

March 2015



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

March 10th Program

Delta Barley, Alaska Flour

Presented by Bryce and Jan Wrigley of Alaska Flour –Delta Junction

Bryce Wrigley is committed to sustainable farming methods and to developing a local food system in Alaska. This commitment drove him to shift to no-tillage on his Delta Junction farm and to found Alaska Flour Company.

He has worked closely with UAF on many research projects, is a member of the Advisory Council for the School of Natural Resources and Extension and most recently was appointed to be a CARET (Council for Agricultural Research, Extension and Teaching) delegate for UAF.

He is the District Manager for the Salcha-Delta Soil and Water Conservation District. Since 2007, he has been President of the Alaska Farm Bureau, the largest and most influential farm advocacy organization in Alaska. Bryce is deeply committed to expanding agriculture in Alaska as a means of strengthening our food security.

Jan is a wife and mother first and foremost. Raising their children on a hog farm motivated them to higher education. Jan has taught school in Delta Junction for 30 years teaching speech and language and remedial reading. Jan has served on numerous local committees. She is an excellent cook and has done a remarkable job raising her husband.

Their goal is to increase Alaska's self-reliance by providing healthy flour and cereal products. Alaska Flour Company's product line has grown from barley flour to include cereal, couscous, cracked barley, roasted barley tea, pancake mixes, and most recently, brownie and cookie mixes.

Bryce and his wife Jan will discuss their family's work of growing, and taking barley from the field to the dinner table, including a short cooking demonstration featuring some of their barley products.

Time: 7pm **Location:** Cook Inlet Aquaculture Bldg., Mile 16.5 K-Beach Rd.

Near the Bridge Access Rd. intersection

Refreshments and sometimes door prizes. Free and open to the public



2015

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Coming Soon—5th Annual Kenai Peninsula Ag Forum
Presented by Kenai Peninsula RC&D in partnership with Kenai Peninsula Fair
Saturday, April 18, 9 am to 4 pm. at the Fairgrounds

To register, visit <https://www.facebook.com/events/779527235460347>.

Central Peninsula Garden Club is one of the event sponsors.

Will's Rambling**A Tale of Two Tunnels, Chapter II —by Will Hightower**

You ever hear the old joke about the farmer asking the centipede, "How do you know which leg to move first?" The centipede got to studying on that and never walked again.

Even after the tunnel was on a trailer in the yard, we were studying on what was to be done. One large tunnel was ordered, but two smaller tunnels would work better. We talked to many people, including the NRCS. We visited high tunnels, getting more advice than I could handle. Finally we bit the bullet and got to the physical work.

All summer was spent tearing out twenty plus years of gardening. Needless to say there were many times of saying, "Was this the right way to go?"

As the leaves were turning last fall, construction work started. We were actually going to start building and assembling the tunnel! We would never have finished the minimum contract work if not for a mild fall and easy winter. We split the large tunnel into two units, needing 4 lines of holes and four doors instead of just two. 64 holes were needed between the two units. Holes translated means: 8" in diameter and 42" deep. That's a lot of gravel to move!

We chose an Oregon Valley High Tunnel, so the following is related to that type of unit. Here are four points of "my high tunnel wisdom":

1. Get the ground pipes level and the ground pipe bolt holes in the correct direction.
2. Do not tighten any bolts until the full metal frame is together.
3. Information, you need more information. Spend lots of time watching videos on You Tube with the search "High Tunnel".
4. Trust in your own abilities. You have abilities or will have improved abilities by the time your project is finished!

Level – if you get the bottom right, the top will take care of itself. We talked to several tunnel owners. Some said, "Just drive the ground pipes in. Stop when the pipes are level. You only have to pull the pipes a couple times to remove the dirt out of the center. After that you get to drill new holes through pipes to get the bolts through. Bolts need to go through both the ground pipes and the rib ends". (Monti says **level** also means your soil must be flat and smooth. Don't start building before it is!)



The instructions from Oregon Valley said the ground pipes needed to be cemented in. Someone else said a trench was best, like a footing. The last time I dug a trench on our gravelly hilltop it had to be at least as wide as it was deep. Let's see—240 feet of trench 3 ½ feet deep is a lot of concrete!!!

We ended up borrowing a 3 point posthole digger which attached to the tractor and worked GREAT! Except for when the auger would hit rocks or when the auger slipped by a large root and in two rotations the unit was trying to suck the tractor to China. Unbolting the digger from the tractor and reversing the auger out by hand with a large pipe wrench is not a job of joy.

The best advice we got locally was to build the bottom board, drill spaced holes, hang the ground pipes on the board and level the whole assembly as a unit. Theoretically the pipes are all at the right elevation and the bolts are facing the right way. This paragraph is simplified. If you want info on detailed base instructions, contact me at a Garden Club meeting.



Bolting up – this is a mechanical thing. When you assemble any purchased item, it is best to loosely bolt parts together until all parts are assembled. This gives you wiggle room and an opportunity to make minor adjustments. After the high tunnel is standing assembled, then tighten her up, starting at either the top or bottom and working to the other extreme. I think bottom to top is best but I can not defend that notion.

Information gathering – this is what you need to do every day, even after you have the frame of your tunnel up. If you can, go to You Tube and type in "High Tunnel". You can spend the winter mining knowledge. This is best done after the day's work is done and an adult beverage is in one hand.

Trust yourself – incoming information will never end. There comes a point when you go with your gut and what you want. You have garden knowledge or you would not be here. Remember, there will always be someone that will say "I would not do it that way". This usually happens in the middle of a project, like hauling out a wheel barrow of tomatoes from the patch and hearing, "I would not have planted so many plants".

Costs and the NRCS - the agency figures that they will give you around ¼ of the cost of the tunnel in financial help. Watch for the line "lumber needs to be supplied locally". Besides lumber, there is shipping, equipment rental, hired labor, end coverings, venting and wiring/ plumbing. At this point, just figuring unit cost, freight, and lumber for the ends, our tunnels have cost \$7,280. (continued...)





The NCRS sent a check for \$6,754. This leaves us investing \$525. If we added in all the costs, our cost would stand at \$3,400+. The question is what is a direct cost? Is underground water piping a tunnel cost?

Would I consider doing another high tunnel through the government program? The jury is still out on that. Are we thinking about a possible third tunnel? Yes, but see the previous sentence.

The amount of knowledge we have gained through being in the program is so vast. It is like being in a formal class. But that knowledge opens up other ways of doing tunnels that do not fit in the program. Still lots of work to do.

If you will excuse me, it is wine time. I need to learn about crop rotation (a USDA program); soil quality (a USDA program); raised bed construction (a Willie program); and weaving equipment (a honey-do program).

CPGC Annual Sea-Ag Fertilizer Sale Fundraiser!

It's time to order your Sea-Ag Fertilizer & Kelp now! Place orders in person at the March 10th program meeting, or the March 21st Roundtable "Get Ready for Spring" event, the Club's Home Show booth—March 28th & 29th and the April 14th program meeting. You can also contact event Chair, Della Bridenburg at 776-3908 or via email at bananaleg47@gmail.com.

Prices are the same as last year:
 \$25. for the handy 10# wide mouth jug of SeaAg
 \$40. for the 50# bag of SeaAg
 \$25. for the 1# bag of Soluble Kelp Powder....
 a little goes a long way.

Pick Up Day is May 9th at Snug Harbor SeaFoods
 Parking area on K-Beach Rd.
Hours to be announced and volunteers welcome to assist on pick up day.

2015 Treasurers Report January February

Beginning Balance: \$19,420.47

Income:

Dues \$560.00
 Ads \$390.00

Expenses:

Hospitality \$(110.94)
 Kenai Chamber Dues \$(100.00)
 Special Spring Event Room Rent \$(100.00)
 Special Event Arthur Keyes \$(500.00)
 Special Event gas money \$ (80.00)
 Program Speaker Hotel \$ (84.00)
 Program Speaker Gift Cards \$(200.00)
 Consultation for sound system \$ (50.00)
 Office Supplies \$ (53.00)

Ending Balance: \$19,092.53

Submitted by Peggy Morris, Treasurer

SHEEP
 When someone tells you they raise sheep for fiber and meat, you think to yourself, "that is cool...."

BEEES
 When you meet someone who raises bees and makes honey, you think to yourself, "that is so COOL!"

GARDEN
 When someone tells you that they have a small home garden and a stand at the farmer's market, you think, "wow, that's cool, I should do that."

CHICKENS
 When someone tells you they raise chickens and sell their fresh colorful eggs, you think, "wow, pretty cool!"

For more information about joining visit us on the web at www.ALASKAFB.org
40 ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP
EVERYONE WELCOME!
KENAI PENINSULA CHAPTER

This can be you. Join the movement. It is COOL to grow things, nurture plants and animals and SHARE with others. Support local farms and buying local. Support your local FARM BUREAU. Support agriculture - small farms, big farms. That helps us to help YOU be a healthy and happy locivore!

Notes from the
Farmers Market Roundtable
Feb. 11, 2015, Cook Inlet Aquaculture
Association Building

Sponsored by Kenai Soil & Water Conservation District,
Central Peninsula Garden Club and Alaska Grown

Kenai Peninsula Farmers Markets 2020:

What's your vision?

- More organic production
- Year-round production
- More farmers = more customers
- More volume with high tunnels
- A CULTURE that supports Farmers Markets
- Better ways to move produce...co-op?
- Food hub
- Actual permanent location
- More specialization of products – growing fewer crops in greater quantity
- Consolidation of Markets
- More high tunnels = more markets

What's needed to make it happen?

- Property (big enough to accommodate a market 10 years from now)
- More education/info on extending the season
- LABOR
- More political will, positive attitudes toward agriculture
- Information about good ag lands
- Information from Boro about demographic trends

Other comments...

- We have lots of small farmers, but not big production
- CUSTOMERS want markets everywhere
- Few farmers can't serve many markets
- What's driving the creation of new markets?
It should be farmers.



Upcoming CPGC Events & Volunteer Opportunities!
*Volunteers Needed & Appreciated! *2015 Committees Forming Now
It's your club...Help with a committee or event! Most are just once a year events.*

- Newsletter: Editor, or share pictures, articles on local gardening topics. Contact Marion mmkn@ptialaska.net
- Event booth staffing & decorating: Home Show in April, Niniilchik Fair in August. Contact Cindy Barnes, alaskancindy@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 Marion Nelson, 283-4632.
- Hospitality Committee: Help at the registration desk for program meetings or certain special events, greeting, taking memberships, 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 programs, occasional workshops. Contact Don St. John, 398-4474.
- Sea Ag Fertilizer Fundraiser: Prepaid orders March-May. Delivery day - May 9th.. Contact Della Bridenburg 776-3908.
- 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 page 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

- March 10 - Bryce & Jan Wrigley of Delta area. Long time farmer and part of the Alaska Ag scene.
- March-May, Sea Ag Fertilizer Fundraiser Sales. Contact Della Bridenburg 776-3908.
- March 21st -Saturday, 111m-3pm, **"Get Ready for Spring" Round Table Event** – Kenai Visitor Center
- March 28-29, Home Show Booth -Decorations by Tustumena School Students!!
- April 14, TBA
- May, Workshops TBA
- June, July, August, Summer Garden Tours
- June 6th - Plant Sale (Early plant delivery evening of the 5th)

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

Dream Coming True: 2015 Update *by Larissa Arbelovsky*

Hello! I first introduced myself in the May 2013 newsletter in which I gave a description of my dream garden that my fiancée, Chris, and I had just finished; including landscaping our entire backyard and building a greenhouse and raised beds out of cinder blocks. Since then, some things have changed. For starters, we got married that June on an 83 degree day!

If you recall, that summer we had record high temperatures so it was a little difficult using that summer to gauge what was going to end up doing well in our garden location. The spinach bolted, the Brussels sprout plants were huge but had very little yield and we had a lot of potatoes with hollow hearts.

As wedding presents, we received some lilacs and rose bushes which we planted around the garden. One yellow rose bush did not come back last summer but some red roses and wild roses did. The lilacs have not bloomed yet so I'm hoping that happens this summer. Last summer we also added a raspberry patch and even ended up with a handful of raspberries by August.

Last year, for the first time in 15 years of gardening up here, I was cursed with a plague of slugs. We set up beer traps for them at night and we'd end up with about 50 slugs in each of our traps in every bed and they just kept coming. They pretty much decimated my veggies.

We also added an irrigation system from Drip Depot to both the greenhouse and the garden last summer. Everything is set on timers and rain sensors. We've added a heater, circulation fans and louvers for exhaust to the greenhouse and installed shelves.

Nearly everything grown in my greenhouse and garden I started from seeds (the exceptions were some tomato plants from the Rusty Ravin greenhouse last year and potatoes from Cadre). I purchase the seeds from Seed Savers Exchange and from Foundroot, an Alaskan seed company. I have had success with cucumbers (love the True Lemon), cabbage, tomatoes (favorites are the Lemon Drop and Italian Heirloom), herbs (Sweet Basil, Thyme, Sage and Apple Mint), carrots, potatoes, beets, kale, Swiss chard, a variety of salad greens and King Richard Leeks. I also started several varieties of flowers such as Tall Russell lupines, Hungarian Blue Breadseed poppies and do really well with the Jewel Mix Nasturtiums, Pacific Beauty Calendula and my pride and joy, Sunflowers (Dwarf, Mammoth, and Ring of Fire).

This year I am going to experiment with watermelon (Small Shining Light, Petite Yellow, and Blacktail Mountain), cauliflower, Romanesco, peppers, kohlrabi and new Sunflower varieties (Teddy Bear, Rostov and Velvet Queen) in addition to my standard fare. I can't wait to see what works. Happy gardening!



Larissa and Chris Arbelovsky in a greenhouse hug.



Everything in this salad came out of Larissa's garden.



This magical 6ft fence has kept moose out of the garden. They've looked but not leaped.

Green Manure at the Food Bank *by Heidi Chay*

The many functions of cover crops in the home garden or small farm include preventing soil erosion, suppressing weeds, reversing soil compaction, attracting beneficial insects and improving soil quality. Cover crops that are tilled into the soil to add nitrogen and organic material are also known as "green manure."

Last fall, Kenai Soil & Water Conservation District teamed up with the Kenai Peninsula Food Bank on an experimental planting of green manure in the main garden adjacent to the Demonstration High Tunnel on K-Beach Road. We provided the seed (a "spring" mix of field peas, oats and hairy vetch from Johnny's) and just before freeze-up, Food Bank factotum Phil Smith broadcast the seed, after mixing it with the recommended inoculant. According to the seed catalog, oats and field peas germinate at 38 and 41 degrees respectively. Hairy vetch prefers temperatures upwards of 59 degrees. So, keep your eyes peeled for an early green-up in the garden! A generous volunteer tills that garden with a tractor every year, so "terminating" the cover crop and working it into the soil should fit into the normal routine.

While you're thinking about the Food Bank, please think seriously about "Planting a Row for the Hungry," donating extra starts this spring or, best of all, donating some time in the garden or high tunnel. Every bit counts! Kenai Peninsula Food Bank: 262-3111, kfoodbank.org.

Links for further reading:

Cover Crops for Home Gardens, Oregon State University Extension <http://ir.library.oregonstate.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1957/17462/fs304-e.pdf>

Cover Crops for Home Gardens in Western WA and OR, Washington State University Extension, <http://cru.cahe.wsu.edu/CEPublications/eb1824/eb1824.html>

Farm Seed Comparison Chart, Johnny's Select Seeds, http://www.johnnyseeds.com/assets/information/farm_seed_comparison_chart.pdf

 <p>KENAI FEED & SUPPLY www.kenaifeed.com 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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Call for additional information:

907-740-8890

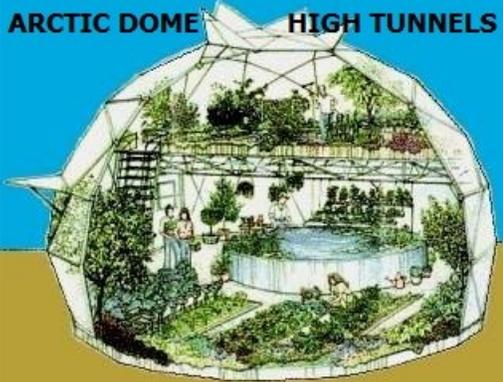
NRCS Approved

....Manufactured in Anchorage Alaska, this dome has both garage door and single entry, automatic vents and the ability to build a second level for double the growing area once out of the NRCS program. Standard 6 mil cover.

Delivery and installation on your leveled site for very reasonable cost. Site inspection prior to install.

Domes create natural circulation and are 30% more efficient than any rectangle with no hot or cold spots .

With stands 150 mile/hr. winds and no need to remove cover under snow load.



Two growing levels are possible in a dome because of their natural reflective nature. You still get sunlight in the lower areas.

Heat pump and upgraded double walled cover makes winter gardening in Alaska possible

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