

December 2014

Central Peninsula Garden Club



PO Box 767 · Kenai, Alaska 99611 · www.cenpengardenclub.org

December 9th Program—

The Gardens and Pioneer Life of Fannie Quigley

Presented by Author & Historian, Jane Haigh

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Fannie Quigley was a pioneer mining woman who lived for 40 years in the remote Kantishna mining district, now at the end of the Denali Park Road. Fannie was famous for her enormous gardens grown under very challenging conditions, and for her hunting and trapping. All of her skills went into cooking for many visitors, who spoke highly of the fabulous meals they were served, miles from civilization.

Above 2500 feet in elevation, with a short growing season, she grew celery and corn, in addition to the usual potatoes, lettuce, carrots, and other vegetables we will try to identify from historic images of the gardens.

Historian Jane G. Haigh is the author of a number of books of popular Alaska history, including **Gold Rush Women**, **Gold Rush Dogs**, **Children of the Gold Rush**, and **King Con: the Story of Soapy Smith**. Jane's book, **Searching for Fannie Quigley: A Wilderness Life in the Shadow of Mt. McKinley**, was published in 2007. Jane was honored as the Alaska Historian of the Year by the Alaska Historical Society. In 2009 she joined the faculty at KPC after completing a PhD in U.S. History at the University of Arizona in Tucson.

Garden Club members, Jane and husband Chris live and garden in the Kalifornsky Beach area and are frequent CPGC participants. Many thanks to Jane for presenting this informative and interesting program.

Program date: Tuesday, Dec. 9,

When: 7pm

Where: Aquaculture Bldg, mi 16.5 K-Beach Rd.

Sometimes door prizes. Bring some refreshments if you can.

Free and open to the public.

Nov 11th - Irrigation Program presented by Jeff Rypka

We had the privilege of having Heidi Chay, District Manager of the Kenai Peninsula Soil and Water Conservation District present the Poster Program Winners with their certificates in front of the audience and family members. Their winning posters were part of the slide presentation for our meeting so everyone could easily see the winning posters.

The program presenter was Jeff Rypka of NRCS, who spoke about setting up a drip watering system for our gardens and high tunnels. He has a high tunnel, outdoor gardens, chickens and horses in the Sterling area.

Jeff began by telling us the three "R's" of watering: Having the **RIGHT AMOUNT** of water at the **RIGHT PLACE**, at the **RIGHT TIME**. This is SO True! His talk focused on setting up a viable, automated watering system using drip tape, how to do it, the equipment needed, starting with the well. He said it is best if you can plumb into your well. He took us through his system from the water source, to watering each row, each plant, using emitters in the drip lines.

Jeff told us it is best if we can put our watering system on a timer. This way, we can make sure our garden/plants get the right amount of water at the right time, on a set schedule. This also works to our advantage, as we do not waste water, by forgetting to shut the water off, nor do we have to babysit our system to turn the water on and off and watch a timer. Jeff said he does blow his lines out in the fall, in preparation for winter, but leaves them in the high tunnel, as they go flat once the water and air are out of the lines.



During the Q and A portion of the meeting, questions were raised about chlorinated city water versus well water, and whether it was necessary to warm the water first after coming from the well. Jeff said he would be more worried about such things as arsenic and iron in the well water over the small amount of chlorine in the city water. As for the necessity of warming the water, he said it wasn't needed, except for melons.

This was very informative talk that many were interested in, evidenced by the questions asked and the 100 people in attendance. I know I learned a great amount, and that there is much more I need to learn on this subject. But, I also feel less intimidated by the need of setting up this type of watering system. Hopefully, Jeff will be offering his workshop again next May.

We also had door prizes of house plants, a Farmers Fresh Market produce bag, and other items. Refreshments were enjoyed by all.

Submitted by CPGC member and volunteer, Donna Endresen (*Thank you for the recap Donna.*)

UAF Cooperative Extension Service Agriculture and Horticulture Public Presentations, Dec. 11 & 12

The UAF Cooperative Extension Service will be conducting interviews for the Kenai Peninsula Agriculture and Horticulture position on December 11 and 12 (Thursday and Friday). The public is invited to participate in the seminars presented by the candidates.

The schedule is as follows:

Thursday, December 11, 2:00-3:00 pm Jay Jenkins; 3:30-4:30 pm Dave Ianson

Friday, December 12, 2:00-3:00 pm Michael Woods; 3:30-4:30 pm Jodie Anderson

All seminars will be presented via distance delivery from **KPC, Room 158 Brockel Building**. In Seward, the Rae Building Room 101 and Homer, KPC Kachemak Bay Campus, Pioneer 103.

The candidates are asked to prepare a PowerPoint presentation on, "Increasing Alaska's food security and how the candidate would implement an Extension program addressing this issue".

For more information contact the Cooperative Extension Service at 262-5824, or outside the Central Peninsula 800-478-5824.

Crop Rotation—A Ramble by Will Hightower

I grew up in Black Hawk County, Iowa. My dad was the County Sheriff so we lived in the county seat, Waterloo. All of my close relatives were farmers and I spent a lot of my younger years on their farms. The main farm was the old family farm, at that time owned by my grandmother, Sophie. The old family farm was originally 120 acres. At some time “Thomas Hill” had been added, making a total of 170 acres. The site of the Thomas house could still be identified by a change of color in the earth. I can only speculate as to what might have been present or absent in that small patch of soil. Even in my youth, I noted that the crops seemed to be less vigorous in the vicinity of the old house than in the nearby areas.

I do not know when the family farm became “the family farm”. My great grand dad, William Andorf, built the barn in 1883. That is what the sign, high on the side of the barn, stated. His only child, William Andorf (different middle names) took over the farm shortly after the turn of the 20th century. William and Sophie raised 12 kids on the 170 acres, and grand dad never had a “town job”.

This part of Iowa has one shortcoming - no rocks. The County had to ship in rock for the gravel roads that divided the county into mile squares. The top soil ran 36 inches deep and was a dark chocolate color. As long as the “Family Farm” was held by my relatives, there were no manufactured fertilizers applied to the soil.

The farm raised chickens for eggs; hogs for market; and Milking Short Horned cattle for cream, skim milk and beef sales. The cream went to the Hudson or Dike Creamery for butter making. The skim milk went to the hogs and any kid hanging around. The beef went to Rath Packing. There was no such thing as “fast food”.

The farm was divided into five fields, which worked out to a five year crop rotation. Each field was planted two years corn, one year oats, one year hay, and one year pasture. All fields were fenced “hog tight”.

I knew, when I “visited” the family farm or any of the uncle’s farms, one of my jobs was to load the spreader and haul the load to the currently designated depository field. There was a never ending supply of spreader loads. Did you ever clean a dry, operating chicken house on a hot July day?

Crop rotation was never a subject talked about, that was the proven way things worked. Composting was an unknown word. If someone knew the meaning of composting, it was viewed that the pen had not been cleaned quickly enough; lazy farmer.

Then the world turned. The family farm disappeared into mega acreages and mono-cropping was the smart way to farm. Crop rotation became something in the mists of times past, like King Arthur.

Digressing a little, you do know what mono cropping means? Mono cropping is where you plant the same crop year after year in the same field. Nothing is considered regarding soil quality. The ground could be rocks, it is just there to keep the plants upright. Whatever the plant needs is supplied in a chemical solution. This is like hydroponics on an outdoor, field size basis. A similar thing occurred in the old south of the US. The plantations planted nothing but cotton and “wore out the soil”. “Go West young man, for new soil”.

This last week we were talking to Pam at USDA about our high tunnels, actually signing the paper that said we had done the minimum amount to get monetary reimbursement from the government. Pam said, “The USDA has a program on crop rotation, would you be interested?” “I’ve been told that space is curved and if you travel in a straight line, far enough, you will end up back where you started. If you live long enough, things will return to what they were.”

Yes, I could develop a three year crop cycle program, the length the USDA wants. I could learn about the different plants or plant groups and what they do to or for the soil. I would have to set up three programs to cover the whole garden scene. We have two high tunnels plus outdoor plantings (potatoes and strawberries). The high tunnels, we hope to operate at two different temperatures (tomatoes and root crops need different conditions). All the information I would need could be obtained, organized and be ready for the spring planting! Divide the raised rows into “fields” and set up a chart for crop group rotation in the “fields”. Piece of cake! Sign “the farm” up. Boy, will we be getting organized!

Then, Pam dropped the other shoe. With a sly smile she said, “You know the USDA requires soil tests with the crop rotation program?” I refer you to my column in the November 2014 edition of the Garden Club newsletter on soil tests.

You all have Happy Holidays! Where did I leave my turkey sandwich?



<h1 style="text-align: center;">KENAI FEED & SUPPLY</h1> <p style="text-align: center;">www.kenaifeed.com</p> <p style="text-align: center;">MILE 14.5 K-Beach Rd. 907-283-1929</p> 	<p>HIGH TUNNELS ORGANIC FERTILIZER PEAT + SEEDS FENCING LIVESTOCK & PET FEED/SUPPLIES PRODUCE</p>	
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The Importance of Bumble Bees—and Other Native Pollinators



At the October garden club meeting, there were questions about the effectiveness of importing pollinators, specifically bumble bees and mason bees, to help with pollination inside high tunnels. Although the imported bees might help with pollination, The Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation has determined that everywhere commercially reared bumble bees have been purchased and used, wild populations decline.

Alaska is fortunate to still have healthy and diverse populations of bumble bees and other native pollinators. Instead of risking introducing disease by importing bumble bees or mason bees, conserve and enhance pollinator habitat, encourage and entice native species to your garden or farm. See links that follow for more information.

- ~A copy of "Conserving Bumble Bees" can be downloaded from this Xerces Society webpage: <http://www.xerces.org/bumblebees/guidelines/>.
- ~See "How Farmers Can Help Pollinators" at <http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/national/plantsanimals/pollinate/>
- ~Watch this webinar on [Pollinators for Your Garden](#) for expert advice on how to create a successful pollinator garden.
- ~Bumble Bee Watch: <http://www.bumblebeewatch.org/>. Take a photo, upload to site, identify the species. Sightings will be verified by an expert. So far, no postings from the Kenai Peninsula!
- ~Color Guide to Alaskan Bumble Bees: http://www.akentsoc.org/doc/AKES_newsletter_2013_1.pdf. Published by the Alaska Entomological Society: <http://www.akentsoc.org/>



Another Interesting Concept on Growing Food in Limited Spaces

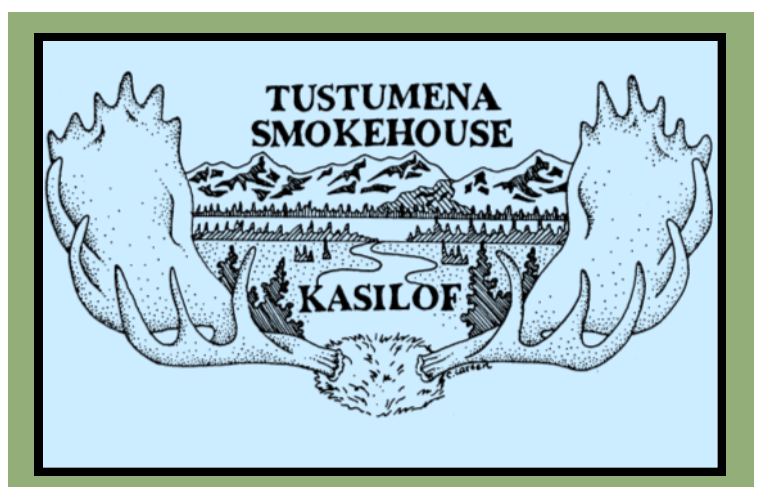
No running water, just misting, no natural sunlight, just controlled light color, no pesticides and less space.
<http://hereandnow.wbur.org/2014/11/28/aerofarms-aeroponic-farm>
<http://aerofarms.com/about/>



NPR's Science Friday Program on Various Plants/Trees

Listen to it: <http://www.sciencefriday.com>. The Nov 7th program segments were especially interesting for growers:
 ~Apple varieties, breeding programs, research on historic varieties;
 ~History of the peanut in this country, it's many uses and a reminder that it's not a nut but a legume;
 ~Co-evolution of insects and plants and synergy of same;
 ~Plants with special properties for drugs/vaccines, with Ebola, influenza and more in mind.
 A great program for growers.

November 2014 Treasurers Report	
Beginning Balance:	\$18,333.20
Income:	
Dues	\$305.00
Expenses	
Storage Unit	(\$330.00)
Printing	(\$61.76)
Historian	(\$25.40)
Misc.	(\$10.57)
Ending Balance:	\$18,210.47
No financial activity for October, 2014	
Submitted by Peggy Morris, Treasurer	



Upcoming CPGC Events & Volunteer Opportunities!

Volunteers Needed & Appreciated!

It's your club.....Help with a committee or event! It's fun. Most are just once a year events. Let any board member know your interest

-Newsletter: Editor, or share pictures, articles on local gardening topics.. Contact Marion mmkn@ptialaska.net --

-Event booth staffing & decorating: Home Show in April, Niniichik Fair in August. Contact Cindy Barnes, alaskancindy-lou@yahoo.com or 262-1395

-Workshop Weekends in May. Arranging workshops, presenters, and venues. Contact Marion mmkn@ptialaska.net

-Program Committee: Meets occasionally. Contact Marion, mmkn@ptialaska.net

-Publicity Volunteer: Email publicity information to the media. Contact Velma Bittick, velee@acsalaska.net or 252-7579.

-Hospitality Committee: Help at the registration desk for program meetings or certain special events, greeting, taking memberships etc, room set up, refreshments, clean up. Contact Juanita Owens, samowens0969@yahoo.com or (318) 557-9876.

-Co-Videographer/photographer for programs and workshops: Contact Linda Dunn, lindadunn78@gmail.com or 283-7857. -Tech committee: Power Point programs and mike set up for pro- grams, occasional workshops. Contact Don St. John, 398- 4474.

-Sea Ag Fertilizer Fundraiser: Order & Pick-up help, March-May delivery day. Contact Don St. John, 398-4474.

-Summer Garden Tours committee. Coordinate local garden tours during June, July, August. Contact Marion 283- 4632

-June through September: Weekly summer flower bed maintenance and clean up at the Aquaculture Bldg. Light weeding and some planting. The entrance area plantings are a thank you to CIAA for meeting room use throughout the year. We appreciate their valuable meeting space contribution. Contact Peggy Morris, 262-8374.

-Face book administrator. Approve/deny requests to join the club's group page. Contact Marion mmkn@ptialaska.net

-Occasional guest speaker lodging or local transportation: Great opportunity for expert information. Contact Marion, 283-4632. -

Programs & Events

December 9th, 7pm, Program: The Amazing Gardens of Pioneer Gardener, Fannie Quigley, presented by Jane Haigh, author, historian, KPC prof, CPGC member.

December 11 & 12, Public Presentations by Candidates for the Extension Office, Ag Hort Agent. Location: KPC, Brockel Bldg., Rm 158, 2pm-4:30 both days. 2 candidates each day, 4 total. Don't miss this opportunity.

Jan 13, Garden Round Table Chatter & Brief Annual meeting, election of Board for 2015.

Jan X Workshop -TBA

Feb 10 & 11, Arthur Keyes of Glacier Valley Farms, Amy Petit of Dept of Ag. Farm and Farmer's Market Development.

March-May, Sea Ag Fertilizer Fundraiser Sales. Contact Don St. John 398-4474

March 21st, Get Ready for Spring Round Table Event – Kenai Visitor Center

March 28-29, Home Show Booth

April, TBA

May, Workshops

June, July, August, Summer Garden Tours

Got a story or photos to share?

Contact Marion Nelson, 283-4632 or mmkn@ptialaska.net

Advertising space available at very reasonable prices!

Check out the club's Face Book page!

Newsletter layout by Becky Holloway and Pam Voeller

**Refreshing Libations
for Your Next
Garden Party!**



Country Liquor
140 S. Willow St.
Downtown Kenai
283-7651