



## President's Patch

By President Jenny Weaver

What a wonderful time of year! Our daylight hours continue to lengthen, and we enter that highly anticipated time of spring in Alaska. I can visualize our members throughout the Valley planning their summer gardens.

What are you doing to get your various garden plots, raised beds, planters, baskets, pots, and tubs ready for this summer? What new varieties of vegetables and flowers will you try? Have you experimented with coir as a starter, or transplant medium? Is anyone giving soil blocks a go? What amendments should you add to strengthen your soil? Will you rotate veggies, herbs, and flowers to make better use of nutrients and hinder diseases and pests? How can you enhance plant growth and pest control through companion planting? What can you do to stimulate growth and keep weeds at bay? Should you mulch, use ground cover, construct low tunnels or cold frames?

Are you as motivated as I am to try Ellen Vande Visse's recipes to enhance boron and calcium absorption in plants? Did you see her pics of bottom rot and think, "Has Ellen been reading my mail!"

With all these considerations, I also wonder about issues beyond my control. What are the repercussions of a winter that got cold quickly, without snow cover, followed by torrential rain that removed all the snow cover and left behind an icy mess? Will my perennials that I didn't mulch return? Will my strawberry beds and the shrubs I transplanted from Julie's Aurora Nursery, or my larch trees (in their second year of potted growth) survive? We shall soon see.

For Valley gardeners, it's go time! These next months are when my living room becomes a true atrium, with every windowsill, tabletop, and floor space filled with a multitude of starts

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### REGULAR MEETINGS

FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

**NEXT MEETING**

**MARCH 3RD, 7:00 P.M.**

**LOCATION:**

**AT THIS TIME THE LOCATION OF OUR NEXT MEETING IS UNDETERMINED. LOCATION WILL BE SENT OUT VIA EMAIL AND FACEBOOK POST ONCE CONFIRMED.**

**AGENDA**

**7:00 TO 7:30 PM REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING**

**7:30 SPEAKER:**

**DAVID IANSON**

**MYCORRHIZAL FUNGI: KEYSTONE SPECIES FOR SOIL HEALTH**

in various stages of growth. I am excited at the prospect of transferring to my greenhouse (for the first time) and to regain use of my living room before the first week of June.

I look forward to seeing all of you at our March 3rd meeting!

## SOMEWHERE IN THYME

A WAYBACK ARTICLE FROM A PAST MMGA PUBLICATION – ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAR 2012

### Drip Irrigation

by Master Gardener Curt Mueller

The use of various systems for getting maximum use out of available water for irrigating plants has been largely pioneered by people in arid and semi-arid areas. Israel has used techniques to good advantage in production of food from plant sources. In our own area we have a greater abundance of water available, yet there are some real advantages to using various types of drip irrigation, and conserving water can have real advantages also.

The system we're using goes by the trade name of Rain-Drip. Far North Garden Supply and Lowes carry components for the brand. At present we're using a drip-hose setup in our vegetable garden. Components are 1/4" outside diameter drip-hose, 1/2" supply lines, various plastic tees elbows and fittings, a water filter, a pressure regulator, and a pressurized water supply.

Our vegetable garden is entirely in raised beds, which lends itself well to using the drip-hose. We've been working toward using the system throughout the garden and hope to reach that goal this season. It has worked very well, and the cost of material has not been excessive. Advantages in addition to water conservation are as follows: Only those beds that need water are irrigated, preventing overwatering where not needed. Plant leaves are not soaked with water as the hoses water only the soil. There is no interference with pollination as in the case of strawberries. Where crops are grown using plastic or mulch as a cover the hose can be covered and still fulfill its usefulness. It is a convenient way to water a fairly large garden area.

The supply hoses are buried shallowly underground where they run from bed to bed. It has not been necessary to drain them over winter as they expand along with freezing water. Filtering the water may not be necessary, but it helps prolong the useful life of the drip-hose. The hose itself is flexible and can be laid aside for the purpose of harvesting root vegetables. The purpose of the regulator is to reduce pressure from the supply to 15 P.S.I. The drip hose does not work well with too much pressure. Experience tells us that 12' runs of drip hose are about maximum length that works well.

Some of our beds are 25' long or more. For those to get watered evenly, a 1/2" supply line is run along one side of the bed, and the drip-hoses are run across the bed at intervals of 18 to 24 inches. The supply line is punctured with a hand tool and an adapter inserted for each drip-hose. The adapters are inexpensive plastic. A plastic plug is inserted into the outside end of the hose. It's best to anchor the drip hose to hold it in place. A small staple over the plug end works well or a u-shaped wire could be pushed into the soil.

Let it suffice to say that we're well pleased with using this watering technique. For anyone interested in making use of this system I'd be willing to provide some help in planning it. Far North Garden Supply has some pamphlets that explain the products and how to use them. When our garden season gets here you could check out our setup as well. It's really quite simple to install, but a bit of experience is always helpful.

**Editor's note:** Far North Garden Supply is closed. Two online resources for irrigation supplies and information are:  
<https://www.dripdepot.com/> and  
<https://www.dripworks.com/>.

### March 3<sup>rd</sup> Guest Speaker

David Ianson received his MS from Utah State University in Crop Physiology focusing on alleviating plant stress through the use of the mycorrhiza association. He received his doctorate from Oregon State University researching Plant-Microbe Interactions (especially mycorrhizae-rhizobium-legumes) when plants are under drought stress. He completed post-doctoral research in expanding on the benefits of the mycorrhiza associations with rhizosphere microorganisms.

He conducted international research with Mexico's Consejo Nacional de Ciencia y Tecnologia (Conacyt) researching communication between nitrogen fixing plants and cacti via mycorrhizal bridges. He has worked with the USDA-Agricultural Research Service and is currently the State Agronomist for the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service.



David will speak on:

Mycorrhizal Fungi: Keystone Species for Soil Health

- What are these associations
- Benefits and disadvantages
- Who responds and who does not (and why)
- Obligate vs Facultative Symbiosis
- Seven different types of fungal associations
- Flowchart of what to do

### WHAT'S UP?

by Jenny Weaver

Our February meeting lit up the night! Ellen Vande Visse's presentation was great fun. Ellen possesses a wonderful, sort of laid-back style and yet she managed to rope us all in to help during her demonstration! Then she shared the end product with everyone and sent us home with some Borax to make magical portions on our own. Thank you, Ellen!

The agenda for March 3 includes brainstorming sessions for the Annual Plant Sale and the Pioneer Home Planting Committees. Please feel free to speak up, share your ideas, and consider joining one of these committees.

If there is one thing I have learned in my 30+ years gardening on Lazy Mountain, is that Alaska gardening is like gardening nowhere else. We experience a short and often chilly growing season, but the intensity and length of our daylight hours outdoes the rest of the planet. The glacial soils of the Valley provide their own benefits and trials. And then we face a multitude of bug pests, diseases, and moose!

Tackling these issues requires a wealth of knowledge. The hands-on, in-the-Valley expertise of our membership is quite impressive. We would be remiss not to **share** our experiences, our successes and failures, and our own ideas and plans with the group. At the bottom of each future agenda will be a line item titled "Announcements." I hope you might consider sharing your ideas and "insider info" with us during this allotted time.

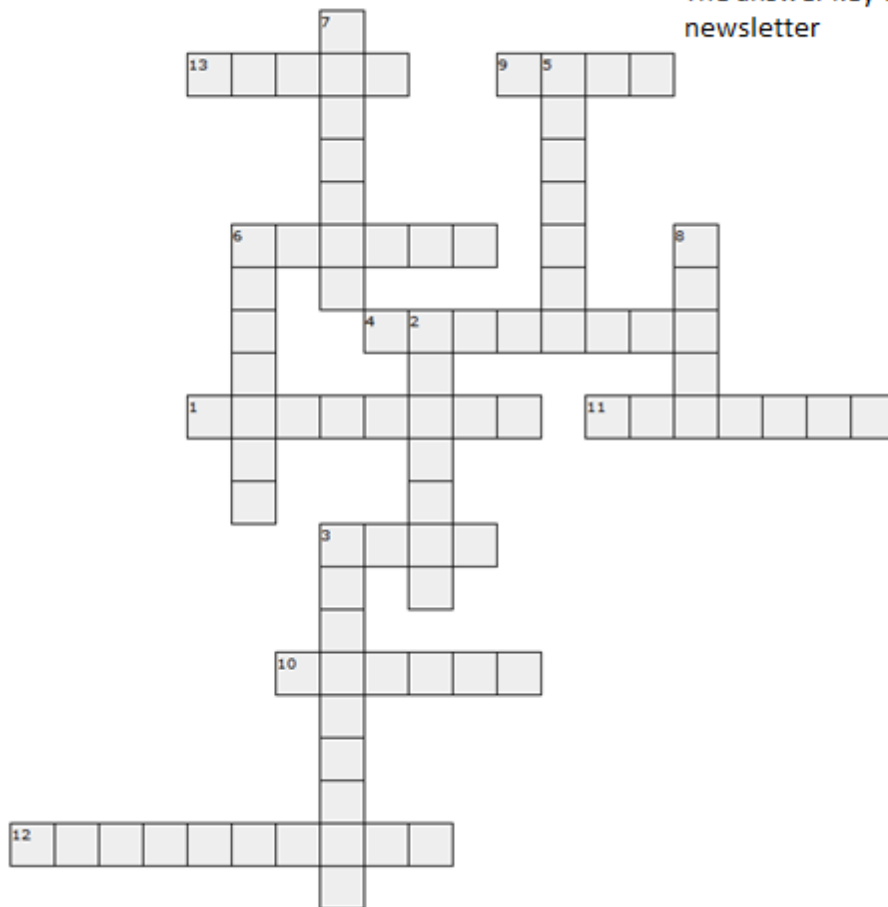
As guest speaker at our March meeting, David Ianson PhD, State Agronomist will share his depth of knowledge regarding mycorrhizae. What do **you** know about mycorrhizae? Can you pronounce it? Spell it? Come learn more about these beneficial fungi and what they can do for our soil and gardens.

I hope to see you on Monday, March 3. Although our club roster boasts 61 members, we rarely see more than 20 people per meeting. Please join us. Invite a friend. Don't forget Zooming in as a possibility.

Good things are happening with Mat-Su Master Gardeners!

## Soils and Fertilizer

Test your knowledge of soils and fertilizers.  
The answer key will be in next months newsletter



### Across:

- \_\_\_\_\_ is essential for the synthesis of proteins and chlorophyll, which gives the green color to plants.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is basically weathered rock, decaying remains of living organisms – plants and animals – and microorganisms.
- A \_\_\_\_\_ (two words) gives information on the levels of nutrients in your soil and recommends how much fertilizer to add each year based on the test results and the crops you grow.
- In order to break down the \_\_\_\_\_ compounds in the plant tissue, microorganisms consume Nitrogen (N).
- \_\_\_\_\_ particles are smaller than 0.002 mm.
- The three secondary macronutrients are: Calcium, Magnesium, and \_\_\_\_\_.
- These are the five soil \_\_\_\_\_ factors: parent material, climate, topography, living organisms, and time.
- The three primary macronutrients are: Nitrogen, \_\_\_\_\_ and potassium.
- You may need to \_\_\_\_\_ soil pH if you wish to grow acid-loving plants.

### Down:

- \_\_\_\_\_ matter in soil is made up of the remains of plants and animals.
- The arrangement of soil particles or aggregates is referred to as soil \_\_\_\_\_.
- Nitrogen is the nutrient needed in the \_\_\_\_\_ amount by plants.
- \_\_\_\_\_ aids in the development of leaves and roots and is essential part of the cell wall structure.
- The \_\_\_\_\_ (particle size distribution) of a soil is determined by the relative amounts of sand, silt and clay present.
- One of the main functions of soil is to store \_\_\_\_\_ and supply it to plants between rainfalls or irrigations.



## February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025 MMGA Meeting Minutes

submitted by Secretary Jana Gooch

### Members present:

-Georgiana Gooch	-Leslie Scott
-Craig & Mary Lisonbee	-James Patrick
-David Thompson	-Todd Weaver
-Kay Fyfe	-Jenny Weaver
-Rebecca Emerson	-Pearl Weaver
-Pearl Weaver	-Ellen VandeVisse
-Rhonda Schneider	GUESTS:
-Kristen Buchta	-Barb Crozier
-Eva Cohnen-Brown	VIA ZOOM:
-Ken Blaylock	-Sue Wallin
-Debby Blaylock	-Laurel Flynn
-Theresa Phillips	-Dawn Wolski
-Greg Kalal	
-Cathy Crew	
-Kristina Tornqvist	
-Sue Glenn	
-Carlene Van Tol	

Meeting opened at 7:03 pm

Last month's meeting minutes: It was agreed there were no minutes to approve of from last month.

Treasurer's Report: 61 members so far. The club's Biennial Report has been completed. Kristina Tornquist moved that we accept the report. Ken Blaylock seconded.

### Committee Reports:

Annual Plant Sale - Deb Blaylock only has 500 yellow, and 600 white of the plant tags left. She requested approval to purchase 2000 yellows and 4000 white tags for an approximate cost of \$200. Motion by Kristina Tornquist that we approve the purchase of the plant labels. Ken Blaylock seconded. Motion passed. We will revisit the amended budget next month.

Veterans & Pioneer Home Planting - Happens two weeks after the Annual Plant Sale.

Colony Days Parade Float - Occurs on Saturday, June 14, 2025.

Rebarchek - We will investigate an offer by Rebarchek and look at options for meeting rooms and space.

Garden Tours - Need a couple volunteers for hosting tours.

Guest Speakers - We are set up for the next three months.

Newsletter - We are always looking for persons to author articles.

Website - Eva Cohnen-Brown is in charge of the website.

Meeting Room & Equipment - We will address this issue later as there are changes happening.

Nomination Committee - Nothing much to report.

Christmas Party - Everyone agreed we had fun this past year at the party. Jana Gooch will be in charge of the party next year.

We need committee chairs for the Midsummer Garden & Art Faire, the State Fair Awards, and the Grants & Scholarships committees. For the Midsummer Garden & Art Faire, we were offered a free booth if we do workshops at the event. Kristen Buchta offered to help with this. Also, on the Grants & Scholarships committee; we aren't doing much on that currently, and maybe we would want to do a grant as we already have a grant form.

Committee Brainstorming During Monthly Meetings - We are looking for ideas for the months of March, April, and May.

Statewide Master Gardeners Conference 2026 - We hosted the 2022 conference. Juneau is hosting this year (2025) on May 16-18 in Juneau.

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We usually follow Fairbanks in the hosting cycle; however, we could consider hosting a conference in 2026 and perhaps get the Extension Cooperative Service to contact UAA for us. Also, we could consider including the Peony Society in our conference.

Changes at the Palmer Cooperative Extension Service (CES) - Theresa Isaac is resigning and the CES is unsure of a replacement. We have a new director at the CES now. One of the issues is we have been using the CES Zoom account, and we need to look at perhaps paying for our own Zoom account - however, at this time we are uncertain where we will be holding our club meetings in the next two months.

Alaska State Fair Bench for Dan Elliot - Sue Wallin needs the specifications for the concrete bench and would like it to be installed before the fair opens this coming year. It was asked if we could go in as partners with other groups and it was agreed that we would discuss this at a later meeting.

#### Announcements:

Master Gardener Courses in 2025 - These courses are on hold as they are revising the workbook and will not finish it until summertime.

Local Garden Courses - There was an Alaska Farm & Garden Show this past weekend that was well attended and was interesting.

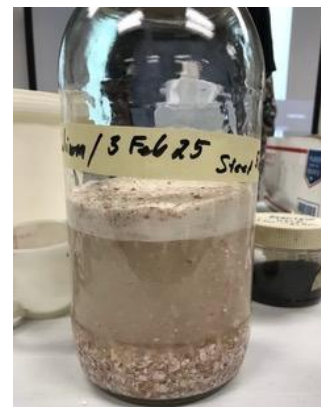
Valley Community Gardens - There are community gardens all over the valley and they offer great opportunities for our Master Gardeners to volunteer to help.

Our speaker for the evening was Ellen Vande Visse who made an interesting and interactive presentation on various homemade solutions for the garden.

Meeting adjourned at 8:57 pm

## February Meeting Photos

Photos by Pearl Weaver



## Garden Links (updated March 2024)

### Alaska AgrAbility Program **\*\*New Mar 2024\*\***

<https://www.uaf.edu/ces/agriculture/agrability/index.php>

### Alaska Botanical Garden

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

### Alaska Center for Conservation Science

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

### Alaska Community Forestry

<https://forestry.alaska.gov/community/index>

### Arbor Day Foundation

[www.arborday.org](http://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 Native Plant Society

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

### Alaska Non-Native Species List

<https://accs.uaa.alaska.edu/invasive-species/non-native-plant-species-list/>

### 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/>

### Flora of North America

<http://floranorthamerica.org/>

### Good Earth Garden School

<https://www.goodearthgardenschool.com/>

### Georgeson Botanical Garden

<https://georgesonbotanicalgarden.org/>

### iNaturalist **\*\*\*New May 2024\*\*\***

<https://www.inaturalist.org/>

### Integrated Pest Management Program

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/ipm/>

### IPM Alaska Pest Reporter

<https://plw.man.mybluehost.me/>



### Junior Master Gardener

<http://www.jmgkids.us/>

### Landscape Plants for Alaska

<https://visionplusapps.com/alaska-plants/>

### 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)

<https://extension.org/search/>

### Master Gardeners of the Tanana Valley

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

### Mat-Su/Copper River Cooperative Extension Service

<https://www.uaf.edu/ces/districts/matsu/>

### Matanuska Experiment Farm and Extension Services

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

### National AgrAbility Program **\*\*New Mar 2024\*\***

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

### Palmer Soil & Water Conservation District

<http://palmersoilandwater.org/>

### Society of American Foresters, Cook Inlet Chapter

<https://forestry.org/cook-inlet-seedling-sale/>

### 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 Herbarium

<http://www.uaf.edu/museum/collections/herb/>

### UAF Alaska Master Gardener Program

<https://www.uaf.edu/ces/garden/mastergardeners/>

### University of Saskatchewan Fruit Program

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

### USDA/NRCS Plant Database

<https://plants.usda.gov/home>

### Wildflower Garden Club of Alaska

<https://wildflowergardenclub.org/>

## BOARD OF DIRECTOR CONTACT INFO

<b>President:</b>	<b>Jenny Weaver</b>	<b>907-982-5446</b>
<b>Vice President:</b>	<b>Kevin Johnson</b>	<b>907-775-2808</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Jana Gooch</b>	<b>907 746-2891</b>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Cathy Crew</b>	<b>907-632-4401</b>
<b>Member at Large:</b>	<b>Deb Blaylock</b>	<b>907-746-6045</b>

If you have gardening news, photos, or information you would 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 2025 AND BEYOND

**Mar 3**, Palmer, Regular Meeting, David Ianson, Mycorrhizal Fungi

**Apr 7**, Palmer, Regular Meeting, Patrick Ryan, To Be Announced.

**May 5**, Palmer, Regular Meeting, Casey Gasch, Soil Health

**May 16-18**, Juneau, State Master Gardener Conference

**May 31**, Palmer, Annual Plant Sale

**June 9**, Palmer, Regular Meeting, Rebarchek Farm Project Day

**June 13-15**, Palmer, Colony Days

**June 14**, Palmer, Colony Days Parade

**Aug 15 – Sep 1**, Palmer, Alaska State Fair

**Sep 8**, Palmer, Regular Meeting

**Oct 6**, Palmer, Regular Meeting

**Nov 3**, Palmer, Annual Meeting

**Dec (TBD)**, 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 **February 3, 2025**, 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 do not 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 needed 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--**





March2025



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Website: [www.matsumastergardeners.com/](http://www.matsumastergardeners.com/)

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