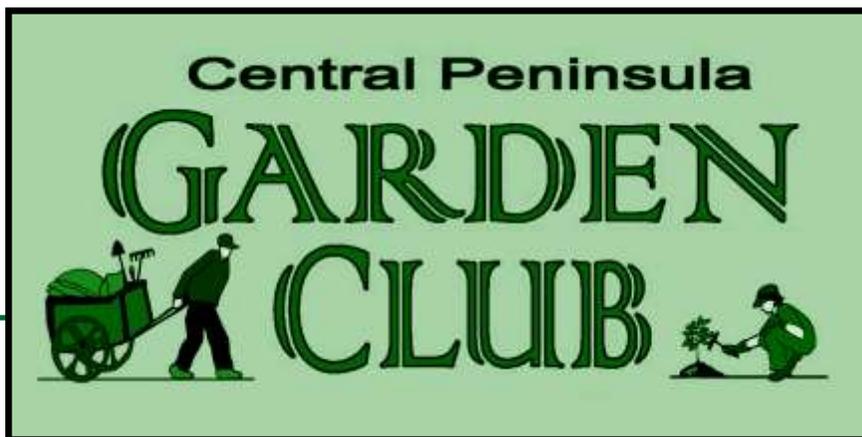


November 2013

Central Peninsula Garden Club



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

NOVEMBER 12TH PROGRAM, 7 PM

Root Cellars, Storage Practices and Designs

Moderated by Lydia Clayton, AG-Hort Extension Agent with a Panel of Local Root Cellar Owners



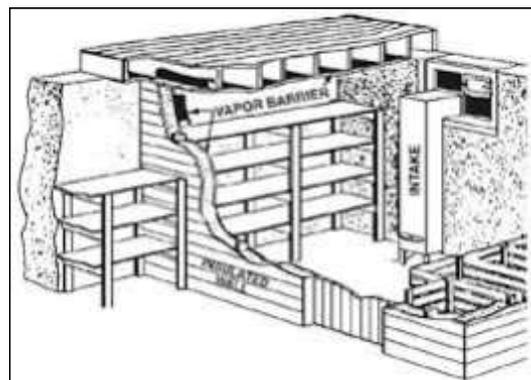
We all know there is a lot more interest in sustainability and growing our own food here and all over the country. Being able to store that locally grown produce is a huge issue and root cellars are one answer hence our November program. How easy or difficult is it to build a root cellar where you live?

Would it have to be in the side of a hill or can one be built in or next to your home? How about using a refrigerator or two? Will a cold corner in your garage work and how? What goes on in a root cellar when the door is closed? What is supposed to happen and what can you do if your produce starts to deteriorate? Bring your root cellar questions to the November program and get answers from our panelists who have lots of gardening and root cellar storage experience with their



various types of root cellars. In the meantime, take a look at the Extension Office Root Cellar information

<http://www.uaf.edu/files/ces/publications-db/catalog/anr/HGA-00331.pdf> and additional on-line information. Consider how much you need or want to store and what kind of space would be needed. Find out about exterior and interior construction features, insulation, humidity, temperature, ventilation and more. See you on the 12th!



A quick web search for "root cellars in Alaska" brought up lots of images including those shown above.



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Dead Armadillos—Will's Ramblings by Will Hightower

All my life, I have felt that whatever you do or believe in should be done in moderation. Don't get too far left or too far right. Don't be a know-it-all expert, but at least don't be a dummy. Now, later in life I find that I'm becoming a fanatic. A fanatic about vegetable gardening, you know, 'how much of your family produce needs you can raise?'

My "fanatic insight" came this evening as I stood in the work bay of my shop, cutting tomatoes from the upside down plants and sorting the fruit by color into tubs. This was at 8:30 PM on October 15, 2013. When I finished sorting, I placed 2 bananas in each of the three tubs and covered with a lid. The shop is cool and dark most of the time, as I am out doors being fanatical about next years' garden layout.

The upside down tomato thing came about because one evening it looked like a hard frost was going to "do in" the greenhouse tomatoes. There were lots of green tomatoes. Very few had ripened. In a panic, Monti got on the phone to Velma Bittick. Velma said that her dad pulled up the plants, knocked off the dirt, and hung the plants upside down in a low light area. Sometimes the fruit ripened and sometimes not. After I finished looking askance over the tops of my glasses, I found myself hanging tomato plants at 11:30 that night. Time passed and there were ripe tomatoes in the shop bay! There were enough ripe tomatoes that Monti canned tomatoes, something she had not been able to do for years.

OK, Velma, what do I do with the fruit that is not turning red? Bananas? Ya! She said to make a blanket pack with the green fruit and green bananas tucked into the middle. Tucking in the sides keeps the "banana gas" inside and causes the tomatoes to ripen. As the fruit starts to turn, move them to another blanket pack and they will finish ripening. Got the bananas but didn't have blankets to spare, so am trying covered tubs.

Earlier this summer, I went fanatical and pulled all the rhubarb in the patch, selling the 102 pounds of chopped rhubarb to the Homer winery. Monti helped with the processing but was sad that she would not have any rhubarb in the freezer for winter use. Four weeks after the dastardly deed you could not tell that the rhubarb patch had been razed. From the frozen rhubarb harvested, I'm looking forward to cakes and sauce this winter. That is if Monti will let me have any.

I always like to try something different in the garden, this year it was sweet potatoes. Had about 20 plants and even got 3 roots that looked like sweet potatoes! I did get a bunch of snakey-looking roots about the diameter of my little finger. What can you do with such little 'taters? Well, you slice them into little rounds like regular potatoes and fry them with onions and bacon. Serve the sweet potatoes O'Brian with scrambled eggs in the morning. Just thinking about them.....Guess what I'm having in the morning?

In true fanatic style: the tomatoes didn't taste as good as last years' crop; why did I not use all that rhubarb in past years? and I know that bigger sweet potato roots can be had. But, I did learn that no matter how fanatical I think I've become, there are always greater fanatics that I can turn to for help.

Oh, dead armadillos? My "cousin," Jim Hightower, (former Texas Railroad Commissioner) said, "There is nothing in the middle of the road but yellow stripes and dead armadillos." Wonder if I've become a left garden fanatic or a right garden fanatic?



Will and Monti Hightower's uprooted, hanging tomatoes going from green to red in their shop.



Hightower's ripening tomatoes that soon turned into canned tomatoes for the winter.

*Onion skins very thin,
Mild winter coming in.
Onion skins very tough
Coming winter very rough.
TRADITIONAL RHYME*

Upcoming CPGC Events & Volunteer Opportunities!

-Coming right up! **HEA Energy Fair CPGC info Table – November 2nd, 10am-4pm** Volunteer for a shift, it's fun and fast. Contact Cathy Haas 262-7248

-HELP with the May 2014 Workshop Weekend event - Registration and follow up possibly with "RegOnline" program or build our own program. Techies, please offer technical help to get this going. Contact Marion 283-4632.

-Special event booth staffing, workshop host, few times a year: Home Show end of April, Workshop Weekends -May, Ninilchik Fair -August. Contact Marion 283-4632, mmkn@ptialaska.net

-Program Committee. Meets occasionally. Contact Marion 283-4632

-Hospitality Committee. Help at the registration desk, clean up, room set up, refreshment arrangements. Contact Juanita Owens - samowens0969@yahoo.com

-Videographer/photographer. Backup photographer or videographer for programs and workshops. Contact Linda Dunn, 262-4465 or Marion 283-4632.

-Tech backup person. Power Point programs and mike set up for programs. Contact Don St. John, 394-4474.

-Guest speaker lodging. Needed occasionally for out of town speakers. Great opportunity for more expert information. 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 bed plantings are a thank you to CIAA for use of their meeting room throughout the year. We appreciate that invaluable contribution to the success of the club. Contact Peggy Morris, 262-8374.



Programs:

-December 10: Alaska Sprouts! Presenter: SJ Klein, owner of Alaska Sprouts, from Anchorage.

-January 11: Dart-AM Farms at Manley Hot Springs. Presenter: John Robert Dart

-February: Date TBA: Alaska Flour Company from Delta Junction Barley growers. Might include a workshop.

-February 11: Soil Readiness, Amendments & ZONES!

-February X: Beginner's Only Special Program. Date to be decided.

-March X: Getting Ready For Spring! Half Day Event at a larger venue. Round tables, many topics.

-April 7: Cut Worms, Root Maggots & Slugs! What to do About Them and How.
(Home Show booth end of April)

-May 3, 10, 17, 24, 31: Workshop Weekends! 4-8 workshops every Saturday.

Help host, schedule, present a workshop.

(Sea Ag pick up on the 10th.- Help needed for a few hours. Contact Don St. John 398-4474)

-June 14: Annual Plant Sale. Early plant drop off evening of 13th and then pre sale on the 14th.

-June, July August: Summer tours. What location should we visit next summer? Your ideas welcome.

How about a tour - trip to another part of Alaska?



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Just What is Spent Grain?

(Often used as garden mulch or animal feed.)

Contributed by Frank and Debbie Kassik, of Kassik's Brewery in Nikiski

Malted barley is the main component in the making of beer. "Malted" is a form of partial germination of the grains and then drying to stop the process. Two things happen, the starch breaks apart inside of the kernel, and two distinct enzymes are produced that convert starches to sugar when you mix those cracked grains with hot water.

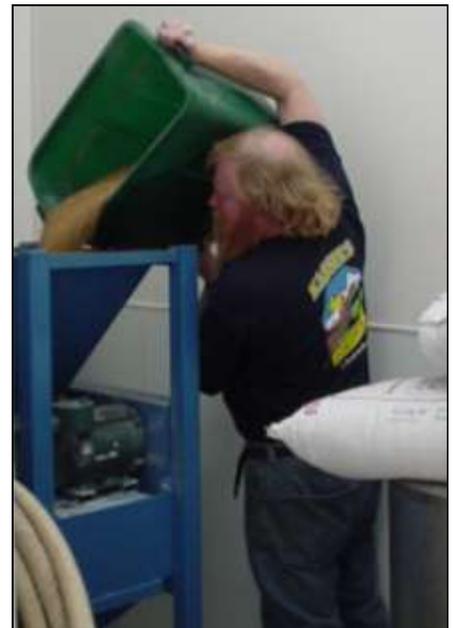
Specific grains for each recipe are carefully weighed, cracked and added to the Mash Tun (Equipment) and mixed with hot water to convert starches to sugar. We extract the sugars by sprinkling hot water on top of the grain bed and collecting the sugars out the bottom which is transferred to our boil kettle.

After the extraction, which is the process of transferring the sugar to the boil kettle the grains are now "spent" with about 10 to 15 percent food value left. The grains are then unloaded from the mash tun into totes which are pickup by local ranchers/farmers for various uses from mulching to feeding livestock. Additionally we add back into the grains a slurry of spent hops and boiled sugar water called trub (tube). Our excess yeast is also added into the spent grains. We take an extra step by heating and killing the yeast to prevent bloating of multi stomach livestock. The yeast provides a high amount of vitamin B.

To make arrangements for spent grain pickup, contact Kassik's at 776-4055 or [www. kassiksbrew.com](http://www.kassiksbrew.com) or other local breweries.



Barley grain before adding to mash tun at Kassik's Brewery.



Kassik's employee pouring grains in the mill to be cracked.



Spent grains being removed from mash tun at Kassik's Brewery.



Spent grains in a tote, ready for livestock owners or farmers use as feed or mulch.



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Hydroponics

By Kilee Horning, a student in Mrs. Werner's 6th Grade Class at Tustumena Elementary

This year, sixth grade girls and boys will be planting hydroponics, plants that grow in water, in our classroom. The kinds of plants we have pondered about producing include lettuce, herbs and peas. We, as students are so pleased to begin this process.

The first step in this method is to clean all of the equipment. To clean the kit you have to make sure there are no bacteria. Step two, is putting the material back together and checking that it still works after all the years of usage. Next, we set up the kit. After that is accomplished, what we do is check the water flow and have it working swiftly. Later, when the water is flowing we set intervals for the lights, which substitute for the sun, and set the water on a timer. On Monday, October 22, 2013, this sixth grade class will start the pleasure of planting. We can't wait.

Mrs. Werner adds:

I love how they just crave more information about growing things. Every time we talk about it, our conversations are stopped only by the clock. Love, love, love their enthusiasm! Thank you for including us in the Garden Club newsletters.



Two of Mrs. Werner's 6th grade students at Tustumena Elementary and their hydroponics set up.



Fall Equinox: a portrait

A raft of mallards
dozes on the dock
as the full moon's light
dims into dawn.
Daylight, evening with dark,
still splinters, shimmers
on the lake.
A garnet-colored dragonfly
drifts onto my sleeve.

My neighbor's blind dog
keeps watch for the fox
returning from the lake.
Fox paws rattle dry leaves
as he prances past
on his way home
to the woods.

By Nancy E. Brown

*Former Kenai resident and gardener,
Nancy Brown, now lives and gardens in the
smallest state, Rhode Island.*



Mountain Ash splendor on October 15 at Margaret and Don Simon's home in Nikiski. It held it's beautiful leaves past most.

Beginnings—by Barbara McDonald

This is the first installment from Barbara McDonald as she and her husband plan and plant their surroundings, gardens and greenhouse for next spring. More in future newsletters.

What do you see in this picture? You're probably saying, "dirt" or "nothing." Not me! I see a dirt hill overflowing with juicy Honeoye strawberries. In front of the strawberry hill, I see a 10x12 greenhouse where the tomatoes and peppers are growing. That tarp-covered coffin looking thing—well, that's the future greenhouse!

But that's just the backyard. Walk with me....



Around front, I come upon my beautiful chocolate lilies, peonies, roses, columbine, and dahlias. These beauties are scattered artistically throughout the yard. Up next to the house are some flowering lilac bushes with irises and groundcover leading to the front door.

Right now it's hard to imagine what is to come as I see a lot of empty space and loads of dirt. And to top it off, both my husband and I are about as amateur as they come. We're eager to learn from everyone and welcome any and all advice, tips, and tricks. It's amazing what we've already learned in our last couple of months as Garden Club members and look forward to discovering so much more.

Now come on springtime, I'm ready to dive in and get my hands dirty.

Barbara McDonald can be reached by email at 907blm@gmail.com

Bowman's 2013 Vegetable Surprise!

—By Lee and Julie Bowman

Here are some photos of our mutant Kossack Kohlrabi. It weighed in at 16.5 lbs. Even though it is ugly, it still is good eating.



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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 Pam Voeller and Becky Holloway.