## MAT-SU MASTER GARDENER'S NEWSLETTER

### **President's Patch**

By Rhonda Bowman, President

Well we have finally reached the middle of summer and time will be ticking away fast now! I could not believe how hot it has been here in Palmer. A friend of mine was in Mesa, Arizona and she was commenting on the 103 degree temperatures there and was shocked that we were 94 the other day at my house. I don't know where they take Palmer's temperature on the news but it hasn't been that cool at my house!

Seems like a lot more of my time has been spent watering and of course weeding but that is more the norm. I got my first batch of radishes and they were very tasty with a good bite of spice. My flowers are now blooming, or some soon to bloom, but my yard looks great and very lush.

What a great time we had at Colony Days this year! We watched the parade and took in the vintage motorcycles as well as the muscle cars. Folks have some amazing rolling stock and it is nice to see everyone out and about taking the local sights. The Palmer Chamber of Commerce did an outstanding job of getting everything organized and our town was so pretty with the flower and vegetable beds.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all the hard-working firefighters battling fires in Willow, Sterling and in the Interior. It has been a hot, dry summer and they have been very busy.

I know how busy everyone is this time of year and I hope that you take time to enjoy the summer before it is long gone.

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#### CHAPTER MEETINGS FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

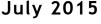
NEXT MEETING THURSDAY, JULY 9TH, 10:00 AM LOCATION: MID-VALLEY GREENHOUSE, 1346 S HYER RD, WASILLA, AK DO NOT HAVE TO BE A MEMBER TO ATTEND

#### MEETING AGENDA

- TREASURER REPORT
- **MINUTES**
- OLD BUSINESS
- New Business

#### TOPIC/SPEAKER:

Tour of Mark Oathout's greenhouse and tomato testing.





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### **PEASANTS PERSPECTIVE,** By Curt Mueller, Master Gardener

Back in the depths of winter, when a good part of gardening consisted of poring over the latest offerings in the seed catalogs, the peasant ran across several greenhouse cucumbers that were new to him. Beguiled by the photos and descriptions, the peasant ordered a couple of these fairly expensive seed packets. Now, at the summer solstice, the cucumbers are producing very well. The extra cost was worthwhile, it seems.



Fruit set on Katrina slicing cucumber.

A slicing cucumber, Katrina, with ten seeds at \$8.20, seemed a little pricy. A pickling variety, Excelsior, cost \$7.10 for a packet of 30 seeds. The Katrina is listed as parthenocarpic, which means it doesn't require pollination to produce fruit. It appears to be gynoecious as well, meaning all flowers are female and capable of producing fruit. Excelsior is listed as parthenocarpic and gynoecious. Both these varieties are producing early and heavily.

Another slicer cucumber the peasant has grown for several years is Diva, also one that does not require pollination but is a producer of both male and female blossoms. Still another slicer is Sweet Success, parthenocarpic and a good producer but more difficult to find seed for. There are several greenhouse varieties available that the peasant has not tried as yet. In recent years more varieties have become available with various characteristics in fruit type and productive capability.



Fruit set on Excelsior pickling cucumber. There are eighteen fruits on a vine three feet long.

The peasant, under the influence of Rube Goldberg, some years ago developed a type of automated cold frame which opens and closes as the temperature varies. When open, it will admit pollinators for fertilizing warm temperature crops such as winter squash and cucumbers, which otherwise would need hand pollination. At present the structure houses three cucumber varieties. One that does well is Northern Pickling, a long vine type. Another is Bush Pickle, a very compact type that produces amazingly well for a very small plant. A slicer, Bush Champion, does well also. This one has previously been grown by the peasant in the greenhouse, pollinating done with a paintbrush from a watercolor set.

All of the varieties mentioned here, both greenhouse and outdoor, are grown in plastic bags. These varieties are ones that have done well; others have been discontinued for various reasons. Gardening has never ceased to be a learning experience. May it be ever thus.

Thanks folks.



http://mastergardener.unl.edu/imgc2015



The ninth annual Palmer Garden and Art Faire will take place on July 11, 2015 in downtown Palmer, Alaska, celebrating summer with gardening, gourmet food, fine art, music, and more. Our volunteer board is hard at work organizing this year's event, and applications for vendors at this premiere summer event are open now. For more info go to: http://www.palmergardenandart.org/

Sign Up for Weeding Mat-Su Experiment Farm Demonstration Bed E-Mail Deb at <u>kdblaylock@ak.net</u> if you would like to sign up for a future vacant slot.		
Week of :	Name	
June 8	Michael & Phyllis Kircher	
June 15		
June 22	Rhonda Bowman/Cathy Crew	
June 29	Curt & Marge Mueller	
July 6	Wayne & Arlene Bowman	
July 13	Lenita Deda & Ginger Sweeney	
July 20	Steve & Eva Brown	
July 27	Deb Blaylock	
August 3		
August 10		
August 17		
August 24		
August 31		

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### MATSU Master Gardeners' Newsletter

### 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/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 <a href="http://plants.alaska.gov/">http://plants.alaska.gov/</a>

Alaska Rock Garden Society http://www.akrockgardensociety.org/

Cooperative Extension Service, Palmer <a href="http://www.uaf.edu/ces/districts/matsu/">http://www.uaf.edu/ces/districts/matsu/</a>

Eat Local Alaska http://akfood.weebly.com/index.html

### Announcements

#### **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

Volunteers are needed to weed Grow Palmer boxes behind the Salvation Army. Contact Winona Benson @ 745-3423 if you would like to help.

#### **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. Good Earth Garden School http://ellenvandevisse.com/

Integrated Pest Management Program <a href="http://www.uaf.edu/ces/ipm/">http://www.uaf.edu/ces/ipm/</a>

Junior Master Gardeners <a href="http://www.jmgkids.us/">http://www.jmgkids.us/</a>

Landscape Plants for Alaska www.alaskaplants.org

Local Alaskan Plants Clearinghouse <a href="http://www.localplants.org/Home">http://www.localplants.org/Home</a>

Mat-Su Borough Rain Garden Program http://www.matsugov.us/raingardens

Mat-Su Master Gardener Website 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 <a href="http://www.seakmg.org/">http://www.seakmg.org/</a>

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 <a href="http://www.uaf.edu/ces/ipm/cmp/">http://www.uaf.edu/ces/ipm/cmp/</a>

University of Saskatchewan Fruit Program <u>www.fruit.usask.ca</u>

USDA/NRCS Plant Data Base http://plants.usda.gov/java/

Wasilla Soil & Water Conservation http://www.wasillaswcd.org/

### 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, <u>www.matsumastergardeners.com</u>

thank you



#### MATSU Master Gardeners' Newsletter

### CLUB CONTACT INFO

President:
Co-VP
Co-VP
Secretary:
Treasurer:
Member at Large:

Rhonda Bowman	746-2948
Curt Mueller	745-6144
Hally Truelove	376-0909
Vacant	
Cathy Crew	632-4401
Marge Mueller	745-6144
-	

If you have gardening news, photos or information you'd like to share in the <u>newsletter</u>, please contact: Deb Blaylock @Email: <u>kdblaylock@ak.net</u>

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

#### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### JULY 2015

Jul 9, Palmer, MMG Mtg, Tomato Testing and Greenhouse Tour, Mid-Valley Greenhouse \*\* Note date change\*\* Jul 11, Palmer, Midsummer Garden and Art

Faire, http://www.palmergardenandart.org/

#### AUGUST 2015 AND BEYOND

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

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!

### How and what to Submit for the Monthly Newsletter

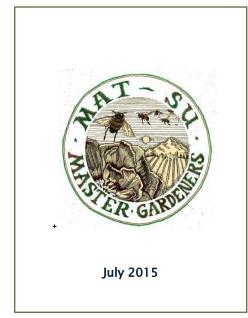
Your submissions are greatly appreciated and make our newsletter what it is - so don't be shy about submitting items for publication. However, there are a few rules which we all must pay attention to:

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~~



Website: <a href="http://www.matsumastergardeners.com/">www.matsumastergardeners.com/</a> Email: <a href="mailto:matsumastergardeners@gmail.com">matsumastergardeners.com/</a>



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