

the Advent issue

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introduction:

So this is Christmas,
It is early November and I am writing an Advent newsletter. The cold has arrived, and in some big box stores the plasticised spirit of Christmas is already for sale, but for me it has not fully started.

For me it usually starts with Advent. The first candle that is lit, the first paper star in the window, the first window on the advent calender is opened. The decoration is the outward part of getting ready for Christmas. The real getting ready is inside.

There have been many pieces written about the erosion of the Christmas spirit and how materialistic it all has become, this then quickly followed by what it should be about. I am not going there: I do like the presents and the food, and everybody is free to fill the season with as much or as little spirituality as they want.

What I would like to try with this newsletter is to collect ideas how one can celebrate: the outward parts that help us along, the parts that bring a little beauty into our lives, and not only for Christmas.

For the rest, enjoy the stories of life in Glenora.

Happy Holly, Merry Berry

FOR YOUR DIARY

December
18th Christmas Fair

**West coast weather:
if you don't like the
weather, just wait a
minute: it will
change
unknown**



Here it is again, this awaited time of the year to offer you the opportunity to come and join us at our

Glenora Farm Community Christmas Fair 2011,

a time to enjoy lots of great music, such as our award winning Glenora Farm Handbells Ensemble, excellent homemade food & baking, arts and crafts for sale from local vendors, silent auctions and raffles. There will be farm tours on our biodynamic farm and workshops if weather permits, plus some children activities. This is a great opportunity to stop in and have some fun with us.

Glenora Farm Community workshops and daycare programs are owned and operated by the Ita Wegman Association, a non-profit organization that operates licensed care homes for adults with disabilities on the farm located at 4766 Waters Rd, Duncan. We also operate Glenora Store & Cafe at the corner of Indian Rd, Glenora Rd and Marshall Rd.

December 18th, 11am - 4 pm, 4766 Watersroad, Duncan
For more info visit our website www.glenorafarm.org call Lynda or Pierre 250-715-1559 or 715-1664.

Michaelmas play, Glenora Farm

Michaelmas is difficult to explain to people who aren't familiar with it. Even our co-workers who grew up with a Waldorf education struggle to understand (or remember) what it is all about. And every time I attempt to describe its significance I find myself pulling out a dusty image of Michael and the dragon, and a harvest table.

This year at Glenora Farm there was an initiative among the young co-workers to perform a play for the community, under the direction of Jenni Balcombe. They had two afternoons to prepare it - what can you do with two afternoons? Much, apparently, and I wanted to write about it because the simple poignancy of the message they brought stays with not only me but many who were there to see it.

To the ethereal, haunting music of the Hebridean "Michael, Sea Lord", a group of figures shuffled up the aisle between the audience. Their garments were ragged and dirty, their feet bare, their faces looked gaunt and bruised. Some had not the will to look up, but kept their eyes cast to the ground. Another held out cupped hands in a beseeching gesture. One limped to the front supported by one of her comrades, then lowered herself on to a stool, the only prop on the stage. Another figure took part of his tattered shirt to bind the injury. Into this bleak and silent world a creature appeared, sack-like, dying plants trailing from its lumpy head. It brought a scraping, clinking sound. As the beast rattled amongst the woe-begone group, their behavior began to change. They still said nothing but their faces became hard. They began to look at each-other with mistrust, or anger, or jealousy. Fights broke out between them. The injured girl was robbed of her chair, and fell to the ground. Another girl, cowering at the back, tried in vain to hold onto her hat as it was snatched from her. Between these desperate people the monster continued to creep, and everywhere it went it brought aggression and greed.

But something would interrupt this sad development: a figure was moving up the aisle towards the scene. She was barefoot, and at her feet there were flowers. Serenity radiated from her as she walked slowly towards the stage, picking the flowers with the same rapt attention that Eve might have bestowed on the flowers of Paradise. On reaching the group she approached first one of the lost souls, and then another, touching them, taking them by the hand and bringing them to their feet. As they looked at her their expressions softened, almost as though waking from a dream. One man still gripped the hat he had taken by force. He looked at it, looked up towards the girl he had take in from, and approached her, holding the hat out towards her, silently. As she held out both her hands to receive it, there was an expression on her up-turned face - of relief, gratitude, and perhaps pain too. Or was it the moment when pain departed?

continued on the next page...

Making paper stars I

First get a piece of square kite paper



fold it in half, crease well, use a paring knife and cut the fold



fold the pieces in half crosswise and cut to make 4 squares, cut those in half again, and you end up with eight small rectangles



fold these in half but don't cut!



Natures Creation in Creative Expression

Ideas must be put to the test. That's why we make things, otherwise they would be no more than ideas; though there is often time between an idea and its realization. The roots of creative expression almost always reflect ones observations in nature as well as its projections in oneself.

When slowing the process of observation something as simple as a leaf is not just a leaf, but a color, a tecture, a shape. It is in noticing variation, that we build the connection to understanding. Using inspiration from the sculptural works of Andy Goldsworthy, these collaborations between coworkers and companions were an attempt to reach beyond the surface of appearance, and the ephemerality of time.

The act on the realization proves to be the most rewarding.



Find more pictures of Aimees art further on in his newsletter

continued from last page

It was a culminating moment, and the figures seemed to see each other as though for the first time. The angel was still among them, and, using the same gentle gesture with which she had roused the group, she touched the beast, and the beast sank to the ground and became silent. She placed the flowers there, on its prone body. There was a moment which contained a palpable awareness among the players and also the audience, and then she led the group out; the same people, the same path, a very different feeling.

The image speaks for itself. It speaks so eloquently of the importance and relevance of Michaelmas in our time of isolation, greed and desperation, that it doesn't require more words from me. But I was interested to hear about the transformation that happened within the players themselves as they worked with Jenni, about how they overcame embarrassment, fear of judgment of others, fear of losing control, and found a well within them of courage and calm inner strength that enabled them to bring us so true a Michaelelic experience.

Making paper stars 2



Now fold both ends so the corners meet at the middle crease



On one end only fold the sides to meet at the middle
So now you have eight pieces like this:



Now put a tiny bit of glue on a toothpick and apply it to one of the pieces like in the picture below:



Over the Mountains to Glenora

On Tuesdays and Thursdays, a little silver car with two happy people in it drives over the Malahat, past Mill Bay and Whippetree Junction, and turns left at the farm market onto Miller Road. Tina usually is asleep for the second half of the trip (fortunately she isn't the driver!), but she always wakes up when we bump over the railway tracks and drive through the trees and past the farms that lie along Glenora Road. At the four-way stop called Glenora Corners, we look to see which cars are parked in front of the weavery, and sometimes see someone we know in front of the store. It feels as if we are almost there, and soon we are negotiating the potholes and turning up the long drive to our second home, Glenora Farm.

The first house we see across the fields is Corwyn, with its beautiful timbers looking warm and welcoming. We pull up in front of Corwyn and Helios houses, and Tina gets out and makes her way to the felting workshop, opening the door and greeting the felting crew with a deep bow as she enters to start her morning's work. Lucinde then drives on to the big house, where she will spend the day in the office, answering emails and trying to remember whether it's "Good morning" or "Good afternoon" when she answers the phone. Lynda is usually busy at her desk, and people are always dropping into the office to say hello, ask questions or check for their mail ... it's a very sociable place to work, and keeps us busy!

Tina and I feel very lucky to have two beautiful homes, the little house in Victoria where we live, surrounded by Garry Oak trees and with a glimpse of the Olympic

mountains in the distance, and the other one at Glenora Farm. Although we no longer live at the farm, it still feels like a lovely warm, welcoming blanket wraps around us when we arrive there ... and there are always smiling faces and cheery greetings. Sometimes we go up just to join in one of the many celebrations or social occasions held at the farm, and once a month Tina spends the weekend there with her great friends Katrin and Maya, and all the others in the big house. "I'm lucky!" says Tina, "I have two homes and lots of friends, and I have my work to do and my piano lessons with Annette. I'm in the Christmas play and I have to say ... ummm ... oh yes, bah humbug! Bah humbug! (laughs) I remembered it! And when we go home I see my brother-in-law and he cooks us a nice dinner. I like to live in Victoria Cottage and work at the farm."

Sometimes we miss the life at the farm, but Victoria is a lovely city to live in, and there is a lot to do there too ... and we have very nice neighbours who always wave and smile when we go for our walks. And the drive over the Malahat is always beautiful, whatever the time of year. Yes, we are two happy people going over the mountain to Glenora Farm!

Lucinde



ferns by Aimee

Making paper stars 3



Lay another piece on top of the first one lining up the side edge of the first one with the middle crease of the second one with the middle crease of the first one



Add the other pieces in the same fashion. For the last piece do the same, but you will have to lift up the first piece and slide the last on inbetween, and glue it.



Done, so stick on your window and enjoy!

Every day of advent we stick another star on our window, so at christmass we have beautiful windows. But one per advent Sunday will work just as well.

With thanks to duofibreworks

New Arrivals

annual campaign

This fall, Glenora Farm was delighted to welcome two new friends to our community! Lisa Finlay joined Corwyn House more permanently at the beginning of December, having worked in the day program for about a year. Lisa enjoys her work in the weavery and brings buckets of energy and laughter to our days, with her "knock knock" jokes and constant smiles.

Debbie Griffiths has now joined our day program, after moving all the way from Port Townsend, Washington, with her mother Jackie. Debbie is a great help in the herb workshop and lovely company in the weavery,

We welcome them both with great joy!

Jenni Balcombe



artwork by Aimee

At this time every year, we reach out to our community for support. While our volunteers and staff carry out as many fundraising activities as we can throughout the year, and our presence can be counted on at every Duncan Saturday Farmer's Market from April through October, we still need supporters like you to help us balance the books to invest in one our multiple programs or in our flexible mission and core funding needs with a special gift.

Your dollars help us teach vocational skills, Educational Training & life skill development in our multiple programs and workshops, such as;

- *Our land - Farming and gardening with bio-dynamic principles, Garden+ greenhouses products & animals- butchery products
- *Maple syrup products
- *The saw mill & woodlot production
- *The kitchen processing
- *Workshops
- *The Weavery
- *Wood workshop
- *Felting products workshop
- *Candle workshop
- *the herb ,salt, teas, cream & oil natural products workshop,
- *the lapidary workshop (jewel)
- *the Music therapy program
- *the Glenora Store & Café.



As you know, we're a sustainable organic farm, craft and life-skills community where adults with developmental disabilities and care-givers grow, learn and support each other by ways of working, living and sharing their lives together in extended family housings. On the farm are our multiple workshops and day-programs, where we provide skills, training and a quality of life, where we develop a sense of purpose, accomplishment, dignity and a place of belonging. We're a Camphill community where special needs are met.

If you are able, please think of us this year with your donation. With gratitude and warm regards,

Pierre Goulet
Development Director

We now accept donations online. Go to:
<http://www.glenorafarm.org/> or:
<http://www.canadahelps.org/CharityProfilePage.aspx?CharityID=d60727>



Thank You *friends and supporters*

Thank You! Friends and Supporters of Glenora Farm

Glenora Farm Community wishes to thank all individuals, foundations and Sponsors for the generous donations we received throughout the year which allow us to continue impact the lives of our Companions

Once again friends and of the Community responded generously by contributing over \$45,000, thank you to the many donors.

Thank you to the many supporters and sponsors who continue to support in various ways:

RBC Royal Bank \$2,000 from the 'Putting Communities FIRST Program', Thanks to Nichola Dickson Whitehead an RBC employee to secure a grant from RBC on behalf of Glenora Farm.

BC Ministry of Advanced Education for granting us \$4,134 towards a training in Website analysis, mapping and content management, PR writing & Desktop publishing

Thrifty foods
\$200 Gift certificate for our Summer Fair

First Chiropractor, Excalibur Marine, Fit-Co Fitness Centre, Home Hardware for their contributions and gifts for our Summer Fair Auctions and Raffle

Hamber foundation \$500, Dr. W Whitehead - \$1,000 and the Duncan Choral Society - \$250 towards the purchase of a 3rd set of handbells for the Glenora Farm handbells Ensemble

Lions Club of Duncan for coordinating the parking spaces during our Summer Fair, thank you very much, it's appreciated a lot.

General Paint in Duncan for donating the paint that was badly needed to paint and revamp the Glenora Farm Store & Café . Thanks for Daniel Sheffield and Stéphane Pelletier for doing the painting job

Country Grocer
\$250 gift certificate for our Christmas Fair

Cowichan Valley Bottle Depot – for donating over \$ 400, the proceeds from one of their monthly 'Black Tie Charity Events'

Camphill Foundation \$20,000 Grant to support the establishment of a fund-development office and the training of Development Director to work on Donors Development and a 5-Year Strategic Plan.

GIFT-IN-KIND

Dr Thomas Gunton for the donation of bricks worth \$700 to build a pizza- bread oven

Pricilla Howard for the donation of a lawn mower worth \$200

Jytte Diller for the donation of weaving supplies

Jill Sechley for the donation of some furniture \$500 for the Big House

Joh Shiell for the donation of a piano worth \$900 for Corwyn house

Bonnie Murray for the donation of weaving supplies

Past Events

Last Halloween we had lots of fun, food , music and dancing.



We participate at the 7th Cowichan wine culinary wine festival, we won the grape stomp contest.



the Ravin' Raven

Christmas special

'Tis The Season To Be Jolly...

As I write this, the wind is gusting and moaning outside my window. The sky is grey and everything is bare and sleeping in the woods. This is the time of year when the warmth of the home must balance the cold and dark outside. It is the season of rest and reflection, of sitting by the fire and turning inward. It is also, in my opinion, the season of magic. This season is so busy and chaotic, but always there are tiny moments, isolated and lovely, when the magic is there in the flame of a candle, or in the ringing of a bell in the far stillness. Open your eyes to these moments, for they will feed you all year! So without further ado, here are a few holiday ideas for bringing magic to your home.

Mulled Yule Wine

You will need:

- 1 bottle dry red wine
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/2 tsp. Nutmeg
- 4 cinnamon sticks
- 1 tbsp. whole cloves
- 1/2 cup brandy (optional)

Mix wine, juice, honey and cinnamon sticks in a pot. Warm at low heat, stirring occasionally, for 10-15 minutes. Remove from heat and let stand for an hour. Then re-heat to serve, adding brandy if desired. Garnish the mugs with an orange slice or a cinnamon stick, and watch the glow come back to the faces around you!

Christmas For The Birds

You will need:

- Peanut butter and/or suet
- Pinecones
- Red ribbon

This is a wonderful pre-Christmas activity to do with children or friends. Having birds around is the sign of a happy home, so give them something to come back for! Simply smear the pinecones with peanut butter and/or suet, then tie around the middle with red ribbon, and decorate a tree outside, or hang along the roof. You can also make popcorn and string it with a needle and thread to make a real Christmas tree!

German Christmas Moon Cookies

You will need:

- 2 cups white flour
- 1/2 cup ground almonds
- 3/4 cup butter
- 3/8 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar

Mix everything except the powdered sugar in a bowl, then knead briefly by hand until the dough comes together. Separate dough into tablespoon sized balls, then shape the balls into half moons. Preheat the oven to 350, and place moons onto an ungreased cookie sheet. Bake for 10-15 minutes, until the cookies are golden-brown. Sprinkle the cookies with the powdered sugar while they are still hot, then put them on a wire rack to cool, and there you go!

Merry Christmas, all, and Happy Homemaking!

~ The Ravin' Raven

The Story of Bella

Our Story begins this year in the Camphill Community of Glenora, Vancouver Island, with a milking Jersey named Bella. She, as her name conveys is quite a resplendent cow. Her crescent ivory horns are tipped in black and her deep brown eyes are heavily lidded and lovely. When she first arrived at Glenora Farm, Bella was not accepted into the herd. She was too small for her kind, nervous and jumpy. Our herd, mostly Scottish highland cattle, is a peaceful, dramatically horned, shaggy bunch. Bella did not fit in. To belong is a need of life; a need every creature yearns to have fulfilled. Not only was Bella of a different kind, but she was of an opposing nature. She pranced and intently watched everything; while others walked sensibly and merely glanced about. Another disadvantage for Bella's integration was her status as a milking cow, she was treated differently by us and cows notice when another gets more.

When Bella would try to eat or drink or rest with the others, they would chase her off with their full horns and sturdy frames. Yet again and again she tried to be with them. Time after time she would softly enter the stable to join in the group eating, yet every time she was driven off. One could see from watching Bella that she ached to be included in their togetherness. She observed them all of the time, paying particular attention to their grooming and play-fighting. Her gentle dark eyes would focus with much interest on the play-fighters pressed forehead to forehead, pushing, leaning into one another. With her focus locked on the to-and-fro of the other cows, Bella would move closer and closer; when she was quite close the others would stop their game and chase her away. Her cravings to be included were palpable.

The day this changed was shortly after the birth of Bionka's first calf. At first Bionka hardly left the small snowy white calf, she spent the first two days with the sleeping calf close to her side. When she did begin to venture off to eat and drink she left the attentive, sweet eyes of Bella to keep watch over her young one. Bella would keep her distance at first, she would merely watch from nearby as the small white calf slept in the sunshine. Bella never wavered her attentions, she stood there and guarded. Bionka softened as new motherhood unfolded, was aware of the gift of an attentive auntie, and blessed Bella's efforts by accepting her. One day she began to groom Bella. Bionka licked her face as if she were a calf; Bella stood with the warm sun shining on her and joy shining out of her. Bella now has her place; her attentiveness has a valuable meaning in the herd. Slowly she has been allowed to enter into the joy of eating, drinking and resting with the group. She is still an odd cow and at times is treated with restraint by others but she is a member nonetheless. This sense of belonging has helped calm her nervousness. Bella has become more peaceful and, if possible, more radiant!

We at Glenora Farm are attempting to do just this, to be a herd with some who prance, some who tread, some who waddle and some who flap about. We all need to belong; we all need to have our different gifts shine through. It is in the spirit of healing that I write this story of our Biodynamic community farm and the animals with which we live and learn. Peace be with you.

Janon Emmons

