



President's Patch

By President Deb Blaylock; photo by the author

Record low and high temperatures already for April 2021! What does that mean for the rest of the gardening year? Your guess is as good as mine – but I'm not betting that Mr. Jack Frost won't make any more appearances or that Old Man Winter might not grace us with a mid-May snowstorm (Anyone remember May 18, 2013?) Mother Nature will do what she wants when she wants!



The May meeting will be your last chance to sign up for the June 5th, 2021 Annual Plant Sale. Please make sure you read the 2021 Plant Sale Instructions which were published in the April 2021 newsletter. For those who have signed up, there will be labels available for pick-up at the May meeting. We will have the sign-up sheet there and you can see Ken Blaylock for label distribution. We still need a few folks to help with the check out area of the plant sale and to help the treasurer with label sorting and cash counting. Let me know which one you would like to help with.

Our May meeting is scheduled for May 3rd at the Lazy Mountain Bible Church. Eva Cohnen-Brown kindly coordinated the meeting location for us. Here's her instructions on how to get there: "The address is 16005 E. Shawn Drive; it's on the left side off of Clark-Wolverine Road, about a quarter mile after the Bushes Bunches sign that's on Clark-Wolverine. The first building on the right off E. Shawn Drive is the church; first right is into its parking lot, with the main

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GENERAL MEETINGS

FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

NEXT GENERAL MEETING

MONDAY, MAY 3RD, 2021, 7 P.M.

LOCATION:

LAZY MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH

16005 SHAWN DR, PALMER, AK 99645

[HTTPS://GOO.GL/MAPS/AWQ5GKA78JUPzWz58](https://goo.gl/maps/AWQ5GKA78JUPzWz58)

PLEASE COME EARLY TO HELP WITH ROOM SET-UP

BUSINESS MEETING AT 7 P.M.

SPEAKER/TOPIC AT 7:30 P.M.

JOEY SLOWIK, COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT TECHNICIAN,

PALMER

JOEY WILL GIVE A TALK ON INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT.

entry towards the back. come a bit early to help set up chairs and/or tables.

Hope to see you all there! It's been over a year since we've had an in-person meeting! Happy spring to all!

PEASANT'S PERSPECTIVE: BY CURT MUELLER, MASTER GARDENER

PHOTOS BY THE AUTHOR

At this writing on April nineteenth the temperature is 66F and the snow on our yard is melting quickly! When is the last time we had a day like this?

The peasant has a couple of tales to tell of tomato plants. As mentioned previously it has been our wont to seed tomatoes on New Year's Day. They are seeded in rows in little boxes, transplanted to four-inch pots, then into gallon plastic bags, and finally into five-gallon bags where they are grown for the season. In the process of removing the gallon bag from the root ball in preparation to putting a plant into the bigger bag, the peasant managed to break the stem of a plant right at soil level. It was almost completely severed with only the skin remaining on one side of the stem. Since the peasant had not grown any extra plants, he had to try to salvage this one, which was a good three feet in height and in flower.

A cutting was taken immediately in case the plant didn't survive, so there would be a replacement of the same variety. Then a very delicate operation was done using electrical tape to bind the stem and hope the plant would make it. Any further movement in the broken area would exacerbate the injury and make matters worse. The plant went into its home in a five-gallon pot. Within a half hour the whole plant had wilted, looking pitiful with its leaves hanging down like rags. It remained thus until evening when the cooler temperature and higher humidity allowed the wilt to disappear. The next day the top of the plant was the only part that showed wilt. This went on for four days until there was no more wilt.

The peasant gave the plant another week and then carefully removed the tape so the stem could expand as it grew.

Lo! What's this? Under the tape the plant had begun to form adventitious roots! This would be a response to the severe injury. The circulation from the roots to the top was not sufficient to sustain the plant and it began to make amends for that situation and make some new roots. The photo below shows new roots going into the soil.



This is a closeup of the base of the plant. It shows the stem and adventitious roots growing from the stem above soil level and then penetrating the soil. The plant itself is healthy and setting some tiny tomatoes. Truly an example of a plant attempting to heal itself.

The break actually healed sufficiently to support the plant, but it is interesting that the plant could make this method of trying to heal itself. Note to self: Rather than try to save the gallon bag it might be better to make a couple of slices in the bag to facilitate removal thereof.

The other story is about the peasant's first effort to grow tomatoes in Alaska. He had constructed a small greenhouse using scrap lumber and polyethylene film. The tomato varieties were Subarctic and Early Tanana, recommended at the time for cool temperatures. This was in the early 1970s, a couple of years before the advent of the Master Gardeners program. A couple who had become good friends had been invited to our place for refreshments and the peasant was eager to show off his tomatoes. There were a few ripe ones and a myriad of tiny green ones. Our friends were retired and had lived in Switzerland and for some years in South Africa. Apparently, they had learned a thing or two about gardening. When the peasant proudly showed off his tomatoes, the comment was, "That's pretty good, but you've got to trim the feathers off." The peasant finally surmised that the man was referring to the suckers that form on each leaf axil. The peasant had left them all on the plants and the "feathers" had formed "feathers" of their own until there were suckers ad infinitum, thereby creating a jungle of vegetative growth and not much in the way of fruit. The peasant has been trimming the "feathers" off ever since.

Thanks, folks, and have a good growing season.

ROOT MAGGOTS

BY JOEY JOZEF (JOEY) SLOWIK, IPM TECHNICIAN, UAF COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE

Spring has sprung, and though it has taken a while to get here this year it's the time of the year to start thinking about root maggots. Root maggots are the young, or larvae, of several species of flies. In Alaska, the most prevalent genus is *Delia* and there are several species which trouble our veggies. The larvae are the troublemakers, eating the roots of cabbages, radishes, and turnips. Any crucifer crop really but we also have some which eat onions. They overwinter as a pupa in the soil, emerge in the spring and look for a host plant. They lay eggs at the base of the plant and the larvae go to work feeding on your vegetables. Adults will usually emerge as soon as it gets warm, but some wait until mid-summer to emerge, so although it looks like there may be two broods in a year, all data tells us it's still just one.

They can be very destructive, but there are several ways to keep them in check. The first step is recognizing the problem. Did you have them last year? Does your neighbor have them? Are there a ton of native mustards growing in a field near by? These all give you an idea of the level of action needed to prevent them from being a bigger problem. Because the adults look for plants to lay their eggs by, row covers, or seedling disks will block that avenue. Floating covers will also allow some light and water to pass through. Some may be using black plastic to get the soil up to temp and that works as well, though if using row covers on a bed that had maggots last year ensure you are not just

trapping the adults under the cover which will just infect this year's plants. Crop rotation helps if this may be the case. It also moves your crucifers away from known infected areas.

If you're keen, spreading diatomaceous earth on the bed can help, but it will become ineffective after getting wet. So, it needs to be reapplied after watering or a rain. Another option is to plant some trap crops, such as a bed nearby of fast-growing radishes which will act as a sink for the flies to lay their eggs. The important thing is that those radishes need to be removed before the adults emerge. A hot compost will kill the larvae, or they (the radishes) can be eaten or discarded.

If you've had maggots a number of steps can be taken in the fall. Because the pupae are in the soil, fall tillage will disturb them and expose them to winter's harshness. This helps with slugs as well. Cleaning beds and areas where mustards occur in the fall will also reduce the population by removing possible hosts and moist organic matter, which makes the maggot's life easier. There are no approved pesticides for root maggots so there is no spray option. But the maggots are harmless and if you find them in a radish that part can be discarded, and the rest can still be enjoyed.

Joey can be contacted at:
jaslowik@alaska.edu

Mat-Su Master Gardener Meeting Minutes: March 1, 2021

Submitted by Secretary Dorte Mobley

Present: Craig Lisonbee, Michael & Phyllis Kircher, Lydia Wood, Gregory Kalal, Rhonda Bowman, Deb & Ken Blaylock, Cathy Crew, Eva Cohnen-Brown, Curt and Marge Mueller, Kristina Tornqvist, Laurel Flynn, Jeanette Newcomb, Debbie Hinchey.

Cathy provided the treasurer's report: We have \$4,189.94 in the checking account and \$7,753.39 in savings. Business license application for the borough has been mailed in.

Minutes were in the newsletter. There were no corrections and the motion by Cathy, seconded by Ken, was approved.

Deb reported that she contacted the Friday Fling administrators and there are no COVID protocols for the plant sale. Information about sign ups has been mailed out. It is a link that you use to sign-up and will be available only through April 30th.

Plantings at the Veterans & Pioneer Home will be June 7 and at the Palmer Library will be June 14th. Mid Valley Greenhouse will be donating flowers to both the library and Veterans & Pioneer Home plantings. We need a time for the Veterans & Pioneer Home planting on June 7.

Michael has looked at blocks at Lowes to put boards into to make a temporary fence at our Rebarchek Farm Project plot. He will look further into that.

Deb thanked Curt for always writing articles for the newsletter and encouraged others to do so too.

We will do some "Pop Up" tours this summer: Members who have gardens that look really good at that time, can let Dorte know (907-232-5422), and we will let the other members know what night we can go. Other clubs are doing the same and will invite the Master Gardeners. We are thinking of making the "regular" tour in Eagle River this year.

Fair Awards are pretty much set - Lydia Wood and Heather Kalxdorf will help with this.

Curt will help Debra Caillouet with the State Fair parade.

We need someone for nominating committee.

Marge Mueller volunteered to be in charge of the Christmas party. Deb will help with the meat cooking.

Several members have volunteered to help with the 2022 conference - Lorraine, Ellen VandeVisse, Cindy Walker, Connie Egger, Cathy Crew. We need someone to be a conference committee chair.

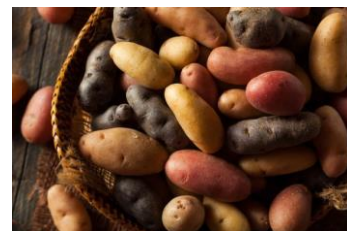
In May, Joey from the extension office will be our speaker on assorted bugs. The meeting will be at the Lazy Mountain Bible Church.

A few announcements were made by Deb: Sustainable Ag Conference and a Master Gardener class is coming up.

Kristina motioned to adjourn the meeting and Ken seconded it. Motion carried and meeting was adjourned at 7:18.

Debbie Hinchey gave us an excellent and highly informative presentation on summer bulbs. Thank you, Debbie!

SEED POTATOES! GET YOUR SEED POTATOES!



If you ordered seed potatoes from Greg Kalal, he will be bringing them to the May meeting. If you still need to order seed potatoes, he reports he has limited amounts and varieties still available. You can contact him at email: gkalal@gci.net or phone: 907.339.1966 to find out what he has in stock. Thanks Greg!



Matanuska Experiment Farm and Extension Center
 May ONLINE CLASSES - Theme is Alaska Agriculture
Watch our Facebook page for additional info & registration links!
<https://www.facebook.com/matanuskasexperimentfarm/>

4/20	Spruce Beetles w/Joey Slowik
4/21	Walkabout Wednesday: Sessions w/Scientists - Hillary Palmer, GIS Specialist
4/22	Mapping Climate Change in a Yupik Native Village
4/28	Walkabout Wednesday: Farm Tour! Checking in on the rhubarb and horseradish
5/4	AK Farms & Farmer Market Highlights w/Jodie Anderson
5/5	Walkabout Wednesday: Alaska Agriculture
5/6	Flower Farming in Alaska: Behind the Scenes with Brown Dog Farm w/Mimi Rooney
5/10 & 11	Youth Program: At-Home Learning Garden Kits w/Ann Biddle
5/12	Walkabout Wednesday: Sessions w/Scientists or GLOBE Citizen Science
5/13	AK Seeds of Change w/Ryan Witten
5/17 & 18	Certified Food Protection Manager Training w/Julie Cascio
5/18	Control of Bird Vetch w/Gino Graziano
5/19	Walkabout Wednesday: Sessions w/Scientists or GLOBE Citizen Science
5/20	UAF Ag Research w/Shannon Powers, Bob VanVeldhuizen & Glenna Gannon
5/26	Walkabout Wednesday: Farm Tour!!!
5/27	Fundamentals of AK Agriculture w/Steve Brown

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 The University of Alaska Fairbanks Matanuska Experiment Farm and Extension Center strives to make our programs accessible for all individuals. If you or a family member who is attending a program need accommodations to participate, please contact our office 5 days in advance to request services. This will give us the opportunity to provide assistance you require. (907)745-3360 or email Theresa Ioske: tmiooske@alaska.edu

2021 Alaska State Fair "Seeing is Believing" Volunteers make it happen!

~ 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 25 & September 1

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 26 & September 2 from 8 AM-Noon

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

~ Extra Hands Needed ~

Tuesdays, August 31 from 10AM-2PM & September 7 from 9 AM-1PM

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

For more information contact Kathy Liska - Horticulture Supervisor

(907) 337-2196 hm / (907) 301-0317 cell or akliska@aol.com

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.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 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

Mat-Su Borough Rain Garden Program

<http://www.matsugov.us/environment/raingardens>

Mat-Su Master Gardener Website

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

USDA/NRCS Plant Data Base

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



CLUB CONTACT INFO

President:	Deb Blaylock	746-6045/kdblalock@ak.net
Vice President:	Kristina Tornqvist	795-6393
Secretary:	Dorte Mobley	232-5422
Treasurer:	Cathy Crew	632-4401
Member at Large:	Sue Glenn	671-0252

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/

Email: matsumastergardeners@gmail.com

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MAY 2021 AND BEYOND

- May 3**, Palmer, MMGA meeting, Joey Slowik, Integrated Pest Management
Jun 5, Palmer, Annual Plant Sale
Jun 7, Palmer, Palmer Veterans and Pioneer Home Planting
Jun 14, Palmer, MMGA meeting, Palmer Library Planting
Jul/Aug, Member-Only Summer Garden Tour(s)
Aug 20 – Sep 6, Palmer, Alaska State Fair
Aug 28, Palmer, Alaska State Fair Parade (tentative)
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: 20th day of each month -- Thank you--



May 2021



Like us on
Facebook

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

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

