



Jun 2022



## President's Patch

By President Dorte Mobley

What a glorious time of the year. Everywhere you look, there is color – especially the light green color is my favorite. I love the time when you look out the window in the morning and there is just this light green haze and then, when you look again, you are wondering if it really did get that much greener since last time you looked. As much as I love the summer flowers, all the little primulas and saxifrages are really giving your spirit a boost when you look at them. Both in the hypertufa troughs and in the rock garden they are in full bloom right now. The early peonies have buds on them, daffodils and tulips are in full bloom as are pulsatillas and fritillarias. If you are in the area, you are welcome to stop by and see it.

I found an amazing way to clean up the beds and everywhere else this spring – the leaf blower. If you open the garage door and blow dirt out, it almost looks like your place is on fire! When the window in the car is open, a lot of the dirt flies right in there! The leaves and grass clippings on the beds – gone with the wind! Bella even thinks it is lots of fun when I blow on her. Haven't tried it in the chicken house yet, but that's coming. Hopefully, no chickens will be in the process of laying an egg when I fire it up.



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### GENERAL MEETINGS

FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

NEXT GENERAL MEETING

MONDAY, JUN 13TH, 7:00 P.M.

PALMER PUBLIC LIBRARY

PLEASE BRING ANY PLANTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO DONATE TO OUR PLANTER AT THE PALMER PUBLIC LIBRARY. ALSO BRING A BUCKET, A GARDEN TOOL OR TWO, AND DRESS FOR THE WEATHER. WE'LL BE CLEANING UP THE BED AND THEN PLANTING IT WITH MEMBER DONATIONS.

A BRIEF BUSINESS MEETING WILL BE HELD AFTER WE'RE DONE PLANTING. PLANT SALE CHECKS AND LABELS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THAT TIME.

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

PHOTO BY THE AUTHOR

This is some fine weather we're having in mid-May. Time to get our planting done! Let's hope we get timely summer rains so our trees can recover from the wear and tear of our January wind, a storm we'll not soon forget.

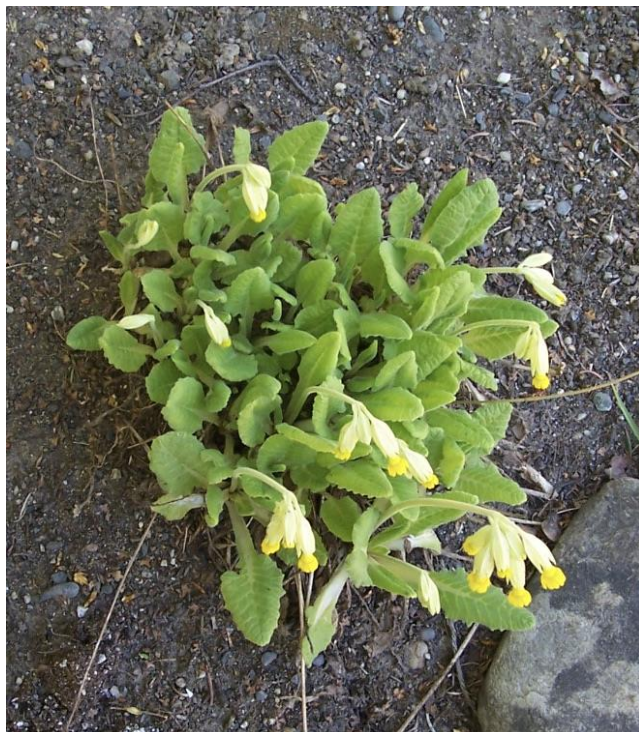
It's interesting that trees and branches that blew down still try to grow and make leaves even with no connection to the soil. Some still have some roots attached to soil. We'll see how they do with horizontal trunks. It has been a rough winter with some sub-zero weather and the desiccating winds of January. Our bur oak is slow about developing leaves and it's hard to determine if the terminal buds on the branches and top are going to develop at all. It seems they should be first to grow.

Some spruce trees lost their needles to the wind on topmost branches. Perhaps they'll grow a new batch of needles; we'll wait and see. Terminal buds on spruce look good and will produce new growth. Native trees are well acclimated and will shrug off tough conditions. In areas exposed to hard winds, cracks and twisted trunks on birch trees are the norm.

Herbaceous perennials survived well as the soil beneath the snow did not freeze. Where the wind blew the snow away the soil was soon covered again with fresh stuff. I guess we'll have to say we had a mostly typical Alaska winter, if there is such a thing.

Get it planted, people, and hope for a great growing season.

Thanks, folks.



Known as a cowslip, this beauty is also a primula, common in England. Early to bloom, the photos of cowslip and English primrose were taken on May 20th.



Shepody cutting ready to plant in the garden. Potato plants emerge quickly when they are allowed to form roots in a warm spot indoors; these were sprouted in our greenhouse.



## WHEN VOLES MAKE TREASURE:

BY ISAAC VAUGHAN, MASTER GARDENER

As the white, water-based mulch – better known as snow – melts off our gardens, we are reminded of our little rodent friends, the voles, who decided our bulbs, tree bark, succulents, and perennials' roots would make a nice mid-winter snack. In my rock garden, as our friends scurried around under their protective, two-foot-thick snowbank, they reduced my sempervivums and sedums to little more than juicy, succulent stumps.

Even though their damage can cause plant death, it is otherwise just simply annoying...or it can very seldom make the plant a treasure: it can cause variegation (a lack of chlorophyll in the margins or in random patterns in the leaf) or cristation (also known as fasciation, when the cylindrical growing point flattens out and makes ribbon-like or elaborately deformed growth). How can a deformity turn the plant into something extremely valuable? If you can propagate it while keeping the mutation, you can sell it to collectors or specialty growers. A mutation such as this is sometimes temporary, but it always makes the plant more weather-tender and susceptible to pests.

Why do plants crest? The growing point gets damaged – most commonly by frost, virus, animal damage, or other physical damage (mild lightning strikes have crested some saguaros) – and the only way the plant can continue using its growing point would be to mutate it. Or, more simply, the plant's cells cannot decide who will make the new growing point, and all try to outdo each other. And what causes variegation? Sometimes, it is genetic. Other times, damage occurs – ultraviolet, physical, drought, but most commonly viroid damage. Both mutations are rare and valuable. I have only run across a few such plants: a variegated lamb's quarters, a variegated birch, a crested sedum, and a crested saguaro

(what you find in collections or garden centers do not count).

Back to me, those little rodent friends chewed off the top of one of my spruce-leaf sedums and caused somewhat of a crest... we will see if it lasts or even survives. I also ran across a variegated birch sapling, but it died shortly upon potting up. If it had not died, I am sure it would have reverted back to all green, but it was cool while it lasted. If any of you Master Gardeners run across a crest or variegate, I would love to hear about it!



This English primrose does well with a little help in our area. It is indeed a lovely plant. The photos of cowslip and English primrose were taken on May 20<sup>th</sup>. Photo by Curt Mueller

## We are hiring a Student Worker



### We are Hiring a Cooperative Extension Services - Student Employee

- Do you want to spread knowledge of how to garden and preserve food in your community?
- Do you love helping kids through organizations like 4-H?
- Do you want to help with the canning and 4-H buildings at the Alaska State Fair?
- Are you ready to join an enthusiastic team that works towards strengthening our community?

This office serves the Mat-Su and Copper River Valleys through outreach, education, and continued research collaboration. This is a great opportunity to work with a dedicated team while continuing your education and completing classes.

If you are a goal-oriented and self-motivated person join our team of professionals at the Matanuska Experiment Farm and Extension Center.

\*\*\*You must be enrolled in at least 6 credits at the University of Alaska for the current semester to be eligible.\*\*\*

This position is full time in the summer and part time during the school year with flexibility to accommodate the school schedule.

For additional information regarding this position and to apply:

<https://careers.alaska.edu/en-us/job/519656/cooperative-extension-servicesstudent-employee>



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THURSDAY, MAY 26, 2022 AT 11 AM - 2 PM

#### FREE Dial Gauge Testing for Canners - Call to Register

Matanuska Experiment Farm & Extension Center

With thoughts of gardening, fishing and hunting this summer, prepare ahead to make sure your canning equipment is working properly.

Pressure canner dial gauges need to be tested for accuracy every year. Bring your dial gauge and canner lid to be tested for accuracy to preserve food safely.

\*\*\*Call 907-745-3360 or 907-745-3677 to set a time\*\*\*



## Alpine Historical Park Volunteer Request

Hello MMGA members!

Have you taken the Master Gardening class, but might still need some volunteer hours?

The Alpine Historical Society Board of Directors would love creative ideas and some volunteer help with our perennial flower beds and other plantings at our beautiful park in Sutton. Although we have good gardeners among our Board of Directors and a few Sutton gardening volunteers (thank you, Laurel Flynn!), we still could really use some help.

Our park is both a popular tourist stop and a well-loved community park in the summer.

I'm a new MMGA member this year and attended the fall 2018 Master Gardener class. I'm hopeful I can learn from MMGA folks while logging some volunteer gardening hours at our Alpine Historical Park.

Interested? Call or text me at 907-355-0207, or contact me by email: [ccv@mtaonline.net](mailto:ccv@mtaonline.net)

Thank You!

Chris VanCleve

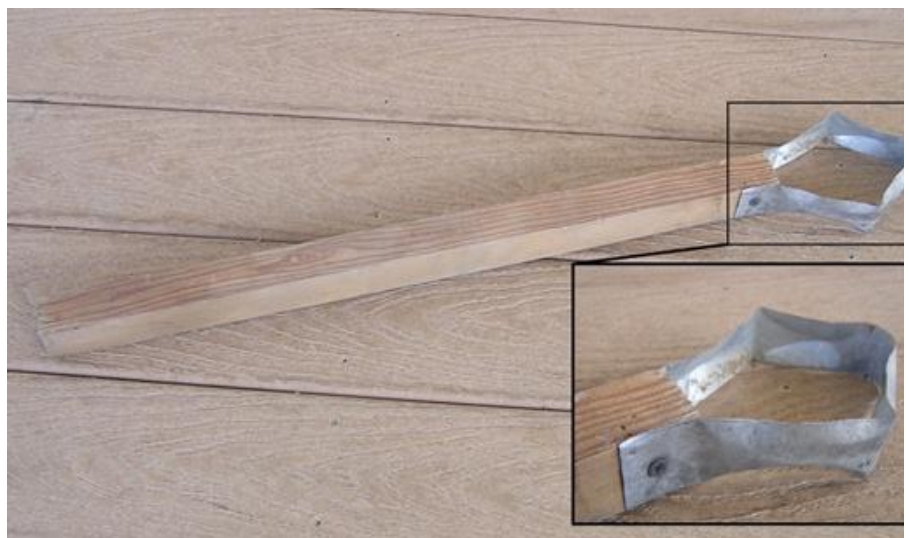
## Two photos of the park



## My Favorite Tool

By Isaac Vaughan

My favorite tool is, ironically, one I built myself: a piece of galvanized scrap metal bent in a loop and screwed to a 2x2 piece of pine lumber, strengthened with a brad nail (to keep the tip from rotating) and inwardly bent edges. You use it like a wire hoe... Except this one is sharper! The only regrets I have about it is that I should have used a sturdier piece of metal for the blade, and (if I had access to a lathe) I would have liked a more comfortable handle. Otherwise, refer to the picture.



## 2022 Alaska State Fair "Experience the Wonder"



### **Volunteers needed to be part of the largest garden exhibit in Alaska**

Entry & Judging days at the Alaska State Fair's Crops & Flowers Departments are a fun atmosphere to meet new people & catch up with old friends.

It is a great opportunity to learn something new and to share your own gardening experiences.

You can even earn some credits for Master Gardener volunteer hours!

#### **~ Entry Clerks ~**

**Wednesdays, August 24 & August 31**

**Three shifts available... 12-5 PM, 3-8 PM and 5-9 PM**

Help Exhibitors fill out entry forms correctly, explain the use of the Exhibitor Guide, assist with verbal direction on preparation of submissions for judging, and placement of entries in the display area.

#### **~ Judges Clerks ~**

**Thursdays, August 25 & September 1 from 8 AM-Noon**

Record winning results, set up and place ribbons for the final display.

#### **~ Extra Hands Needed ~**

**Tuesdays, August 30 from 10AM-2PM & September 6 from 9 AM-1PM**

Looking for a handful or two of volunteers to help with 1<sup>st</sup> Entry take down, 2<sup>nd</sup> Entry set up, ribbon sorting, and final shut down of department for the season.

For more information contact Kathy Liska – Horticulture Supervisor  
(907) 301-0317 cell or [akliska@aol.com](mailto:akliska@aol.com)

**Volunteers make it happen!**



## May 2nd Meeting Minutes

### Submitted by Secretary Isaac Vaughan

Present: Dorte Mobley, Isaac Vaughan, Ellie Hurley, Susie Hayes, Thomas Cappiello, Jenny and Todd Weaver, Chris Wood, Curt and Marge Muller, Eva Cohnen-Brown, Bonnie Hager, Greg Kalal, Ken and Debbie Blaylock, Ginger Sweeney, Jeanette Willis, Cathy Crew, Craig Lisonbee.

Opening and welcoming: Dorte Mobley

Previous meeting minutes: Correction: Jim Fault may find someone to host (Birchtree Charter School gardens), not host a garden tour himself. Correction approved by Kenneth Blaylock, seconded by Bonnie Hager.

Treasurer's report: Conference made less money than expected, but with less hassle: the registration was lowered, we had to pay for catering, and there were fewer vendors than expected. Moved to approve by Ken Blaylock, seconded by Bonnie Hager.

Garden Tours: Looking for Garden Tour locations.

Membership: "One or two" new members from the conference... 81 total. Membership flyer: will be handed/mailed out.

Midsummer Garden and Art Fair: Cancelled and refunded! Kristina Tornqvist dropped off a letter of disappointment at the new charges to non-profit groups, along with notice of boycott.

Palmer Plantings: Our supplier (namely P&M) has aphid infestation. Looking for new plant supplier.

Plant sale: June 4<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00am-3:00pm. Bring your own table[s], chair[s], water, and lunch. Kristina Tornqvist suggested that we move the club percentage take from 20% down to 15%, was voted out at a ratio of 7:5. Cathy Crew requested that the price be listed at even dollars... She does not want to calculate change. \$10,000 gross income predicted from the plant sale.

Rebarchek: Barn will be a meeting location once it gets refurbished.

Speaker coordinator wanted.

State fair prizes: Nothing new.

Curt Muller had a cool float idea for the fair: Explorer finding the fountain of youth, holding his root beer mug underneath the spigot. Blaylocks volunteered a truck and driver (thanks Mr. Blaylock!).

Webpage: Avian Flu outbreak update posted by Eva Cohnen-Brown.

Nothing new on other church as meeting location... Sue Glenn (absent) has been doing insurance stuff.

Next Meeting: June 13<sup>th</sup> at Palmer library. Ken Blaylock volunteered to speak on Big Cabbage Radio about the Mat-Su Master Gardeners and the upcoming plant sale.

Conference presentations will only be available on the website until the 15<sup>th</sup> of May.

## 2022 Standing Committee Volunteers

- **Monthly Newsletter** - Deb Blaylock, publisher
- **Website Manager** - Eva Cohnen-Brown
- **Guest speakers & meeting space coordinator for monthly regular meetings:** - **Vacant**
- **Membership Directory** - Kristina Tornqvist
- **Rebarchek Farm Project** - Michael Kircher
- **Annual Plant Sale** - Isaac Vaughan
- **Palmer Library & Pioneer Home Planting** - Sue Glenn
- **Midsummer Garden & Art Faire** - Craig Lisonbee
- **Summer Garden Tours** - Kristina Tornqvist and Dorte Mobley
- **Alaska State Fair awards** - Deb Blaylock
- **State Fair Parade** - Curt Mueller
- **Nominations Committee** - **Vacant**
- **2022 Christmas Party** - **Vacant**

As you can see, some of our 2022 Standing Committees still need volunteers. Please contact one of the board members if you would like to fill one of the vacancies. Thank you!

## Garden Links (updated Apr 2022)

**Alaska Botanical Garden**

<http://www.alaskabg.org/>

**Alaska Center for Conservation Science**

<http://aknhp.uaa.alaska.edu/botany/>

**Arbor Day Foundation**

[www.arboday.org](http://www.arboday.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 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/>

**Georgeson Botanical Garden \*New\***

<https://georgesonbotanicalgarden.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/>

**Matanuska Experiment Farm and Extension Services**

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

**Palmer Soil & Water Conservation**

<http://palmersoilandwater.org/>

**Society of American Foresters, Cook Inlet Chapter**

<https://forestry.org/alaska/>

**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](http://www.fruit.usask.ca)

**USDA/NRCS Plant Database**

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





## CLUB CONTACT INFO

<b>President:</b>	<b>Dorte Mobley</b>	<b>907-232-5422</b>
<b>Vice President:</b>	<b>Kristina Tornqvist</b>	<b>907-795-6393</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Isaac Vaughan</b>	<b>dnavon@msn.com</b>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Cathy Crew</b>	<b>907-632-4401</b>
<b>Member at Large:</b>	<b>Sue Glenn</b>	<b>907-671-0252</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

### JUNE 2022 AND BEYOND

**May – Jun**, Palmer, Composting Classes,  
<https://ellenvandevisse.com/>

**Jun 4**, Palmer, Palmer Pavilion, Annual Plant Sale

**Jun 9, 1 pm**, Palmer, Veterans and Pioneers Home Planting (Contact Sue Glenn to sign up)

**Jun 13**, Palmer, Regular Meeting, Planting at Palmer Public Library

**Jul/Aug**, TBD, Summer Garden Tour(s)

**Aug 19 – Sep 5**, Palmer, Alaska State Fair, "Experience the Wonder"

**Sep 12**, Palmer, Regular Meeting, TBD

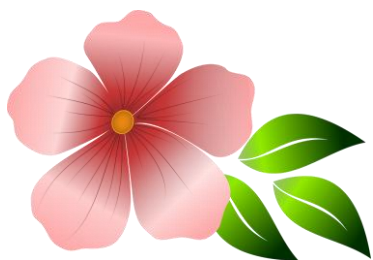
**Oct 3**, Palmer, Regular Meeting, TBD

**Nov 7**, Palmer, Regular Meeting, TBD

**Dec 5**, Palmer, Christmas Party

Don't forget to check out the photos tab on our webpage! Eva updates it periodically from activities our Association participates in.

<https://www.matsumastergardeners.com/photos.html>



## 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, 2022, 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 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.

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--**



June 2022



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**Facebook**

Website: [www.matsumastergardeners.com/](http://www.matsumastergardeners.com/)  
Email: [matsumastergardeners@gmail.com](mailto:matsumastergardeners@gmail.com)

**MAT-SU MASTER GARDENERS  
ASSOCIATION  
PO BOX 598  
PALMER, AK 99645**

