



Apr 2015



## President's Patch

By Rhonda Bowman, President

I was wandering through the local hardware store the other day and sowing seeds must be on everyone's radar. I started checking out what items can be used to start your seeds and people are very clever using a variety of items they already have in their homes. The most familiar one is the toilet paper rolls as well as egg cartons. Also used are old food and detergent containers, disposable coffee cups, milk and juice jugs, plastic salad bar containers, drink cartons and single serving and large yogurt containers. Of course lots of folks use the seed starting flats you get at the store and reuse them every year.

There is plenty of advice on the web to help you get a healthy start to your seed sowing. You can also get information at your Cooperative Extension Service office.

I recently attended the Statewide Master Gardeners' Conference in Fairbanks and was greeted by a snowstorm when I arrived. There was a lot of enthusiasm and the speakers were great. Various topics were covered such as plant hardiness, growing garlic, crop protection, planning a bed before you plant and design planting, growing microgreens and plant/insect interactions. The attendees were friendly and we shared a lot of experiences during the day.

It should be an exciting season to get our flowers and vegetables going. Don't forget to attend the Train Depot on Mondays for vegetables, breads, teas and other handcrafted items. Hope your Easter is a happy one.

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### CHAPTER MEETINGS

FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

NEXT MEETING

MONDAY, APRIL 6TH, 7:00 PM

LOCATION: MTA CONFERENCE ROOM

480 COMMERCIAL DR., PALMER, AK

DO NOT HAVE TO BE A MEMBER TO ATTEND

### MEETING AGENDA

- TREASURER REPORT
- MINUTES
- OLD BUSINESS
- NEW BUSINESS

TOPIC/SPEAKER:

**WINONA BENSON, COOPERATIVE EXTENSION NUTRITION EDUCATOR AND MASTER GARDENER IN TRAINING**

**WINONA WILL SPEAK ON THE GROW PALMER INITIATIVE AND WHAT'S GOING ON WITH THE PROGRAM THIS YEAR. SHE'S COORDINATING VOLUNTEERS AS PART OF HER INTERNSHIP.**

## PEASANTS PERSPECTIVE

By Curt Mueller, Master Gardener

This is being written on March 20th, which in 2015 is referred to by some as the first day of spring. To be on the safe side, the peasant will refer to it as the vernal equinox. After all, we true Alaskans know it ain't really spring until the dandelions bloom, and even that might not hold true. Nonetheless, it is a time for joy in knowing that we're back on the plus side for day length.

Last week's run of subzero temperatures surely drove the frost deeper where there was no snow cover, which was virtually everywhere. We hope that won't delay our gardening. It should put a good dent in the slug population since their eggs are in the frozen zone where the soil is exposed. The eggs will remain viable in areas that have a lot of leaf cover such as woodlands and roadside ditches where the weeds and grass provide sufficient cover to keep the soil from freezing deeply. They will find our gardens, but it may take longer.

Doubtless by now we've all started something to be transplanted to our gardens when the time comes. Many of our vegetables will be direct seeded when the soil warms. There are some that are frequently pre-started that will do as well and often better if direct seeded, unless earliness is a priority. What comes to mind are dill, chard, and kohlrabi. The peasant has experimented with pre-starting some of the pea crop in three-inch pots. It will speed the first harvest, but does require some extra work. Beets may be transplanted, but again, it is questionable whether it is worth the extra effort required.-

The peasant encloses a photo to brighten the newsletter and remind us that real spring will happen in its own good time.

Thanks folks.



### TOOLS FOR GARDEN PLANNING

Many gardeners rely upon the knowledge they store in the heads to plan their gardens. Others are diligent about recording information in a journal or some other written method. In this day of electronic technology, there are many online sources to help. Here are links to a few which look worthwhile and somewhat accurate for our particular zone.

#### The Old Farmers Almanac

<http://www.almanac.com/gardening/planting-dates/AK/Palmer>

#### Mother Earth News

<http://www.motherearthnews.com/garden-planner/vegetable-garden-planner.aspx>

#### Territorial Seed Company

<http://gardenplanner.territorialseed.com/>

#### Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds

<http://www.rareseeds.com/resources/planting-guide/>

#### Organic Gardening

<http://www.organicgardening.com/learn-and-grow/seed-starting-chart>

#### Fedco Seeds

[https://www.fedcoseeds.com/seeds/veggie\\_chart.htm](https://www.fedcoseeds.com/seeds/veggie_chart.htm)

## Minutes of the Mat-Su Master Gardeners

March 2, 2015  
Not available at time of  
publishing.

### Grow Palmer Update

Hello Master Gardeners!

I am writing to you to let you know of a great way to get in your volunteer hours! As per your commitment to the Master Gardeners series, you signed on to complete 40 hours of volunteer time in the community. (Remember, if you complete your hours, you get a partial reimbursement from your initial financial payment)

I am currently working with the "Grow Palmer" organization here in the Valley. Grow Palmer is a local group of volunteers dedicated to planting edible gardens throughout Palmer for everyone to share. One of the missions of this group is to promote Alaskan grown vegetables and support Alaska farmers. If this sounds like something you would like to support and get in some valuable volunteer hours, here are some more details:

April 20, 27, and May 4th Working at the Palmer Depot Farm Market at the Grow Palmer table. The table will be set up from 10 or 11 (?) am until 7 pm. You can work a couple hours or all day! At the table you will be directing people to sign up sheets for volunteer opportunities and informing people about who Grow Palmer is. All information will be at the table so no former knowledge is necessary.

May - August : Planting, watering, and weeding throughout the gardens, beds can all be logged volunteer time.

Master Gardener Plot: If there are enough of us we can have our own plot in one of the beds

behind the Salvation Army in downtown Palmer. A plaque will be put in the bed and our handy work will be shown as the vegetables grow! Regular tending and care will be needed for this so we have a plot worth bragging about!

August - September - volunteer at the Fair in the 4-H building as a Master Gardener - answering gardening questions. Not sure you have all the answers? Bring your book!

Please let me know if you like to earn your volunteer hours through this opportunity..

Hope to see you soon! Have A Wonderful Day!

Winona Benson

Nutrition Educator: Family Nutrition Program

UAF Cooperative Extension Service

Mat-Su/Copper River District

wjbenson@alaska.edu

907-745-3423

### BASIC SOIL FERTILITY: ORGANIC AMENDMENTS FOR POWERHOUSE SOIL

Saturday April 4, 2015, Butte area of Palmer, 4pm - 7pm, \$35

- Build powerhouse soil
- Learn the organic fertilizers
- Grow nutrient-dense fruits, vegetables, grains, pastures
- Boost your crop health, vitality, and disease-resistance
- Put all the parts of the program together: crop rotation, inter-cropping, organic amendments, soil tests & labs, green manures, cover crops, composts, organic matter, vermi-compost, and soil food webs.

Good Earth Garden School with Ellen Vande Visse is hosting this class. There are several ways to register. You can register online at <http://goodearthgardenschool.com/>, email Ellen at [information@goodearthgardenschool.com](mailto:information@goodearthgardenschool.com) or call her at 745 0758.

## Garden Links

### Alaska Botanical Garden

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

### Alaska Community Agriculture

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

### Arbor Day Foundation

[www.arborday.org](http://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

<http://alaskamastergardener.blogspot.com/>

### 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 Assoc..

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

### Alaska Plant Materials Center

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

### Alaska Rock Garden Society

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

### Cooperative Extension Service, Palmer

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

### 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](http://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](http://www.matsumastergardeners.org)

### Master Gardener Research Link

<http://search.extension.org>

### Master Gardeners of the Tanana Valley \*\*UPDATED\*\*

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

### Palmer Soil & Water Conservation

<http://palmersoilandwater.org/>

### South-Central Alaska Beekeepers Assoc.

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

### Southeast Alaska Master Gardeners

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

### Sustainable Agriculture – UAF

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

### 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/>

### University of Saskatchewan Fruit Program

[www.fruit.usask.ca](http://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

Know of an upcoming event or organization which needs our help? Let a board member know!

### BOARD MEMBER OPENING

The position of Club Secretary is still open. The job involves taking minutes at meetings and attending board meetings. If you are interested, please contact Rhonda Bowman for further details and information.

### 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](http://www.matsumastergardeners.com)

*thank you*

## CLUB CONTACT INFO

<b>President:</b>	<b>Rhonda Bowman</b>	<b>746-2948</b>
<b>Co-VP</b>	<b>Curt Mueller</b>	<b>745-6144</b>
<b>Co-VP</b>	<b>Hally Truelove</b>	<b>376-0909</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Vacant</b>	
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Cathy Crew</b>	<b>632-4401</b>
<b>Member at Large:</b>	<b>Marge Mueller</b>	<b>745-6144</b>

If you have gardening news, photos or information you'd like to share in the newsletter, please contact: Deb Blaylock @Email: [kdblalock@ak.net](mailto:kdblalock@ak.net)

Website: [www.matsumastergardeners.com/](http://www.matsumastergardeners.com/)  
Email: [matsumastergardeners@gmail.com](mailto:matsumastergardeners@gmail.com)

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### MARCH 2015

- Apr 4**, 10 am – 5 pm, Anchorage, Spring Garden Show, Mall at Sears  
**Apr 6**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, Grow Palmer initiative.  
**Apr 10-11**, Anchorage, Alaska Botanical Garden's Spring Conference,  
<http://alaskabg.org/>  
**Apr 13-15, & 17**, Palmer, Pesticide Applicator Training, [www.uaf.edu/ces/matsu](http://www.uaf.edu/ces/matsu)  
**Apr 18**, 1-3 p.m., Palmer, Birch Tapping Class, [www.uaf.edu/ces/matsu](http://www.uaf.edu/ces/matsu)

#### MAY 2015 AND BEYOND

- May 4**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD  
**May 7**, Palmer, Annual Plant Sale (tentative)  
**Jun 3**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, Palmer Library Planting  
**June 22-24**, Anchorage, Alaskan Plants as Food and Medicine Symposium,  
<http://www.alaskanplants.org/>  
**Jul 6**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD  
**Jul 11**, Palmer, Midsummer Garden and Art Faire, <http://www.palmergardenandart.org/>  
**Aug 3**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD  
**Aug 27 – Sep 7**, Palmer, Alaska State Fair  
**Sep 14**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD  
**Oct 5**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD  
**Nov 2**, Palmer, MMG Mtg, TBD  
**Dec 7**, Palmer, Annual Christmas Dinner

## 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 editor 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:**  
**20<sup>th</sup> day of each month -- Thank you--**



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April 2015



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**Facebook**

Website: [www.matsumastergardeners.com/](http://www.matsumastergardeners.com/)  
Email: [matsumastergardeners@gmail.com](mailto:matsumastergardeners@gmail.com)

**MAT-SU MASTER GARDENER'S CLUB**  
**PO BOX 585**  
**PALMER, AK 99645**

