



## President's Patch

By President Deb Blaylock

Ten hours and twenty-six minutes of daylight! We're working our way up to full-blown spring sun! The spring equinox will be here on March 20th. My grow shelves are filled with all kinds of herbs and alliums and even a few slower growing flowers. Peppers will be sown this week and tomatoes and a few other things are scheduled for the first week of March. Soon, I'll be firing up the grow tent in my greenhouse and carrying flats of plants out of my overflowing grow room (aka the laundry room).

While we're waiting on seeds to sprout, more sunshine, melting snow and the earth to thaw, I highly recommend checking out the goings on at the Matanuska Experiment Farm and Extension Center. Even though the offices are still closed due to COVID, the folks over there have been remarkably busy creating ways to stay in touch with their customers. Jodie Anderson and Ann Biddle do a Facebook live show every Wednesday from 2:30 to 3:30 called Walk About Wednesday. Its always an informative and entertaining show.

They've also been busy putting together classes ranging from seed starting to trap crops. Last week Joey Slowik, IPM Technician, gave an informative class on Trap Crops in the Home Garden. This week Steve Brown will give a class on Soil Sampling and Marion Owen gives a class on Seed Starting. These classes will be held via Zoom. Here's the link to all their upcoming classes and how to sign up:

<https://www.uaf.edu/ces/districts/matsu/>. Next month their theme is Sustainable Living and there should be some great classes on the schedule. I recommend signing up for a few of them. It's a good way to beat Cabin Fever and fuel up your Garden Fever.

Our next meeting will be a Zoom meeting and we should have the link later this week. Don't forget to "Spring Forward" on March 14<sup>th</sup> as that's when Daylight Savings Time begins. Hopefully, we'll be able

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### GENERAL MEETINGS

FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

**NEXT GENERAL MEETING**

**MONDAY, MARCH 1ST, 2020, 7 P.M.**

**LOCATION: ONLINE ZOOM PRESENTATION**

**BUSINESS MEETING AT 7 P.M.**

### SPEAKER/TOPIC

**CARMEN SUMMERFIELD.**

**SHE IS AN AIRLINE PILOT WHO FLIES INTERNATIONALLY. CARMEN WILL GIVE A TALK ABOUT THE DIFFERENT PARKS SHE HAS VISITED IN EUROPE AND ASIA, HOW PARKS WORK, THEIR DIFFERENCES, AND HOW THEY COMBINE GARDEN AND ART.**

**ZOOM MEETING INFORMATION WILL BE EMAILED OUT AS SOON AS ITS AVAILABLE.**

to meet in person in the near future. I miss all your smiling faces! See you on the 1<sup>st</sup>!

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

Photo submitted by the author

It has been said that Alaska has nine months of winter and three months of poor sleighing. This may be a little of a stretch, probably dreamed up by some gardener near the end of February as he wearied of snow and cold and was impatient to get things growing. A light snow the morning after the previous one of minus temperatures doesn't do much to encourage thoughts of spring. March is sure to see some changes and a heightening of enthusiasm as we prepare for another growing season. We knew winter was coming, we prepared for it, sure enough we got winter, and we enjoy it. Texas didn't have that privilege. As one who patched frozen pipes in seismic exploration's mobile camps, the peasant feels for the people of Texas and the damage, and the cost it takes to put things to right, but people are resilient and will go on.

February has been a time of seeding for some people. Annual flowers and vegetables and herbs that need an early start have been seeded and March will surely bring the time to continue the

process of getting ready for the outdoor growing season. The long days are coming quickly and at an increasing rate. Nature does not wait! The ravens have their shiny mating plumage, squirrels are active, winter birds are active, moose are thriving, trees will soon show fattening buds - there is no holding it back.

The peasant has thrown in a couple of scenes, one wintry and one of summer - may you enjoy them. Thanks, folks.



Nature's bounteous harvest



Window on winter's world

## Dirt Words By Dorte Mobley

I read an old garden magazine and found an interesting little article about soil. I decided to dig deeper and find out more about these words that I don't remember having heard before. And then I thought – "Why not share it with you!"

When we look at our soil in the garden, it is not just a substance that has always been there and looked like that. Soil starts out as something called *regolith*. It is an inorganic blanket of loose dust, broken rocks, volcanic ash, glacial deposits, and debris that has been deposited by various geological processes. Or it can be from weathering of the bedrock. It is in a loose form and has not been compacted by fusion, pressure, or a cementing action which could make it into another kind of rock.

Our soil is dependent on five major factors: climate (all weather conditions at that soil site), organisms (bacteria, fungi, plants, and animals), relief (the topography or lay-of-the-land), the parent material (the regolith), and time. All of these factors explain why one of you living on the one side of the Valley have a totally different soil than another gardener just a few miles away. This also explains why so many of us have low pH soils to begin with, because general conditions are the same across the Valley, like the parent materials.

If you want to study this topic more in depth, you can study pedology, which is the discipline within soil science that focuses on understanding soil formation and evolution. Pedology comes from the word *pedon*, which is old Greek for soil, and *logos*, meaning study. A ped is also a name for aggregates of soil particles.

## REBARCHECK FARM PROJECT UPDATE

By committee chair, Michael Kircher



Our arbor is a little lonely out there by itself, a situation we hope to remedy this summer. The next step would be to add a fence or fence sections to delineate the corners and bring them up to the arbor. We probably should have that done by a fencing company to get the ball rolling. That would free us up to move forward with other developments such as raised beds, trees, perennial planting, etc.

We still need someone to make a sign identifying the section as Master Gardeners, if there are any artsy people out there. The size can vary but should fit on the front of the arbor or a larger free-standing one by the side, depending on how ambitious one is. Other groups such as FFA are becoming active out there. Remember last year they completed a fairly large greenhouse, which we can use if we want to. Let's hope the weather cooperates this year.

You can contact Michael at his email: [urbanag@gci.net](mailto:urbanag@gci.net) with any ideas on making a sign for our plot.

## Mat-Su Master Gardener Meeting Minutes: February 1, 2021

Submitted by Secretary Dorte Mobley

Present were: Deb and Ken Blaylock, Dorte Mobley, Phyllis Kircher, Sue Glenn, Eva Brown, Michael Kircher, Kristina Tornqvist, Cathy Crew, Gregory Kalal.

Treasurer Cathy Crew presented the budget. Kristina Tornqvist moved, and Ken seconded to accept the budget. There were questions about the budget that were answered. Nobody opposed the budget, and it was approved unanimously. Cathy presented the January treasurer report. Kristina motioned to approve, Sue seconded, and the motion passed.

The January meeting minutes had been emailed out prior to the meeting. Kristina Tornqvist moved to approve the minutes as presented and Ken seconded, and the motion passed.

President Deb Blaylock went over the various committee volunteers as more members have been added to some committees. Some committees still have nobody in charge and Deb reminded committee members to choose a chair within each committee.

Sue and Kristina have finalized the 2021 Membership Directory. It was mailed out to the membership.

For the upcoming March 1 Zoom meeting, Carmen Summerfield will be our guest speaker. Carmen is an airline pilot who flies internationally. She has long been incredibly involved in the Valley Arts Alliance and has also been active in many different garden and arts projects in the Valley. Carmen will give a talk about different parks she has visited. As an airline pilot, she has had lots of opportunities to visit many parks in Europe and Asia. She will talk about how parks work and how they differ from each other as well as how they combine garden and art.

Reminder - to participate in the 2021 Annual Plant Sale, you must be a member by the May 2021 meeting. Annual Plant sale sign-up will happen at the April and May 2021 meetings.

The Anchorage Master Gardeners are putting on another Advanced Master Gardener class. The course begins March 3rd. An email was sent out with information. Info and Registration link:

[https://www.alaskamastergardeners.org/advanced\\_mg\\_program.html](https://www.alaskamastergardeners.org/advanced_mg_program.html)

Women in Ag Conference will be March 20th (8 am, Zoom) - Online. Women in Ag Conference registration link:

<https://forms.gle/MqtXJ6SNSsUiymjf9>

The Alaska Botanical Garden Spring Conference March 4 & 5 - Online. Info and registration link:

<https://www.alaskabg.org/spring-conference-2021.html>

The meeting was adjourned at 7:29pm.

The evening's presenter was Dorte Mobley who had compiled pictures and ideas for keeping a journal of your garden.

### What's Happening in March at the Matanuska Experiment Farm and Extension Center?

Their March theme is "Sustainable Living."

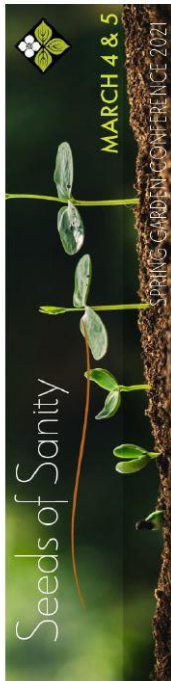
Ann & Jodie's Walkabout Wednesday every week 2:15 - 3:15.

Jodie is doing a class called Composting: one part of your personal sustainable lifestyle, March 2 from 12 - 1.

Listen to Jodie on Big Cabbage Radio (89.7 FM) on March 2 at 8:00 to get updates.

Like their Facebook page to get the latest scoop on what's going on and how to attend.

Seeds of Sanity, Alaska Botanical Garden Spring Conference, more information at: <https://www.alaskabg.org/spring-conference-2021.html>



**Virtual Spring Garden Conference 2021**  
*Seeds of Sanity*  
 March 4 & 5  
 3:00pm-8:00pm via Zoom

ABG is excited to offer our annual Spring Garden Conference as a virtual experience this year! While we would love to meet in person, the online format provides the FULL Conference experience with access to ALL the great presenters (no need to choose between concurrent sessions)!

We all seek peace and tranquility by spending time tending our gardens amongst our favorite plants. Last year, when we found ourselves unable to gather with friends and family, we often turned to our garden spaces as a way of coping with the isolation.

ABG is bringing the gardening community together through two days filled with workshops and lectures to get you off to a great start on your gardening journey this summer. You can join us for both days or just "pop-out" when you have time. Registration includes access to 15+ speakers as well as vendors and live music for both days along with access to recordings of each of the key speakers. Recordings will be made available to ticket holders after the conference.

No single day registrations. A separate Zoom link for each day will be emailed to participants a few days prior to the Conference. With 2020 behind us, let's get ready to sow some *Seeds of Sanity* into our garden spaces and start the growing season off right!

**Thursday March 4th, 2021 Schedule- All Times Are In Alaska Standard Time**

3:00	Mike Montersuso	Opening Remarks/Welcoming
3:05	Lindsay Clark	Leaf ID with Chocolate
3:15	Tori Gignras, Art Nash, Deshauna York	<b>Accessible Gardening for All-</b> Individuals who experience barriers that limit their access to or make it challenging to enjoy gardening may wonder if there are solutions to improving their experience. AgrAbility is a USDA-funded program that helps agriculture workers navigate the solutions and services available to keep them in the garden or farm. Join us in discussing environmental considerations, planters, and adaptive tools for a more accessible garden.
4:15	Claire Kaufman	<b>Garden Maintenance – Tips and tricks-</b> Planting a garden is the fun part, but once the planting is done, the real work begins. We will drive into different techniques that you can use to keep your gardens looking their best throughout the seasons. We will touch on the basics – weeding and watering, and will delve into more advanced techniques such as deadheading, staking, shaping, dividing and more. You will leave this presentation with a tool kit that will help focus your maintenance efforts, leaving your gardens looking better and giving you more time to spend enjoying them!

4:40	Emily Becker	<b>Starting a Seed Library in your Neighborhood</b> - Last March, the Airport Heights neighborhood turned a "Little Free Library" into a "Little Free Seed Library." I'll show what we did, what worked, what challenges we encountered, and how we plan to make it even more successful in 2021.
5:10	Ellen VanderVise	<b>What a Difference Cover Crop Can Make!</b> - Compost & fertilizers are not the only way to enrich your gardens. Come learn how to let nature build your soil while you relax. Growing cover crops are fun and easy—even in a small garden.
6:20	Debbie Hinchey	<b>Tree Basics</b> - Learn about planning, transplanting, root systems, branch structures, pruning, and more!
7:20	Jessica Thompson	<b>How to Grow a Hoppity Gardener!</b> - Learn the basics of how to grow hops in your back yard for brewing beer. From planting to harvesting, we'll cover everything you need to know for growing and harvest your hops, this presentation will give a brief overview of how to get started for that hoppity back yard!
7:40	Matt Iverson	<b>Social Home-</b> learn to make cocktails and mocktails with your garden herbs
8:00	Stacey Shriner	Closing Remarks

**Friday, March 5th, 2021 Schedule- All Times Are In Alaska Standard Time**

3:00	Mike Montersuso	Opening Remarks/Welcoming
3:05	Gina Dione	<b>Creating a Container Garden.</b> Container gardening has become very popular, and for good reason! In this session, we will learn how to choose the right plants and containers to allow you to grow your own food on a sunny deck, windowsill and other non-traditional spaces.
4:05	Debbie Hinchey	<b>Metal Leaf Craft</b>
4:30	Saskia Eslinger	<b>Introduction to Permaculture for Alaskan Gardeners.</b> This intensive workshop explores the connection between permaculture and Alaska. How can we use the wisdom of the land that are less toil and trouble. By enlisting the help of nature as our ally, we can create more harmonious gardens that have natural beauty and productivity.
5:40	Cynde Warbelow	<b>Moving into Your Garden for the Summer: Ideas for Creating Outdoor Living Spaces</b> Most of us don't want to waste a minute of Alaska's spectacular but short summer season, so we spend as many of the long daylight hours as we can outdoors. I propose that we just move our living spaces into our yards. I have ideas, in words and in photos, which I will present to support this concept. This move outdoors can be a simple secluded seating area, a space for outdoor cooking or a quiet place for sleeping. I'll also address using woody and herbaceous perennials, annuals and even vegetables as the bones of these garden rooms.
6:45	Will Cramer and Gail Hoefler	<b>Meconopsis, The Himalayan Poppy In Alaska.</b> Come join ABG staff and the volunteers who have dedicated a number of years to creating a Meconopsis collection. We will be discussing all things Meconopsis from their origins to growing them in your own garden.
7:45	Mike Montersuso	ABC Year in Review
8:00	Stacey Shriner	Closing Remarks

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

**USDA/NRCS Plant Data Base**

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



## CLUB CONTACT INFO

<b>President:</b>	<b>Deb Blaylock</b>	<b>746-6045/kdblayment@ak.net</b>
<b>Vice President:</b>	<b>Kristina Tornqvist</b>	<b>797-6393</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Dorte Mobley</b>	<b>232-5422</b>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Cathy Crew</b>	<b>632-4401</b>
<b>Member at Large:</b>	<b>Sue Glenn</b>	<b>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

### MARCH 2021 AND BEYOND

- Mar 1**, Palmer, MMGA meeting, TBD  
**Mar 4-5**, Zoom, 2021 ABG Virtual Spring Garden Conference,  
<https://www.alaskabg.org/spring-conference-2021.html>  
**Mar 20**, Zoom, Alaska Women in Ag Conference, <https://forms.gle/MqtXJ6SNSsUiyjmif9>  
**Mar 3 - Apr 7**, Zoom, Advanced Master Gardener Class,  
[https://www.alaskamastergardeners.org/advanced\\_mg\\_program.html](https://www.alaskamastergardeners.org/advanced_mg_program.html)  
**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--**



March 2021



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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**

