



President's Patch

By President Deb Blaylock

As gardeners, we welcome the lengthening days as winter solstice has come and gone. The winter holidays are upon us, and soon it will be time to dig out our equipment to begin the gardening cycle all over again. Seed catalogs are trickling in with their enticing pictures and selections of new varieties as well as those tried and true plants.

What is your favorite way to keep track of what to grow or not to grow? My method is using an Excel spreadsheet. I know others keep garden journals and yet others rely on their memories. I learned Excel in the Army and it is my favorite way to track things. Over the years, my spreadsheet has evolved to keep track of seed starting dates as well as seed companies, germination times, harvest dates and even what club memberships I have. My internal hard drive space (memory) is pretty much maxed out and this method really helps keep me on track (mostly).

I also use this spreadsheet to keep an inventory of what seeds I have on hand. Soon, my inventory will be done, and I can compare that to what I need to order. Its helpful when doing your seed inventory to know which seeds have a short shelf live and which ones will maintain their viability for a number of years. I've found alliums don't keep more than a year or two. Brassicas keep 2-5 years and tomatoes and peppers seem to have the longest shelf life. There are many helpful sites on the internet which can help you determine seed viability. Another useful tool is a germination test to check on seed viability. Cooperative Extension Service has a good publication on this: [FGV-00249, Procedures for the Wet Paper Towel Germination Test.](#)

Two of our upcoming meetings will have speakers presenting on seed saving and seed starting. We also have a talk on how to deal with pests on houseplants and indoor growing in February. Rob Brown is our January guest speaker and is well known in the Anchorage garden community. I hope to see you all at the January meeting. Also, if you haven't renewed

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Patch	1
Next Meeting	1
Peasant's Perspective	2
Botany Basics - Crossword Puzzle	3
December Meeting Notes	4
2020 Committees	4
15th Alaska Sustainable Agriculture Conf.	5
Welcome to Carolyn Johnson	5
Garden Links	6
Announcements/Volunteer Opportunities	6
Contacts	7
Calendar of Events	7

GENERAL MEETINGS

FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

NEXT MEETING

NOTE THE NEW LOCATION!!

MONDAY, JANUARY 6TH, 7:00 P.M.
 LOCATION: MATANUSKA EXPERIMENT FARM
 AND EXTENSION CENTER, KERTTULA HALL,
 "BLUE ROOM," 1509 S GEORGESON DR,
 PALMER, AK

DO NOT HAVE TO BE A MEMBER TO ATTEND

SPEAKER/TOPIC

BUSINESS MEETING - 7-7:30 PM

GUEST SPEAKER - 7:30 - 8:30 PM

GUEST SPEAKER: ROB BROWN, FLAT TOP
 FARM, ANCHORAGE, ALASKA,
<https://flattopfarmak.wordpress.com/>

COMPENDIUM OF FAVORITE GARDENING AND
 GROWING PRACTICES.

membership, now is the time! We look forward to a great 2020 growing year!

PEASANT'S PERSPECTIVE: BY CURT MUELLER, MASTER GARDENER

Photo submitted by the author

We people living in the high latitudes seem to take the changing cycles of the seasons a bit more seriously than those living in the more southerly regions. The December solstice is upon us as this is written, and it is an event to be celebrated here. Like the New Year it is both an ending and a beginning. The December solstice immediately begins a new phase, as the North Pole starts its shift toward sunlight and longer days again. Indeed, we welcome the winter solstice, and the change - gradual at first - reaches five minutes and forty-five plus seconds by the vernal equinox. It's a great experience and one we observe with pleasure year by year, culminating with the summer solstice.

How fortunate that we can celebrate various holidays at this time of year. Truly we have

good reasons for celebrations that coincide with the shortest days and the sun's brief appearance near the horizon. The turning point brought by this celestial event must have been very meaningful in ancient times as it is to us today.

With the ending of the Old Year we can remember what has passed. With the New Year we can plan with new hope for things to come. As always, we wish it to be a happy, better time. We wish ourselves to be better people. So it is, my friends. An ending, a beginning.

May you enjoy the fellowship of family and friends this holiday season, and may your New Year be happy and prosperous.

Thanks, folks.

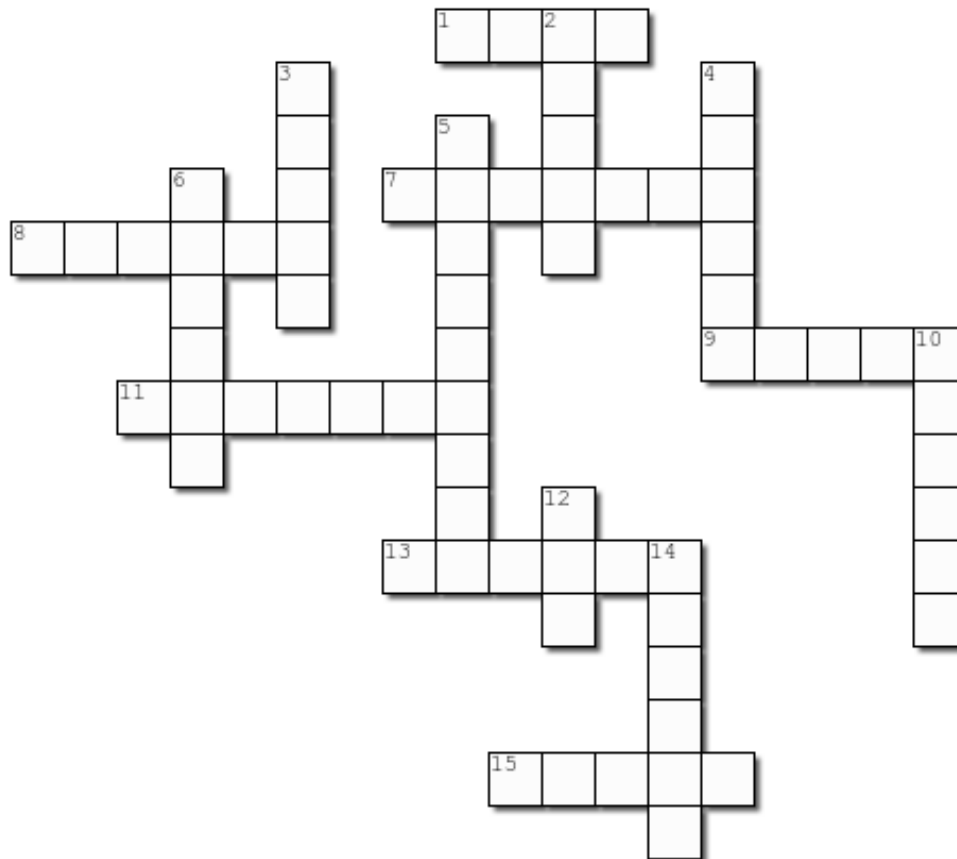


Perhaps the snow will come.

We're trying something new for the monthly newsletter - a crossword puzzle! A source book will be used and listed to find the questions and answers. The answers to January's puzzle will be listed in February's newsletter.

Botany Basics

Questions and answers to this puzzle were taken from the April 2011, Sustainable Gardening, The Alaska Master Gardener Manual, HGA-00339.



Created using the Crossword Maker on TheTeachersCorner.net

Across

1. An area on a plant stem where buds are located.
7. Having one seed leaf.
8. The female flower part; consists of a stigma, style, and ovary.
9. An often overlooked but crucial plant part.
11. The stalk that attaches a leaf to a stem.
13. A plant which goes from seed to flower to seed in one year or growing season.
15. Water- and nutrient-conducting plant tissue.

Down

2. Having two seed leaves.
3. The basic structural and physiological units of plants.
4. The pollen sac on a male flower.
5. The first leaf that appears on a seedling. Also called a seed leaf.
6. The male flower part; consists of an anther and a supporting filament.
10. The top of a female flower part; collects pollen.
12. An undeveloped shoot from which leaves or flowers grow.
14. Principle function is to absorb sunlight and make sugars in a process called photosynthesis.

**Notes from the 11 - 2 - 2019
Mat Su Master Gardener Meeting
From Deb Blaylock, MMGA President**

Our annual Christmas party get-together was held at Turkey Red in downtown Palmer. The room was beautifully set up for us and the staff was very helpful and attentive. They even had the TV on with a crackling fireplace. We had about 25 or so in attendance with a few who had to cancel because of bad travel conditions.

After a delicious meal of ham (prepared by Marge Mueller), roast turkey (prepared by Deb Blaylock) and various side dishes prepared by attendees, we held a brief business meeting. President Deb Blaylock on behalf of the 2019 MMGA Board of Directors presented certificates of appreciation to members who volunteered on numerous committees during the 2019 year. Some members were not present and will receive their certificates at a later meeting. In no particular order are a list of the awardees: Phyllis Kircher - Meeting Room Coordinator; Deb Blaylock - Newsletter Publisher, State Fair Awards and Christmas Party; Eva Cohnen-Brown - Website Manager, Newsletter Editor and Midsummer Garden & Art Faire; Kristina Tornqvist - Guest Speakers, Membership Directory and Plant Sale; Michael Kircher - Rebarck Farm Project; Cathy Crew - Plant Sale; Marge Mueller - Library and Pioneer Home, Christmas Party and Plant Sale; Deb Caillouet - Midsummer Garden & Art Faire; Curt Mueller - State Fair Parade, Newsletter Column and Plant Sale; Steve Brown - Midsummer Garden & Art Faire; Dorte Mobley - Summer Garden Tours and Plant Sale; Maria Cunningham - Membership Brochure Update; Ginger Sweeney - Plant Sale and Colony House Museum; Arlene Bowman - Library and Pioneer Home; Sally Sonnichsen - Library and Pioneer Home; Lenita Deda - Membership Coordinator; Wayne Bowman - Plant Sale; Marcia Clemons - Plant Sale; and Bonnie Hager - Plant Sale.

If we missed anyone, please send an email to matsumastergardeners@gmail.com and we'll add them to the list. Volunteers are the backbone of our organization and the Board of Directors sincerely appreciate each and every one! Giving back to our community through volunteerism is our mission in life!

We still have some vacant committee positions and look forward to seeing those get filled in the upcoming meetings. If you're interested or need more details, shoot an email to matsumastergardeners@gmail.com.

A rousing gift exchange followed the awards presentation with jars of honey making many appearances. It must have been a good honey year! Much fun was had by all!

Our next regular meeting is January 6th, 2020 at 7 p.m. Rob Brown of Flattop Farms in Anchorage is our guest speaker. He will share with us some of his favorite gardening and growing techniques. Rob has some very interesting grafting techniques with tomatoes and melons.

2020 Committees

Monthly Newsletter - Deb Blaylock

Website manager - Eva-Cohnen-Brown

Guest speakers - **Vacant**

Membership directory - Sue Glenn

Grants/Scholarships - **Vacant**

Rebarck Farm project - Michael Kircher

Annual Plant Sale - **Chair vacant**; Flyer Design, Maria Cunningham

Palmer Library & Pioneer Home plantings - **Chair Vacant**; Heather Kalxdorff

Midsummer Garden & Art Faire - **Vacant**

Summer Garden tours - **Vacant**

Alaska State Fair awards - Deb Blaylock

State Fair Parade - **Vacant**

2020 Christmas Party - **Vacant**



**15th ALASKA SUSTAINABLE
AGRICULTURE CONFERENCE**
in Anchorage at the BP Energy Center
February 20-22, 2020

**CALL FOR ABSTRACTS AND
REGISTRATION OPEN**

The 15th Alaska Sustainable Agriculture Conference and workshops will be held February 20-22 at the BP Energy Center in Anchorage, Alaska. The conference, made possible by a grant from Western SARE (Sustainable Agriculture Research and Extension), has developed an excellent reputation among farmers and producers. It is viewed as a truly unique opportunity to advance sustainable innovations to agriculture in Alaska.

This year's conference will feature a Plenary Session and Technical Sessions the first day of the conference (Thursday February 20), followed by two days of Technical Sessions and Workshops (Friday February 21 and Saturday February 22). There is a flat fee of \$100, which gains you access to any and all three days of the Conference and Workshops. We hope you will join us!

Abstract Submission: The deadline to apply to submit an abstract for a presentation at the conference is Friday, January 24th, 2020. Link to submit abstract:

<https://form.jotform.com/93077022700145>

Conference Registration:

<http://bit.ly/2XsDJhR>

Conference Hotels:

Hotel Group Rate Event Summary

Start Date: February 19, 2020

End Date: February 22, 2020

Last Day to Book: January 27, 2020. Hotels offering your special group rate (code: Alaska Sustainable Agriculture Conference)

- SpringHill Suites Anchorage Midtown for \$119 USD per night
Address: 3401 A St, Anchorage, AK 99503
Phone: (907) 562-3247
 - Residence Inn Anchorage Midtown for \$125 USD per night
Address: 1025 35th Avenue, Anchorage, AK 99508
Phone: (907) 563-9844
- Hotel Reservation Link:
<http://bit.ly/2CY8BgF>

Welcome Carolyn Johnson!

Please welcome our new secretary, Carolyn Johnson. She'll be at our January meeting, ready to take minutes. Come and tell her welcome in person! Here's a bit of info she provided so we could get to know her a bit:

Carolyn Johnson is a recent "transplant" from the Greenwood area of Northern California where she lived for 11 years. Before relocating there, she lived in San Diego for over 30 years where she worked for Hewlett-Packard and Alcoa in the IT world of manufacturing and R&D as a manager, raised 5 children and recently retired in 2018. In her busy life, to relieve her "stress," she fell back on her gardening and landscaping skills she learned as a child from family who were Missouri farmer transplants to Southern California.

Over the 50+ years that she has been gardening Carolyn has found she has "two" green thumbs and can grow just about anything. She likes talking/communing with her plants & trees as well as sharing her knowledge and plants with neighbors and friends. She now has the time to spend earning her Master Gardener "title" and learning a whole new agricultural area to see what she can grow in Alaska, along with growing a new group of friends!

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

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 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.com

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,

<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

USDA/NRCS Plant Data Base

<https://plants.sc.egov.usda.gov/>



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

2020

- Submit an article to the newsletter.
- Looking for someone to write a monthly column for the newsletter. Please contact Deb Blaylock if you're interested.

CLUB CONTACT INFO

President:	Deb Blaylock	746-6045/kdblayment@ak.net
Vice President	Gregory Kalal	339-1966
Secretary:	Carolyn Johnson	619-857-6614
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: kdblayment@ak.net

Website: www.matsumastergardeners.com/

Email: matsumastergardeners@gmail.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY 2020

Jan 6, Palmer, Rob Brown, Flat Top Farm, A compendium of his favorite growing practices.

Jan 30 – Feb 1, Fairbanks, 2020 APGA Winter Conference,

<https://www.alaskapeonyconference.com/welcome/>

FEBRUARY 2020 AND BEYOND

Feb 3, Palmer, MMGA meeting, Charles Stillman, IPM Strategies for Indoor Growing

Feb 20-22, Anchorage, 15th Alaska Sustainable Agriculture Conference,

<https://www.uaf.edu/ces/agriculture/sare/conference/>

Feb 22, Anchorage, Alaska Botanical Garden, 2020 Spring Garden Conference,

Feb-Mar, Palmer, Organic Gardening Classes, <http://ellenvandevisse.com/>

Feb 26 – Mar 1, Seattle, WA, Northwest Flower and Garden Festival, <https://gardenshow.com/>

Mar 2, Palmer, MMGA meeting, Dr Patricia Holloway, Seed Saving

Apr 6, Palmer, MMGA meeting, Basic Seed Starting, Deb Blaylock, Mat-Su Master Gardeners

May 4, Palmer, MMGA meeting

May 30, Palmer MMGA Annual Plant Sale

Jun 1, Palmer, Palmer Public Library Planting

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, 2020 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.

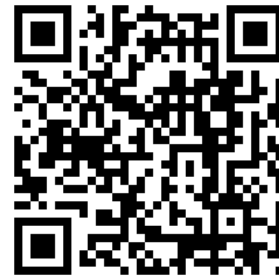
If you are not the author or photographer, please ensure you have permission of the author or photographer to use their material in the newsletter. The newsletter publisher is not responsible for obtaining this for you.

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

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



January 2020



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Facebook

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

**MAT-SU MASTER GARDENERS
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