

THE ISLAND AGRARIAN

NEWS FROM SAN JUAN ISLAND GRANGE #966

**GROWERS, MAKERS, AND KEEPERS WORKING TOGETHER
FOR MUTUAL BENEFIT AND COMMUNITY BUILDING**

We Did It...Together!

By Nancy Best

In a collaborative effort by the Grange and the Friday Harbor Food Bank, six gallons of dried pears and 24 gallons of dried apples were delivered to the San Juan Island Food Bank.



It's been a great year for apples on the island! As anyone who has an apple tree or lives next to an apple tree or has friends with apple trees will know, apples have been competing with zukes for the high-summer don't-leave-your-car-unlocked-or-you-might-find-a-zuke-in-it prize. Generous islanders have been bringing boxes of beautiful fruit to the Friday Harbor Food Bank, stretching the Food Bank's ability to manage the bounty.

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Nancy Best with the product sliced and dried over three days in October, ready for delivery to the San Juan Island Food Bank.



San Juan Island Grange #966 is a grassroots, non-partisan advocacy group supporting a resilient community on San Juan Island.

The Grange serves San Juan Islanders with legislative programs and community activities, such as talent and craft contests, scholarships, and more. You don't have to be a farmer to belong, though many are. Our elected officers are volunteers, and our "work" is done through committees. The heart of our mission is fostering community well-being, and we enjoy gathering to celebrate this.

We are a 501(c)(8) organization, accepting donations towards our programs and to maintain Grange Hall, in downtown Friday Harbor.

Officers of San Juan Island Grange #966 may be found at sanjuangrange.org/officers.html

Our bylaws and resolutions may be found at sanjuangrange.org/structure.html

San Juan Island Grange #966
P.O. Box 2013
Friday Harbor, WA 98250
(360) 378 6632

admin@sanjuangrange.org

rentals@sanjuangrange.org

facebook.com/SJIGrange966

We Did It...Together! continued

Grange to the rescue! We first undertook a proof-of-concept session with pears: four sessions over two days to process 90 pounds of pears into delicious dried fruit. Food Bank clientele loved them!

Moving on to apples, Grange members, Food Bank volunteers, friends, and families (those teen-aged boys can really make the apple corer/peelers fly!) washed and sliced apples and stacked the dehydrators. Together they filled up all three big and two small dehydrators at the Grange kitchen twice a day for three days. Phew! With three to five people at each session, it never took longer than an hour and a half to get the job done.

Thank you, Grange, for the use of the kitchen for this project. And thanks to Grange members Lois, Brooke, Jess, Janet, and Sarah and to non-Grange members Bruce, Judy, Sophie, Alayne, Christina, Rachel and family, Margaret, Robin, Bonnie, Rachelle and family, and others for pitching in on this project and making it so fun!



Letter from the President

We have a new officers corps in place at the Grange! Thank you all who ran for office! A list of the 2024 officers is on the next page, but please notice that we have three posts unfilled.

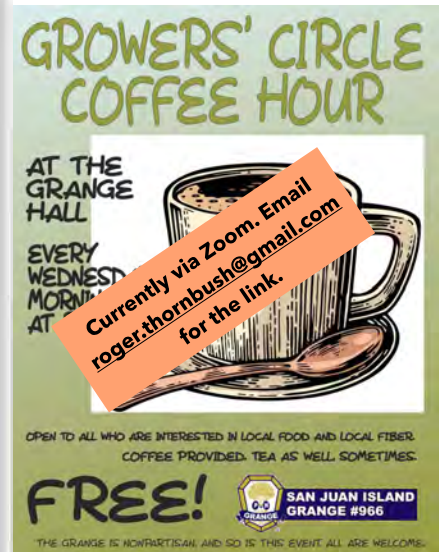
The post of **Family Living Coordinator** was created long ago to work alongside the Lecturer/Program Director in the education and entertainment of Grangers. Originally called the Home Economist, this officer was in charge of programs designed to help Grange families in their home lives, working closely with the Lecturer who was in charge of more general educational programs. The State Grange Director of Family Living offers program handbooks and guidance to local Granges, but our own Home Economist, or whatever the officer wishes to be called in our Grange, would have great leeway in choosing their focus and programs. May I suggest food preservation and a monthly potluck?

For the posts of **Ceres and Flora**, possibly no one wanted these positions because their duties are virtually non-existent. May I propose that Ceres, Pomona, and Flora design and conduct the ritual whereby Associate Members become Regular Members? That would be a modern take on their traditional roles in the Degree Work of the Grange.

And since they symbolize abundance in grain, flowers and fruit, they ought to be in charge of the Harvest Table, whereby members' surplus is shared with the Grange. We could move the Harvest Table to their corner of the hall, where they could display it beautifully, the way the Graces did in the early years of the Grange.

Please let me know if you would like to have any of these posts!

Roger Ellison, President 2023



Notices

Save Your Seeds...
 And This Date!
 February 25, 2024
 Seedy Sunday Seed
 Exchange

As you get your garden ready for winter, consider saving seeds to share with your friends and neighbors.

It's time to dry your seeds, label them with variety and year, and put them somewhere cool, dark, and dry to rest for a few months. It's useful but not necessary to track down the variety and to note growth habits for yourself (and your neighbors) for next year. A good simple reference for saving seeds is found here:

<https://seedsavers.org/>

Grower Hot Topics

At recent Growers' Circle Coffee Hours we talked about **mason bees**, cleaning up the nest tubes, and storing the bees until release time, which might be around first dandelion bloom. Proper humidity during storage is important, so a humidity gauge is useful. [Crown Bees](#) in Woodinville is a source of supplies and information. *Pieris japonica* is a good **first food for mason bees**, with flowers opening as the bees come out of the nests.

Want to host a hive of bees starting in April? Scott Reynolds is looking for places to put his hives. If interested, talk to Scott. stormkrow@gmail.com.

There was talk about **increasing the number and quality of beehives** by grafting queen cells into the hives—here's a link to info: [Queen Cell Production: Grafting and Graft-Free Methods \(psu.edu\)](#)

Pear pollination also came up, with further info to be found at. [WSU Tree Fruit | Washington State University](#)

Lori Brakken of the [Seattle Tree Fruit Society](#) can help **ID pears**. It's tricky, and often requires seeing the tree in many phases of blossom and fruit.

Q: Say, why are the wrappers of my cabbage all mushy? A. Did you accidentally cut the outer leaves when you cleaned up? B. Any sign of insects?

We talked about Brad's **atomic grape tomato** and how to tell if it is ripe. This site might help: [How Do You Know When Black Tomatoes Are Ripe? - The Scientific Gardener](#)

Newly Elected Grange Officers

President: Roger Ellison

Vice President: Jessa Madosky

Program Director: Marc Santos

Family Living Director: VACANT

Steward: Alice Deane

Assistant Steward: Kevin Connolly

Lady Assistant Steward: Alison Longley

Chaplain: Nirmala Arsem

Treasurer: Boyd Pratt

Secretary: Lovel Pratt

Gatekeeper: John Latimer

Ceres: VACANT

Pomona: Laura Jo Severson

Flora: VACANT

Executive Committee: Patty Garcia

Executive Committee: Bill Severson

Executive Committee: Doug Rowan

Musician: Mike Cohen

Tons of Cider!

By John Latimer

The Grange just completed several days of pressing a lot of apples and pears! On September 23rd, we had a Grange pressing event at Sweet Earth Farm as part of the annual Farm Tours. We also had three days of pressings where 22 people utilized the Grange fruit grinder and juice pressing equipment to turn their apples and pears into wonderful juice.

All of the events were very successful, and we all went home with incredibly tasty juice to enjoy. A special thanks to Harold, Ali, and Matt who joined me on the Cider Pressing Team—we couldn't have done all of this without you!

If you're interested in joining the Cider Pressing Team, contact me at JT_Latimer@yahoo.com. See more fun cider photos on the next page!





San Juan Islands Agricultural Guild Now Hiring

Executive Director

The San Juan Islands Agricultural Guild (Ag Guild) is seeking an Executive Director, based in San Juan County, Washington.

Formed in 2008, the Ag Guild is a county-wide 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with the mission to foster a vibrant, resilient, and sustainable food system in San Juan County Washington.

The ideal candidate will demonstrate leadership, fundraising, and organizational management experience. The candidate will have a deep passion for addressing food system challenges through collaboration and will uphold the Ag Guild's role as a network convener and movement builder towards a food future rooted in economically viable, equitable, and environmentally just practices.

[See full job description here.](#)

Friday Harbor Film Festival Award Winners

Friday Harbor Film Festival is thrilled to present the Audience Choice Award for the Best Overall Feature Film to ***Patrick and the Whale***, directed by Mark Fletcher. The other Audience Choice Awards went to:

- Best Overall Short Film: ***The Last Act***, directed by Amy Benson
- Best Explorers & Adventures Feature: ***Patrol***, directed by Brad Allgood and Camilo De Castro
- Best Things to Consider Feature: ***Covenant of the Salmon People***, directed by Shane Anderson
- Best Tales From the Heart Feature: ***Mama Bears***, directed by Daresha Kyi

This year's Andrew V. McLaglen Lifetime Achievement Award went to researcher Deborah Giles, Ph.D.

The 2023 Local Hero Award was given to filmmaker Amy Herdy at the Awards night.

Heartfelt congratulations to all the winners! The Awards Ceremony is available to watch FREE at www.FHFF.org. through November 5.