



## President's Patch

By President Deb Blaylock

We're a bit shy of being in the official "winter" season with winter solstice occurring on December 21<sup>st</sup> – however, I think temperature-wise, we're definitely in a good ole Alaskan winter. This has been one of the earliest and coldest we've had for a few years.

Hopefully, you were all able to finish your winter garden preparation before the deep freeze set in. I've seen a few folks posting about the late arrival of fall bulbs which didn't arrive before the ground froze solid. Perhaps planting in pots and trying to force them for some early spring or late winter color would be something to try? I made a late order on some garlic I wanted to try and it did not arrive in time before my bed was frozen fairly deep. Not wanting to make the effort with the axe, I ran an extension cord out to the bed and put two of my seed starting heat mats over the area and then threw an old blanket on top. The bed thawed nicely and was steaming in the frosty 20-degree air while I added my fertilizer and planted the garlic two days later.

I want to thank all the members who contributed to our holiday recipes found on pages 3 to 6 of this month's newsletter. Many of these are favorites from our annual Christmas Party. I'm looking forward to Cathy's delicious ham sauce, Arlene's butterscotch delight and Marge's red cabbage casserole. There are quite a few other offerings which will need to be tried! The rum balls, pecan pie, Frikadelle and quiche look promising, as do the roasted vegetables from Eva's recipe! All I can say is YUM!

We have two members who are due recognition this month. Gregory Kalal finishes up his two years as the Association's Vice President. He donated his time despite being very busy with his seed potato business. He was particularly busy this year because of all the renewed interest in growing vegetables. Thank you for your time and efforts!

The second member is Marge Mueller. I can't remember a time when either Curt or Marge haven't been on the Board of Directors or one of the

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#### GENERAL MEETINGS

FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

NEXT GENERAL MEETING

MONDAY, JAN 4TH, 2020, 7 P.M.

SPEAKER & LOCATION:

TO BE DETERMINED

committees for the Association. Marge is always the first to raise her hand to volunteer and cheerfully help out. If only we could clone her! Her most recent board position was as the Member-at-Large and I'm not sure how many years she filled that position. Next time you see Marge, please let her know how much she is appreciated. Thank you, Marge!

Stay tuned for information on our future meetings as our committee coordinates future speakers. Merry Christmas and Happy Hanukkah!

## PEASANT'S PERSPECTIVE: BY CURT MUELLER, MASTER GARDENER

Photo submitted by the author

The colorful seed catalogs should soon appear to whet our enthusiasm and appetites for a new gardening season. These are welcome harbingers of a new growing season to come; may they always grace our reading material. Whether we order online or by postal service they are invariably interesting and useful. New varieties of plants that do well for us are sometimes replaced by still others, requiring new trials on our part. Then there are always the heirloom types, many of which continue to do well. Growing this great variety is all part of the learning process.

Marge and the peasant have been growing red currants and black currants for a number of years. They are very well adapted to the area growing conditions and produce well every year with a minimum of care. They do best with some support of the bushes which also makes picking them easier. The red currants suffer damage from sawfly larvae some years; the black ones seem immune to that problem. Part of our property is well wooded and there are native red currants which add to the harvest, but the real bearers are the domestic variety.

Black currants will try to spread if not held in check. Our way to prevent them from taking over new territory is by using a two foot fence of large netting. The fence serves to hold them upright and a mower is used to discourage new shoots outside the fence, as they spread from the roots. Branches that grow through the netting can be trimmed manually. Our area for the black currants is naturally wet and behind them is a field of seven-foot-high ferns. The currants bear prolifically even in a hot dry summer, and no additional water is required. Frequent watering in a drier area would be necessary in order to produce a good crop.

These berries grow in clusters, making them easy to pick. They make tart and

delicious jellies, and the peasant is now producing a batch of wine from the black currants. The peasant is a novice at winemaking, and it is a learning experience, but so far it seems to be going OK.

One thing that needs to be mentioned is that black currants have an aroma that some people find disagreeable. The odor comes mostly from the leaves. The peasant finds the flavor of the berries to be good and enjoys eating some right from the plants. The large clusters somewhat resemble grapes.

Our climate, which is usually cool and moist during the growing season, is great for growing berries of several kinds, so I hope you all take advantage of this to produce some very tasty foods.

May you all stay well and enjoy looking toward a new season and a return to more normal times.

Thanks, folks.



**A nice crop of red currants ripe for picking.**

## Roasted Brussels Sprouts, Cinnamon Butternut Squash, Pecans, and Cranberries

(from the Fairfield House) submitted by Eva Cohnen-Brown

This easy Thanksgiving side dish is not only delicious and bursting with Fall and Holiday flavors (cinnamon, maple syrup), it's also healthy, gluten free, vegetarian, and packed with fiber! (Note from Eva: this takes some time to prepare, so I usually double the recipe.)

### Ingredients

#### *Roasted Brussels Sprouts:*

3 cups Brussels sprouts, ends trimmed, yellow leaves removed  
3 tablespoons olive oil  
Salt, to taste

#### *Roasted Butternut Squash:*

1 and ½ pound butternut squash, peeled, seeded, and cubed into 1-inch cubes (Yields about 4 cups of uncooked cubed butternut squash)  
2 tablespoons olive oil  
3 tablespoons maple syrup  
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

#### *Other Ingredients:*

2 cups pecan halves  
1 cup dried cranberries  
2-4 tablespoons maple syrup (optional)

### Instructions

#### *Roasted Brussels sprouts:*

Preheat oven to 400 F. Preheat oven to 400 F. Lightly grease the foil-lined baking sheet with 1 tablespoon of olive oil.

Make sure Brussels sprouts have trimmed ends and yellow leaves are removed. Then, slice all Brussels sprouts in half. In a medium bowl, combine halved Brussels sprouts, 2 tablespoons of olive oil, salt (to taste), and toss to combine. Place onto a foil-lined baking sheet, cut side down, and roast in the oven at 400 F for about 20-25 minutes. During the last 5-10 minutes of roasting, turn them over for even browning, the cut sides should be nicely and partially charred but not blackened.

#### *Roasted butternut squash:*

Preheat oven to 400 F. Lightly grease the foil-lined baking sheet with 1 tablespoon of olive oil.

In a medium bowl, combine cubed butternut squash (peeled and seeded), 1 tablespoon of olive oil, maple syrup, and cinnamon, and toss to mix.

Place butternut squash in a single layer on the baking sheet. Bake for 20-25 minutes, turning once half-way through baking, until softened.

\_Note: You can roast both Brussels sprouts and butternut squash on 2 separate baking sheets at the same time, on the same rack in the oven – that's what I did.

#### *Assembly:*

In a large bowl, combine roasted Brussels sprouts, roasted butternut squash, pecans, and cranberries, and mix to combine. (OPTIONAL): For more sweetness, add 2 or 4 tablespoons of maple syrup, if desired – do not add all maple syrup at once, start with 2 tablespoons, then add more, if desired, and toss with the salad ingredients to combine.

**Mom's Rum Balls****Jill Parson**

- 3 C vanilla wafer crumbs (one 12 oz box, now an 11 oz box)
- 1 C powdered sugar
- 1 1/2 C finely chopped pecans (can substitute walnuts if preferred)
- 1 1/2 T powdered cocoa
- 2 T corn syrup (white or dark)
- 1/2 C rum or bourbon (I usually add a bit more!)
- Extra powdered sugar for rolling finished balls in.

Combine all ingredients thoroughly and form/roll into small balls. Roll into powdered sugar. Store in refrigerator. Can make ahead and freeze. Thaw, roll in fresh powdered sugar, and they are ready to serve.

(I used the food processor to chop/grate the pecans and the wafers, for very fine, even crumbs, easy to roll into balls.)

To add pecans on the top if you want, put a drop of corn syrup on the top of a ball, press a half piece of pecan onto the syrup and rum ball. The corn syrup seems to hold the pecan in place. (I don't do this because the pecans still fall off.)

I use latex gloves when I'm rolling the rum balls - hands don't get all gummy.

Enjoy. Jill

**“FRIKADELLE”****FRIED DANISH PORK MEATBALLS****Dorte Mobley**

- 2 lbs. ground pork
- 1 large onion, shredded (or blended w. the milk if your kids don't think they like onion)
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1-2 eggs
- 3/4 cup flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper

Mix all ingredients thoroughly, shape as balls and fry in margarine on frying pan.

**CRUSTLESS QUICHE****Linda Myers-Steele**Ingredients for base:

- 6-8 eggs (depends on size)
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup cheese grated (cheddar, swiss, or mozzarella)
- 2 Tbs. parmesan cheese (optional)
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 1 cup optional ingredients (see below)

Options – use 1 cup or a combination to equal 1 cup

- Cubed ham or crumbled bacon
- Chopped broccoli
- Chopped tomatoes
- Sliced onions or green onions
- Chopped spinach
- Chopped asparagus
- Cooked cubed potato

Instructions

1. Spray pie dish with cooking spray (PAM, or similar)
2. Preheat oven to 350 degrees
3. Whisk together the milk, eggs, cheese, salt & pepper
4. Stir in additional ingredients
5. Pour the egg mixture into a pie dish, and bake uncovered for about 45 minutes, or until the center is set and not jiggly.

Tastes good re-heated in microwave also.



### Butterscotch Delight from Arlene Bowman

- ½ C cold butter
- 1 C flour
- 1 C finely chopped walnuts
- 1 (8 oz) cream cheese
- 1 C confectioners' sugar
- 1 (8 oz) Cool Whip divided
- 3 1/3 C cold milk
- 2 (3 ½ oz) instant butterscotch pudding
- ½ C coarse chopped walnuts

Cut butter into flour, stir in fine walnuts. Press into greased 9"x13" pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes or until golden brown. Cool.

Beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Fold in 1 cup Cool Whip. Spread over cooled crust. Beat milk and pudding for 2 minutes or until thickened. Spread over cream cheese layer. Spread with remaining Cool Whip and sprinkle with coarse chopped walnuts. Chill until set.

### Corn Pudding submitted by Deb Blaylock

Corn Pudding (also called Corn Spoonbread or Corn Casserole) - this is a southern staple at any holiday table. Part cornbread and part creamed corn, this southern delicacy is a simple (but delicious!) must make this fall.

prep time: 10 MINUTES; cook time: 45 MINUTES

#### Ingredients

- 1/2 cup butter melted
- 2 eggs
- 8 1/2 ounce box cornbread mix
- 1 can Del Monte Whole Kernel Corn, drained
- 1 can Del Monte Sweet Corn, Cream Style
- 1 cup sour cream
- 2 teaspoons sugar

#### Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a 9x9 baking dish with nonstick cooking spray.
2. Whisk together all of the ingredients until a lumpy batter forms. Pour batter into the prepared baking dish.
3. Bake for 45-50 minutes until golden brown on top and pulling away from the edges.
4. Let cool for 5-10 minutes before serving with a spoon.

### Red Cabbage Casserole Marge Mueller

#### Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon melted shortening
- 8 cups shredded red cabbage
- 1 medium onion chopped
- 1/2 cup vinegar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 to 2 medium apples chopped
- 1/4 cup red currant jelly

In large pot melt shortening. Add the cabbage, onion, vinegar, sugar and salt. Mix well. Cover and simmer 15 minutes. Add apples and cook 10 to 15 minutes longer, covered. Add currant jelly and mix well. 8 to 10 servings. Freezes very well.

### Ham Sauce Recipe Cathy Crew

- 1 jar currant jelly
- Horseradish sauce (store bought in a jar) to taste.

Blend well in blender or food processor. I pour it all back in the current jelly jar - keeps a long time in refrigerator.

This is not a very directed recipe, but everyone is different as to how spicy they like it. My boys like it really hot but I don't so they'll take some on the side and doctor it up!

## Pecan Buttermilk Pie

Chris Wood 

### Ingredients

- 1 cup pecan halves
- 1/4 cup firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1/4 cup dark corn syrup
- 8 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 pie crust, 9-inch

### Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line a jelly-roll pan with aluminum foil, and lightly grease the foil.
2. Stir the pecan halves, light brown sugar, and dark corn syrup together in a small bowl. Spread the mixture out on the jelly-roll pan, and bake, stirring every 4 minutes, for 12 to 15 minutes, or until the glaze thickens.
3. Remove the pan from the oven and spread the pecans in a single layer on wax paper. Let the pecans cool completely, separating them with a spoon as they cool.
4. Lower the oven to 325 degrees F.
5. Combine all the remaining ingredients in a mixing bowl and pour the mixture into the unbaked pie shell. Scatter the chopped glazed pecans evenly on top of the pie filling.
6. Bake for 50 minutes to 1 hour, or until set. Let the pie cool on a wire rack before serving at room temperature.

## Red Cake

Deb Blaylock

- 1/2 cup Crisco
- 1 and 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup red food coloring (about 1 of the bottle of red food coloring)
- 2 Tablespoons cocoa
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 and 1/4 cup sifted flour
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 teaspoon soda
- 1 teaspoon vinegar

Cream Crisco, sugar, and eggs together in a mixing bowl. Make a paste of cocoa and food coloring and add to the creamed mixture. Mix the salt and flour together in a separate container. Add flour and salt and buttermilk (alternating small amounts) to the creamed mixture, mixing in well each time. Add vanilla. Last, add soda and vinegar separately.

Bake for 325 degrees 30 minutes or until toothpick comes out clean. Use a 9x13 or 2 9-inch round cake pans.

Frost with cooked flour frosting when cake is completely cool.

### Old Fashioned Cooked Flour Frosting

- 6 level tablespoons flour
- 1 cup milk

Cook the above until very thick and smooth. Cool completely.

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup butter or oleo (butter works better)

Beat the above until light and fluffy. Put the two mixtures together and beat until light and fluffy. Add 1/2 teaspoon vanilla and 1/2 teaspoon almond extract or 1 teaspoon vanilla. Spread on the cooled cake.

**Mat Su Master Gardeners Meeting  
November 2, 2020 Minutes**

Present were Deb and Ken Blaylock, Dorte Mobley, Cathy Crew, Kristina Tornqvist, Marge and Curt Mueller, Sue Glenn, Ellen VandeVisse, Craig Lisonbee, Lydia Wood, Greg Kalal, Eva Brown, and Isaac Vaughan

Deb Blaylock, President, called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

Cathy Crew gave the Treasurer's Report and answered questions from members. We have \$4,147.95 in the checking account and \$7,751.45 in the savings account.

Deb Blaylock motioned to delay the voting on the 2021 budget until January. Motion was seconded by Sue Glenn and unanimously approved.

Minutes were in the newsletter. No corrections were to be made. Minutes approved.

Kristina made a motion to suspend the dues for next year for current members but still ask for the membership dues for new members. Motion was seconded by Cathy. A discussion was had on whether we will have to change the standing orders if we do that. A vote was taken on the topic. The members voted evenly 6 for and 6 against with one member not voting. With the even results, Kristina informed us that in that situation the President will be the tiebreaker. Deb voted no so the motion failed.

Nobody else volunteered to be on the Board. Ken motioned and Sue seconded it that we approve the slate of officers that was presented. Following members were elected:

President: Deb Blaylock

Vice President: Kristina Tornqvist

Treasurer: Cathy Crew

Secretary: Dorte Mobley

Member-at-Large: Sue Glenn

We got members to sign up for several of the committees. We still need someone to lead the following committees: State Fair parade, Nominating, Christmas party. We also need more people to help with the plant sale.

Deb has informed Steve Brown that we will not put on a conference in 2021 but that we will do it in spring of 2022. We will need members to step up and help with that. We will need to put money in the budget for the conference.

2021 meeting dates are in the newsletter and on the web site. We will probably not be able to meet at the Experiment Farm for a while due to COVID. We will do Zoom meetings instead if possible.

Ken motioned to accept the standing rules as written in the newsletter. It was seconded by Cathy and motion carried.

Meeting was adjourned and was followed by a presentation on rhubarbs by Jeff Smeenk.

Note: Dr. Smeenk talked about the USDA, Agriculture Research Service branch which was formerly located in Palmer, Alaska at the Matanuska Experiment Farm. It was closed several years ago and the plant germplasm for the Rheum species (Rhubarb) was moved out of state. Here's a link to the National Clonal Germplasm Repository: Corvallis, Oregon:

<https://www.ars.usda.gov/pacific-west-area/corvallis-or/national-clonal-germplasm-repository/>.

## Garden Links (updated Nov 2019)

**Alaska Botanical Garden**  
<http://www.alaskabg.org/>

**Alaska Center for Conservation Science**  
<http://aknhp.uaa.alaska.edu/botany/>

**Arbor Day Foundation**  
[www.arborday.org](http://www.arborday.org)

**Alaska Division of Agriculture**  
<http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/>

**Alaska Farm to School**  
<https://www.farmtoschoolalaska.org/>

**Alaska Garden Clubs**  
<http://www.alaskagardenclubs.org>

**Alaska Grown**  
<http://www.buyalaskagrown.com/>

**Alaska Grown Source Book (online)**  
<http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/sourcebook/sourcebookindex2016.html>

**Alaska Master Gardeners Association, Anchorage**  
<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 Peony Society**  
<https://alaskapeonysociety.wixsite.com/alaskapeonysociety>

**Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association**  
<http://www.apfga.org/>

**Alaska Plant Materials Center**  
<http://plants.alaska.gov/>

**Alaska Rhodiola**  
<https://www.akroseroot.com/>

**Alaska Rock Garden Society**  
<http://www.akrockgardensociety.org/>

**Good Earth Garden School**  
<http://ellenvandevisse.com/>

**Grow Palmer**  
<http://growpalmer.org/>

**Integrated Pest Management Program**  
<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/ipm/>

**Junior Master Gardener**  
<http://www.jmgkids.us/>

**Landscape Plants for Alaska**  
[www.alaskaplants.org](http://www.alaskaplants.org)

**Mat-Su Borough Rain Garden Program**  
<http://www.matsugov.us/environment/raingardens>

**Mat-Su Master Gardener Website**  
[www.matsumastergardeners.com](http://www.matsumastergardeners.com)

**Master Gardener Research Link (Extension)**  
<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**  
<https://www.uaf.edu/ces/>

**UAF Cooperative Extension Service Publications**  
<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/pubs/catalog/>

**UAF CES Citizen Pest Monitoring Portal**  
<https://pestreporter.alaska.edu/>

**UAF Georgeson Botanical Garden**  
<http://www.georgesonbotanicalgarden.org/>

**UAF Herbarium**  
<http://www.uaf.edu/museum/collections/herb/>

**UAF Alaska Master Gardener Program**  
<https://www.uaf.edu/ces/garden/mastergardeners/>

**UAF School of Natural Resources & Extension**  
<http://www.uaf.edu/snre/>

**University of Saskatchewan Fruit Program**  
[www.fruit.usask.ca](http://www.fruit.usask.ca)

**USDA/NRCS Plant Data Base**  
<https://plants.sc.egov.usda.gov/>



**Merry Christmas**



## CLUB CONTACT INFO

<b>President:</b>	<b>Deb Blaylock</b>	<b>746-6045/kdblalock@ak.net</b>
<b>Vice President:</b>	<b>Gregory Kalal</b>	<b>339-1966</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Carolyn Johnson</b>	<b>619-857-6614</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 send to the MMGA email.

Website: [www.matsumastergardeners.com/](http://www.matsumastergardeners.com/)

Email: [matsumastergardeners@gmail.com](mailto:matsumastergardeners@gmail.com)

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### JANUARY 2021 AND BEYOND

**Jan 4**, Palmer, MMGA meeting, TBD  
**Feb 1**, Palmer, MMGA meeting, TBD  
**Mar 1**, Palmer, MMGA meeting, TBD  
**Apr 5**, Palmer, MMGA meeting, TBD  
**May 3**, Palmer, MMGA meeting, TBD  
**Jun 5**, Palmer, Annual Plant Sale  
**Jun 14**, Palmer, Palmer Library Planting  
**May/Jun TBD**, Palmer, Palmer Veterans and Pioneers Home Planting  
**Jul/Aug**, Member-Only Summer Garden Tour(s)  
**Aug 26 – Sep 6**, Palmer, Alaska State Fair  
**Aug 28**, Palmer, Alaska State Fair Parade  
**Sep 13**, Palmer, MMGA meeting, TBD  
**Oct 4**, Palmer, MMGA meeting TBD  
**Nov 1**, Palmer, Annual MMGA meeting, TBD  
**Dec 6**, Palmer, Christmas Party



### *Club Membership*

The membership year runs from January to December each year. Annual individual memberships are \$15 and family memberships are \$20. Family memberships are only for family members living in the same household. The deadline to join is January 15, 2021 to be listed in the annual membership directory.

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



December 2020



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Email: [matsumastergardeners@gmail.com](mailto:matsumastergardeners@gmail.com)

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