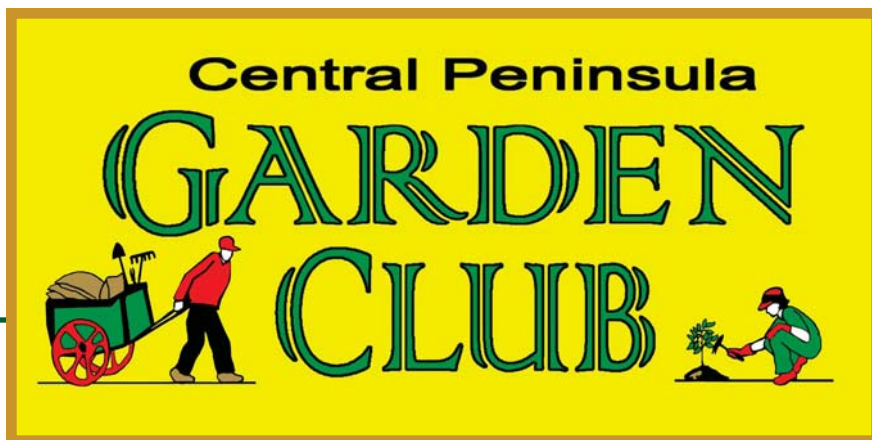


April 2012

Central Peninsula Garden Club



PO Box 767 · Kenai, Alaska 99611 · [www.cenpengardenclub.org](http://www.cenpengardenclub.org)

### Special points of interest:

- It's time to renew your membership! \$20 for Individual, \$30 for Family.
- Membership forms are always available at [www.cenpengardenclub.org/membership2011.pdf](http://www.cenpengardenclub.org/membership2011.pdf)

### Board Members

- Marion Nelson - *President, program chair*—(907) 283-4632, (907) 398-8669 (cell)
- Liz LeDuc - *Vice president, web site coordinator, hospitality*
- Kay Gardner - *Secretary, special events*
- Peggy Morris - *Treasurer, plant sale*
- Chris Cook - *Hospitality chair*
- Cathy Haas - *Plant sale co-chair, historian chair*
- Don St. John - *Tech chair, Sea Ag sales chair, special events*
- Renae Wall - *Publicity chair, nominating committee*
- Don Thompson - *Special events, plant sale*
- Amy Williams - *Tech committee, hospitality*
- Lee Bowman - *Sea Ag committee, special events*

### April 10 Program

## Personal Scale Urban Farming

**Presented by Dohnn Wood - Family Farmer, General Handy Man & Alaskan Renaissance Man**

Dohnn says: This will be a discussion of my journey from "discovering" that vegetables actually taste good, in the late summer of 2000, to growing and harvesting over 1500 lbs of food off my 5000 sq ft city home lot in 2011. With a little bit of ingenuity, and a lot of "stealing" of good ideas, my wife, son, and I eat almost a ton of farm fresh

local food we grow ourselves. I'll share what has worked for us here in Anchorage so far. (Dohnn grew in/on/under pots, hoops, floating row cover and in a solar greenhouse.)

Don's family moved to Anchorage in '75, so he calls himself an Alaskan. "In the last 37 years I have raced bikes, owned and operated a retail store for 18 years, gotten married and now I'm a stay-at-home dad for a brilliant six year old, a family

farmer and a general handy man, an Alaskan renaissance man." Don't miss this information packed program.

**When:** April 10, 7pm. Please car pool if possible.

**Where:** Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association building on K-Beach between KSRM and the Bridge Access Road intersection.

**Program** is open to the public. Visitors are welcome. Refreshments provided and sometimes door prizes.

### May 8 Program

## Planting Potatoes, Veggies, and More in Five Gallon Buckets and Other Containers

**Presented by Master Gardener Jane Baldwin.**

Jane gave this very educational and entertaining program at the Alaska Botanical Garden Conference, to the delight of all in attendance. She has a great assortment of images showing what can be done in a variety of containers, with great success,

whether you have a plot of dirt or not.

Jane is a past president of the Master Gardeners and a frequent presenter on many garden topics.

**When:** April 10, 7pm. Please car pool if possible.

**Where:** Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association building.



## March 23 Bonus Program Annie Nevelndine

THANK YOU to Annie Nevelndine for her program on Interplanting Vegetables, Herbs and Ornamentals, plus her very entertaining dessert presentation on the fun and hazards of growing, garden-

ing, and surviving it all with a smile.

Her information and images were inspirational as we still gaze out on a lot of white stuff.



Visit our website at  
[www.alaskaberries.com](http://www.alaskaberries.com).

Check out our online store for  
selections, price and  
availability.

We offer berry plants you will  
be able to enjoy for years to  
come.

## Don't Rush Your Soil—From CPGC Vice President, Liz Leduc, co- author of *Biodiversity Planning and Design* (with Jack Ahern)

I hate to admit it, but I'm definitely jealous of friends Outside who, when they say they are "thinking about" their garden, mean they are thinking about what chores they can get done this weekend—not trying to remember where their garden is under the snow! Photos of budding trees and emerging crocuses, warm dirt...it's a bit too much some days.

But as the weather warms, we must take care we don't let our eagerness rush the season. This month's *Organic Gardening* offers a good tip about when your soil is really ready

to plant. Do your seed packets say to plant "as soon as the soil can be worked?" What does that mean? Preparing the soil and planting too soon can cause you a lot of grief. It is important to be careful your soil isn't too wet and cold, as this can lead to rotting the seeds. And, according to *Organic Gardening*, April/May 2012 (page 80), working the soil when it is wet and cold can lead to significant damage to its structure that could "haunt your efforts for the rest of the growing season."

Part of the problem with trying to hurry your soil is that,

if tilled when too wet, the pore spaces between soil particles can collapse, leading to clumpy, heavy dirt. This then leads to water pooling or running off the surface, rather than percolated down to the roots of your plants—roots that aren't developing very well anyway in the hard ground you've created!

Here's how to avoid this mistake. Grab a handful of soil and gently squeeze it into a ball. Apply light pressure to it with a finger from your other hand. Does this flatten the ball or cause it to break into big chunks? Sorry, you need

to wait a little longer. But if applying pressure causes it to easily break into loose pieces, you are good to go—time to start digging!

Don't make the mistake of starting your garden before the ground is ready. A little patience goes a long way for a successful growing season.

Liz Leduc



## Annual RC&D Agricultural Forum, April 21

April 21 is the annual Kenai Peninsula Resource Conservation and Development District's Ag Forum.

Location: Niniichik Fairgrounds.

Tickets are available at Garden Club meetings: \$25 advance, \$35 at the door – includes lunch.

Presenters include:  
Jason Floyd – 4-H  
Rita Jo Shoultz – Peonies

Petra Illig – *Rhodiola rosea*  
Lee Luden – Fiber animals  
Kyra Wagoner – High tunnels  
Rob Carter – Plant Materials Center  
Andrew Crow – Forming Co-ops

**Breakout sessions:**  
 Marketing  
 Farm to School  
 Cold storage  
 Mobile slaughter unit  
 Borough ag policy  
 Veggie processing facility

## From Lee and Julie Bowman in the Sterling area.....They do it All

2011 was an experimental year for us.

We erected two hoop houses, and planted most of the standard vegetables plus we experimented with, among other things, winter squash. We tried three different varieties. They were Orange Kabocha (Sunshine from Johnny's), Waltham Butternut (from Ed Hume Seeds), and Butterbush (from Burpee).

They were all successful considering how late we got them in the hoop houses. As you can see from the photos, we got a variety of sizes. For

storage, we dipped them all in a dilute solution of chlorine bleach. We are very happy to report they kept very well.

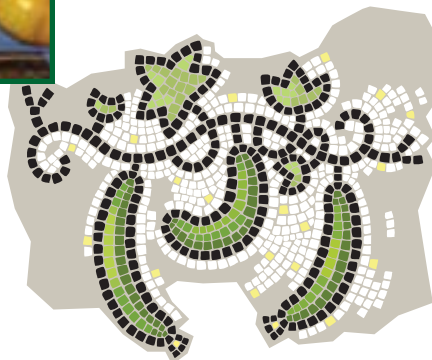
We had kabocha for supper last night, and we still have 2 left in our basement. The flavor has been exceptional. We

even kept some of the smaller squash that did not appear to be ripe. To our surprise, after a short storage period, they too were excellent table fare.

We did not realize how much space the plants occupied, especially the butternut. When we plant them again this year, we will certainly allow them more space, and we will get an earlier start.

Happy growing.

Lee and Julie Bowman



## Special Thanks to Janet St. John

Most of you have seen Janet St. John's amazing treats at the Garden Club monthly programs. She bakes and shares her amazingly clever and delicious creations of all kinds, meeting after meeting.

Sometimes there are more comments about Janet's creations than gardening and that's always the case around

the coffee pot and refreshment table.

We look forward to discovering "What has she made this time? .....Oh my gosh, look at this....." at every meeting.

Thank you Janet for your very generous contributions.

## Harvesting Kelp in Southcentral Alaska

The Clarion had an article in Sunday's paper from the Kodiak Mirror/Juneau Empire <http://juneauempire.com/state/2012-04-01/kodiak-residents-learn-harvest-cook-kelp#.T3kQVBweTnI> about harvesting/eating/cooking kelp on Kodiak Island.

The article stated that it was OK to harvest on all shores on Kodiak Island. Not so in our

part of Alaska.

While the minerals etc., in kelp might be desirable in our gardens, it's not legal to harvest on the vast majority of our beaches and shorelines with a few small exceptions. Seldovia area is the closest, easiest gathering area for us.

Please read the full article from ADF&G: [www.adfg.alaska.gov/static-](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static-sf/Region2/pdfpubs/kelp.pdf)

[sf/Region2/pdfpubs/kelp.pdf](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static-sf/Region2/pdfpubs/kelp.pdf).

Permit information: [www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=otherlicense.aquatic\\_resource](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=otherlicense.aquatic_resource)

The entire Kenai Peninsula, including Turnagain Arm, Knik Arm, Cook Inlet, Kachemak Bay, and Seward, is CLOSED to the taking of aquatic plants, except in three (small) remote

locations: the shorelines of the Kenai Fjords National Park (Bulldog Cove east to Yalik Point; the shorelines of the lower Kenai Peninsula and the North Gulf Coast west from the longitude of Jakolof Bay; and the shorelines of West Cook Inlet between the Chuitna River to Granite Point.

There is a 10 lb wet weight limit.

## Kiwi Travels Through the Eyes of Mary Starrs-Armstrong

This winter my husband Dallas and I fulfilled a dream to visit New Zealand. I did not necessarily travel with the eyes of a gardener, but I did notice a few things.

In the yard of our Auckland Home Stay, Fuchsia bushes the size of my closet thrived, herbs in pots dotted the edges of our patio. Alyssum forced its fragrant way through cracks in the cement outside our room reminding me of the power of living roots. Behind the house, terraced beds grew five different kinds of tomatoes with flowers at the edge of each bed. I love this veggie and flower mix.

Our Home Stay hosts in Wellington transformed a 12' x 4' pathetically ugly, untended space outside their living room door into a vibrant backyard where only grass and weeds had grown eight years previous. Now flowers, birds, veggies thrive even though their summer waned. While planting a veggie patch in a 4' x 4' raised bed at one end of her spot, our host also used unique and clever con-

tainers: a wheelbarrow, pieces of pottery, a bucket from a piece of heavy equipment, cinder blocks holes full of onions, flowers amidst lettuce, spinach and kale. Again, this mix of food and flowers is appealing.

We rode a bus into downtown Wellington and found five interesting structures for community gardens smack dab in the middle of the square surrounded by Federal buildings. Flowers, herbs and veggies grow in these simple wooden structures called Pick Your Own Pop Up Gardens. Each frame carries this dictum: "Please pick the produce if it is ready and leave some for someone else. Free workshops at the garden: call this number..."

Further up town, on the Founders Gates to the Botanic Gardens in Wellington hangs a sign reading: This

garden is dedicated to the honourable pleasure of rejoicing the eye, refreshing the mind and renewing the spirit. Indeed.

The Botanic Gardens offer a small wonder-filled Fragrance



Garden through which Dallas and I walked four times in one afternoon. Inhale. Exhale. Inhale. Exhale. Repeat.

The huge Lady Norwood Rose Garden with antique roses greets the visitor at the entrance with variety, color and plenty of documentation. Lovely.

Just off the rose garden stands a greenhouse with a 20' diameter pool where lotus plants lived creating a quiet, sacred-feeling space shared with orchids and lilies and other water loving plants.

Over the acres of land in the middle of the city, succulents and rock-loving plants cling to hills and mounds. Dozens of species of mature trees provide shade and awe. Flat-surfaced walkways twist into figure eights between patches of lawn. Beds of colorful annuals and bulbs coordinate, contrast and please the eye and make us smile. Enjoying flower, herb and vegetable plants in public place is an extra bonus of international travel.

Mary Starrs-Armstrong

## Not in Our Zone...Proteus

I recently vacationed on Maui and made a visit to the Kula Botanical Gardens. These are two of many Proteus that they grow. I highly recommend stopping there if you are on the Island.

Cathy Haas, CPGC Historian,  
Plant Sale Co-Chair



## Garden Club Home Show Booth

**Home Show Booth April 28-29 – Volunteers Sincerely Needed.** Please help with a shift or two at Garden Club Home Show booth, fielding questions about gardening, the Garden Club, selling logo T-shirts, etc. It's a lot of fun to find out what people have going on and their challenges in various locations, plus telling them about the Garden Club's programs and activities. There are still many people that don't know the garden club exists!

Bonus! Don Thompson is growing a couple hundred tomato plants that will be for sale at the club booth. First come, first served.

Hours:  
Friday - 12 noon, set up.  
Saturday – 9am to 7pm,  
Sunday – 11am to 5pm, take down.

Contact board member Renae Wall to schedule a shift: 260-6616 or wallrenae@yahoo.com.

## CPGC Annual Plant Sale

### ATTENTION MEMBERS!

CPGC Plant Sale: June 9th  
Location: Assembly of God Church, Spur Hwy in Kenai.

Our annual club plant sale is Saturday, June 9th. Our best selling plants in the past have been vegetables, usual types of tomato plants, perennials, all types of herbs, berries and hanging baskets.

Donated plants should be planted up in clean pots with good soil. Please label the plants as to what they are. Thanks in advance! Plant stake labels are available at CPGC programs in bundles of ten.

We are hoping members contribute dozens of plants to our sale. When you do plantings for your own gardens and greenhouse, remember to

plant extra for the club plant sale!

There will be an early Friday evening drop off for plants again this year as well as the Saturday morning, pre-sale drop off time. This information and the sale schedule will be in the May newsletter.

The Church is again generously allowing the garden club use their tables.

We will be asking for some strong garden club members to help carry and set-up the tables and take them down after the sale.

Please contact Judy Platz at mail@calloftheriver.com if you are willing to help with set up and take down.

Plant Sale Co-Chairs  
Cathy Haas & Judy Platz

# Notes

**SeaAg fertilizer fundraiser,** Don St. John, has lined up numerous SeaAg products for us this year, along with suggested usage in a given area, amounts, product analysis, quantity and price, as well as answers to the burning question, “Why do I want to use this stuff?”

Place your prepaid order at a meeting or with Don at 398-4474 or email: [akdon@acsalaska.net](mailto:akdon@acsalaska.net).

**Jeff Lowenfels’ weekly column** of gardening advice is in the Anchorage Daily Newspaper or on line. He includes names of the plants to start now and which come next. For past columns, it’s easy to look back and catch up on Jeff’s advice for all sorts of growing issues.

[www.adn.com/2012/03/28/2396292/spring-means-let-sun-start-seeds.html](http://www.adn.com/2012/03/28/2396292/spring-means-let-sun-start-seeds.html)

**And now, Sheila Toomey’s** new ADN column on Gardening issues:

[www.adn.com/2012/03/30/2400205/a-little-community-spirit-would.html](http://www.adn.com/2012/03/30/2400205/a-little-community-spirit-would.html)

## Garden Club Dates to Note

April 3, 17, 21—Landscape Architect Planning Workshop: April 3 & 17, lectures and April 21st, making the plan.

April 19 - KPC Earth Day Celebration

April 21—Peninsula RC&D Ag Forum

April 28-29 - Home Show Booth

May 5, 12, 19, 26 - Workshop Weekends, 2-5 workshops every Saturday.

May 8 - Planting Potatoes & Veggies in a Five Gallon Bucket, presented by Master Gardener Jane Baldwin.

June 9—CPGC Plant Sale - How many plants/baskets can you donate this year?

July-August – Summer Garden Tours –Members Only.

August 11—Garden Tour – Fundraiser, co-sponsored by Soldotna Chamber.

September—Dr. Bob Bors, head of the fruit breeding program, Department of Plant Sciences, University of Saskatchewan.

## Treasurer’s Report

**March 2012**—Peggy Morris, Treasurer

Beginning balance		\$12021.69
<u>Income:</u>		
Member dues	\$1040.00	
Landscaping class	<u>\$1650.00</u>	
Total	\$2690.00	
		\$14711.69

Expenses:

Airfare	\$289.00	
Meal	\$33.50	
Program reimbursement	\$35.23	
Printing	\$28.62	
Hospitality	\$153.26	
Home show	<u>\$780.00</u>	
Total	\$1319.61	
Ending Balance		\$13392.08

Newsletter layout/production—Pam Voeller  
To submit stories or pictures, contact Marion Nelson, 283-4632



**Question of the month:** If you could have any workshop you want during the “Workshop Weekends” event in May, what would it be? Email response to [mmkn@ptialaska.net](mailto:mmkn@ptialaska.net).

A small committee is needed to help with Workshop Weekends, **how about you?**

**Place an ad in the newsletter!** Monthly advertising rates:  
Small—\$20  
Medium—\$25  
Large—\$35  
Extra large—\$45  
Full page—\$90

If interested, contact Marion Nelson, 283-4632.