

July 2014

Central Peninsula Garden Club

Happy 4th of July!



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

*June 8, 2014*

## Annual Plant Sale Was Wet and Wonderful

We had another great garden club plant sale this year, held at the Kenai New Life Assembly of God parking lot on the corner of the Spur and Princess Street.

Weather was not our friend, but that didn't stop us. Thanks to all the generous plant contributors and everyone that came to buy the plants. Without your help, we couldn't have been successful. We netted \$1472 which goes to support 4-H projects, fair awards and club events.

It is never too soon to think of next year's sale. Just a little planning and planting, and you could really help with some great plants for 2015. I still have extra pots for those that want to start early.

Thank you to the church youth group for their good help and all our Garden Club volunteers: Juanita Owens, Dennis Spindler, Don St. John, John Coon, Fritz Miller, Margaret Simon, Velma Bittick, Kay Gardner, Deena Huntley, Sandy Sandoval, Helen Groeneveld, Marion Nelson.

2014 Plant sale committee: Cathy Haas, Pat Udelhoven, Peggy Morris, Linda Barclay.

*Plant Sale Chair, Cathy Haas*



### Board Members

President & Program Chair & Newsletter— Marion Nelson

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Director & Special Events Chair—Cindy Barnes

Director, Special Events—Don Thompson

Director, Special Events—Lee Bowman

**Will's Ramblings****"The Doer"**—by Will Hightower

I have talked about things needed to grow a garden; the seeds, the soil, and protecting the garden. Also talked about, what to do with the results of the garden and the doings of gardening. As well as, what to do with three bushels of strawberries. Wait, that last was a wishful dream. But, I've never talked about "the doer"; the person doing the gardening.



"The Doer", picture an eighty-five-year, physically impaired, office clerk starting a commercial truck-farm. He is looking for a retirement income, and a doctor told him, he needed more exercise and to get outdoors to help with his breathing. What do you think his chance of success might be?

Now look at role models from your life, while I look at my grandfathers. My mother's father was an angry man that wouldn't take care of himself, this much I learned second hand, as he died when I was 3 or 4. My father's father was a self-employed carpenter that believed what Social Security told him, this was back in the 50s. At the time of his retirement you were not to work for wages, after the government started sending you money. The old boy went into the house and found a rocking chair and in two years was dead.

It is never good to be an angry person, but hard not to do when viewing the actions of the world around you, near and far. This is very hard to do as one gets older and "wiser". Trust me, no one likes an angry old fart, so why waste your remain time being one. Take a walk or go read a gardening book. Relax, find your inner self.

Now we have touched on "The Doer's" mind set and physical shape. How about their mechanical ability? Can he afford a John Deere 9999, and if he can does he really need it? Whatever a 9999 is for. When operating and maintaining equipment, what is his mechanical ability? People, all people, fall somewhere between operating thousands of acres with a 9999, and figuring out which end of a hand hoe to attack the weeds with in a flower pot.

I started out with fair sized gardens. I was a complete failure, by the end of the season you could not find anything to eat in the weeds. It was time for me to drop back and regroup or find a rocking chair. The garden surface was dropped way down and raised 2 feet thus retarding burnout from weeding. What weeds? Lots of reading and listening was mixed in. Each year something new was tried. Just now I'm returning to the surface areas of 15 years ago.

If you are just starting to garden, not quite settled on a garden location or an old timer suffering from burnout, limit this year's garden to 2 buckets filled with "Fritz's fine compost". Visit your garden everyday, with the garden book you are reading. You get mind exercise, fresh air, lowered burnout and just dare a weed to show its evil face. Limit yourself to your "garden mechanical ability" and you will stay a "Doer".



Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association  
40610 Kalifornsky Beach Road  
Kenai, Alaska 99611  
283-5761 + [www.ciaanet.org](http://www.ciaanet.org)

Healthy habitats for healthy salmon.

## Early Spring Dreams for a New Garden

I started out this spring with so many big plans. We had to tear down our molding shed and underneath I found a treasure, the perfect gardening spot. Nothing had ever been grown there so the dirt was raw. Unfortunately, we also had to build a screen because it was full of rocks and gravel. I didn't figure that out until after I had planted my row of garlic and brought out my cauliflower. Growing outside in Alaska is new to me. We also got a free carport canopy from our neighbor so my wonderful hubby welded the pieces together and we made a makeshift mini tunnel. I started all my seeds in March and April inside and they took over my bathroom which is on the south side of the house.

I have a plan to make pasta sauce, salsa and can the rest of the tomatoes, so I am growing Romas, Moskovich, Sun Gold and another heirloom tomato. I started 2 De Circo broccoli but when I transplanted them outside, they got bit by the cold when the wind blew the row cover off, and the temperature dipped below 35. They died. I am also trying 2 watermelons, cantaloupe, 4 cucumbers, bell peppers and jalapeno peppers, basil, and zucchini.

I started putting stuff out in the mini tunnel the first week or so in May. The leaves got a little cold at night but survived the below 40° temps. I plan to plant my lettuces and carrots and short season veggies as soon as possible, but my 2-year-old keeps me super busy and I am still afraid to put time and effort into planting and not getting any success. I am trying to use only the dirt that was here before adding anything to it, so it's a live and learn thing. I planted sweet snap peas and potatoes the last week in May and they are doing fabulous. I have 3 apple trees planted outside and 1 in the mini tunnel. I plan on putting the melons and zucchini outside in the ground before it starts fruiting but who knows.



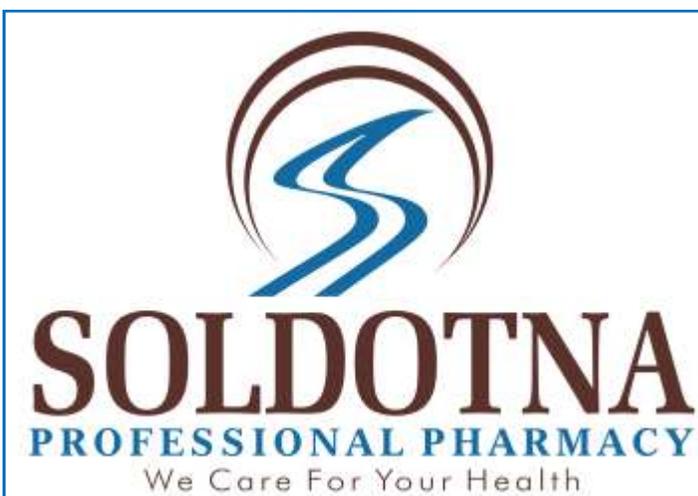
*Links You Can Use...*

Goats Prove Their Worth Once Again

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2014/06/18/321659645/goats-in-the-city-detroit-s-munching-mowers-make-a-case>

Broccoli Lovers & Sellers Know This

<http://www.npr.org/blogs/thesalt/2014/06/18/323214050/eating-broccoli-may-give-harmful-chemicals-the-boot>



## Burger Bus



OPEN YEAR ROUND

Monday—Saturday

11am to 6pm

CLOSED SUNDAY

## Gardeners' Gleanings from CPGC's Facebook Page

Josie Shawna Mackey- McDonald

My name is Josie McDonald and I am a lifelong Alaskan Athabaskan native. Growing up I have always been fascinated with gardening and finally am getting the hang of it. I planted time and time again in the same little area and had only a few of the perennials come back. Last year I decided to dig up the entire area by hand, and I added better dirt and fertilizer. I replanted the few survivors I had and added a some new plants mostly from Jackson's Garden.

The area is now thriving which coming from someone who can't keep a houseplant alive is a very large accomplishment. I still have some weed issues, especially horsetail and dandelion but I am persistent with them.

Vern Nusunginya

I recently met a lot of wonderful people. I attended a few Master Gardener sessions and discovered one of my fishing buddies is a Master Gardener.

I have had a few successes. I've discovered that cherry tomatoes like my sun room but Siberian and Russian Tomatoes don't. Also, I discovered that aphids love pepper plants.

My Sitka Roses are thriving and require little care. My lilac bush is a late bloomer and has a lot buds. I discovered that my crab apple trees don't cross pollinate because they are the same variety. I did find a different crab apple tree and hope that I got to my blooms in time.

I got to meet Mr. O'Brien at the Farmer's Market, in Soldotna, on Saturday. I bought a Parkland Apple Tree that was grafted to a crab apple base. I planted it yesterday. I'm excited about it and want to see how much it will grow over the summer. O'Brien said it should do three feet; a friend says I might get a foot.

I want everyone to know how much I enjoy their comments and advice (on the Garden Club fb page).

### June 2014 Treasurer's Report

Beginning Balance:	\$17,504.98
Income:	
Dues	\$ 70.00
Newsletter Ads	\$ 60.00
Sea-Ag	\$ 650.00
Plant Sale	\$ 1,722.00
Workshop Weekends	\$ 550.00
Expenses:	
Plant Sale	\$ (255.00)
Sponsorship Fiar/4H	\$ (1,000.00)
Workshop Weekends	\$ (335.00)
CIAC Flowers	\$ (128.00)
Ending Balance:	\$18,838.98

Submitted by Peggy Morris, Treasurer

Got a story or photos to share?

Contact Marion Nelson, 283-4632 or  
[mmkn@ptialaska.net](mailto: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



## Gardening in Bethel: an update from Tim Meyers

Words from Tim Meyers about this season's planting, harvesting and marketing: "Well, all I want to say is that the water wheel planter and tunnel layer changes the way I think about farming. I started with 500 storage cabbage this spring—what I wanted to do by hand; next year I will do 3,000 in less time. I do 150 broccoli in a secession planting, now I can do thousands in less time. We have about 2700 cabbage, broccoli, and cauliflower plants in the ground here, all under plastic. These tools are unbelievable (Water Wheel Planter & Tunnel Layer). This will mean I need to look for other markets than just here (Bethel)". (See picture of the interior of Meyers Farm market in Bethel.)

P.S. If you travel to Bethel stop in and say "Hi" from CPGC.



*This machine (above) puts a row tunnel wire in the ground and covers it with plastic. It takes about 20 minuets to put up a 230 foot row. Below, some of the tunnel rows after being covered by the "Tunnel Layer" machine.*



*Above, Meyers' Bethel Farmers Market Building. Below, interior view of shelves filled with produce. They started selling beet in May.*



*Tim sez, "I have ten 210 foot rows here with 4 rows of carrots spaced 2 inches apart in each bed and should get 10,000 lbs. of carrots."*



*This bright green water wheel planter can put 1000 starts in the ground in less than an hour with one person, says Tim Meyers. Brand name: Rain Flo and he said it cost around \$1900.*



## Everyone Needs a Cow—By Shonia Werner

After tilling up our former cow corral, it became evident that every gardener needs a cow. Besides the obvious perks bovine provide such as, steadfast companionship, welcoming moos upon returning home, and delicious homegrown meat, the resulting compost from the friendly beasts is second to none. Only gardeners can understand the feeling of thankfulness and excitement felt when the dirt was turned over after composting for several years and the transformation of the manure to dark, rich, aromatic earth was revealed. We chose to plant a crop of potatoes in the sweet-smelling soil, and were surprised when the field erupted in green in only 7 days. In years past, 2-4 weeks seemed to be the norm around here. I will be the first to admit, that growing potatoes has never been my specialty, but hopefully with this new growing medium, this year's bounty will be enough for more than one or two meals.



## Upcoming CPGC Events & Volunteer Opportunities!

### Volunteers Needed & Appreciated!

It's your club! Which committee fits your talents? Call Marion—283-4632. Your help is needed now and during the program season.

-NOW Newsletter Committee: Share pictures or write articles on local gardening topics of interest to our members. Special plant articles welcome.

-Special event booth staffing & workshop host (a few times a year): Home Show in April, Workshop Weekends in May, Ninilchik Fair in August. **Next information table event is the Ninilchik Fair in August.** Contact Cindy Barnes, [alaskancindy-lou@yahoo.com](mailto:alaskancindy-lou@yahoo.com) or 262-1395.

-Program Committee: Meets occasionally. Contact Mari- on, [mmkn@ptialaska.net](mailto:mmkn@ptialaska.net)

-Publicity Volunteer: Post a few program flyers. Contact Velma Bittick, [velee@acsalaska.net](mailto: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](mailto:samowens0969@yahoo.com) or (318) 557-9876.

-NOW -Videographer/photographer for tours, programs and workshops: Contact Linda Dunn, [lindadunn78@gmail.com](mailto:lindadunn78@gmail.com) or 283-7857.

-Tech backup: Power Point programs and mike set up for programs, 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.

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

-NOW-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 this valuable contribution. Contact Peggy Morris, 262-8374.

### Programs:

No monthly programs: May, June, July, August.

-NOW - July, August: Local garden tours. Open to dues- current members—a membership benefit. Ideas welcome. Participants car pool to destinations which are located in the same general area. Catch up on your dues so you can take part in this popular summer activity. You will learn something at every destination. Mail \$20 indiv.-\$30 family to POB 767 Kenai 99611.

-How about a tour to another part of Alaska? What gardens do you want to visit?

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



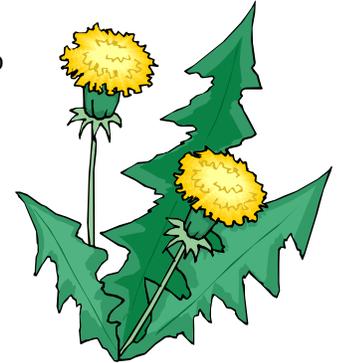
**Country Liquor**  
140 S. Willow St.  
Downtown Kenai  
**283-7651**

## Research idea: Small-time Composting (kind of)—By Will Hightower

I had an idea on small amount composting. This is not for the big time operators like the Dons, Fritzs or Lees of the club. You guys can stop reading now and have a cup of coffee.

This idea is for the Beckys and Anns of the garden world, the people that it is hard for them to gather enough raw materials to build a “real compost pile”. When working in the vegetable garden or flower bed, what do you always get a pile of? Pulled weed piles, the ever present weed.

The question with weeds is, “What can be done with pulled weeds?” If you had a compost pile, you should not put the weeds in it as most piles, up here, do not cook enough to kill the seeds. Some seeds can be viable for years, at a wide range of temperatures. So many people bag the weeds and fill up the landfill. Burning does not even ensure all the seeds are done for. All that green growth that should be used to feed the next generation of plants is disposed, rather than used. What can be done?



OK , here is the idea, “Weed Tea”! Find a 5 gallon plastic bucket with a lid. Fill the bucket about  $\frac{3}{4}$  full, really stuff it in. Cover the mass with water. Place the lid on the bucket (doesn't have to be tight) and place in a sunny spot for 10 to 14 days.

After the cooking time, skim off the liquid. I feel this liquid will be strong, this is based on dealing with worm juice for years. I would recommend that the liquid be diluted about 10 waters to 1 weed tea. This is a guess, part of the research, adjust as you learn.

I think there might be an issue with long-term storage of the weed tea, so use it or get rid of the liquid after a few days. The mass in the bottom of the bucket will be greatly reduced and easier to get rid of, yes off to the landfill. If you have lots of weeds or a big garden, you may want to cycle more than one bucket. Do this on a staggered schedule, fresh bucket every few days.

I have not tried this system, but feel it might work well. The garden gets the goodies and no weed seeds. Feed back on this idea would be great. The floor is now open for discussion. —Happy gardening!

## May 31st Workshop Weekend Pictures—Contributed by Bob Malvin

### Irrigation—Jeff Ripka Presenter



*Left, pressure gauge set up for Jeff' Ripka's tunnel/garden.*

*Middle, Ripka's high tunnel raised beds, with tomato plants off to a good start. Wonder what it looks like now!*

*Below, workshop participants listening to Jeff's tunnel growing info. Note the great raised beds.*



...More Workshop Weekend Pictures from May 31st—Contributed by Bob Malvin

Bee Keeping for Gardeners—Tom Gotcher, Presenter



*Clockwise from left, Tom Gotcher pointing out features of his bee keeping set up during the Bee Keeping Workshop for Gardeners.*

*Gotcher's busy "super" including food source. Amazing.*

*A pollen laden bee in May.*

**Everything's Amazing in Bowman's High Tunnel**—Lee Bowman, Presenter

*Lee Bowman, right, showing the expected plant growth to come.*





*Above, Bowman explaining details of his gardening practices.*

*The amazing producing cherry tree in Bowman's tunnel, right.*



<p><b>KENAI FEED &amp; SUPPLY</b> www.kenaifeed.com MILE 14.5 K-Beach Rd. <b>907-283-1929</b></p> 	<p>HIGH TUNNELS ORGANIC FERTILIZER PEAT + SEEDS FENCING LIVETOCK &amp; PET FEED/SUPPLIES PRODUCE</p>	
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