

MAT-SU MASTER GARDENER'S NEWSLETTER

April 2016



President's Patch

By Rhonda Bowman, President

Well according to the calendar we are officially in Spring! It is the beginning of starting seeds and for those eager folks it is time to get those starter plants into pots.

I always get carried away when I get those seed catalogs and order too many items. I know that there is limited space but it is easy to get excited and overplant. I think they make the photos so appealing to draw you in! The local nurseries have been advertising their hanging baskets for summer to tempt you but I already have my begonia bulbs ready to go into my hanging baskets. Still, I love to go look at the flowers and get some ideas for my own flowerbeds.

I know there are folks that have already gotten a jump on burning their lawn before we had our spring snow storm. It is a great time of year to get the yards cleaned up and get those perennials cut back that you were letting go to seed. There is so much preparation to do before you can actually start gardening.

Our Annual Plant Sale will be held on June 4th in the downtown Palmer Pavilion. We always have a great variety of flowers, vegetables and herbs for sale. It is a popular event that keeps us hopping all day!

The next meeting will be held at MTA in the basement conference rooms on April 4th at 7 p.m. See you there.



Photo courtesy Rhonda Bowman

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CHAPTER MEETINGS FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

NEXT MEETING

MONDAY, APRIL 4TH, 7:00 PM

LOCATION: MATANUSKA TELEPHONE
COMPANY (MTA) BUILDING, CONFERENCE
ROOM (IN THE BASEMENT), PALMER, AK
DO NOT HAVE TO BE A MEMBER TO ATTEND

MEETING AGENDA

- TREASURER REPORT
- MINUTES
- OLD BUSINESS
- NEW BUSINESS

TOPIC/SPEAKER:

PALMER PIONEER HOME GARDEN BEDS PROJECT
DISCUSSION ON HOW TO PROCEED WITH THE GARDEN
BEDS AT THE PIONEER HOME. CURT MUELLER AND A
FEW OTHERS HAVE A COMMITTEE FORMED TO REPAIR
THE BEDS. A COMMITTEE HEAD AND MEMBERS ARE
NEEDED TO DETERMINE HOW AND WHAT TO PLANT IN
THE BEDS, PROCURE PLANTS AND MATERIAL TO FILL
THE BEDS.

PEASANT'S PERSPECTIVE: BY CURT MUELLER, MASTER GARDENER

Photos by the author

It's the first day of spring and the snow is coming down as this is written. Surely this snow will benefit all things waiting to grow. The peasant responds with joy as he cranks up the snow blower.

Growing starts from seed has been the modus operandi for the peasant as it has for many of our club members. It offers a wide choice of varieties to be grown and flexibility in choosing seeding and transplanting time, not to mention the satisfaction and enjoyment of seeing the seeds sprout and develop.

The peasant would like to make some suggestions that have worked well, and may have some applications for others.

Starting cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels and the like around April 10 has been an optimal planting date. They are started in 32s which gives them some extra root room. The plants will be of the right size when transplanted to the garden, minimizing wind damage that can occur with larger plants. Brussels will still have enough time to mature in the fall as well. We do start a few plants of short maturity cabbage about March 25. A variety that performs well for this is Parel, with a maturity date of less than 50 days. Three or four plants will make tasty heads when you're craving fresh produce from your garden.

Marge and the peasant make a batch of sauerkraut every summer and for that we grow midseason cabbage that makes firm large heads. Late cabbage is grown for storage or contribution to the Pioneer Home. Cauliflower is available in early and later varieties, lengthening the season on that crop. Broccoli will continue to produce satellite shoots as long as you keep them picked.

Winter squash and cucumber varieties are started at mid-April and grown as greenhouse crops. There are some cucumber varieties that do not require pollination that do very well in the greenhouse. If listed as parthenocarpic they do not require pollination. Gynoecious means they produce only female flowers.

We have on occasion started some peas in three inch pots in the latter part of April to get an early crop. These are transplanted to the garden when the soil is ready for planting. It's worth a try.

Thanks folks.



How about a little color?

Annual Spring Garden Show

Saturday, April 9, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Join us for our annual Spring Garden Show at the Mall! Plant, seed and book sales, informational displays, and more!

The Mall at Sears
600 East Northern Lights Blvd., Anchorage,
AK 99503

MAT-SU MASTER GARDENER 3/7/16 MEETING MINUTES

Attendance: 16 members, 1 guest

FFA Scholarship Fund

A discussion regarding FFA scholarship funds and how much to deposit this year was held. \$1000. was allocated last year with two FFA members each receiving \$500. Steve Brown, Extension Agent, reported that many more FFA members joined this year. It was decided to table this discussion and invite Kevin Fochs to attend our next meeting.

Plant Sale Tags

White plant sale tags will identify plants and lilac tags will have the cost and grower's initials. We don't want to deal with change this year so make your prices reflect even \$1. amounts (2 for \$1. Etc.)

Field Trips

One planned so far: Spring Creek Farm

Pioneer Farm

Pioneer Farm will sell flats of flowers and vegetables to us for \$17. Lowes will give materials for discount to repair the beds. Kurt will measure the beds and make a list of what is needed.

Five Flights and Two Days to Inuvik, Dr. Steve Brown

Steve recently visited Inuvik and reported that with global warming the people could only harvest 20 ducks this fall where usually they would harvest 200 for the winter. The caribou has become scarcer. Their government is encouraging community greenhouses. They have an 18,500 sq. ft. greenhouse where community members grow food. The Permafrost is melting so community members are looking for new ways for food preservation such as canning.

Submitted by Club Secretary, Joan Redlin

GROWING FIREWEED

By Curt Mueller

These are two fireweed plants that the peasant is growing. The seed is from a white flowering plant that Pat Tremaine has growing in her yard. Her plant has spread out to form a shrub-like format and is truly a striking sight when in bloom. Pat has graciously provided the peasant with seed from this source. The peasant seeded in mid-January in hopes of getting some flowers the same year so as to determine which plants would produce white flowers and which would produce the mundane pink ones.

By studying photos on the internet of both color phases of the plant, the peasant has come to the conclusion that the color of the flowers to be can be pre-determined by looking at the leaves and stem of the developing plants. Notice the reddish color at the base of the leaves on the plant at right. This plant will probably produce pink flowers. The one on the left does not have this coloring and is also not quite as vigorously growing. Aha!



The peasant has 96 of these plants growing in four inch pots. So far only three are showing the reddish color. The pink phase we see must certainly be a dominant trait, and if a white flower is pollinated from a pink flowering plant there will probably be few if any white flowering plants among the progeny. From what the peasant has determined, if a white flowering plant self-pollinates or is pollinated by another with white flowers it should produce white flowering progeny. Some flowers on the same plant could be pollinated with one color phase and some with the other. It will be interesting to see what develops. Continued on page 4



Cook Inlet 2016 Spring Tree Seedling Sale Chapter of the Society of American Foresters

We are happy to announce the kick off our annual tree seedling sale. We are taking orders now for five types of seedlings:

- **Lodgepole pine**
- **Siberian larch**
- **Colorado blue spruce**
- **Paper birch**
- **White Spruce**

These species have been selected for the climate in south central Alaska and typically perform very well here. Seedling price is the same as last year at \$25 per bundle of 20 seedlings.

Please use the form included in the links below to pay for and reserve your seedlings for pickup on Saturday, May 14, 2016. (starting at 9am) at Sportsman's Warehouse in Wasilla.

Our order form can be downloaded from the link below (copy and paste the string into your web browser if the link isn't active):

http://www.forestry.org/media/docs/ak/2016_Alaska_Seedling_Form.pdf

Our order form and more information including species availability is posted on our web page:

<http://www.forestry.org/alaska/treesale/>

Please feel free to contact us with any questions by contacting me at: reburnsi@gci.net

Sincerely, Roger Burnside, Tree Seedling Sale Coordinator

Continued from page 3

Incidentally, the roots you see at the top of the pots in the photo are because the soil from last year's tomato crop is reused for this and other purposes, with new soil being used for this year's tomatoes. This is done to prevent any carryover of soil borne diseases of tomatoes. The fireweed seems to thrive in second hand soil.

STARTING SWEET PEAS

By Curt Mueller

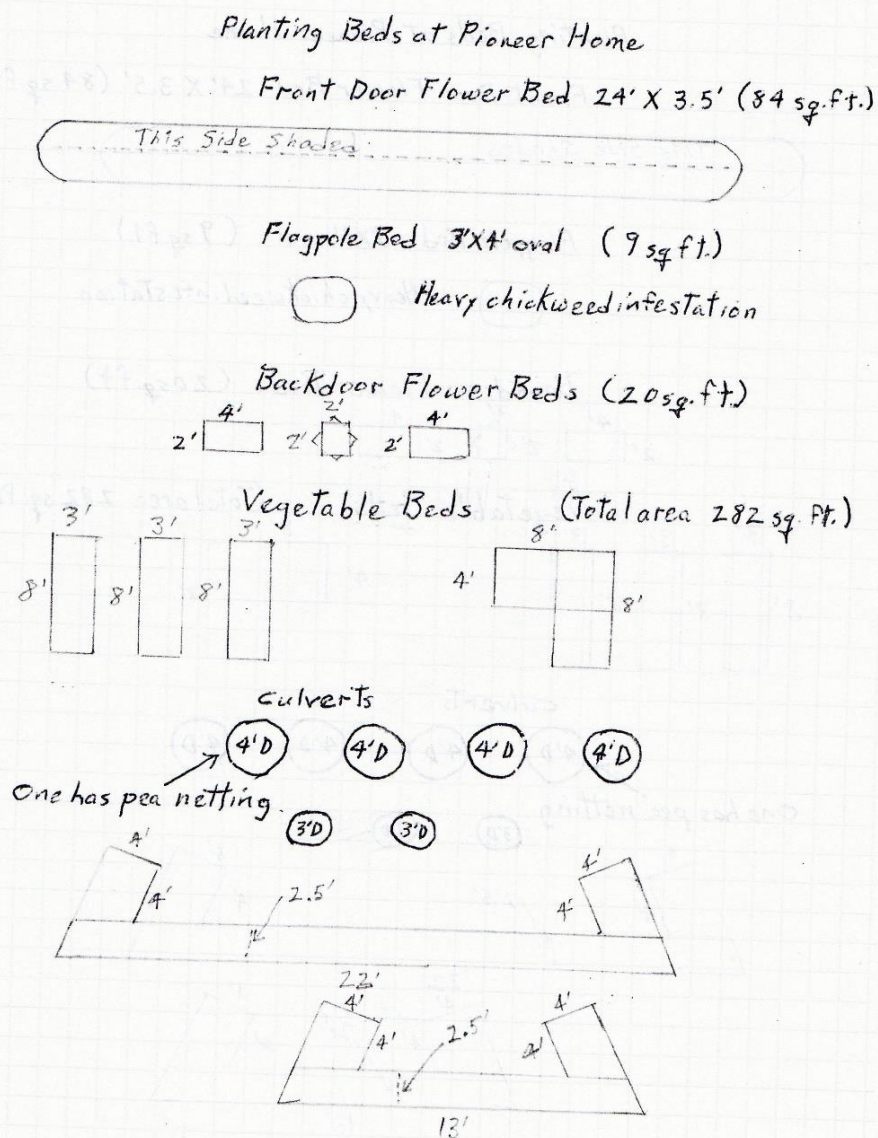
Germinating sweet peas is not always completely successful. This seed was Royal Family mixed, a climber that will easily reach six feet, purchased from Stokes. Seed was soaked for about a day before seeding. These were seeded on March 10 and placed on 75F bottom heat and covered with newspaper to provide darkness. The photo was taken on March 19. A reliable seed source is a factor, and soaking, mild bottom heat, and darkness are beneficial. Chipping the seed is tedious and doesn't seem to help a lot. Germination here was well over 90%. Some stragglers may still appear.



Plants will be staked using small wood stakes ripped out of scrap lumber and the tops of the plants will be pinched off to encourage branching. They should bloom from Mid-July until a very hard frost shuts them down. A mild frost does not affect flowering. The beautiful colors and fragrance of the blossoms make this a favorite.

PIONEER HOME GARDEN BEDS PROJECT

Plans and considerations submitted by Curt Mueller



Some things to consider concerning the planting beds at the Pioneer Home:

- An employee at the home says the residents are excited about our plans to do the planting. Yay!
- The bed at the front door faces due north and will get early morning and evening sun. The side next to the door is in the shade from the sign for the home and will do best with shade tolerant plants.
- The bed by the flagpole is heavily infested with chickweed and will require some remedial action. Evidently it was not planted in 2015.
- The backdoor flower beds are in full sun.
- The soil in the vegetable beds is well below the top of the sides. It was suggested to use six bales of Pro-Mix or equivalent to raise the soil level.
- One of the culverts was used for peas and has netting for peas to climb on.

- Material to repair the two largest vegetable beds was priced at Spenard Builders' Supply at \$107.02. This reflects a discount from regular retail price of \$116.62 by using Curt's account to make the purchase.

One thing Curt did not mention is, a Committee and chairperson is needed to coordinate the planting. Without that, this project will not get out of the planning phase.



Alaska Master Gardeners Conference 2016

Grow Your Own

from the soil up

April 16, 2016
UAA Lucy Cuddy Center



8:00- 9:00 a.m.	UAA Lucy Cuddy Hall- Registration	
9:00- 9:15 a.m.	Welcome Annie Nevaldine, Mistress of Ceremonies	
9:15- 10:00 a.m.	<i>"The Rejuvenated Garden & Restored Gardener"</i> Marianne Binetti - Keynote Speaker	
10:00- 10:20 a.m.	Break- Visit the Garden Market & Silent Auction	
	Lucy Cuddy Hall	Rasmuson Hall
Session 1 10:30- 11:15 a.m.	<i>"New Twists in Cooking from the Garden"</i> Paul Marmora	<i>"Organic Fertilizers: Getting Closer to the Science"</i> Julie Riley
	Lucy Cuddy Hall	Rasmuson Hall
Session 2 11:25-12:10 p.m.	<i>"Designing a Haven for Birds, Bees and Other Pollinators"</i> Brenda Adams	<i>"Plant Propagation Techniques and Seed Storage"</i> Pat Holloway
Lunch 12:20-1:10 p.m.	Lunch & Garden Photo Presentation	
	Lucy Cuddy Hall	Rasmuson Hall
Session 3 1:20- 2:05 p.m.	<i>"Primroses: from Seed to Sale to the Garden"</i> Ed Buyarski	<i>"Urban Food, Growing More in Small or Unusual Gardens"</i> Dohnn Wood
2:05- 2:35 p.m.	Break- Visit the Garden Market, Silent Auction closes	
	Lucy Cuddy Hall	Rasmuson Hall
Session 4 2:35- 3:10 p.m.	<i>"Growing Haskap Berries in Your Back Yard"</i> Brian Olson	<i>"Lessons Learned on Eating from the Garden Year Round: It Begins with the Soil"</i> Dennis & Annie Ronsse
3:20- 3:40 p.m.	Lifetime Achievement Award Harry Deuber, AMGA President	
3:40- 4:25 p.m.	<i>"The Lazy Gardener"</i> Marianne Binetti	
4:25-4:45 p.m.	Closing Remarks Door Prizes	
5:00- 6:30 p.m.	Reception in Lucy Cuddy Hall ~ Network with the Presenters	

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/index.htm>

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.akrockgardenociety.org/>

Eat Local Alaska

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

Good Earth Garden School

<http://ellenvandevisse.com/>

Integrated Pest Management Program

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

Junior Master Gardeners

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

Landscape Plants for Alaska

www.alaskaplants.org

Local Alaskan Plants Clearinghouse

<http://www.localplants.org/Home>

Mat-Su Borough Rain Garden Program

<http://www.matsugov.us/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 ***New***

<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

The club is desperately in need of someone to coordinate speakers for our meetings.

We have many volunteer opportunities coming up this year.

We could use a volunteer coordinator to help track volunteer opportunities and schedules.

Please let Rhonda know if you're interested in any of these jobs. Thanks!

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 @Email: kdblalock@ak.net

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

APRIL 2016

April - National Gardening Month

Apr 4 Palmer, MMG Mtg, Discussion/planning of Palmer Pioneer Home garden beds.

Apr 9, Anchorage, Mall at Sears Spring Garden Show, <http://mallatsears.com>

Apr 16, Anchorage, State Alaska Master Gardener Conference, Grow Your Own, from the soil up.

http://www.alaskamastergardeners.org/AMGA_Conference.html

April 22, Earth Day

MAY 2016 AND BEYOND

May 2, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD

May 16, Alaska Arbor Day

Jun 4, Palmer, Annual Plant Sale

Jun 6, Palmer, Palmer Library Planter Planting

Jul 11, Palmer, Spring Creek Farm Tour

Aug 1, TBD, MMG Mtg, TBD

Aug 25 - Sep 5, Palmer, Alaska State Fair

Sep 12, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD

Oct 3, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD

Nov 7, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD

Dec 5, Palmer, MMG Mtg, 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.

Membership forms are available to download on the club's website, www.matsumastergardeners.com

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--



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April 2016



Like us on
Facebook

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

**MAT-SU MASTER GARDENERS
ASSOCIATION
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