



## President's Patch

By President Jenny Weaver

### May Meeting Features Dr. Caley Gasch

Join us for our next Mat-Su Master Gardener meeting on Monday, May 5th, at the Cooperative Extension Service office, Room 208. The meeting will begin promptly at 7 pm when Dr. Caley Gasch will speak about soil health. Dr. Gasch is a soil science researcher with the UAF Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station. She leads research projects that focus on soil health and cover crops throughout Alaska's agricultural systems.

What is soil health? Why do we need healthy soils? How do you measure and maintain healthy soils in your garden? This presentation will address these questions and get you started on managing the soil as a living component of your garden.

Our business meeting will take place after Dr. Gasch's presentation.



#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

President's Patch	1/3
Somewhere in Thyme	2
Dr. Stephen Brown Celebration of Life	3
April Meeting Minutes	4
Instructions for MMGA Plant Sale	5
2025 MMGA Plant Sale Participant Guidelines	6
Garden Links	7
Contacts	8
Calendar of Events	8

#### REGULAR MEETINGS

FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH

NEXT MEETING

MAY 5TH, 7:00 P.M.

LOCATION:

MATANUSKA EXPERIMENT FARM AND EXTENSION CENTER

KERTTULA HALL, ROOM 208, SECOND FLOOR  
1509 S GEORGESON DR, PALMER

AGENDA

REGULAR BUSINESS MEETING

SPEAKER:

CASEY GASCH, SOIL HEALTH

#### ANNUAL PLANT SALE SIGN UP!

The May meeting is the last opportunity to sign up to participate as a vendor in the May 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Plant Sale.

Thos who have signed up can pick up plant labels at the meeting. Both white and yellow labels are available.

## SOMEWHERE IN THYME

A WAYBACK ARTICLE FROM A PAST MMGA PUBLICATION – ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MAY 2018

**PEASANT'S PERSPECTIVE: BY CURT MUELLER,  
MASTER GARDENER, PHOTO SUBMITTED BY THE  
AUTHOR**

The peasant has been thoroughly enjoying our sunny warm days, watching the snow melt and soak into the soil. It has happened with little runoff and no hard nightly frosts. There is still snow in drifted areas here on Lazy Mountain, but it is disappearing as well. Trees are budding, rhubarb and tulips are showing, and hopes are up too for a good gardening season.

Last month the peasant wrote about his efforts to improve germination on sweet peas. Observing the results, the best ones were in seeds that had been soaked for four to six hours with no nicking of the seed coats. Soaking the seed overnight softened the seed too much and handling the seed then became a problem. Some seed remained impervious and could be nicked. For future growing of this plant with the colorful and fragrant flowers the peasant has decided to make it easy on himself and just go with soaking seed for four to six hours. Starting the plants early and pinching the tops to help the plants bush out will be a good way to do sweet peas.



Sweet peas in three-inch pots. They have been topped once and are filling out nicely. They may need to be staked. They will be planted out when the soil has warmed and can tolerate light frosts.

Some time ago the peasant had also written about growing white fireweed from seed. It has been an education, and despite a mistake in germinating the seed in winter, after two winters the surviving plants are showing multiple shoots and promise to be more than was hoped for. The peasant has

decided that a good recipe for growing this plant from seed would be this:

- Obtain seed from a plant that produces pure white flowers.
- Stratify the seed. This may not be necessary, but it helps.
- Choose a sowing time that corresponds with germination in a natural setting.
- Sow a generous number of seed. Not all will germinate readily.
- Rogue out any plants that have dark colored leaves with reddish stems.
- Grow in pots through the first winter.
- Plant out in the following season.

The reason for getting rid of plants with dark leaves and reddish stems is that they are the product of cross-pollination with nearby wild plants and will produce pink flowers. Those that will have white flowers have paler leaves and stems and are readily distinguishable from those that will produce pink flowers.

Obtaining seed may be difficult. There are sources online at varying cost. The peasant should have a limited amount available by next fall [he hopes] and will be happy to share.



New shoots on overwintered white fireweed. There are seven shoots shown here. More may appear later. This plant should be quite showy by mid-July.

Enjoy the green-up which will surely come soon. It's a wonderful, miraculous, time. Thanks, folks.

# Stephen Brown

1963-2025



**JOIN US FOR STEVE'S CELEBRATION OF LIFE:**

**DATE: SATURDAY, MAY 10, 2025**

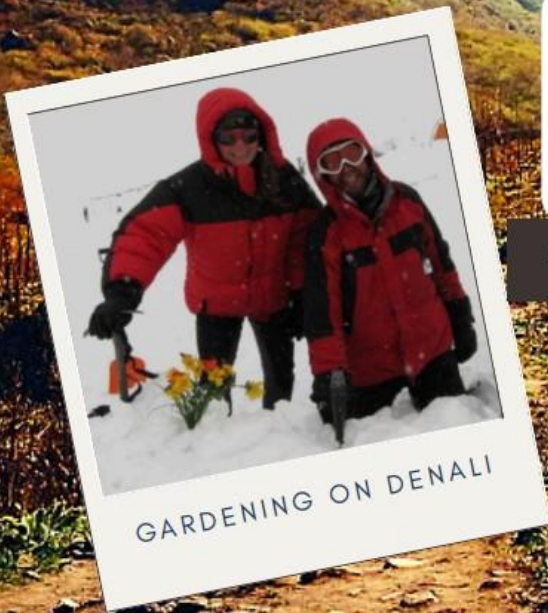
**TIME: 2 P.M. - 5 P.M.**

**LOCATION: LAZY MOUNTAIN BIBLE CHURCH  
(16005 E. SHAWN DR.; PALMER, AK)**

**REFRESHMENTS WILL BE OFFERED AFTER THE SERVICE;  
FEEL FREE TO BRING FINGER FOODS TO SHARE.**



LIVESTREAMING



GARDENING ON DENALI



STEVE ON KILIMANJARO

"THE SOVEREIGN LORD IS MY STRENGTH! HE MAKES ME AS SUREFOOTED AS A DEER, ABLE TO TREAD UPON THE HEIGHTS." HAB 3:19

## April 7th, 2025 - MMGA Meeting Minutes

submitted by Secretary Jana Gooch

### Members present:

-Georgiana Gooch	-Dawn Wolski
-Gregory Kalal	-Rebecca Emerson
-Ken Blaylock	-Michael Kircher
-Deb Blaylock	-Jenny Weaver
-David Thompson	-Kristen Buchta
-Todd Weaver	-Kay Fyfe
-Pearl Weaver	
-Craig Lisonbee	<b>GUESTS:</b>
-Curt Mueller	-Margaret Leifer
-Marge Mueller	-LaMarr Anderson

Meeting opened at 7:14 pm

Everyone introduced themselves around the room.

Due to technical difficulties in attempting to get the Zoom meeting up and going, we all enjoyed a slide presentation by Dawn Wolski of her gardens last summer as Lamarr Anderson (from Rebarchek Farm) worked to resolve our issues.

Thereafter, Ken Blaylock motioned that we accept the March minutes, Craig Lisonbee seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Jenny Weaver provided the Treasurer's Report as Cathy Crew was otherwise obligated. The amount in Savings is \$7,781.56 and in Checking is \$8,078.96. The only changes were membership fees that were received and speaker fees paid out. Ken Blaylock motioned that we accept the Treasurer's Report and Craig Lisonbee seconded. Motion carried.

Jenny Weaver gave the President's Report. Handouts were made available from the last couple of meetings: Ellen Vande Visse's recipes, Mycorrhizae, and a Membership Pamphlet.

Lamar was finally able to get a new Zoom meeting going and get our guest speaker online (Patrick Ryan from Alaska Botanical

Gardens). At 7:53pm, Patrick Ryan provided his presentation on the Aging Gardener and what the aging gardener should know.

At 8:36pm, we reconvened the business meeting. Signup for the plant sale should occur tonight or, at the latest, by May 5th.

After an inquiry from the Cooperative Extension Service (CES) regarding Mat-Su Master Gardeners utilizing plots at their Community Gardens, Deb Blaylock and Dorte Mobley reported to Jenny Weaver that we have not maintained any plots there for several years.

The CES did ask the club if they would be willing to maintain the flower bed out front and to the right of the entrance to the Blue Room. Craig Lisonbee suggested that we set a date and ask volunteers to join us to clean up the CES front garden.

Discussion ensued on the club taking \$7,000 from the savings account and opening up a small account at the Mat Valley Federal Credit Union where we can invest in a twelve-month CD at 4% earnings. We would need two signers on the account, and it was suggested that Cathy Crew and Jenny Weaver sign on the account. Deb Blaylock motioned that we adopt the procedures as discussed, Michael Kircher seconded. Motion carried. Our guest, Margaret Leifer, mentioned that a CD automatically rolls over one day before expiration.

Rebarchek Farm has 1/8-acre plot that the club could use to enhance the farm. Michael Kircher presented a host of good ideas for the plot, suggesting that we could plant a row of rhodiola as a dedication to Steve Brown of CES and to add signage that indicates the memoriam. Michael has a lot of plants that he can donate to the effort.

Finally, there will be a memorial held for Steve Brown at the Lazy Mountain Bible Church on Saturday, May 10 from 2-5pm.

Meeting adjourned at 9:09 pm.

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR MMGA PLANT SALE

Each plant or item offered for sale is to be marked with two tags - a white tag and a color tag. Tags will be available only for members who have signed up for the 2025 plant sale and will be available at the April and May 2025 Mat-Su Master Gardener Association meetings.

Choose an ID to mark your tags with. Most use their initials (two or three). Indicate your tag ID on the Plant Sale Sign-In sheet when you arrive at the morning of the plant sale. Please ensure your tag ID is unique. Remember, your ID tells who gets paid for the sale of the item.

Use permanent marker or #2 pencil to label the tags:

White tag has common or botanical names of plants and any optional information.

Yellow tag - the item price (**in \$1 increments ONLY - please no 25¢, 50¢, 99¢, etc.**) and your unique tag ID

Yellow Tag - Front  
Price



Yellow Tag - Back  
Unique ID



White Tag      Plant Name



The MMGA receives 20% of the sale from each plant or item and you receive 80%. If there is no yellow tag or the unique tag ID is unreadable, it is assumed that all proceeds go to the MMGA. (Thanks for the donation!)

Members often ask how to price plants, but you may want to price yours other than the suggestions below. Price them to sell. Plants that have not sold by noon may be reduced in price.

**SUGGESTED PLANT PRICING** (These are just suggestions - you may use any price for plants as long as it seems reasonable, and **prices are in \$1 increments - this is non-negotiable**)

Perennials, including herbs:	3" pot	\$3 - \$4
	4" pot	\$4 - \$5
	6" pot	\$5 - \$6
	gallon pot	\$6 - \$8
Annuals, including herbs	4/6 cell pot	
	3" pot	\$3 - \$4
Vegetables	4/6 cell pot	
	3" pot	\$3- \$4
Tomatoes (plant size, variety, and post size determine price)		\$3 - \$10
Strawberries (depending on pot size)		\$1 - \$2
Raspberries, Currants, Rhubarb	gallon pot	\$5 - \$10
Shrubs trees	2-gallon pot	\$10 - \$15

## 2025 MMGA PLANT SALE PARTICIPANT GUIDELINES

The Plant Sale will be held on **May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2025**, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm at the Palmer Pavilion (across from the Palmer Visitor's Center). This is our major fundraising event for the year and members are encouraged to participate either by bringing plants to sell or helping out with the sale. It is an immensely popular event with members of our community and draws a large crowd.

1. All Mat-Su Master Gardener Association (MMGA) members who have joined or renewed their **membership AND signed up to participate in the plant sale by May 5th, 2025**, can participate in the plant sale. Helpers are needed to help with checkout, help the cashier, sort tags, answer buyer questions, and direct buyers to the appropriate tables.
2. Plants should be brought to the Pavilion between 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. on the morning of the plant sale. Please check in, sign your name, and verify your unique tag ID. **No one may sign up on the day of the plant sale to participate as a vendor.**
3. All plants for sale must be tagged with a white tag, showing the common name and/or botanical name of the plant. All items will have a yellow tag showing the item's price and the seller's unique ID. If there is no ID on the yellow tag, the item is assumed to be a donation to the Association. For all sales, the MMGA retains 20% of the sales of each item. The MMGA members will receive 80% of the sales of each item.
4. Native plants should be garden grown (PLEASE, no digging in the wild!). Please avoid bringing invasive plants like orange hawkweed, spotted knapweed, butter and eggs, etc. The Cooperative Extension Service offers a lengthy list and description of suspected invasive species.
5. Inspect all plants carefully to ensure no plants have evidence of insects or disease.
6. MMGA members may also sell crafts, arts, or garden-related items by providing and staffing their own tables. These items will also have the appropriate yellow price tag attached.
7. **All sales** will be made through the central check-out stand. Volunteers are needed to staff this.
8. There are some tables available at the Pavilion; however, it is recommended that you bring your own table and chairs. It is highly recommended that you bring items for your own comfort such as chairs, warm clothing, beverages, snacks, and lunch.
9. **All unsold plants need to be picked up after the sale.** If you can't be there at 3 pm, please arrange for someone to take your plants. **Do not just drop off plants and leave them.** Plants or items left behind will be discarded.
10. You may also donate your excess plants to the MMGA for the various Association planting projects. **Donations must be coordinated prior to the closing of the plant sale.**
11. Proceeds from the sale will be calculated after the plant sale has ended. Normally, our Treasurer will either mail each individual's 80% to their address on file with the Association or hand out checks at the following June 9th MMGA meeting. Please indicate on the sign-in sheet how you would like to receive your check.

If you would like to volunteer to help with the plant sale, contact Jenny Weaver or Kevin Johnson (contact info on page 8), the Co-Chairs for the Plant Sale Committee. We need folks to help with set-up of the check-out area, the MMGA information table, putting up MMGA sales banners, and a multitude of other tasks. Boxes are always needed at the plant sale for folks to take home their purchases. A few folks are needed to go to the local stores and ask them for empty boxes. Does anyone have garden wagons they could bring to the sale?

## 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

### MAY 2025 AND BEYOND

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

**May 10**, Palmer, Dr. Stephen Brown Celebration of Life

**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--**





May 2025



Like us on  
**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**

