

COMMUNITY HOMESTEAD

NEWSLETTER: SUMMER 2014

Mission: "to establish and maintain a community so that people with developmental and other disabilities can reach their fullest human potential"

501 280th Street, Osceola, WI 54020 (715) 294-3038 www.communityhomestead.org

Oh, it has been a while since we got out a newsletter. Not that we had no news but rather that we had too much. Our summer was packed with the enthusiasm and verging mania of a short growing season. Planting, growing, cultivating, harvesting, and a short summer season, canoeing, swimming hiking picnics, festivals, fairs...oh my goodness, we are missing out on something! Who has time to write? So this newsletter is an attempt to separate individual events from the carnival of experiences that made our summer. We send you warm (but crisp) greetings of the season!

New Land Updates -Christine Elmquist

The land is ours! From the winding track, past the bee hives, the tree lined grain fields, the sunflowers spread over the slope of the hill like a quilt, around by the woods and the maple trees, all the way up to the open pastures at the top-it is all Community Homestead's. Our cows wander to the upper fields along the restored cow path. Janette comes swinging along the footpath from Berry Grove proclaiming the latest news to the sky. Ryan drives the tractor up the track.

80 acres, \$280,000, 3 years. How did this happen? Well, YOU did it. A really generous grant from the **Otto Bremer Foundation** matched all the funds but a match is only as good as the initial contribution. And so many people con-



tributed. Thank you does not cover it but, thank you anyway.

We are going to try hard to be more prepared next time land comes up for sale. After all, we farm 420 acres and still only own 220 acres of it. Securing it for farming and the life of the community is never too far from the front of our minds. Farm land sustains us. To this end, we are now squirreling away funds so we at least have a down-payment on future land at risk.



Grazing -Eric Witt



I was watching the cows grazing in a pasture along the road recently and was struck by how vibrant and healthy they looked. A few days of rain had left their coats clean and shiny and as I watched they painted that classic Wisconsin scene- mottled black and white flanks roaming, chomping slowly across a lush green backdrop. As this year's grazing season winds to a close, it is a good time to contemplate what can be done to improve pastures for next year, and consider why we put so much energy into pasturing cows in the first place.

Grazing has benefits beyond creating picturesque Wisconsin landscapes. Grazing cows are healthy cows. Pasture plants are full of vitamins and the fresh air, exercise and abundant sunshine cows receive while grazing foster a healthy, robust immune system, preventing acidosis and other health conditions associated with high grain diets. Milk from pastured cows has a superior fatty acid profile (increased Omega-3's), increased antioxidant vitamin levels and greatly increased conjugated linoleic acid (CLA).

Getting all of these grazing benefits is no easy task for the farmer. It means increased management, more paperwork and record keeping, and adapting to changes in weather. When winters stretch into late March and drought conditions dry up pastures by mid August, it can be very challenging for farmers in this region to meet even minimum requirements for organic certification.

In order to ensure that we have lush, nutrient rich pastures in the future, we have to practice careful management now.

We use a rotational grazing system to give our cows daily access to fresh pasture while still allowing adequate time for pasture re-growth. Dustin, Travis and Joel offer the cows a new paddock each time they go out in the morning. During the hottest part of the season we pasture the cows in the evening. This has the dual benefit of only grazing one paddock per day and keeping the cows in the barn where they can be fed and kept cool by fans. We are also taking steps to improve pasture quality over time by tilling, replanting, mowing (with our new pasture mower) and harrowing.

For much of the summer we need additional pasture to graze the dry cows and young heifers so preserving rotational pasture around the farm for the milking herd. This year we were aided greatly by newly acquired land on Easter Hill. This required the restoration and construction of the cow lane from the barn to Easter Hill, and installing poly wire perimeter fencing around a 20 acre pasture area below Easter Hill and a 9 acre field on top. Anyone who saw Richard emerging from the woods after a fencing session, looking like he'd wrestled a badger, could tell this was rough bushwhacking work. We extend a big thank you to all the crews, students and summer volunteers that made pasturing animals there a possibility this year.



The calves grazing, Adrian making hay, Travis by the barn.



We'll mull over these future plans and no doubt have new ideas by the time we turn the cows out to pasture next spring. Now our attention shifts indoors to keeping the cows fed, warm and comfortable through what threatens to be another brutal winter. It's a harsh reality of dairying in northern Wisconsin that all of the benefits of pasture need to be harnessed in a relatively short grazing season. But we get the most out of it that we can, and actually look forward to winter, for it has its own charm.

The Flower Gardens -Mary Elmquist

It is a wonderful situation one finds oneself in when one's hobby becomes one's work, and this is where I find myself in as much as I create and grow flower gardens around the community center.

Our summers here are fairly short and so we want to dip into them as quickly and abundantly as is possible, I do this by growing flowers but is not only a summer project, it starts already in the late summer and fall collecting seeds. Most of our flowers are fifth or sixth generation and seem to become hardier, contrary to what you read on the commercial packets. I collect seeds from all our gardens here at Community Homestead and also in the locality, and friends send me seeds as well. Everything is packaged and marked although, mind you, sometimes I don't know the name of a flower so the packet gets marked, "purple spikey flower gathered in North Dakota."

In March, when the greenhouses are fired up, I plant the seeds and, after a few weeks, they need to be transplanted in trays or small pots. Of course, the beds have to be prepared, the mulch removed, the weeds caught as they grow and compost spread. Some years there is a major thinning out of the perennials. At the end of May we start planting the flowers, really packing the gardens full. Then comes the time of watering, pulling the weeds that persist no matter what. Besides the gardens we do a lot of boxes and container planters to go around the community center and the house. If all goes well we have beautiful flower gardens and planters and try to prolong the season by dead heading. (Remember, the aim of a flower is to produce a seed so cutting off the dead flowers prevents this but you do need to pick out the plant that you are going to use for seeds, and those you leave) At the end of the season comes the cutting back and cleaning up the garden and remulching where needed.

I do have to say I have tremendous helpers in all this. Dustin is the yard man and, having now helped me for a few years, has a good grasp what happens when, and how, and more and more works independently. Certainly without his help things would not go so smoothly, So thanks Dustin for helping me to indulge my hobby. Steve Fons is also a real partner in my efforts, as he mows the lawns so beautifully. What is flower garden, without a lovely, landscaped lawn?

Top to bottom: Steve, The Community Center, Mary and Dustin



Osprey in the Garden-Emily Bohall

Ospreys are very a distinct looking bird. They are water hawks with fierce yellow eyes and sharp, quick talons. They specialize in diving, talon first, into shallow waters for a fishy meal to take home to their large, stick framed, nests.

Since my days in elementary school playing Amazon trail, I have favored the osprey above many other birds of prey. It was not, however, until this summer that I actually got the chance to witness the full beauty of this bird in action.

It started just like any other day in the garden, weeding or something of that sort, when someone looked up in awe, "Oh wow, an Osprey!". We all stood admiring the Osprey as it soared overhead. As it began making circles, its destination and motivation became clear: the goldfish.

"Quick to the pond!" Adrian shouted and we all rushed across the garden to the irrigation pond. With our arms flapping and bizarre noises filling the air, caws, hoots, and shouts, we slightly threw the osprey off its game.

It was less than a week before the event occurred again and for the rest of the summer the garden crew would keep a sharp eye out for the osprey.

The Minnesota State Fair. -Caleb Seiser

Ahhh...what a thrilling day! Familiar to last year, it approached us with much anticipation, and then breezed by in such a hurried, excited, action-packed fashion. And once again, fair day succeeded in delivering fun for all.

Personally, the Minnesota State Fair is a place where I can relinquish my normal reservations, and embrace the food craze. Food is everywhere at the fair! And everything, some would say.

With so many creative food options, and only a limited space in my stomach, I decided to follow Oscar's lead in the food game. Last year, I recall him making wise and composed food decisions, among our rushed and rash choices, and thus he came away with the most enviable dish. So, this year I followed his lead. He advised me to get a buttermilk scone with sausage gravy, I did, and it was delicious!

On to other things... Highlights outside of food for me included going to the International Bizarre (in search of kimchi), and stumbling upon a series of dance performances by Hmong, Thai, and American Indian dance groups. The animals were nice to visit, too. The Llama were soft, the sheep were gigantic, and the horses re

Trip to the North Shore - Hillary Schauls

Christine, Richard, Joel, Oscar, Kelly, Elizabeth, the Germans, Lucas and Alex, Andrew, Parker, and me, all went on a day trip. We met Jay, Emily, and Joseph and Marianna. They were camping. We met them on Sunday in Grand Marais.

We saw the sunrise over Lake Superior. Richard and I went in the fudge store. We walked around downtown. After we got ice cream, we walked to another side of Grand Marais. We went walking on a long hike and saw flowers and stuff. We went to a swimming hole and ate lunch there. We went on a hike again. We had supper in Duluth. I saw seagulls. We had a good time. It was fun.



ally liked to nuzzle up to Janette's chest and face.

I asked a couple others what they liked about their day at the fair. Scott said he liked walking around and seeing all the people—taking in the scene! Kelly's favorite part was seeing the animals. "I saw little piglets. Some lady was holding them!" Oscar and Nina, both, said their highlight was watching the dancers at the International Bizarre. Hillary enjoyed getting the free WCCO bag from the news booth with Bruce. Mary liked the pigs,

and Dustin, the cows. David and Moritz—who had arrived from Germany less than a week earlier—were completely stunned by it all. And completely stuffed from all the corn dogs, hot dogs, curds, and stick foods they said they had eaten.

Before we knew it, it was time to reconvene at the gates. Of course, it was a major relief to see that everyone made it out of the madness, and it was pleasing to hear everyone had a great time. Some wished to stay longer, while most of us yearned to return to the comfortable quiet of Osceola. The latter say won out, so we departed the grounds. We only spent a handful of hours there, and only frequented a fraction of the fair, but I think we all got our Minnesota State Fair fill. Until next year!

<Hillary and Elizabeth



Trip to Camphill Minnesota - Janette Schauls

We went to Camphill Minnesota, a whole big van. It was a party, an open house. Me and Kelly walking around. Ate meat and lemonade. And a brown cookie. Music, blue grass, a drum. Selling T shirts and hats, and cutting boards not like ours. And rugs. Not like our rugs, not made of tshirts, not huge. Kelly on exchange at Camphill Minnesota. Viktor is helping in the garden here and

helping milk cows. He goes home on Sunday. Kelly comes home Sunday. I go every year to Camphill Minnesota Open House.

Vacation on the Lake -Asger Elmquist

Saturday August 2nd. The Thule cargo carrier, stuffed with duffel bags, is on the roof of the Van and we – Mary Peters, Sandra Volberding, Mary and Asger Elmquist and our dog Ella - all pile in and head north in Minnesota, near to Canada where we will be spending a week in a cottage on the shore of Kabetogama Lake in the “Voyageurs National Park”.

“Mary Peters, what did you like best about the vacation?”

“I liked the Paddle Boat, I liked to go out to the rock Islands – Why are the rock Islands there? I liked the Canoe. I liked to hikes in the woods and to go out for lunch, and I liked to sit on the bench and watch the children jump into the water. I liked the movies in the evening. Sandra and I shared a room – I had bed this side room, Sandra had bed that side.”



Sandy and Mary

“And Sandra, what did you really enjoy?”

“Oh, I liked to sit on the bench out on the long Pier with my fishing rod and fish. I never caught anything; but while I was fishing, I enjoyed to watch the children bounce on the “Rave” Trampoline and slide or jump off the Aqua tower. It made me laugh so much! I hated the bugs in early morning and evenings. I liked the big swing near the Ducks, they are so funny.

So I asked Mary E for her highlights:

“Experimenting with standing up on the ‘Paddle Boards’, loved the Kayak and the half day Pontoon boat trip.”

We all know what Ella liked best – to swim and retrieve the water toy.

For me, Asger, the very best was to see everyone having such a good time. Yes, of course I liked the boats, the water, exploring for wildlife on our small car trips, and Oh, I could go on; but will run out of space in this newsletter.

My BotCon Trip -Mark Welk

On our first day we rode around Pasadena and LA and shopped at comic book stores. Then we went to 50/50 burger. Their famous burger has a patty made of half ground beef and half ground bacon. Then we went to Universal Studios to see the Transformer fan experience. We saw life size characters from the movies like: Bumble Bee, Lord Megatron and Optimus Prime. I got to speak to Megatron. I told him I’d find that traitor Star Scream and be his new Decepticon. I saw Optimus Prime and asked him where the Matrix of Leadership came from. Then we waited a very long time to be some of the first people to ride the new Transformers 3D Experience ride. It was great. We used 3D glasses. Star Scream’s missile came right at me. The ride was very intense. It was lots of fun.

On day two we woke up early, drove around Pasadena and got pancakes for breakfast. Then we went to the main event, BotCon 2014. There were a whole bunch of action figures and displays. It was amazing. Then I found a robot I’ve been looking for a very long time, Six Shot. This toy means a lot to me. It is the classic from 1986 that I’ve wanted since I was a kid. We also got to see the cast of RescueBots and Team Hasbro. Team Hasbro thanked all their fans and told me about the products coming out for 2015. After the convention we had dinner at a Mexican restaurant.

On our last day we did a lot of sightseeing. We went to the Asia Pacific museum. There was stuff from all over the world like Mongolia and Bangkok and Singapore and China. We took lots of pictures and stood by statues. Then we went to the Griffith Observatory and had a good view of the Hollywood sign. Inside the observatory we saw a lot of scientists and some good planets. There was a giant pendulum going back and forth. Then we went to Santa Monica to look at the ocean. And, on our way back to the airport I got sushi for the first time. I had had sushi once before and I didn’t like it. But California sushi was very good. We got to our plane and arrived in Minneapolis really late but Caleb was there to pick us up. The next morning I didn’t have to go to Adrian’s shop, I got to sleep in.



Mark with his collection

Americorps Volunteer Day - J. Bord

In honor of September 11th, a group of us including the Americorps members spent the day in Centuria, WI, listening to country music on the radio, doing bizarre choreographed dances in hallways, joking around, and most importantly, volunteering at a Habitat for Humanity work site.

For those who are unfamiliar with the organization, Habitat for Humanity is an international, non-governmental and non-profit organization which was founded in 1976. Habitat has been devoted to building "simple, decent, and affordable" housing and has addressed the issue of poverty housing all over the world.

On this day, Caleb Seiser, Elizabeth Bright, Steve Fons, Kurt Karis, Viktor Lambert, Parker Ameel, Emily Bohall and myself (J. Bord), worked with Habitat's site manager, Bob Babel, staining, sanding and sealing moulding, doors and door jambs for 1 and 1/2 houses. Our carpenter of the group, Kurt, had this to say, "I sure did have fun" and, "I'm handy cause I have a tool belt." This was very true that day with Kurt leading the charge in the sanding station. "I did it (sanded) on the wood, two doors for each room, just

Comings and Goings -Christine Elmquist

Kurt at Pig Roast

This summer we said goodbye to Andrew Lloyd who finished his Americorps year. We miss his enthusiasm, his hard work, his propane drumming and his efforts to eat every wild bit of bark and fungus he could find here. Fortunately, for our general entertainment this last interest is a burgeoning one of Parker Ameel who joined us in August from Michigan to begin his Americorps year. He is already overwhelmed by tips from the rest of us about the location of puffballs and other potential sources of breakfast and responds with his characteristic warmth as brightly on the sixth time of hearing it as on the first! Freshly arriving, and with plenty of energy, is Nick Turner from Illinois who joins us with Americorps for a year at Altair. Welcome! We are also in the lucky situation of having Elizabeth Bright and Emily Bohall here for a second year which delays any more sorry goodbyes for a couple more months at least!

This summer we were joined by Jasmine Jamila Weurth and Cassidy Neal who lent a hand in the garden and at Brown House before returning to college. Lucas Pantfoerder and Alex Klauschenz came for five weeks from the Hibernia Waldorf School for a taste of community life and now we are hosting two more young Germans, Moritz Schlegal and David Langhammer from Schopheim Waldorf School.



like our houses."

Caleb and Parker

Habitat for Humanity is building three different houses in the town of Centuria, for three different families. Their goal is to finish the projects by October so that the families can move in before the cold winter months.

When talking with Kurt about finishing the project, he had this to say, "If I had the money I'd buy them a trailer but I'd like to help another day, sometime in the fall to help them get done faster before it's too cold."



Viktor Lambert also helped out on the farm for a week during his exchange from Camphill Minnesota and Charlotte Howland came for a summer farm week too. During the early summer the garden and orchard echoed with children's voices as second and third graders came with Minnesota Waldorf School, then with older voices from Avalon School and The Chicago Waldorf School's ninth grade. On several Thursday mornings a bus would draw up and fill our garden and orchard with brightly colored t-shirts and as summer stretch church groups came to weed, harvest and help out. And then, more quietly, but with appreciated devotion, every Tuesday, we were joined by Sue Horn, arriving in the early hours from Minneapolis for harvest and staying late to pack vegetable boxes.

Thank you everyone who layers this community with life and joy.

In Memory of Oscar Olson -Christine Elmquist

The Buckmann family cleared this 120 acre farm at the turn of the century. Building the barn, then the house, the windmill, with its spring house, and a few little sheds, two grown sons and one daughter stayed on while the others adventured out of Wisconsin and married. Farming with horses, these remaining siblings milked the cows, logged the woods, grew small grains and established Cedar Bend Farm. And then they took on a young fella, a hired man. He was to have his horse team, get up early in the morning for the barn and help with the hard labor of harvest time.

Oscar Olson was that “hired young fella.” Later, he bought the farm and raised his family, moving into the little house next door when his wife died and his son took on the farm operation, In 1994, he then watched as a pretty interesting and odd bunch of people took on Cedar Bend Farm. Odd though they were, and definitely “not from here,” Oscar strolled out of his house to first take a look, and then have a chat, and then advise. Then he was up on the tractor.

“Adrian, a guy should go and get them round bales”.

“Adrian, want me to go cultivate?”.

“Adrian, you just set me up”.



Oscar

Stopping in the barnyard, twenty years ago on his own feet then, as he aged, with a stick, then on a mower, and then on a golf cart, Oscar especially looked forward to the young people coming to volunteer. The prettier the better. The more eccentric, the more tickled he was. Never one to overuse a name, he referred to them as, “The Swiss Miss”, “Blondie” or “London” with a mischeivous twinkle. Oscar was open and polite to everyone regardless of ability, age, gender or any other peculiarity. He had never been much beyond Duluth (“De loot” as he called it) but he was

an open-minded, appreciative, world traveler. as the world came to visit him here. Children were, “Richard’s boy/girl” or, “Adrian’s oldest/youngest”. Yet all the details of their individual lives were surprisingly stored away in his incredible memory.

His memory linked us to the farm’s past, its rich community of neighbors, characters and friends, alive still in the fences, pastures, barn, and trees around us. As we met Oscar in the relative autumn of his life, at 77 years old, we were aware that one day, he too would pass on, even though we could not imagine the farm without him

At 97, this was the first summer he was not on the tractor, not having a chat with Adrian and Ryan by the machine shop, and not chugging by with a wave from his tractor mower. He died in the early summer, looking forward to meeting his wife again, and leaving us with many memories

and a deep appreciation of his lovely approach to life.

Elias Wagner Flynn, Born July 6th, 2014

Greetings friends of Community Homestead! I am Elias, the littlest of us all, member of Altair house.

My family, mom Chelsea, dad Jeff, and brother Isaac, has been smothering me with kisses since I was born. Currently my interests include chewing my fingers, looking at brightly lit ceilings, and working out this giggle business. The coming fall and winter seasons will be full of amazements here for me!



Holiday Craft Fair

Come see our beautiful woodwork, fabrics, wreathes, beeswax candles and cards

Saturday November 15th 10-4pm
Saturday December 13th 10-4pm

Right here at the Community Center
515A 280th St, Osceola, WI 54020



*Many thanks for your Donations:
April 1 - September 29, 2014*

Particular thanks to our volunteers, Cheryl Beardslee and Roger Mussel who bring us weekly Tai Chi, Paul and Jayne Seiser who helped out in the house and in the garden, Sue Horn, and Mary Clare Huberty and Sherry Hansen, busy in the wings, along with extended family and young adult offspring who drive for hours to come help at the Pig Roast and the Country Banquet. And this brings us to the chefs of the Country Banquet; Nathan Sartain, Gina Schmidt, Sean Jones, Marcy Alfonsi and Sara Johannes who make magic in our gardens and both create a wonderful feast and create funds for farmland.

Joyce Albers Tyrell
Lee and David Allen
Barb and Wayne Arndt
Sandy Ball
Margy and Gary Balwierz
Linda Bergh
Josephine Behroozi
Joyce Borgerding
Kathy and Ron Broom,
Sandy Burton,
David Busch
Margaret Caruk
Robin Carlson
Wendy Chretien
Jeff Comins and Laurie
Schmidt
Shirley Cronick
Sean and Julie Cummings
in memory of Betty Cum-
mings
Rachel Deep
Therese Durkin
Marcia Dressel
Diane Dzick, in memory
of Betty Cummings
Arianna Elmquist
Asher Elmquist
Jacob Elmquist and Alex
Slay
Joseph and Marianne
Elmquist
Karen Everson
Elizabeth Fetter
Alice Flynn,
Claire Frisbie
Linda Galais in memory of
Betty Cummings
Nancy Gaurino
Sue Gerlach

Beth and
Michael
Giacobassi, in mem-
ory of
Betty Cum-
mings
Peter and
Mary
Gove
Kelly
Hansen
Ruth Hart in
memory of Betty
Cummings
Carol Haughton
Brian Hols,
Mary Clare Huberty and
Sherry Hansen
Jennifer Huff
Nancy Jacobs
Anne Johnson
Robert Johnston, in mem-
ory of Betty Cummings
Edith and Donald Kam-
merer in memory of Betty
Cummings
Dorathy & Verlyn Kicker
Edith Kramer,
Bonny Kraus
Wallter Krebsbach
Millie Krebsbach
Norman Kretschmar
Jean Larson
Pam & Charles LaRue



Linda Leng
Laverne Lund in memory
of Betty Cummings
Lorna Lutz
Carolyn Mayo, in honor of
Terra Corpuz
Jane and Arvid Maki
Maureen McElrath
J and S McGovern
Melody Moberg
Barbara Molinaire and
MaryAnn Rentas
Therese Muggé
Jim Nester
Richard Nester
Todd Newmann
Ben Ober
Sian Owen
Cruise
Tricia
Paulson
Laura
Peterson
Lauri
Pierce
and
Garth
Riegel
Jeff and Ju-
lie Plochnow
in memory of
Betty Cummings
Ginna and Allen Portman
Amis
Celia and Duane Poehls
Kris Post and Ed Funk
Terri Pueschner
Mary Jo Rasett
Jeff Reardon
Jacquie and Perry Rice
Michelle Rice
Jenny Riederer
Margaret Ringhofer, in
memory of Betty Cum-
mings
Kate Romens
Jennifer Russell
Jan Sadusky
Cheryl & Steve Schan-
back,
Joel Schwochert
Cathy Schubilske
Myra Severin

Mary Stott and John
Becker, in memory of
Betty Cummings
William Skadden
Carle and Wayne Stroess-
ner, in memory of Betty
Cummings
E Stuckslager in memory
of Betty Cummings
Karen Svoboda
The Benevity Community
Impact Fund
Mary and Ken Tomes,
Joel West,
Tom Wolfe
Frank and Emily Zum-
pano,
The Buds Somerset Gar-
den Club
Cellars, Wines and Spirits
of Woodbury
Cycles for Change
Newton Dee (Camphill
Village)
Osceola Community
Health Foundation
The Otto Bremer Founda-
tion
Oil Donations from
Village Pizzeria, Dresser
Lucky Panda, Osceola
UW River Falls
The Sandcastle, Minne-
apolis,
Piccolo Restuarant, Min-
neapolis

**And to the many who
gave through Give Big
Osceola but chose to re-
main anonymous.**

*photo: Justin weeding in
the garden*