



President's Patch

By President Deb Blaylock

I was very honored to be asked to present at the 2019 State Master Gardeners Conference. There were over 200 folks signed up and the conference had a great array of talented speakers. The Alaska Master Gardeners Anchorage (AMGA) did a fantastic job with the conference – many kudos to those who worked to make it such a great event for gardeners across the state. I hear the 2020 conference may be held in SE Alaska! This would be a great opportunity and I look forward to attending that conference.

Julie Riley announced her retirement at the end of the conference. For those who don't know Julie, she was the Cooperative Extension Service's horticulture agent in the Anchorage CES office for many, many years. She is beloved by the AMGA membership and is very much missed. Budgetary cuts forced CES to lose many programs statewide, which has impacted gardeners and farmers statewide.

There are many more cuts looming on the horizon for the state's agriculture programs. Contact your representatives within the state government and voice your thoughts on these cuts. It may seem like such a small piece of the overall budget "pie," but Alaska's agriculture is an important piece to our food security. Please let your voice be heard!

We may be a small organization, but we are important to our community. Many look forward to our annual plant sale every year. According to Facebook, over 25,000 folks have viewed our event! The deadline for plant sale sign-up is the May 6th meeting. If you can't make the meeting, ask a friend to sign you up – but you MUST be a current member by the meeting. This is also your last chance to pick up labels for the plant sale. If you're not familiar with the plant sale

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GENERAL MEETINGS

FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

NEXT MEETING

MONDAY, MAY 6TH, 7:00 P.M.

LOCATION: MATANUSKA TELEPHONE COMPANY (MTA) BUILDING, MEETING ROOM (IN THE BASEMENT), 480 COMMERCIAL DR., PALMER, AK
DO NOT HAVE TO BE A MEMBER TO ATTEND

SPEAKER/TOPIC

BUSINESS MEETING - 7-7:30 PM

GUEST SPEAKER - 7:30 - 8:30 PM

JAIME RODRIGUEZ WILL BE TALKING ABOUT HOW TO BUILD A ROCK GARDEN.

PLANT SALE SIGN-UP AND PLANT LABEL PICK-UP – MEMBERS ONLY.

procedures, visit our webpage and review the procedures which are published there.

I look forward to seeing you all there! Jaime Rodriguez, owner of The Alpine Garden Nursery, is our presenter and will be talking about building rock gardens.

PEASANT'S PERSPECTIVE: BY CURT MUELLER, MASTER GARDENER

Photo submitted by the author

Inclement? Nay! Mid-April's snow and rain showers are a gardener's friends. They help awaken our trees and perennials and lawns, plus put the damper on fire hazards. Besides that, they give us a break from yard work, as if we needed an excuse. Enjoy!

The peasant has tried to extend the vegetable harvest season over the years, trying some new things and making use of tried and true methods. Today's essay is about making use of plant breeders' developments in producing plants with varying maturities to prolong the harvest season as well as to produce storage varieties to further the enjoyment of produce into the winter.

One crop that seems to produce its edible heads all at once is cauliflower. Mid-season varieties are the most commonly grown and maturity is in the 55- to 65-day range. This is close enough that when seeded at the same time and given the fickle vagaries of our summers, all will be ready to harvest at the same time, and cauliflower stands for only a short period in the garden. The peasant has remedied this to some extent by searching for extra-long maturities to lengthen the harvest season. One variety that has worked well is Callisto at 90 to 105 days. A variety that is very early and promises to produce well before mid-season is White Corona, with a maturity given at 33 days. The peasant grew a couple of those in the greenhouse with uncertain results but expects the variety to do well in the garden. It is certainly worth mentioning that early varieties can do well in containers.

A second planting of cauliflower has some merit, but if done too late the results may be disappointing. If transplanted as the days have begun to shorten the cauliflower doesn't seem to develop as well, but it is certainly worth a try.

The last few years the peasant has grown a cabbage variety called Parel. This one is in the 50-day range and produces a smaller head of excellent quality. The seed was difficult to find this year, but it remains viable for several years. Another early variety with

better availability is Katarina at 45 days. The peasant is trying this variety for 2019. From the early offerings we can go on to a wide range of maturities and sizes. Golden Acre is dependable and still fairly early. Ruby Perfection is late for a red cabbage and stores well, and Princeton at 105 days is the last to be harvested here but stores exceptionally well. Seed availability for Princeton seems to be non-existent so the peasant is trying Decurion, listed as a storage cabbage at 110 days. In 2018 Princeton cabbage was left in the garden until October 28 and stored well into February. The storage cabbages can handle some fairly hard frosts and retain their quality.



This is a Parel cabbage seeded on February 6 and grown in the greenhouse in hopes of producing an edible cabbage. On this date, April 18, it is beginning to form a head. Will it make it?

There you have a couple of approaches for having good quality produce over a longer season. Our growing season may be short, but cool season vegetables do exceedingly well. For our taste and good health, it is well to take advantage of Alaska's bounty.

Thanks, folks.

EARLY SPRING LAWN CARE: BY STEPHEN BROWN, MAT SU/COPPER RIVER DISTRICT AGRICULTURE AGENT

Although the recent late snow was a surprise, the weather forecasters are still predicting an early spring. This tempts folks to go do something in the yard. Patience is strongly advised!

One of the first tasks many people want to do is rake up all the sticks, rocks, trash, etc. that have accumulated since last fall. Don't. Raking too early when soils are still cold and muddy will unnecessarily uproot many healthy grass plants and contribute to soil compaction. Hence, the gardener's rule of thumb – "stay off of wet, muddy soils" - applies as equally to lawns as it does to gardens. Rake when the soil begins to dry out and is no longer soft and muddy under foot.

After snow melt, many people discover areas of their lawn covered with small to medium, circular, light tan patches of what appears to be dead grass. In some cases, these circular patches will coalesce together, forming large areas of dead-appearing grass. This condition is caused by fungi that grow and thrive in cold, moist (but not frozen) conditions. This is snow mold. In home lawns, most of this dead-looking grass is confined to the grass leaves and has not affected the actual growing points of the plant. This allows the grass plant to, literally, outgrow the symptoms. In fact, a light raking to lift up the grass foliage will speed recovery and stimulate growth. There is no need for any fungicide application at this time of year.

Another common over-winter artifact visible in the lawn after the snow melts are narrow, twisting ridges of loose grass blades that cover what appears to be a shallow trench. Voles cause this damage. By the time the damage is visible, the meadow voles have left the area for more protective cover. Damage from these

animals is most common where lawns abut other natural areas like grassy fields or vacant lots. Most of their injury is confined to damaging the grass foliage with little injury to the grass crowns. Simply raking off the loose grass blades and any clumps of uprooted grass plants will help stimulate new growth and recovery.

Early spring is also the time of year when injury from deicing salts used on streets, driveways and sidewalks becomes apparent. Most often, this will take the form of a rather narrow band of dead grass adjacent to those hard surfaces. Sometimes it can also appear as larger dead areas next to the ends of sidewalks or driveways where snow from the street and/or driveway was piled. After a few spring rains or a couple of thorough soakings from a garden hose, these areas can usually be repaired by seeding or sodding without further salt related injury or death. Repair seeding can usually be done as soon as the soil has dried out somewhat and is no longer muddy and soft under foot.



May 6th
Drive Your Tractor to
Work Day

MMGA Minutes, April 1, 2019 - Minutes submitted by Dorte Mobley, Secretary

Present were: Deb and Ken Blaylock, Cathy Crew, Gregory Kalal, Jill Parson, Phyllis and Michael Kircher, Marge and Curt Mueller, Arlene and Wayne Bowman, Sue Glenn, Julie Pollard, Dorte Mobley, Eva Cohnen-Brown, Deb Caillouet, Sally Sonichsen, Steve Brown, Neena Levan, Kristine Tornqvist, Marcia Cunningham, Rhonda Bowman, Laurel Flynn

Before the meeting started, Steve Brown from the Cooperative Extension Service and Deb Blaylock presented Marge Mueller with the Alaska Master Gardener certificate, the first ever in the state awarded for merit. She is an amazing gardener and a great volunteer but has not taken the official class.

Treasurer report was explained by Cathy and nobody had questions. We have \$4,793.76 available and \$7,743.18 in savings. Report was approved as presented.

The March 2019 meeting minutes were published in the April newsletter. There were no corrections and they were approved as written.

Kristina is working on speakers for the meetings.

We currently have 48 members. Kristina will update the membership directory list and she will email it to members.

The Palmer Library and Pioneers Home flowers will be hardened off by Marge when she gets them. Marge will contact the Pioneers Home to determine a date for planting their flower beds. The Palmer Library planting will be accomplished at our June meeting. Sign-up sheet for bed maintenance was passed around by Arlene.

We need to start getting people to sign up for helping at the table at the Midsummer Garden and Art Faire. Deb Caillouet passed around a sign-up sheet.

The summer garden tour will have gardens in Butte on it.

Curt will need an assortment of stuff for the float for the State Fair parade.

We are always looking for pictures and articles for the newsletter.

Dorte has plant labels, but the company sent 4-inch labels instead of 5 inches; we don't have a bunch. The company we ordered from is expected to send the correct labels before the May meeting. More labels will be handed out at the May meeting. Plant labels are only for those who sign up for the June plant sale.

People need to sign up for selling plants at the annual plant sale – the deadline is the May 6th meeting. A sign-up sheet was available and only a few folks signed up. Curt will pick up tables and chairs at the Extension office. With the fence down where we normally hang our sign, we need to find a different spot for it. Sellers need to bring their own tables, chairs and cardboard boxes. They also need to stay and sell their plants. We bring it all in the morning. Eva can be a floater and help where needed. Marcia will make sure it gets in the local papers and radio. Wayne will bring his cool cash register.

No news about the 501c3 status or insurance.

Fred Meyer has asked if we would be interested in teaching a class for them. More details are needed.

Palmer Historical Society sent a thank you card for the work we did for them last summer.

Marge informed us that Anita Chase's daughter, Pam, had a stroke, so keep them in your prayers.

The next meeting is May 6 with Jaime Rodriguez talking about how to build a rock garden.

Meeting was adjourned 7:22 p.m.

Jill Parsons gave a very informative and entertaining talk on making a bird-friendly garden and yard.

Alaska Agriculture Day May 7th 2019

Join us in celebrating this year's theme:
Farm Animal Fun!



Hop on over to buyalaskagrown.com and let us know how you or your community will be celebrating! You'll be entered into a drawing for Alaska Grown apparel, and also receive a shout-out on our Facebook and Instagram pages!

For more information, or for Alaska Ag Day activity ideas, visit the Alaska Grown website at buyalaskagrown.com



Garden Links

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 Farm to School

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

Alaska Garden Clubs

<http://www.alaskagardenclubs.org>

Alaska Grown Source Book (online)

<http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/sourcebook/sourcebookindex2016.html>

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://alaskapeonysociety.wixsite.com/alaskapeonysociety>

Alaska Pioneer Fruit Growers Association

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

Alaska Plant Materials Center

<http://plants.alaska.gov/>

Alaska Rhodiola **New**

<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 Gardeners

<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

<http://search.extension.org>

Master Gardeners of the Tanana Valley

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

Palmer Soil & Water Conservation

<http://palmersoilandwater.org/>

South-Central Alaska Beekeepers Assoc.

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

Southeast Alaska Master Gardeners Association

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

Sustainable Agriculture – UAF

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/ah/sare/>

UAF Cooperative Extension Service, Palmer

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

UAF Cooperative Extension Service Publications

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/pubs/catalog/>

UAF CES Citizen Pest Monitoring Portal

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

UAF Georgeson Botanical Garden

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

UAF Herbarium

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

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

<http://plants.usda.gov/java/>



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- Submit an article to the newsletter
- Volunteer to chair or help a committee – Curt needs help with the State Fair float; Michael needs ideas for the Rebarchek Farm project; the plant sale needs help with set-up, take-down, cash register, and cash count, there are vacancies on the weeding schedule and the Palmer Garden Art Faire booth schedule has vacancies.

CLUB CONTACT INFO

President:	Deb Blaylock	746-6045/kdblayment@ak.net
Vice President	Gregory Kalal	339-1966
Secretary:	Dorte Mobley	232-5422
Treasurer:	Cathy Crew	632-4401
Member at Large:	Marge Mueller	745-6144

If you have gardening news, photos or information you'd like to share in the newsletter, please contact Deb Blaylock at her email: kdblayment@ak.net

Website: www.matsumastergardeners.com/

Email: matsumastergardeners@gmail.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY 2019

- May 6**, Palmer, MMGA Meeting, Jaime Rodriguez, How to make a rock garden.
- May 6**, Drive Your Tractor to Work Day
- May 7**, Alaska Agriculture Day
- May 10 & 11**, Palmer, Palmer High FFA Plant Sale and Open House
- May 16**, Palmer, Third Thursday with Extension, Wild Edibles
- May 11, 17, or 28**, Palmer, Backyard Composting Class, email compost@matsugov.us or call 745-0758.

JUNE 2019 AND BEYOND

- Jun 1**, Palmer, MMGA Annual Plant Sale
- Jun 3**, Palmer, Palmer Library Planting
- Jun TBD**, Palmer, Palmer Veterans and Pioneers Home Planting
- Jun 8**, Palmer, Backyard Composting Class, email compost@matsugov.us or call 745-0758.
- Jul - TBD**, Garden Tours
- Aug - TBD**, Local Business Tour
- Aug 24**, Palmer, Alaska State Fair Parade
- Aug 22 - Sep 2**, Palmer, Alaska State Fair, "Crazy Good"
- Sep 9**, Palmer, MMGA Meeting, TBD
- Oct 7**, Palmer, MMGA Meeting, TBD
- Nov 3**, Day Light Savings time ends
- Nov 4**, Palmer, MMGA Annual Meeting
- Dec 2**, Palmer, MMGA Annual Christmas Party

Club Membership

The membership year runs from January to December each year. Annual individual memberships are \$10 and family memberships are \$12. Family memberships are only for family members living in the same household. The deadline to join is January 15, 2019 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--



May 2019



Like us on
Facebook

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

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

