 4, Palmer, MMG Mtg, Annual Christmas Party

Please let Rhonda know if you have any ideas for future meeting topics. Members are welcome to offer to speak or reach out to speakers of interest to the club's membership. The club would welcome a speaker coordinator - if interested contact Rhonda. Our club is only as good as we the members make it!

Club Membership

The membership year runs from January to December each year. Annual individual memberships are \$10 and family memberships are \$12. Family memberships are only for family members living in the same household
Join or renew online

Thank you

How and What to Submit for the Monthly Newsletter

Your submissions are greatly appreciated and make our newsletter what it is - so don't be shy about submitting items for publication. However, there are a few rules which we all must pay attention to:

Articles, stories, poetry, upcoming events, and pictures (garden-related) are gladly accepted for inclusion in the newsletter. Please submit pictures in JPEG format and other items in Word format with no special formatting other than paragraphs. When submitting pictures, please provide a brief caption or explanation as to who or what is in the picture. I do not have a scanner to copy pictures so I cannot accept hard copies.

If you are not the author or photographer, please ensure you have permission of the author or photographer to use their material in the newsletter. The newsletter publisher is not responsible for obtaining this for you.

Please do not provide magazine articles or pictures from the internet unless they are public domain items.

Deadline for submission of articles and info: 20th day of each month -- Thank you--



April 2017



Like us on
Facebook

Website: www.matsumastergardeners.com/
Email: matsumastergardeners@gmail.com

**MAT-SU MASTER GARDENERS
ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 585
PALMER, AK 99645**

