



Aug 2017



President's Patch By Rhonda Bowman, President

While you are busy gardening this summer make sure that you remember that we have beds that could use some care at the Matanuska Experiment Farm, Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home and the Palmer Library. If you are in the neighborhood just stop by and pull a few weeds and clean up any petals that have fallen off in the wind. It is a big help during the summer. Also, it seems like the vegetables are going gangbusters from the folks at the Grow Palmer beds and if you don't have any vegetables you can harvest some from their beds. It is always nice to weed while you are in there checking it out.

We are grateful for the City of Palmer maintenance folks who have been watering the flowers all over town and at the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home. There are also some volunteers from the IBEW helping at the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home and I'd like to let them know how much we appreciate their efforts. I know the residents love their yard all trimmed up and landscaped. I got waves from the windows when I was over there pulling weeds. It certainly reflects well on our community when folks get off the bus at the Visitor Center and look around at nice landscaping.

Once again, I am going to remind folks that the local food banks are feeding children this summer and could use extra food either produce or shelf-stable items. You can also contribute to the food pantries at your local church because

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GENERAL MEETINGS FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

NEXT MEETING
MEMBERS ONLY
MONDAY, AUG 7, 3:00 P.M.

MEETING AGENDA

THE AUGUST MEETING IS A TOUR OF SEVERAL MEMBER GARDENS. TO ATTEND, YOU MUST BE A CURRENT MEMBER OF THE MAT-SU MASTER GARDENERS ASSOCIATION. DIRECTIONS WILL BE SEND OUT TO CURRENT MEMBERS IN A SEPARATE E-MAIL.

they are also vital in the community efforts to feed folks.

Our next meeting will be August 7th and will be a local tour of members' gardens. The time and location specifics will follow by e-mail.

PEASANT'S PERSPECTIVE: BY CURT MUELLER, MASTER GARDENER

Photos by the author

It is typical among the garden peasantry to search for new cultivars and new cultivation methods to enhance vegetable production or to improve the aesthetic value of the surroundings. It is also typical to want to share newly found knowledge with peers. This peasant is no exception, and he continues to search and to learn from others to improve prospects in Alaska gardening. So be it.

Several years ago, a neighbor asked us to start some tomato plants for her; these she wanted to grow outdoors. She had been informed by another friend that the variety does well outdoors. Indeed, this is often the way information gets passed along. Yes, we would start the plants for her, and keep one to trial for ourselves. The neighbor grew hers in a sheltered sunny spot and we grew one on our south-facing front deck. All did well and produced abundant ripe tomatoes of a medium size and good flavor. The variety, Polar Baby, proved its worth and continued to do so in subsequent years. A medium-sized bushy plant, it is also determinate.

The peasant thought it would be interesting to make a comparison to a couple of other tomato varieties that have been grown outdoors. These are Altai Sasha, a determinate, and Stupice, indeterminate. Wayne Bowman had given me three seeds of the Altai Sasha and the Stupice was purchased from Denali Seed Company. The Polar Baby seed was from Tomato Growers Supply Company. It is worthy of note that determinate varieties, although they produce all their fruit and then shut down, will bear over a period of several weeks, especially in an outdoor environment.

The seeds of all three varieties were planted on March 11th under lights and with bottom heat, grown in the greenhouse until May 1st, then moved to our

hardening-off table. They were protected from a couple of late frosts in May and moved to our front deck on June 1st. The photos accompanying this article were taken on July 17th.



These are the tomato plants as mentioned in the newsletter article. Polar Baby is on the left, Altai Sasha in center, and Stupice on right.

Polar Baby, the plant on the left and the smallest of the three, has already had some fruit picked from it. Its small size makes it easier to grow if one has limited room and facilities. Don't we all?

Altai Sasha, in the center, has green fruit and will need more time to produce ripe ones.

Stupice, on the left, could have used some pruning and will probably need to be staked. It does have some developing fruit that will take several weeks to ripen. If it had been pruned, that may have speeded up ripening, but all three plants were given the same treatment in the trial.

The photos tell the rest. A warmer spring and summer might have produced somewhat different results, speeding up the ripening process for all three varieties. Pruning the very vigorous Stupice would certainly be of help. The peasant grew a couple of Stupice plants in the greenhouse and they have been bearing ripe fruit for some time, and they certainly grow fast in the greenhouse environment. Continued on page 3.

ALASKA AGRICULTURE APPRECIATION

Day at the Farm

Thursdays, Aug. 3, 12-5 p.m.

Matanuska Experiment Farm
1509 S. Georgeson Drive, Palmer

- Agriculture presentations
- Extension cooking demonstrations
- Kids' activities
- Hay wagon rides
- Farm equipment displays
- Vendors, exhibits & lots MORE!

Save the Date!

For more information, contact Theresa Isaac at 907-746-9450.
www.uaf.edu/snr • 877-520-5211
UAF is an AA/EEO employer and educational institution.



Introduction to Mushrooms of the Mat-Su Region

Field & Laboratory, Macro & Micro Mushroom Identification
with Dr. Gary A. Laursen, mycologist

August 11-13, 2017

\$100 for entire course — \$20 for Friday night lecture only
MUST REGISTER BY AUGUST 4!

If you want to collect, identify, prepare and/or preserve wild edible mushrooms, this course is for you. You will gain a wealth of information on wild and/or edible mushrooms in Southcentral Alaska.

Friday, Aug. 11	6-9 p.m.
Saturday, Aug. 12	9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sunday, Aug. 13	9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Class begins at 208 Kerttula Hall, 1509 S. Georgeson Drive, Palmer

- Become proficient in identifying, describing, labeling and preserving wild fungi.
- Learn basic fungal taxonomy.
- Learn about host specificities and ecology.
- Understand the impact of mycological determinations in economic, environmental and societal contexts.
- Gain knowledge of contemporary mycological issues.

To register, go to <http://bit.ly/cesworkshops> or call 907-745-3360.

For more information:

Julie Cascio, Extension Faculty, Health, Home & Family Development
907-745-3677 • jmcascio@alaska.edu
Cooperative Extension Service • Mat-Su/Copper River District
1509 S. Georgeson Drive • Palmer, Alaska 99645



Continued from page 2.



This close-up shows some of the fruit being produced on the Polar Baby plant. There is more, including some ripe ones on the backside of the plant.

A modest experiment, to be sure. One may draw one's own conclusions. Thanks, folks.



Photo courtesy Eva Cohnen-Brown
Master Gardeners Curt Mueller and Michael Kircher, clearing out the flower bed at the entrance to the Alaska Veterans and Pioneers Home - one of our many summer projects.

ALASKA PLANT MATERIAL CENTER TOUR RECAP

BY KEN BLAYLOCK, MASTER GARDENER, PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR

The Alaska Plant Materials Center, here in Palmer, hosted our Master Gardener's club for a tour of their facility in June. Robert (Rob) Carter, Managing Agronomist, provided a slide show presentation and exchanged questions and answers with us. Arthur Keyes, Director of Alaska Division of Agriculture, joined us for the slide show and Q&A. We discussed soil conservation, road construction, local farmers, the latest pathogens, invasive plants, and other subjects before the walking tour.



Established in 1972, the 405-acre Plant Materials Center has functioned to promote the state's agricultural industry. Grains, grasses, fruits, potatoes, shrubs, and trees are evaluated for the potential use in Alaska climates. Small quantities of these plant materials are released to Alaskan commercial growers who then increase the production of these materials and make them available for food, ornamental, and conservation purposes.

Our tour took us from an office building conference room, through raised beds of varieties of plants, into a laboratory. The Plant Pathology Laboratory tests for pathogens. They document new and common hazards to plants, then share the information and recommendations for solutions.

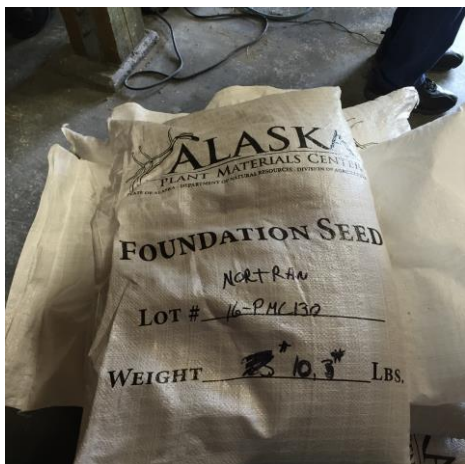
We also saw the catalogs of collected and identified seeds, used for comparison and confirmation of unidentified seeds sent to the facility. The Seed Production Program certifies plants and seeds to ensure purity and viability for growing in Alaska, and then ensures an adequate supply of these seeds are available for growers.



We toured the seed cleaning facility, where bulk desired seeds have foreign seeds and debris removed. These desired seeds are then stored for future distribution, or returned to the owners if they were dropped off for cleaning by local growers.



On the tour, we were privy to seeing part of the facilities' storage area where they maintain a seed bank for desired plants. These seeds can be used in cases of future events where food plants are destroyed or killed off by pathogens or other disasters.



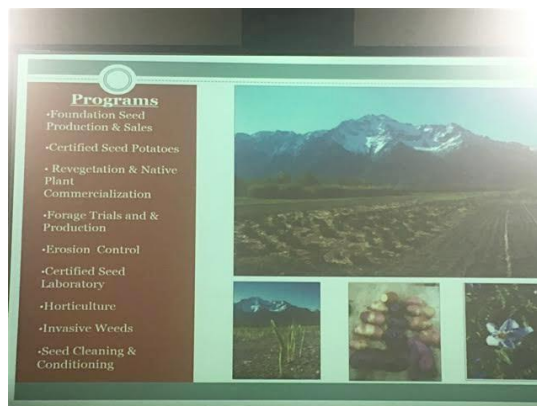
Our final visit was to the potato culture grow room. Numerous potato seedlings were kept in vials, under grow lights, and in a temperature-controlled environment. These potatoes are pathogen-free, and are the base from which the generation zero potatoes are grown each year to supply seed potato growers throughout the state each year.



For more information on what the PMC does for Alaska agriculture, visit:

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

More Photos from the Plant Material Center Tour from Eva Cohnen-Brown, Master Gardener.



A slide showing the PMC's programs



A view of the plant propagation room



Rob Carter, explaining some of the aspects of the potato program and why potatoes are grown in the "test tube" (and no, they are not GMO)

Volunteer at the June Tull 4-H Building Alaska State Fair

Need volunteer hours to complete the required 40 volunteer hours to finish your requirements to become an Alaska Master Gardener? There are a few vacant time slots to fill. Volunteer to help at the June Tull 4-H building during the Alaska State Fair, August 24th thru September 4th. Shifts are 3 hours and 15 minutes long.

Each volunteer receives an entry ticket and parking pass for the day they volunteer. Please call the Mat-Su Cooperative Extension Service office with any questions you may have - 745-3360. Here is the link to the online sign-up sheet:

<https://tinyurl.com/junetullbuilding>

The link shows which shifts are available to volunteers.

Thank you for volunteering!

Looking for Volunteers ... Be a part of the largest garden exhibit in Alaska!

Entry and judging days in the Alaska State Fair's Crops Department is a fun environment to meet new people, catch up with old friends, and a great opportunity to learn something new and/or share your own gardening experiences. You may also earn credits for those required Master Gardener volunteer hours!

Entry Clerks - help exhibitors fill out entry forms correctly, help the entrant in the preparation of their entries for judging by showing how to follow the guidelines of the Exhibitor Guide, and placement in display area.

Wednesdays, August 23 & August 30. Three shifts available - 12-5 PM, 3-8 PM and 5-9 PM

Judges Clerks - record winning results, set up and place ribbons for the final display.

Thursdays, August 24 & August 31- 8 AM - Noon

I'm also looking for a few people to help with take down and ribbon sorting on **Tuesdays, August 22 from 4-7 PM & September 5, from 9 AM - Noon.**

Join the Fun ... "Better Together" ... Volunteers make it happen!

For more information contact Kathy Liska at (907) 337-2196 or akliska@aol.com

2017 ALASKA MASTER GARDENER CLASS - ANCHORAGE AND MAT-SU AREA

The online registration for the Anchorage and Palmer Master Gardener classes is now online at:
<http://tinyurl.com/ybfh5y2c>.

The Anchorage Master Gardener class will take place on Mondays and Wednesdays, 3-6 pm, beginning September 11th and ending mid-October. The class is located at the UAF Cooperative Extension Service Outreach Center, 1840 Bragaw St., Suite 100, Anchorage.

The Palmer Master Gardener class will take place on Tuesdays, 6-9 pm beginning September 12th and ending late November. The class is located at the UAF Matanuska Experiment Farm, 1509 S. Georgeson Rd., Room 208, Palmer.

Registration cost is \$300 and covers all course materials including the textbook "Alaska Sustainable Gardening Handbook." \$150 will be refunded if the 40 hours of community service is completed within 1 year of the start of the course.

Registering as soon as possible is highly recommended as the courses fill very quickly. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact Stephen Brown by phone at: 907-745-3639 or e-mail at: scbrown4@alaska.edu.

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? There are vacant dates and times on the summer project weeding schedules.

To view the schedules, go to

<http://www.matsumastergardeners.com/weeding-schedules.html> . To sign up for a vacancy, send an email to

matsumastergardeners@gmail.com

Thank you!!

Don't forget to check the weeding schedules and make sure you do your part to keep our summer projects weeded and in tip top shape!

CLUB CONTACT INFO

President:	Rhonda Bowman	746-2948
Co-VP	Curt Mueller	745-6144
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: kdblaylock@ak.net

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

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

AUGUST 2017

Aug 3, Palmer, Alaska Agriculture Appreciation Day at the Farm.

Aug 7, Palmer, MMGA Garden Tour

Aug 11-13, Palmer, Mushrooms of the Mat-Su Region, <http://bit.ly/2uDrXog>

Aug 24 - Sep 4, Palmer, Alaska State Fair, <http://www.alaskastatefair.org/site/>

SEPTEMBER 2017 AND BEYOND

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

We would like to do a garden tour of member's gardens for our August meeting. If you would like to volunteer to have your yard or garden on the tour please email: matsumastergardeners@gmail.com.

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~~



August 2017



Like us on
Facebook

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

**MAT-SU MASTER GARDENERS
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