

Paul and Ruth Lemp Memorial Community Garden

Gardeners News Bulletin

March 2024



"To Plant a Garden is to Believe in Tomorrow"

Audrey Hepbrun

AND TOMORROW IS NOW! As many of you have found, our short, weather dependent growing season, is tough on plants that you want to grow from seeds. There is a lot of snow this year. It needs to melt off in the garden before we can get access to the beds and get them ready. If you are a start-from-seed gardener, several of our "seasoned gardeners" have suggested that you should plant your seeds indoors, **now**, near a window, or under a grow light, so that your plants are ready to go in the ground, when the time is right. The alternative would be to purchase "starts" from one of the local nurseries. Our next BULLETIN will have some instructions on how to prepare your plants for transplanting outside.

MORE BEDS COMING and a BIG MOVE!

We have ordered 5 more beds that are a little taller, narrower, and longer, specifically for those of you who wish to grow tall plants, such as Pole Beans, Pole Peas, Sunflowers, etc. This will give us a total of 55 beds. The new ones will be placed next to the WEST FENCE, between the gate and the corner. Before we assemble them and put them in place, we will need to move beds 39, 45, and 46, in order to make space for the new beds, plus locate the old ones to a location that will give them a little more direct light. The beds will have to be totally emptied before we can move and refill them.. Lots of hand labor, **DOUBLE UGH**. Those beds will not be available for planting until after they have been moved. Like everything else with this project, the work party dates are weather dependent, but you can expect a howl for help in late April or early May! Some beds will be renumbered to accommodate the move but, if you requested, you will still get the same bed you had before!

RESERVATIONS FOR 2024 SEASON

Some of our gardeners pre-registered for 2024, plus we have one new gardener who has already paid her use fee. A total of 35 beds have been pre-registered. **We need all gardeners, old and new, to confirm if you still wish to be on the list, and we are attempting to contact you by telephone. If you haven't responded, please respond to this News Bulletin via EMAIL, by APRIL 15, with a YES or NO, so that we can plan. If we have a question re your eMail, we will call you.** Those of you who have multiple beds may have to settle for a few less if we do not have enough available. If you do have multiple beds we will attempt to put them next to each other so that maintenance for you is easier! Also, If you wish to move to one of the NEW 5 TALL BEDS, please let us know. At the present time we have no names on the waiting list so it may all work out OK.

SPRING WORKSHOPS

Alaska Botanical Garden's SPRING GARDEN CONFERENCE
MARCH 23rd AND 24th

Dena'ina Civic and Convention Center

FREE ADMISSION Lots of Garden Vendor Booths and Displays

Saturday 3/23

4:00 pm Registration

5:00 pm Opening remarks

5:20 pm – 7:05 pm Presentations

How to enter your veggies and flowers at the Alaska State Fair

Stepping into the Garden with words

Galls in the Garden, a citizen science opportunity

Rooted in the Community; Yarcopia's 2024 plans

Sunday 3/24

10:00 am Behind the Scenes at the Alaska State Fair Gardens

Propagation of Native Seeds for Environmental Restoration

Introduction to Integrated Pest Management

11:15 am Annual Flower Container design, favorites and Fundamentals

ANC Soil n Water Cons. Dist. Native Plant Program Update

Pruning Essentials

12:15 pm Lunch Break, visit displays

1:30 pm Preserved Moss Art

Cut Flowers; Focus on Perennials

Focus on Perennials – Do-it-yourself Fertilizer Spray

2:45 pm Sourdough Tips for Great Alaska Veggies

Extending the Alaska Growing Season (panel discussion)

Alaska Botanical Gardens newest garden: A Sensory Garden

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SUMMER SCHEDULE

Pre-Registration Confirmation, Pay Fees	April 15
NEW Registration, pay fees	April 20
Garden Bed Assignments	April 27
Planting Opening Date (weather permitting)	MAY 15
New Bed Construction	weather dependent
Move beds 39,45,46	weather dependent
Suggested Date for final harvest/clean-up	September 29

Gardener's Manual review and updates

The Gardener's manual has been updated and will be distributed to you when we have our annual registration days, as noted previously (4/15 and 4/20). We have tried to shorten the manual and edit the confusing directions. Vego-Bed use fees will remain the same. One new item deals with poor Gardener performance. Gardeners who do not take care of their gardens, or disturb other gardens, may be asked to leave and will not be allowed to continue or sign up for the next year.

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM

Last year, several new gardeners wondered if we had any experienced gardeners whom they might contact for information/assistance in getting their Garden Beds started. We did not have a program established at the time, but would like to follow up on the idea. If you would be interested in becoming a volunteer mentor, please contact us either before or at the time of formal registration and we will prepare a confidential list of Mentors. When we get a request for assistance, we will contact you directly so that you can contact the gardener.

Summer Gardening Workshops

At this time we are still trying to locate Master Gardeners or Professional Gardeners willing to donate their time in presenting workshops. We are still searching. In the meantime, we are thinking that some of our own "seasoned" gardeners might be interested in leading some evening discussions/presentations in the Fellowship Hall of the Church. Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday evenings are available. Topics that have been requested include "What can I Plant from Seeds Directly into the bed"; "How Often Should I water"; "How far apart should I space my Plants"; "How do I Start Seeds in my House/Apartment"; "What about transplanting", "Is the COSLC Fertilizer enough"; "Garden Pests and how to get rid of them"; "Tricks for preparing my Garden Bed", etc. COSLC could provide Coffee/Tea/Water, and if the group wants to bring refreshments to share that would be their choice. Please contact us if you would be willing to share your expertise!