

Looking to the future ~Christine Elmquist

Amongst the berries, the vegetables, the bread, the milking, the picnics by the river, the barbeques on the deck, we have a mission here. It is, “to create and sustain a community where people with developmental and other challenges can reach their fullest human potential.” In the past couple of years we have been checking in on that in a very deliberate way.

We want to be responsive to our mission, not stuck: creative rather than rigid. And we want to make sure we can sustain the vibrance, energy, and beauty of community life into the future, adapting as keenly as a school of fish, to currents, weather, environment, occasional sharks, and the talents, personalities, needs of all of us, the individual tiny fish that make up the whole colorful movement!

Out of these thoughts, several projects have already started; the conversion of Orion to apartments, the start of the new bakery and craft area, the strengthened individuality of garden and farm. We are sharing more responsibilities. We are trying out new roles, letting go of obligations, seeking out new ways of supporting each other. And yes, lots of mistakes and glorious discoveries on the way, in about equal parts and often causally linked!

There is more to come. Exciting times ahead. The bakery/craft room has been started, a big pizza oven arises, we are figuring out how to start the apartments on the budget we have. Tune in for more in the next newsletter!



Photo: Travis, Kelly, Hannah, Nastia & Christina

Establishing an Endowment Fund ~Mary Tomes

Within the last year an endowment fund has been established with the goal of creating an ongoing source of income for the continuation of programs at Community Homestead.

After researching different non-profit foundations, we are happy to collaborate with St. Croix Valley Foundation. They have been part of the Valley for years, successfully managing investments for numerous non-profit organizations and private individuals. Please keep Community Homestead in mind as you do your estate planning or wish to donate stock or money to Community Homestead.

You can directly mail a check to Community Homestead (attention Richard Elmquist) richard.elmquist@communityhomestead.org) at

Community Homestead
501 280th St
Osceola WI 54020

and indicate it is for the endowment fund, or contact Heather Logelin at St. Croix Valley Foundation at 715-386-9490 or hlogelin@scvfoundation.org.

Coming Events

Saturday/Sunday September 23/24
Spirit of St Croix Arts Festival: 10am - 5pm
Lakefront Park, Hudson WI

Big Arts Festival with entertainment and free admission. Come say hello to our craft folks!

Saturday/Sunday October 7/8
Sogn Valley Arts Fair: 10am-5pm & 10am-4pm
Cannon Falls, MN

Our Craft Booth and lots of other artists to browse

Saturday/Sunday October 14/15
Red Wing Arts Fall Festival 10-5pm & 10-4pm
Red Wing, MN

Crafts in the center of the city of Redwing. Come say hello to our booth!



Summers at Riverwood Canoe and Kayak Rental ~Steven Kicker

In 2020, Covid shut down a lot of my social hang outs and I had more time on my hands. I had been working for a long time at Crystal Ball Farm’s Dairy and I wanted to buy a car so I decided to look for a second job.

Riverwood is a canoe and kayak outfitter in Osceola. Kevin Carlson was the teacher at the high school so I knew him, and then I met everyone else when I started work there in the summer of 2020. Andrew is Kevin’s son and he is the boss. Andrew is really nice and caring. Personally, I think he is great to work with.

When I first started working there, I was on beach duty. This entails getting people from their cars down to the beach safely and into their canoes and kayaks, loading the trailers, and getting people off the river and back to their vehicles safely. I like the physical aspect, like going to the gym and being paid for it! And it is a job in the fresh air which I think is fantastic. I like the social aspect, meeting people and making sure they have a good day, that is so much fun.

Andrew asked me if I was interested in driving so in 2021 I became a shuttle captain. By this time, I had my car and I had been driving a while. Driving the shuttle means I drive up to Interstate, meet people at the parking lot, get people their lifejackets and all the information they need to get to the landing safely, and get them to the river. This adds a new skill and I generally like to do new things anyway.

When I look back, and I think about this a lot, I think about how far I have come. When I was 18, I was assessed as not being able to learn to drive and honestly, my hopes were really shattered. But if you want something enough, you work hard, and have patience with each step toward that goal that

you can take. I had a lot of support from everyone, family, freinds, community, and driving everything on the farm, starting with the mower and moving up, really helped me build the skill set to drive a car. Just practice and trying and believing in yourself. Sometimes, it is true, you can’t learn to do something, that is reality, but if you want something bad enough, you’ll work hard to get it.

Now Elvis has started working at Riverwood on the weekend. He also likes the physical aspects and he’s is in the same boat, in a lot of ways, as I was way back when. I really enjoy working with him and sharing some of the things I have learned and hopefully, that is helpful!



Photo: Elvis & Steven

Summer Farm Update ~Shannon Kulig

If someone asked a farmer this year for a single word to describe the growing season it would be adapt. Despite well laid plans and the best intentions we had to, and continue to, adjust and make hard decisions. The interesting thing about adapting is that it is often coupled with learning and we here at Community Homestead know how to learn. When there's little rain, take advantage of every opportunity to plant drought tolerant crops and graze everything



Photo: Hillary

Field work happened whenever conditions allowed. If we got a tenth of an inch of rain, we planted into damp dust and hoped for another tenth of an inch later in the week. Eric and Brendan tried to be flexible and jump on any opportunity to tractor. When mother nature wasn't kind, we rebuilt a shop or repaired a piece of equipment.

To keep cows munching away on slow growing grass we fenced, and fenced, and took down fence, and fenced some more. A special shout-out to Nastia, who honed her inner fencing goddess, building paddocks for young cows to explore, and to Janette and Terra who can carry a surprising number of white fiberglass posts around a 10-to-15-acre hay field.

These frequent fencing expeditions were made possible by a loyal dedicated on-farm crew. Joel made sure the glut of late spring calves received plenty of pasteurized milk, while Travis did the dirty jobs, and Hillary picked up after busy farmers and their wild two-year-old. Aldo kept everyone entertained by encouraging lots of tag and we all got to laugh at his tie stall acrobatics.

We have been so grateful this summer for all our help, from students working their way through late spring projects, to thriving young German milking volunteers, and our friends and family promising rain dances from across the country. Inspired by some August rain and green hay fields and budding sorghum, I will sign off and say, "Here's to adapting, learning new things, and please, some more rain."

Aldo's Farm ~Aldo Witt



Photo: Aldo

Hillary, Nastia, Travis, Terra, Joel is too, and Aldo, and Mommy, and Daddy.

Red truck, tractor, and the motel, and the barn, and the mower, the oat silo, and the orange truck, and the flat tire on the orange truck. What else is on our farm? And piggies, and mud, a workshed

Aldo likes riding on green tractors. Aldo has friends and flies and a combine.

Aldo goes in the hayloft and throws down hay.

First, I go away from the farm with the poop wagon that spreads stuff all around and it gets empty. I got pinched one time when daddy closed the windows. Aldo doesn't flick any levers, but I get to hit the honk button and the other buttons don't do anything.

Oh hey, the milk truck's here! It went psssss, it makes a sound.



Photo: Nastia

Sisters' Vacation ~Hillary Schauls

Janette and I went down to Neenah for a week and stayed two nights at my sister Barb's. It was fun. We saw fireworks in Appleton, feed the geese. I got bitten. I took Buddy for a walk, Buddy is a puppy. We went to the movies and saw The Little Mermaid. It was Madeline's graduation, my niece, and we had a party at the park. We went to a popcorn place for lunch, different kinds of popcorn, and met Barb's friend and Barb bought some popcorn to share at her house.

On the 4th of July we went to my sister Jen's friends' cabin on the lake for two nights. Me and Janette and Jen all slept in the same room. We took a boat ride and Janette sat on a chair to watch us on the lake because she did not want to go. I went on the innertube with Jen and Jenny's friend. I was in the middle. It was fun. We went to dinner two times and met Barb and Wayne there. Barb took us to the zoo and Rescue Center in Green Bay and we saw rabbits feeding in the window and squirrels, birds, foxes, muskrat, otter, and possum and white-tailed deer. One of the deer came close to me. And skunks. I fed the goats and so did Janette. I like to feed them. But not lions.

Christine and Richrd and the Morning Glory gang picked us up at the grocery store after camping and we had a picnic on the way back, sandwiches and chips!

Morning Glory's Camping Trip ~Hannah Gregor

We got in the van really early and we travelled really far to the other part of Wisconsin. It was me, Nastia, Alex, Christine and Richard, Ann Sophie, Tobias and Anne.

I was really feeling impatient and ready to get going and looking forward to hiking and swimming and looking around the town. We had to set up our tents first and put our air mattress and sleeping bags in, and our clothes too. I had a coke by the lake and met some dogs and petted a bunch of people's dogs! I was looking for rocks, mostly agates. I met some people who were camping in the same area as us.

We went into town and I bought a book from the Game of Thrones series, and I went in a hat store! We had a campfire and s'mores and German stick bread but that was not the main part of dinner!

We went to another state park where you could jump off a rock and into the water. I climbed down the rock because you can never tell where the rocks are under the water and I swam. It was very cold but I liked swimming in that water because it was a very warm day! I dried off like a little lizard in the sun!



Photo: Alex

We went to find fruit, mainly cherries. And then we looked for some more fruit because the first place was just preserves! And then we went out to have lunch.

We went to watch the sunset which was very slow to see the sun go and meet the sky. People were coming in with boats and I got to pet another Golden Doodle!

After we packed up, we picked up Janette and Hillary and had a picnic lunch and went on a hike and to a fire tower. I stayed with Janette because she did not want to go up the tower either so we sat on the rocks and watched. I think Door County is a nice place to go for people that have friends and family, and you can't fall asleep because you've got to see everything!



Photo: Hannah

Stephanie Jacinto
Alicia Jacquet-Morrison
Rochelle Jaffe
Madita Janzing
Maresa-Sophia Janzing
Danielle Jaul
Doris Johns
Mary Johnson
Julie July
Kimberly A Kaiser
Friedolin KaneCamatta
Claire Kerata
Rosa Koehnlein
Lisa Kraisiwatana
Niels Krappa
Deborah Kravik
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Owen Kulig
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Debra Landin-Cooper
Ann Laursen
Charlotte & Howard Lee
Kevin Leehan
Gideon Leek
Mike & Kerry Levy
Gina Lewin
April Linden
Alexandra Lodge
Lonnie Lovness
Alice Macaulay
Bruce Macaulay
Goose Macaulay
Sarah MacRae
Beth Madden
Joan Madden
Sabine Mai
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Patricia Maki
Steve Manderscheid
Carol Manning
Kathy & Ron McBroom
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Maureen McElrath
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Rich Meoli
Patricia Messicci
Pamela Mielke
Susan Miles
Ann Miller
Ross Miller
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Barbara Molinare
Pamela Monteiro
Bernie Morency

Pamela Morris
Therese Mugge
Danielle Murry-Knowles
Meredith Paige NeJame
Ellen Nester
Joel Nester
Julia Nester
Mark Nester
Richard Nester
Jessica Neumann
Darla Nick
Mike Nielsen
Susan Nielsen
Kristin Nyren
Landon Nyren
Malika Obeidi
Benjamin Ober
Lisa Olson
Bette & James Overmier
Lauren Palmer
John Pantazides
Timothy Parke
Alexis Parker
Sally Parks
Janet Pedersen
Morgan Pedersen
Barbara J Peters
-in memory of Mary Peters
Bruce Peterson
Jenna Peterson
Lois & Bruce Peterson
Kim Pilgrim
Chelsea Pine
Johanna Pongratz
Kristine Post
Scott Prichard
Enid Pritikin
Stephan Przybylowicz
Therese Pueschner
Fabian Rude
Mary Jo Rassett
-in memory of Mary Clare
Huberty
Amy Reisdorf
Charlotte Reynolds
Jacque Perry Rice
Michelle Rice
Jayne Riederer
Garth Riegel
Kailey Roberts
Christina Roffers
Jerard Roggio
Lisa Rohlman
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Miriam S
Ann Sandberg
Claire Scanga
Gary and Lynne Schauls
Hillary Schauls

Janette Schauls
Samuel & Angela Schillace
Judi Schmidt
Rebecca Schoeppner
Joshua Seidman
Batyah Selis
Judith Selis
Konstantin Semyonov
Myra Severin
Jaime Shachter
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Victoria St.Laurent
Virginia Stark
Cheryl & Jack Starr
Natalie Stenger
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The Blackbaud Giving Fund
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therans
Town of Farmington Chari-
table Fund
United Way St. Croix Valley

Comings and Goings in the Orchard ~Alex Felt

I thought perhaps I would write this article similar to how Christine writes her comings and goings in each newsletter edition.

This year we greeted new herbs for our teas in the orchard: welcome, hyssop, anise-hyssop, calendula, stevia and peppermint! Teas have been popular in the past years and this year we will try to produce more to keep up with demand!

Greetings to five new sour cherry trees! Expect in the coming years to see more cherry jelly for sale.



it will be several years before we expect to see much in the way of blackcurrant products for market. Sorry to our tart jam loving friends! Redcurrant bushes are still hanging in there.

Exciting arrivals expected for Spring 2024 is a BIG order of young blueberry plants. Blueberries require years of tending before they are producing generously, but in a few years time, you can excitedly expect a lot of delicious blueberries in our jams and pies, as well as for fresh eating at markets and for online orders.

As for the apples, raspberries, and grapes? They’re doing well enough!

Apples got extra attention from the Youth Initiative High School with weeding, mulching, and fertilizing our favorite trees and they’re happier for it. We also were on top of our pest prevention against the coddling moth, and are happy to report a lot more ‘first’ apples ready for sale this late summer and fall— check the online store in the coming weeks!

Raspberries always give us a generous crop from July through until first frost. August is a slow month where we can tidy up the orchard before the apples and grapes are needing a lot of attention.

Grapes, to be honest, receive the least amount of attention from us in the orchard. We prune them, occasionally thin them in the early summer, and are pleasantly surprised when its a good year. This year, the grapes are happy with the hot and dry summer after a wet early spring.

We had to say goodbye to our old blackcurrant bushes. The pests and disease pressure that organic orchardists face can sometimes be more than an old plant can handle. This year we purchased some new bushes, but

Each year, our orchard crew becomes a bit more knowledgeable about caring for the fruit and herbs on the hill in community. We hope to continue to remain steady with what we produce, while seeking to innovate a little bit more each year. It is a space with a lot of loving intention.

Summer in the Garden ~Kelly McDaniel



Photo: Elvis

I water the flower baskets and I also help pack the CSA boxes, I make sure I have a good attitude, not like last year but this year is a good attitude, that’s what Nadine said! I like Nadine and Adrian: they have a good sense of humor. They are something. I like Nadine’s daughter, Maya. I was wearing an orange and black t-shirt and Maya said I look like a carrot but Chelsea said I look like a Jack O’ Lantern.

I help with chives and my hands smell like chives, Herbs are outside but chives are in the greenhouse. Nadine and Adrian have a watermelon break, or a cantaloupe break, and Richard calls it a Cantapulp. That’s funny!

I am forgetting about Alex and Brendan and Johanna, and Ann Sophie when she was here, and Raphael and Janika. I work with Bruce and sometimes I work with Bruce in the greenhouse and he also helps with packing. Bruce brings the boxes into the shed. Elvis packs the CSA boxes too and he helps Brendan, but Elvis is mainly in projects I think. It was very dry and hot all summer, but today it was raining and I came prepared with a raincoat!

I like helping people out in the garden, bringing the green cart with the crates in in. I don’t drive the jalopy that’s Elvis and Nastia and Hannah and Desi and Oscar and Maya. I don’t want to back into a tree. Everyone is different, and I use a cart.



Photo: Terra

The Tree Farm Conference ~Alex Hansen

Sean (Schottler) called Christine. He was a tutor about trees at the Tree Farm. Lots of people came. Someone from Denmark. Sean had hayrides. All the people grow trees.

He asked us to make lunch and breakfast (cinnamon rolls!) We made quiche in pie group. I helped, Hannah and Minseo chopped vegetables, Raphael helped. They liked the quiche. They liked the pickles, They liked the rolls. They liked the salads!

I served cookies. Said, “Everything is good; chocolate chip, cranberry, ginger, snickerdoodle too”

They had two cookies. Someone had more! They were funny. They liked the pie.

Projects Crew ~Richard Elmquist

This is a catch-all crew for larger repair, building, grounds keeping. We often feel pulled in many different directions (but fortunately, with the drought we have not had to do so much mowing!) but it is very well suited to someone who likes variety.

For flexible people it’s a great opportunity to learn lots of different skills. Nastia and Steve Fons do a lot of bicycle repair, Anne and Toby, young German volunteers, replaced the head on a lawn mower tractor. We have been repainting the community center, some inside and some outside and so the first time for some to use a brush, or a sprayer. We have been framing windows and doors in the new bakery shed, leveling the gravel floor with a tractor and back blade, shovel and rake, mowing and weed whipping lawns and fence lines, tree care, pruning and propogating trees.

In my life, I have had many opportunities to amass a pretty big knowledge base and its nice to share that and pass it along.



Photo: Janette, Eun, Raphael & Hillary

Raphael ~Elvis Cormican

Raphael is from Lyon in France. He was in the military in France and then when he got out started school for law. He is my age which is 22. When Raphael was here before, me Janika, Ann Sophie and he went on a night bike ride down to the river and he lived in Morning Glory. This time he lives in the Farmhouse cabin in the front yard near the road and then he will move to Morning Glory

I think Raphael is a very kind and great friend and he is willing to do anything with you. He is very sporty and active and really likes to go exercising like bike riding or running and also lifting weights. When me and Raphael lift weights we listen to different kinds of music and he showed me a French kind of Rap and it was really good. He works in the garden and also in the bakery and he also works with Christine in the processing and in projects with Richard. He is a very hard worker when he gets to know the job and he really loves working with other people. Raphael is only here for 6 weeks and he leaves on September 12th.

People coming and going ~Christine Elmquist

As the season turns, we say goodbye to our year long volunteers; Tammy, Ann Sophie, Anne, and Janika who are all going back to Germany, some to study and one, Tammy, to keep exploring her agriculture and community path!

Thank you to all our Spring and Summer volunteers who have joined us; Minseo and Eun from Korea, Raphael from France, Johanna from Germany, Joshua from California, Adrienne from Minneapolis, Sam and Chloe Backland from Osceola (yay Osceola) and Maya whose extended family visits are always huge boost to the garden and community life! Thanks also to Toby, Luca and Nick from Hibernia Waldorf School in Germany. We also value the willingness of all our family members to jump in and lend a helping hand to our busy summers, Kristin, Witts and Kuligs, lots of Elmquists, Nadine’s Mom Madelon, we are looking at you!

New friends arrived in the form of Ethan and Caleb (Bubba), while Jackson returned again for the summer, all joining the strong day program contiungent.

In September we are looking forward to meeting Elke, Marika, and Chadyvan from Germany who are joining us for a year, and to Marin from Japan who is coming for a few months.



Photo: Tammy & Kelly

Donations from March 2 through August 16, 2023

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Talal Alzghari
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Steven & Gerard Cummings
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