

THE HUB'BUB

News from Cowichan Station: Hub of the Universe

Spring 2014

The Responsibilities of Being a Farmer: *An Interview with Margie vanBoven by Brenda Laine*

Margie married Ben vanBoven in 1985, and then moved to Vanvalley Farm on Koksilah Road. For Margie, it was a bit of a transition coming from town and moving to the country where “everything seems so quiet and yet busy at the same time.” There were crops to be planted and harvested, and cows relying on food and drink, and being milked on time. “Cows need to be milked a minimum of every 12 hours which makes for long days starting at 4am for the morning shift and again at 4pm for the afternoon shift.”

Ben's parents, Herman and Ida, started the dairy farm in 1960, and Ben and Margie bought and took over the operation in 1993. Until last year, when they implemented their new automated Lely milking system in their newly constructed 18000 square foot barn, up to 45 cows were milked twice a day in a four stall milking parlour.

Ben did the majority of the work on the farm when their four children were young, while Margie looked after the children, cooked and cleaned, did barn chores, yard work, and farm book keeping. Looking after the cows was a family affair. “The children got used to being in the milking parlour with me when we milked the cows,” says Margie. “All the kids came with me, and they'd have to help feed the calves, scrape barns, and keep things clean. We were all a part of it!”



Responsibility for the cows dictated their time. It wasn't easy to arrange plans around milking times, and if a cow was calving, they'd just have to stay home. Margie says, “When we were young farmers - and even now - a holiday to us was three days of camping. You just could not go away for long periods of time. We didn't go away for a two-week holiday until we had farmed for about 11 years.” “But,” Margie adds, “it's the responsibility we believe God gave to us – to take care of the animals and to take care of the land. We try to do that to the best of our ability, and at the same time, we tried to teach our children that also.”

When asked how she likes living in the Cowichan Valley, Margie said: “To us the Cowichan Valley is home,” but added, “Before we built our new barn, we did consider leaving the island, but only because farming would be easier in the interior of BC.” Margie then went on to express her concern for the future of farming in the Valley, adding that “Farming is getting harder on the island because land is harder to get. We have a lot of competition for farm land with people who can pay a lot more than farmers.” Margie stressed, “The importance of being able to produce our own food, either as an area, a province, or a country, is huge. You can't just take away farmland that is meant to produce food, or crops for the animals, because you can't replace it. Farmers can't farm on a mountainside.”

“But,” Margie says, “We love the valley. Ben was born and raised on this farm. We decided to stay, because our family is here, and because it's a great place to live and work, and the community is great.”



Progress at the HUB

5 Cheesy Rhymes for Great HUB Times

Home-Made Annex Aid

Cowichan Station residents and friends totally pitched in last summer and fall to fix problems at The Annex. A \$25,000 grant from CVRD's gas tax fund was more than matched by community support through fundraising events and donations. Together, with lots of volunteer help, we raised over \$57,000 locally! This allowed us to:

- Fix the annex roof
- Buy a high-quality energy-efficient air-source heat pump (thanks to a great discount arranged by Mercury Refrigeration), and
- Reboot the old heating system to hopefully tide us over until we have the funds to install the heat-pump.

Thank you everyone!

Youth Thing This Spring

Watch for free after-school sports and other youth offerings starting in March. Two contractors (Sadie and Karoline) will be piloting recreation programs for The HUB. This project will lay the groundwork for CSAA to better support volunteer-led community programming in the future. We also have 2 big boxes of new sports and play equipment! Thank you to Canadian Tire's JumpStart program for this support!

New Arts Spaces in Old Historic Places

Much of the work needed to convert the ground floor of Cowichan Station schoolhouse into two wonderful new community-run arts spaces has been completed. A community clay studio and a multi-purpose arts workshop/classroom are under construction! We are grateful for the support of the Province of British



Columbia for a BC Creative Space grant for this work. Renovations so far include new washrooms, wheelchair accessibility, and a lot of "behind the walls" safety stuff we should all appreciate, even if we never see it! Watch for fun and artful fundraisers this spring to help CSAA and the HUB Clay Collective work together to complete the renovations.

Main Entry Re-Vamp, with Wheelchair Ramp!

When local people first gathered in 2006 to discuss why and how to save the old school, they came up with the motto "a place for us". This spring we will happily extend that HUB welcome by adding a ramp to the front entry. Thanks to Human Resources and Skills Development Canada for the grant to support this work. (And, in the future, funds permitting, watch for a covered outdoor deck in the space created between the ramp and the building.)

Hey, hey, hey... been to HUB Café?

Deepest apologies to those who are unable to visit The HUB on Thursdays and Fridays from 10-2:00. Really – you're missing out – it's not our fault. Local volunteers have initiated a delicious little adventure using The HUB's new café space adjacent to the gym. Made-from-scratch soups, bread, baking, and other special treats. Come and be nourished! More volunteers welcome.



Benefit Dance

FOR TWO NEW COMMUNITY ARTS SPACES

featuring Live Band USED GOODS with Cowichan Station's Chuck Wenberg

The HUB
at Cowichan Station
2375 KOKSILAH ROAD
250.746.1794
cowichanstation.org

\$8 ADVANCE / \$10 DOOR
SPACE LIMITED | ADVANCE
TICKETS RECOMMENDED

AVAILABLE AT:
BUCKNUCKS BOOKS
PORTALS | TRIAL BY
FIRE POTTERY [STALL
@ DUNCAN MARKET]

Saturday March 29th
8pm CASH BAR SILENT AUCTION DOOR PRIZES

Proceeds will fund construction costs to convert the ground floor of the historic Cowichan Station school into a community clay studio and a multi-purpose room for arts and rec. Both new spaces will be non-profit run and open to the public, serving the entire Cowichan Valley.

poster design donated by Crystal Sawyer, Triveni West Communication & Design

Volunteer!
Come to Events!



*Silent Auction and
Burger & Beer Social
Raised \$2500!*

Child and Youth Recreation Programs beginning at The HUB

We are currently in the planning stages for the Child and Youth Recreation Programs. The Jumpstart program donated lots of great new equipment that will keep everyone active and having fun together (a parachute as seen below, basketballs, juggling equipment, and much more).



Program ideas thus far include an after-school recreation drop-in, a parent & tot drop-in and a homelearners recreation drop-in. We would love to hear from you about the activities your family is interested in. Feel free to email Sadie and Karoline at kids@cowichanstation.org with any ideas or suggestions and for more information. The programs will begin the week of March 24th so watch for more details coming soon.

2014 CSAA/HUB Events Schedule

For more info or to volunteer: info@cowichanstation.org

Special Events:

- March 29th** - Benefit Dance for HUB Renos. Live band: *Chuck Wenbert & Used Goods*. All profits go to finishing the new Clay studio and community art room.
- April 26th** - Earth Day "Trash Bash" – neighbourhood litter clean-up and scrap metal drive – all day. 4 – 8 Trash Bash awards, AGM, Chili cook-off, and volunteer party – All welcome!
- May 10th** - Kid's benefit Garage Sale – kids (<18) sell their stuff and share earnings 50-50 with the HUB. Indoors. Movie matinee to follow. Plus, Pottery Studio 'sneak peak' clay exhibit.
- June 6-8th** - Cowichan Station School 110th Anniversary reunion.
- July 5th** - Summer Gathering – plant sale, trunk sale, BBQ, kids' summer games, more?
- October TBA** - Hub Social – Cow Bay Pub (date TBA)
- November TBA** - Craft Sale (tentative)
- December TBA** - Christmas dance

Regular Events

Basketball Drop-in Tuesdays at 7:30 in the gym lienadgreen@gmail.com

Beavers Mondays 6:15-7:15 in the gym meekeyis@shaw.ca

Cowichan Station Discussion Group (Friends of Bill W.) Thursdays 7:30-8:30 pm in the Annex
senk@telus.net

Feldenkrais – Wednesdays 9-10 am by donation. To Register leave your name and Phone# at 250-748-3557

FreshStart Fitness with Leah Mattin Tuesdays & Thursdays 9-10 am & 6:30-7:30 pm and Fridays 10:15-10:45 in the gym leah@fsfitness.ca

Girl Guides (Sparks, Brownies & Pathfinders too) Wednesdays 3-8 pm in the gym
janice.frueh@hotmail.com

Senior's Coffee Tuesdays 10:30 – 12 am in the café calveleyinvictoria@shaw.ca

Westcoast Men's Circle Wednesdays from 7 to 9:30pm in the Annex – for more information contact
grant@westcoastmen.org 250-597-2801

Yoga with Lindsay Campa Mondays 9:15-10:30 in the annex –lindsay.campa@gmail.com or
<http://thehealingbody.ca>

Koksilah Farmers Institute - Linda Gilkeson presents "Backyard Bounty: Organic Harvest All Year Round". Saturday March 22, 2014 from 9:30am-4:00pm at The Hub \$25/person. Bring your own lunch. To pre-register contact: a.auchincloss@shaw.ca (250)743-8874



Connecting Community

Join the E-News list. Email info@cowichanstation.org and ask to be added.

Like us on Facebook. <https://www.facebook.com/TheHubAtCowichanStation>

Cowichan Station Area Association, 2375 Koksilah Road, Cowichan Station, BC
V9L 6M5 (250)746-1794 <http://cowichanstation.org>