



## President's Patch

By Sheri Walker

Goats, gates and gardens. Everything will be fine as long as the gate stays closed between the goats and the gardens. However, I have a couple of two-legged kids that have been known to forget about the gate on occasion. Since goats love to browse just like moose do and love eating shrubs like roses and raspberries it could prove to be an interesting gardening season.

Speaking of moose, we managed to beat the moose to the fiddleheads this year. I should say, my husband beat the moose. He was the one to harvest them and painstakingly clean the flaky coating off them. Then he sauteed them in garlic and butter. As my 5 year old would say... "delectable". They were similar in flavor and texture to asparagus. I'm glad hubby thought they were worth the effort to clean as he plans to harvest more. I'm not sure that I would go to all that trouble again but they were yummy. Fiddleheads should always be cooked before consumption as they contain thiaminase, a Vitamin B depleting enzyme which is destroyed with cooking.

I have always loved the cheerful yellow blooms of dandelion that herald the arrival of spring each year and then cursed them as they tried to take over my yard. However, this year I decided to make my peace with them (and horsetail). I had all kinds of plans to make ointment and use them in stews and stir fries. I might yet. I also discovered that dandelion root tea is helpful for digestion and that I actually liked the flavor even if it is somewhat like coffee. So I set about to gather a bunch of roots to make my own tea rather than buy it. Well those well intentioned bunches sat in my sink for two days and I realized that I don't have time for all my whims so they went on the compost heap. However, I have discovered that my

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### Chapter Meetings First Monday of the Month Next meeting

Monday, June 7, 2010, 7:00 pm  
Location:  
Palmer Library  
Palmer, Alaska

#### Agenda:

Annual Palmer Library Planting Project  
Bring your shovels and any plants you want to donate

goats like dandelions as long as I hand feed them. They love horsetail as well although they must be given in small doses as it also contains thiaminase. I'm sorry but I'll not be cooking horsetail to feed my goats. So for now the goats will get the dandelions and some of the horsetail and in return I will get some nice compost for the garden.

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## What We've Waited For

By: Master Gardener, Curt Mueller

What a grand time this is! Warm, sunny days and frost-free mornings! If we'd waited for Memorial weekend to plant we'd have missed a great start on our gardening. Whatever comes next weather-wise, we'll remember these spring days for the rest of the summer.

While we've been busy getting dirt under our fingernails, the insects haven't been slackers either. This includes those which we'd rather not see too many of. The aphids are on the birches and other trees in great numbers for this time of year. Some trees will more than likely become stressed if the weather stays dry. On the plus side, slugs don't prosper if it's dry. I've not seen any sawflies, so maybe they're not in the high part of their cycle. They can seriously damage your raspberry plants as they chew up the foliage.

Earthworms are abundant in the garden, and of a size that you could take along when you go fishing. Good for soil building in the garden, we'll consider them a benefit. When we get a winter when the frost goes deep they will become less numerous and will take several years to build up in numbers.

Look out for onion maggots. They are in the egg-laying mode right now. The egg-layer is a fly which has recently metamorphosed from the pupal stage in which it over-wintered. In Alaska they don't usually have more than the one cycle per year, but they could in a favorable season. The eggs are little white specks deposited on the onion leaves. They are capable of destroying your onion crop.

The root-worms that prey on cabbage and cauliflower and turnips and such will become a problem soon. Their life cycle is like the onion maggots, although their season is more extended. The eggs are also small white specks to be found on the stems and leaves of

your transplants and turnips. They will make turnips inedible and will often kill cauliflower plants and stunt the growth on cabbage and broccoli if numerous as they often are.

Of course the biggest of the garden and shrubbery pests is in the calving season now. Mama moose will surely be showing the calves where the good stuff is that humans like to raise.

We will cope with the pests as we may, but in the nursery rhyme which is offered below for your enjoyment, another method is suggested.



Photo Submitted by Sheri Walker

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Planting my vegetable garden this year was an interesting process. As I mentioned last month, I had intended to interplant flowers amongst the vegetables. Well, I managed to plant my vegetables like a flower bed...not in rows but interspersed amongst each other with flowers in the ground near the raised beds. It was very strange not to plant them all in neat little rows. Old habits die hard I guess. Some of my reading this spring has been on this topic and an advantage of mixing things up with flowers and vegetables planted together is better pest control. If you don't have a single type of plant all in one spot or row, you are less likely to have disease and pests affect your entire crop.

A good read for someone getting started with vegetables or wanting to add a few unusual and uncommon plants is "*The Canadian Edible Garden, Vegetables, Herbs, Fruits & Seeds*" by Alison Beck, Lone Pine Publishing. It is filled with beautiful color photos of each plant, describing how to start, grow and harvest, tips, recommended varieties and problems and pests. Most of the plants would do well here.

And one final exciting thing. I have cucumbers setting fruit in my new greenhouse. One is about 2 inches long already. Have already harvested basil, lemon balm and chives. Seems I get more excited about gardening every year.

## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Original newsletters have surfaced and need to be archived. Please contact [matsumastergardeners@gmail.com](mailto:matsumastergardeners@gmail.com) if you are interested in this project.

Nomination Committee still needed to lead recruitment process for vacating board positions. Please contact [matsumastergardeners@gmail.com](mailto:matsumastergardeners@gmail.com) if you are interested in this committee.

Volunteers needed for the Master Gardener Table at the Spring Creek Garden Open House on June 12, 2010. Please contact [matsumastergardeners@gmail.com](mailto:matsumastergardeners@gmail.com) if you are interested in volunteering.



Photo Submitted by Sheri Walker

## Garden Links

**Master Gardeners of the Tanana Valley:**

<http://interiormastergardeners.org/>

**Alaska Master Gardeners Association,  
Anchorage Chapter:**

<http://alaskamastergardeners.org/>

**Alaska Botanical Garden:**

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

**Master Gardeners of the Tanana Valley Monthly  
Newsletter:**

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/newsletters/mastergardeners/2008/0812tananamgu.pdf>

**Alaska Peony Growers Association:**

<http://alaskapeonies.org/index.html>

**Alaska State Federation of Garden Clubs:**

<http://www.gardencentral.org/asfgc/homepage/>

**UAF, CES Palmer Website:**

<http://mat-suces.weebly.com>

**UAF Cooperative Extension Service Publications:**

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

**Alaska Plant Materials Center:**

[http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag\\_pmc.htm](http://dnr.alaska.gov/ag/ag_pmc.htm)

**Master Gardener Research Link:**

<http://search.extension.org>

**Matsu Master Gardener Site:**

[www.matsumastergardeners.org](http://www.matsumastergardeners.org)

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## Announcements

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2010:

**June 5, 9am–3pm:** Plant Sale, Palmer Pavilion  
**June 7, 7:00 pm:** Library Planter, Palmer Library  
**June 24, 5:30 am – 8:30 pm –** Midsummer Gala in the Garden, Alaska Botanical Garden, Anchorage  
**June 26 (11:00 am – 6:00 pm) & 27 (11:00 am – 5:00 pm),** ABG Fair, Anchorage  
**July 12,** TBA  
**August 2,** TBA  
**August 26 – September 6,** Alaska State Fair, Palmer  
**September 13, 7:00 pm:** Native Trees and Shrubs for the Landscape, Patricia Joyner, MTA conference room  
**October** TBA  
**November 1, 7:00 pm:** Fungi for Gardeners, AKA Mushrooms, Diane Pleninger, MTA Conference Room  
**December 6, 7:00 pm:** Christmas Party and Elections

### PLANT DONATIONS NEEDED

The Palmer Senior Center is in need of plant donations

### MATSU MASTER GARDENER 2010 PLANT SALE INSTRUCTIONS

We have developed set of guidelines for the 2010 Plant Sale. They will be available for you to print on the same sight as the Newsletter. Members who receive a printed newsletter will also receive a printed copy of the plant sale instructions. Please note, to participate in the plant sale, you must be a current member with the Matsu Master Gardener's Club. If you aren't sure if you're a current member, please contact Michele Walker at 306-1188.

Mat-Su Master Gardeners Meeting Minutes

May 3, 2010

President Sheri Walker called the meeting to order with 18 people in attendance. Sheri Walker requested that the minutes be accepted as printed in the newsletter, Wayne Bowman moved to accept, seconded by Kristina Tornqvist, and passed. Arlene then read out the treasurers' report with sales of hats and shirts from the Home and Garden show. The 2010 Scholarship was canceled due to no response from the committee as far as eligible candidates.

Wayne Bowman began offering tags for the upcoming plant sale, as well as passing out directions on how the tag system works for all those who wish to sell. Increments of no smaller than .50 cents was determined for all plant material, and the use of adhesive labels on the plastic tags was advised as they can be quickly printed out and attached rather than handwritten tags. The options of donating left over plants to either; the Library planter or to Spring Creek gardens was raised for consideration by all those selling.

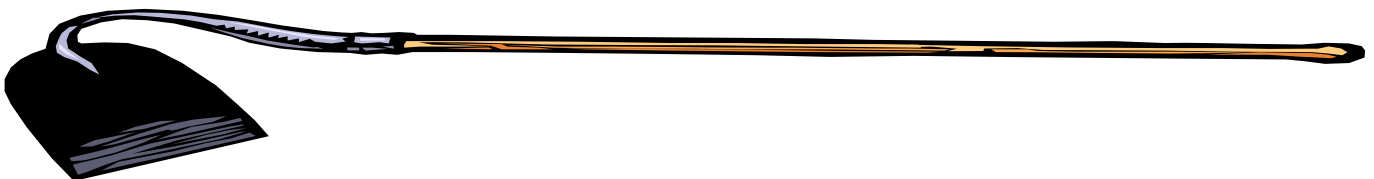
The next Master Gardeners meeting will be held on June 7<sup>th</sup> at the Palmer Library Planter. Items that Marge and Curt Mueller will be looking into are vegetables for the planter as well as more sunshine mix or compost. Sheri Walker offered some of her Kardoos, Arlene Bowman has offered Artichokes.

Volunteer opportunities for club members were raised including Alaska Agricultural Day opportunities which will be detailed in the May Newsletter, archiving old issues of the newsletter to make them available online, and positions on the Nominations committee, as well as manning a table at Spring Creek Gardens June 12<sup>th</sup> Open house for 4 hours. The Alaska Botanical Garden offered the club a table at their upcoming Spring Garden fair although it was decided that the club is currently unable to man such a booth for the desired weekend.

Lastly, Deb Blaylock made a motion to generate nametags for all members of the Mat-Su Master Gardeners to wear at events and activities where the club will be making an appearance. The motion was seconded by Wayne Bowman and passed.

The meeting was then called to a close by Sheri Walker, Wayne Bowman accepted the motion and Phyllis Kircher 2<sup>nd</sup> and passed.

Michele Walker, Secretary



## Spring Creek Farm in Palmer, Alaska

### Environmental Learning Center

**Saturday, June 12**

**Open House at the farm!!!**

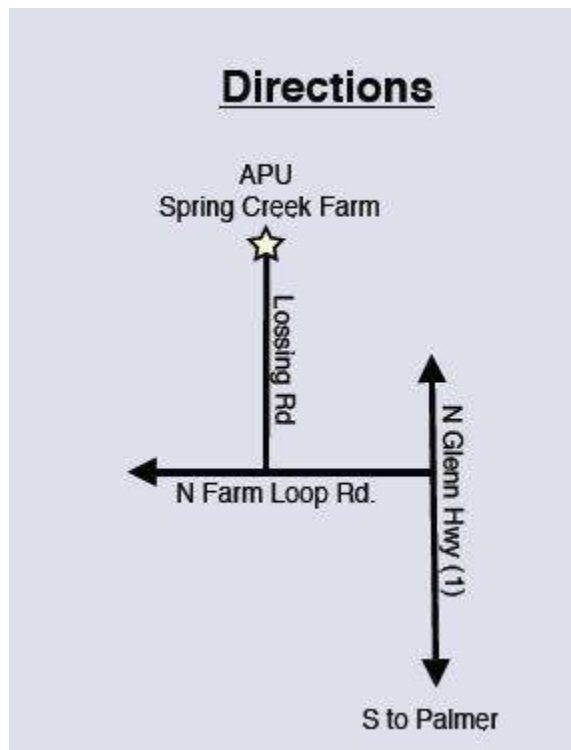
**Noon to 4:00**

Featuring Valley Arts Alliance "**Second Saturday**" "Art on the Farm"

Come on out for a farm and garden tour and a host of other fun events for kids of all ages. We are hosting informational displays and demonstrations from Fireside Books, Soaring Crane Natural Health Center, Good Earth Garden School, Palmer Soil & Water Conservation District, Great Land Trust, Mat-Su Farm Bureau, Valley Center for Recycling Solutions (VCRS), Blue Mountain Wellness Studio, and others.

Come hear the Mat-Su Chorus, hike our trails and visit our 30 foot Yurt.

Take a hay ride around the farm!!



## CLUB CONTACT INFO

<b>President:</b>	<b>Sheri Walker</b>	<b>746-6772</b>
<b>VP</b>	<b>Wayne Bowman</b>	<b>745-3537</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Michele Walker</b>	<b>306-1188</b>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Arlene Bowman</b>	<b>745-3537</b>
<b>Member at Large</b>	<b>Marge Mueller</b>	<b>745-6144</b>

If you have gardening news, photos or information you'd like to share in the newsletter, please contact: Deb Blaylock, Email: [kdblalock@ak.net](mailto:kdblalock@ak.net)

Website: [www.matsumastergardeners.com](http://www.matsumastergardeners.com)  
Email: [matsumastergardeners@gmail.com](mailto:matsumastergardeners@gmail.com)

Old Stephan's Jersey Cow  
Submitted by:  
Curt Mueller

Tell your mother, tell your father, tell the cook.  
Old Stephan's jersey cow has jumped the brook!

Tell your brother, tell your sister, tell the maid.  
Dame Olga chased her with a garden spade!

Tell your auntie, tell your uncle, weep and wail.  
Old Stephan's jersey cow has lost her tail!



June 2010

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