

THE ISLAND AGRARIAN

NEWS FROM SAN JUAN ISLAND GRANGE #966

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

It's Cider Time!

By John Latimer

Join us at the Grange booth at the San Juan Island Farmers Market tomorrow, Saturday, November 2, 9:30am-1pm for an apple cider pressing!

Bring your own apples to press or get some fresh juice at the Grange booth while you enjoy the farmers market festivities.

If you bring your own apples, make sure they are not from off the ground, and bring extra (clean)



containers. It's easy to underestimate the amount of juice our mighty press can squeeze out of an apple!

We'll be joined by Madrona Murphy of Kwiaht, who will provide tasting samples of heirloom apple varieties from the San Juans, and also Lori Brakken, with the Home Orchard Society. Madrona and Lori will be doing mystery apple identification.

See you tomorrow!

Onions and Garlic at Overmarsh

By Bruce Robinson

After a mild summer and early fall, inclement weather has arrived on San Juan Island, stalling two of the year's final projects at Overmarsh Farm Commons.

The onions and garlic pictured below were begging to be planted on October 20th, but rain and high winds forced the delay



of the year's final work party. With cooperation of the weather gods,

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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

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Overmarsh Update continued

the planting was rescheduled for October 27. Extra onions and garlic were sent home with participants who will plant them so they can grow through the winter.

The other project that the Overmarsh Farm Commons Steering Committee is working to accomplish in the

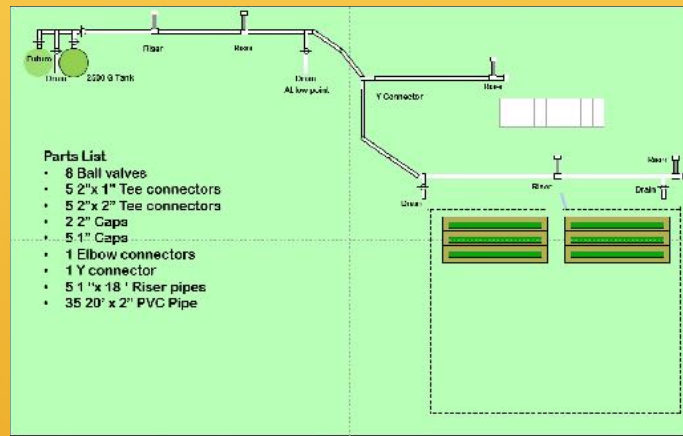


Diagram by Bill Severson

next few weeks is to dig a trench and lay water pipe from the water storage tank to the community garden. 700 feet of 2" PVC pipe has been delivered to the farm.

The committee will plan the route of the pipe and also determine the best location for risers to provide water to various growing areas. Loren Soland, Court Bell, and Bill Severson are taking the lead on this project.

Through the winter, with work at the farm slowing down, the steering committee will continue working on the many administrative aspects of the project. Currently applications for land use and user agreements are being developed for both potential growers and graziers. The steering committee looks forward to expanding the land use at Overmarsh Farm by working with a variety of people, each bringing a vision for how to grow food for San Juan Islanders.

Letter from the President

Dear Grangers,

We are staring into the teeth of a crucial election before us, one that will determine the fate of our democratic system. Of course I am referring to the Grange Election of Officers on Wednesday, November 6, when we will elect our leaders for 2025.

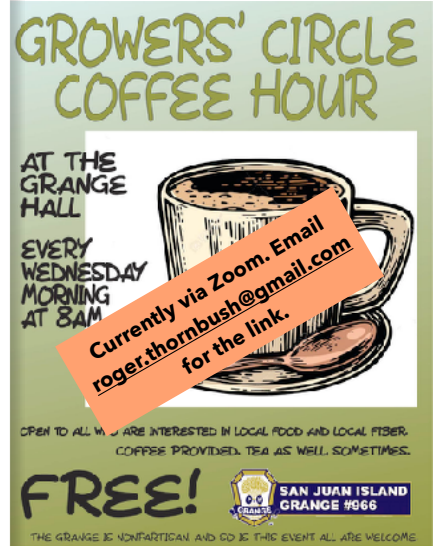
Please come to the meeting if you would like to nominate a candidate, vote, or be elected to office. The current Steward, Program Director, and Secretary will not be running for re-election, and it is very important that we find replacements for them. As for the other officers, we at the Grange consider all posts open each year, and any member may be nominated for any office.

If you are a Regular Member, you may nominate candidates and vote in this election. If you are an Associate Member, you may only suggest names for nomination, but you may request advancement to Regular Membership at the start of this meeting. The ritual to advance Grangers to Regular Membership is short and sweet, involving the singing of our welcome song and the recitation of an oath of allegiance from the members.

Know of a Granger who would make a good officer? I have put together a little survey for you that describes the duties of each office and asks for names of Grangers who might be good at that position. That will give meeting attendees a list of whom to nominate at the election. The survey does not record your identity, so feel free to suggest any Granger you want, including yourself. Each named Granger will be asked whether they are willing to serve in that post. There is no drafting at the Grange!

Please help out your Grange by suggesting officers in the survey [here](#) or by pasting <https://forms.gle/oGtmwvzspNbHin4X7> in your browser.

Roger Ellison, 2024 President



Grange Booth at the Farmers Market—the Place To Be

By Sherri Phelps

What a great summer for the Grange booth at the farmers market! Lots of produce, plants, biochar, eggs, jewelry, books, and artwork have been sold. Many Grangers have taken part this season.

It takes many hands to set up, staff, and take down the booth. And it takes someone like Roger Ellison to be there every weekend with his truck full of tables, display stands, and all the paraphernalia needed to make this happen.

As you may have noticed, there have been fewer farmers at the market these last years. Because the Grange booth is a collective, together we we have been able to fill a small part of the need for produce at the market.

This summer's bounty was exceptional. Roche Harbor Farm (Brent Snow) brought in an abundance of vegetables and flowers. Mia's Farm (Larissa and David Nash), Red



Photos by Kevin Connolly

Wing Farm (Mary Jane Anderson), Gina Levantini, David Geist, and Sherri Phelps, among others, brought in produce. Black garlic came from Three Dog Farm (Paul Hopkins). Scott Reynolds and Sarah Severn brought jars of local honey and some honeycomb. A number of Grangers dropped off their excess garden bounty. Yum! Such an abundance! And so much participation!

There has been a variety of non-produce items, too: fun earrings, bracelets made of stone beads (Elizabeth McCubbin), glass art (Roxy Wolosenko), ceramic prints (Jessa Madosky), books (Boyd Pratt, Mike Cohen, Isobel Davis), cards (Nancy Spaulding), and more!

The Grange was honored to be given a new location at the market when the covered market stalls in Brickworks Plaza were finished in July. It's been fun to figure out how to utilize this lovely space, as there is so much to display.

Thanks to all Grangers who help out at the booth or stop by to support us.

Remember, if you have something to sell and are a Grange member, you can sell it at the Grange booth!

Full House for Island Grown Film and Overmarsh Farm Commons Fundraiser



The first crop of Overmarsh Farm potatoes was served to a packed house at Grange Hall, at a film showing and farm fundraiser on September 27. The potatoes were savored in the form of roasted potatoes and a potato-kale casserole by Cynthia Burke.



Photos by Lovel Pratt



The Island Grown film by the San Juan Makers Guild was enjoyed as a celebration of island farming.

The Overmarsh project raised \$440, and the Island Grown movie was very well-received.

Thanks to Marcy Montgomery of the San Juan Makers Guild for organizing this celebration!



Hi, Everyone!

Our community came together again this year for four apple-drying events to benefit the San Juan Island Food Bank. Using the Grange's new 32-screen food dehydrator and apples donated to the Food Bank, multiple boxes of apples turned into more than eight pounds of dried apples, ready to be dispersed to island residents.

A "heap" of Grange members helped at these events. It takes four people less than two hours to fill up the fine new dehydrator located in the Grange kitchen and two people about 45 minutes to load the dried fruit into bags seven hours later. With each dehydrator load, a small mountain of apples dries down into three to four one-gallon bags of tasty treats. The Food Bank receives many boxes of apples from generous community members. Drying them is a welcome way to manage bounty.

Thanks to everyone who donated apples, to the Grange for use of the kitchen and dehydrator, and to the volunteers who came out to whiz thru the fruit with those apple/corer machines!

Nancy Best



Photo: Nancy Best
Volunteers Margaret Johnson and
Kathleen Raub on the job

Fundraiser for Palestinian Family

San Juan Social Justice Collective is a group of islanders working to educate the community about the ongoing genocide in Palestine. The group has been at the farmers market for about a year and have had quite a few events at the Grange in support of the project.

The group is currently raising funds to help evacuate a Palestinian family from Gaza, the AbuKhaleds, in the hope of getting them to safety.

The link to the gofundme page is [here](#).



Growers' Coffee Hour Digest

Reported by Roger Ellison

You are welcome to join the Growers' Coffee Hour! I send this link out every week to Growers who sign up. To receive the link, email me at roger.thornbush@gmail.com. Here are highlights of recent discussions:

On September 25 we talked about the history of apples. We wondered whether use of apples mainly for eating fresh was a result of prohibition, when cider orchards were cut down and dessert apples planted. Were apples once mainly thought of as a cooking ingredient, rather than a fresh fruit? And what about the notion that Johnny Appleseed made cider apples available to homesteaders. It's a big conversation. Growers may wish to do a keyword search on "history of apples" and continue the discussion at a future Coffee Hour.

We talked about the saving of beans and peas for replanting. [Since they do not easily cross pollinate, beans and peas are easy to save. And what can we grow with our beans?](#)

Garlic planting time is coming! [Some growers do it during a certain phase of the moon.](#)

We had a discussion about climate change causing carrots to bolt through the process of [vernalization](#). We agreed that keeping a list of varieties that are sensitive and those that are insensitive to fluctuating weather was a good idea, to weed out the troublemakers.

On October 2 we talked about hard apple cider versus apple cider vinegar. The basic difference in process is that in hard cider making, the juice is allowed to ferment to alcohol with air excluded using airlocks. In vinegar making, air is allowed in to bring the product through the alcohol stage to the vinegar stage. Strong (20%) vinegar, available from garden centers, can be used as an herbicide. We talked about its use with mowing or tilling as part of a strategy to get rid of thistles. [How To Kill Weeds With Vinegar - Simple, Effective And Natural! \(oldworldgardenfarms.com\)](#)

Good tomato varieties for growing in pots? It's easy to find lists online, but can we find and share a list of varieties that grow well in pots here? About drainage in pots: [Do not put rocks in the bottom of pots.](#) It actually inhibits drainage.

We talked about getting hazels to grow faster. Here's an article from Permaculture Magazine: [The Essential Guide to Hazel-Permaculture](#)

On October 9 we talked about how the changing climate will mean harsher weather conditions in the future, along with more emergencies. A grower suggested this source of information: [Climate Impacts Group \(uw.edu\)](#). Increasing our resilience to climate-change fueled weather impacts would mean more food in storage, more reliance on our own open-pollinated

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Growers' Circle Digest continued

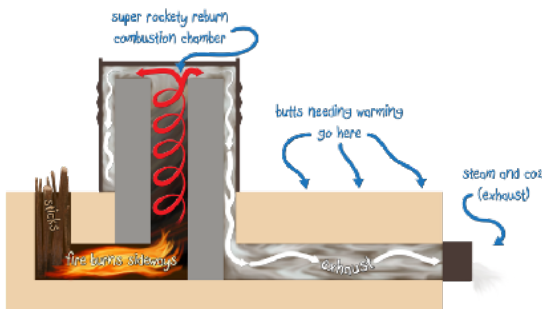
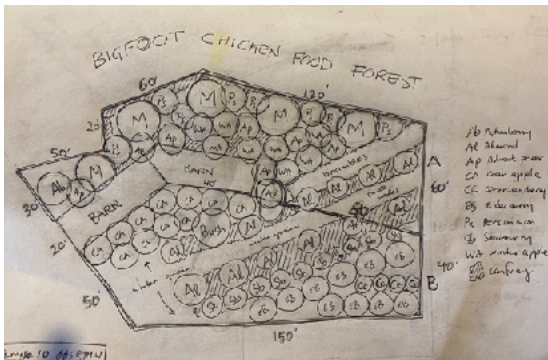
seeds, and more winter growing of vegetables. We talked about the UK's response to Nazi aggression in WW II: Dig for Victory!

There is also the response of the people of Cuba upon collapse of the Soviet Union: [The post-Cold War Cuban food experiment | Rapid Transition Alliance](#). We discussed dehydrators, canners, freezers, as well as producing local chicken feed and creating food forests for chickens to forage for themselves: [Big Foot Food Forest 2024 - BIG](#)

FOOT FOOD FOREST

On October 16 we talked about resilience and risk; power outages, generators, solar panels, and battery backups; freezing, canning or dehydrating food for storage; and growing more food over the winter, using greenhouses where necessary. One way to increase a household's

resilience in the face of winter blackouts is a wood stove for heating and cooking. One is the [rocket stove mass heater](#) (below), for clean and efficient burning.

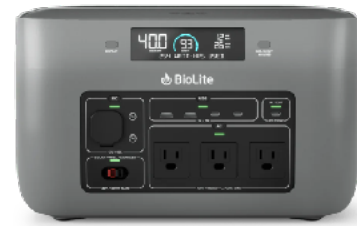


Another way is the compost toilet, especially the kind that needs no electricity. [How to Make a Vermicomposting Flush Toilet-Permaculture](#)

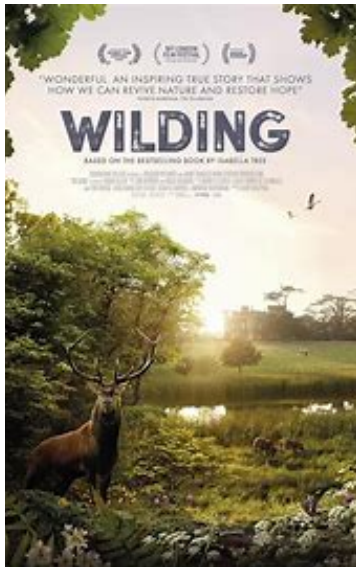
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Growers' Circle Digest continued

A grower suggested looking into biolite for off-grid solutions: [BioLite Outdoor Off-Grid Energy | Free Shipping \\$99+ | United States](#)



On October 23 we talked about the [movie Wilding](#), which showed at the Friday Harbor Film Festival, for which I was the MC. The movie is based on the [book Wilding](#), written by Isabella Tree. Plot: a young couple inherits the family farm in



Sussex, UK, decides that continuing industrial grain farming on their marginal clay soils would just put them deeper in debt, and hatches a scheme to return their 3500 acres to pre-industrial conditions. That meant taking out interior fences, putting up a strong perimeter fence, and importing large cows, small ponies, and resourceful pigs to manage the return of their farm to a "wilder" state. The results are amazing, and the images in the film are gorgeous.

We compared it with *Clarkson's Farm*, a British documentary TV series about a man well known in automotive sports who buys a farm and learns, often in hilarious ways, how to grow food. The viewer is invited to learn about land, farming, livestock and local politics along with

the new farmer, Jeremy Clarkson.

It's been quite a year for mushrooms, eh? A grower suggested myco tours of the island each fall. Anyone?

More information about kalettes: [VegPlotter | How to grow Kalettes \(Kale Sprouts\)](#)

How far apart to grow onions: Here is a square foot guide, showing how many plants may live in a square foot of bed. I find this idea useful, but often give more room to things like winter squash.

SQUARE FOOT GARDEN PLAN GUIDE							gardens365.com
Tomatoes 1	Peppers 1	Onion 9	Head Lettuce 4	Carrots 8	Leaf Lettuce 16	Cucumber 2	
Hot Pepper 1	Winter Squash 1	Sweet Potatoes 1	Potatoes 2	Pumpkins 1	Cauliflower 1	Corn 2	
Beets 9	Eggplant 1	Spinach 9	Garlic 4	Radishes 16	Melons 1	Celery 2	
Brussel Sprouts 1	Kale 2	Summer Squash 1	Rosemary 1	Cilantro 9	Sage 1	Chives 1	
Bush Beans 4	Pole Beans 4	Basil 2	Bok Choy 1	Parsnips 9	Dill 9	Oregano 1	
Cabbage 1	Turnips 9	Parsley 2	Thyme 2	Rutabagas 4	Peas 8	Okra 1	

*Numbers represent the number of plantings per square foot