



President's Patch

By President Deb Blaylock

Summer is officially here! Yahoo. Gardens should all be planted by now and flowers and veggies beginning to pop and produce!

What are your garden experiments this year? Any brave and adventurous gardeners in our midst? Send me some info on what's new in your garden with a few pictures for the next few newsletters. It will be interesting to see what everyone is trialing. For me, I'm trying out a dwarf Okra variety which is supposed to grow well in buckets; a new (for me) variety of heirloom corn called Kuli Corn, which is an early Flint corn from Montana; parsley root, which is supposed to be used similarly to parsnips or carrots; and Gete Oksomin winter squash, supposedly an 800-year-old variety which did well for the Matanuska Experiment Farm last year.

Many thanks to all the volunteers who showed up to help with our summer planting projects. All were accomplished with quite a few volunteers, and hopefully, the beds fill out nicely throughout the summer. We did discover that during the week after we planted at the Veterans and Pioneers Home, there was a glitch with the city watering and our plants didn't get watered. Sue Glenn came to the rescue with some donated flowers and replaced the plants who didn't survive. Please keep an eye out when you're doing your volunteer week for weeding. Let us know if you see any problems.

The plant sale went quite well. A big thank you to Wendel Lewis for bringing some extra tables and chairs which were put to good use. A special shout out to Cathy Crew for tackling the Square payment issue and getting us set up with an account and device. We'll have to look at adjusting our budget for expenses related to that and perhaps looking to cost sharing with future customers on the added fee expense. Look for more discussion on that when we prepare our 2022 budget and standing rules.

Our next scheduled event is the Palmer Midsummer Garden & Art Faire on July 10th. We have one open slot which needs a volunteer. Please let me or Sue Glenn know if you can fill that slot (see page 5). We'll be setting up with several other garden clubs so it should be a fun filled day. It's always fun to help at the booth and answer gardening questions!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Patch	1
Next Meeting	1
Peasant's Perspective	2
Beetles	3
Minutes from June 2021	4
Palmer Midsummer Garden & Art Faire Info	5
Alaska State Fair Parade Information	5
Nominating Committee	5
Summer Weeding Schedule	6
Garden Links	7
Contacts	8
Calendar of Events	8

GENERAL MEETINGS

FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

NEXT GENERAL MEETING

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 14TH, 2021, 7 P.M.

LOCATION:

**MATANUSKA EXPERIMENT FARM AND EXTENSION
CENTER, KERTTULA HALL, "BLUE ROOM," 1509 S
GEORGESON DR, PALMER, AK**

SUMMER GARDEN TOUR INFORMATION

**THE MEMBERS ONLY TOUR WILL ON JULY 5TH IN
SUTTON THIS YEAR. DETAILS WILL BE SENT IN A
SEPARATE EMAIL.**

Dorte reports the members-only garden tour will be on July 5th in the Sutton area – watch your email for details. If you're on Facebook, the Greater Eagle River Garden Club is hosting a tour, Saturday, June 26, from 12 to 4 pm. Also, if you feel your garden is worthy of visitors, send an email and we'll send it out to members as a "pop-up garden tour" opportunity.

Get back to your weeding and watering duties and we'll see you all soon! Happy Gardening!

PEASANT'S PERSPECTIVE: BY CURT MUELLER, MASTER GARDENER

PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

We waited more or less patiently for the summer solstice after the dark days of the winter solstice in December. The summer solstice came and a day later we have lost four seconds of daylight. Now we're on the downhill side again; a little sadness goes with that. Decreasing day length triggers changes in the native flora and the plants we grow as well. It's what makes some plants mature and flower, fruit to ripen and trees to prepare themselves for our winter season. This cycle doesn't end as our earth makes its orbit around the sun, so we must adapt to it, which isn't always easy. Our high latitude makes the seasonal changes more pronounced. We are fortunate that the holiday season comes at the time of the winter solstice and now we have a holiday to celebrate at the summer solstice. Juneteenth and July Fourth are close. Perhaps we're not so far removed from the ancients who had their own way of acknowledging the cyclic changes during the year.

The peasant would like to give some hints on thinning vegetables in order for us to gain the most benefit from growing them. We'll start with those we can space when we plant them. Peas at two inches is a good interval, string beans at 3 and 1/2 to four is OK. Potatoes at 18 to 24 inches with rows 24 inches apart may be crowding somewhat, but we need to make maximum use of our garden space. Cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, and broccoli can use a similar spacing, keeping in mind that there is considerable variation in cabbage size. The peasant spaces Parel, a very early variety, at twelve inches. Also putting cauliflower where the plants can be pulled after harvest will leave room for cabbage plants to spill over into that area.

The peasant thins beets to three inches, carrots to two, onions are spaced at four inches with

rows six inches apart, parsnips at four inches, radishes at one to two, rutabagas at about four and turnips a bit closer; dill should be at four to six inches. These figures can be varied to fit your own particular situation but may give you some guidance. Definitely thin your vegetables and enjoy a quality harvest.

Thanks, folks.



The heading cabbages are the variety Parel, long a favorite of the Muellers. The photo was taken June 21. These were seeded indoors on April 1 and will be ready to harvest within a week. They are also capable of standing in the garden for two weeks. The plant to the right of the first two is also Parel, seeded on April 15. These are great season extenders and will fill in until other early varieties come on. Compact and tasty, they are the best extra early variety we have grown.



BEETLES

BY JOEY JOZEF (JOEY) SLOWIK, IPM TECHNICIAN, UAF COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Well, this June has been a very good one for the beetles. We often don't worry too much about beetles as pests but when they get in large enough numbers, they can be destructive. We received reports of the small metallic *Altica* beetles infesting fireweed. They are shiny little guys about ¼" in length. They are usually only a minor pest but this year they have been found to be damaging fields of fireweed. They are often associated with a couple other pest beetle species, *Bromius obscurus*, which is a 3/16" fuzzy brown beetle, and some of the larger willow weevils. You may not think of fireweed as a crop but if you raise bees, you do, and the beetles' damage can affect the flowers. All of these beetles are pretty general feeders and will show up on any tasty broad-leafed plant.

We also received reports of the water lily beetle, *Galerucella nymphaeae* damaging raspberry plants. This beetle is more commonly found feeding on lily pads on many of our local lakes. Why they jumped to raspberry is a mystery but they seemed to enjoy it by the amount of damage they were doing. And as I'm sure you've picked up on the strawberry weevils are out in force. These small weevils, about 1/8 inch, are most often found in homes in the fall. They have a couple generations a year and this earlier one this year is large. So, we're finding them in our homes. Both the adults and larvae feed on grass usually and are not pests, except for the nuisance of finding them about the house.

For the gardener beetle damage is often seen as small holes in the leaf. They don't usually have too much preference where on the leaf they feed, meaning they don't seem to like the edges over the veins. The beetles themselves often hide out in the litter at the base of the plant during the day and crawl up during the night. One of the easiest ways to see which beetle is the culprit, and to control the population, is to stay up late

and look for them. You can usually knock them off or pick them off the plant into a bucket of soapy water.

Beetles are not generally found in huge numbers so a few days of picking them off will impact the population greatly. Depending on the species the young usually feed in the soil. Some are predators but some also feed on the plants roots or funguses associated with them. Pesticide use is usually unproductive as the larvae evade sprays and beetles generally are pretty resistant themselves. Another advantage of controlling them this way is you then have specimens which you can photograph and ask for specific help with. Some species are particular and knowing what beetle you are dealing with can help. You can always submit pictures to our Pest Reporter website, <https://pestreporter.alaska.edu/>, or email me at jaslowik@alaska.edu.



Clockwise from upper left:
 Altica sp., <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Altica>;
 Bromius sp., <https://bugguide.net/node/view/398053>;
 Willow weevil,
<https://bugguide.net/node/view/1138949/bgpage>;
 Strawberry root weevil,
<https://insectid.wisc.edu/2014/05/20/strawberry-root-weevil/>;
 Galerucella sp.,
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galerucella_nymphaeae

Mat-Su Master Gardener Meeting Minutes: June 14, 2021

Submitted by Vice President
Kristina Tornqvist

President Deb Blaylock called the meeting to order outside the Palmer library shortly after we finished planting the three-tier planter. Nine members were present (including new member Steven Spurger - welcome!).

Cathy Crew reported on the plant sale: income was \$8,228 with \$6,582.40 going to members. Club total was \$1,645. Credit card sales exceeded \$3,000. Sue Glenn suggested we bill customers the 3% square fee, but no motion was made. Ken Blaylock moved to approve Cathy's report, Kristina seconded, and motion carried.

Kristina Tornqvist moved to accept the May minutes as presented in the latest newsletter. Sue Glenn seconded, and the motion passed.

Deb Blaylock reported that a 50-foot fence will be installed at the Rebarchek project sometime in July. Blaylocks will buy the materials and Michael Kircher will put up the fence. An email will go out on the construction date so

that others may come and help Michael put together the fence.

Sue Glenn reported that the planting project by the Pioneer Home was well attended and went quite fast. The same was the case for the courtyard planting. She expressed thanks for the plant donations. She also reported that we need a weeder for the last week of August.

Sue also reported that the big iris was taken out of the library planter and divided. We still need workers for the 10-12 and the 4-6 time slots at the Palmer Midsummer Garden & Art Faire on July 10.

Ginger Sweeney reported that she planted annuals at the Colony Museum.

There will be no meetings in July or August. Starting with the September 13 meeting, we will again meet at the Matanuska Experiment Farm.

Meeting adjourned.

MMGA Booth Shift Sign Up, Palmer Midsummer Garden & Art Faire July 10, 2021	
Time:	Name
9 – 10 am	Blaylocks (Put up canopy)
Set-up	Sue Glenn
10 am - Noon	Marge Mueller
	Michael Kircher
Noon – 2 pm	Sue Glenn
	Phyllis Kircher
2 – 4 pm	Ann Eagerton
	Craig Lisonbee
4 – 6pm	Anita Chace
6 pm	Blaylocks (take down canopy), Sue Glenn
Take down	Glenn



For more info:

<https://palmergardenandart.org/>

2021 Alaska State Fair "Seeing is Believing" Mat-Su Master Gardener Parade Float

Curt Mueller is the head of our State Fair Float Committee. He is requesting design ideas for the float. He would like the design to be compliant with the 2021 Alaska State Fair Theme of "Seeing is Believing." Of course, it should have a gardening centered theme as well. If anyone would like to send suggestions his way, you can email Curt at mueller@mtaonline.net.

The date of the Alaska State Fair Parade in Palmer is August 28th.

Nominating Committee Needed!!

It's time to start thinking about volunteers for 2022. We will need a new president and possibly the other officer and board of director positions. Our committees will need volunteers as well.

To start this off, we need a nominating committee of two or three folks to begin the process of finding a new board of directors and officers.

Its always a good thing to get fresh perspectives and new energy to keep our focus and projects going. The club does a lot of good things for our community. Please consider volunteering.

Sign Up for Weeding Palmer Library & Veterans and Pioneers Home

If you would like to sign up for an unclaimed week, email matsumastergardeners@gmail.com with the date and your name.

Week of:	Name
June 14	Wayne & Arlene Bowman
June 21	Theresa Isaac; Craig Lisonbee
June 28	Laurel Flynn
July 5	Sue Glenn; Cathy Crew
July 12	Kristina Tornqvist; Bonnie Hager
July 19	Curt & Marge Mueller
July 26	Wendel Lewis & Anita Chace
August 2	Ann Eagerton
August 9	Ken & Deb Blaylock
August 16	Mabel Wimmer; Danielle and Maya Simoni-Cooper
August 23	Mabel Wimmer
August 30	Isaac Vaughan

Garden Links (updated Mar 2021)

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 Garden Clubs

<http://www.alaskagardenclubs.org>

Alaska Grown

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

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://www.alaskapeonysociety.com/>

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

Mat-Su Borough Rain Garden Program

<http://www.matsugov.us/environment/raingardens>

Mat-Su Master Gardener Website

www.matsumastergardeners.com

Master Gardener Research Link (Extension)

<http://search.extension.org>

Master Gardeners of the Tanana Valley

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

Matanuska Experiment Farm and Extension Services *New*

<https://www.uaf.edu/afes/places/palmer/>

Palmer Soil & Water Conservation

<http://palmersoilandwater.org/>

Society of American Foresters, Cook Inlet Chapter *New*

<http://www.alaska.forestry.org/alaska/chapters/cook-inlet>

South-Central Alaska Beekeepers Assoc.

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

Southeast Alaska Master Gardeners Association

<http://seak-mastergardeners.org/index.html>

Sustainable Agriculture – UAF

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

CLUB CONTACT INFO

President:	Deb Blaylock	746-6045/kdblalock@ak.net
Vice President:	Kristina Tornqvist	795-6393
Secretary:	Dorte Mobley	232-5422
Treasurer:	Cathy Crew	632-4401
Member at Large:	Sue Glenn	671-0252

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/

Email: matsumastergardeners@gmail.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JULY 2021 AND BEYOND

Jul 5, Sutton, Member-Only Summer Garden Tour

Aug 20 – Sep 6, Palmer, Alaska State Fair

Aug 28, Palmer, Alaska State Fair Parade (tentative)

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: 20th day of each month -- Thank you--



July 2021



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Facebook

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

**MAT-SU MASTER GARDENERS
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