

Skyline Ridge Runner

July 2009

Skyline Ridge Neighbors

Vol. 21, No. 3

A Nonprofit Neighborhood Association Serving Northwestern Multnomah County, Oregon

Come to the SRN Summer Gathering August 8 at Skyline School

Miles Merwin

Save the date, mark your calendar. It's time again for the Summer Gathering!

Skyline Ridge Neighbors invites everyone to Skyline Elementary School Saturday afternoon, August 8 for the 2009 edition of the Summer Gathering. The event is free and family-friendly.

An annual tradition, the Summer Gathering is a combination social event, potluck feast, concert, fun and games day, and most importantly, a fund-raiser for SRN. Proceeds from the Gathering are the main source of funding for all of SRN's activities, e.g. the quarterly newsletter you are reading, the email Newsliner, the website, community meetings, our new Sustainable Living series, ongoing weed control efforts, and annual neighborhood clean-ups. SRN works to inform residents with relevant news and events, and encourages you to get involved in activities for the betterment of the neighborhood.

Schedule

The Summer Gathering starts at 1:00 p.m. and ends at 6:00 p.m. The tentative schedule of activities is as follows:

- Silent auction table closings: 3:00, 3:30, 4:00 p.m.
- Oral auction: 4:30 p.m.
- Games: 3:00-4:00 p.m.
- Music: 2:00-4:30 p.m.
- Art table: 1:00-5:00 p.m.
- Food: 1:00-6:00 p.m.

Auction donations

As in past years, both silent and oral auctions offer lots of terrific treasures donated by neighbors and local businesses. You can help by providing items for either the silent or oral auction. Plus, you can claim a tax deduction for your donation since SRN is a nonprofit charity.

Look around the house or garage now for that almost-like-new item that you no longer need but someone else

would love to take home. If you are a creative person, consider donating one of your works of art, photographs or crafts.

If you have a business, consider donating one of your products, a discount coupon or a certificate for services. This year, we invite all businesses that donate an item valued at \$25 or more to set up an information table at the Gathering so they can meet neighbors and show samples of their wares or services. Contact Jolene Williams (503.247.7135, jolenefwilliams@yahoo.com) for more info.



The Summer Gathering will be held again this year at Skyline School, a cornerstone of our neighborhood. (Photo: N. Harger)

Drop off most donations at Brooks Hills Historic Church, 11539 NW Skyline Blvd. (under the covered porch) any time. Contact Vickie Coghill (503.621.3507, catawho03@msn.com) in advance if you have any expensive or large/heavy items to donate. Small items, including books, DVDs, videos, CDs, etc. can be delivered to Sara Bowersox, 16244 NW Rock Creek Road (503-621-9574). These items will be sold garage-sale style, separate from the silent auction.

SRN is not just looking for donated goods. If you have a unique talent, keen interest or a special place, think about hosting a group of people for a special event to share it, e.g., wine-tasting, homemade dinner, walk in the woods, etc. Be creative. Contact Jolene Williams to discuss your idea and how to prepare a poster to advertize it for the auction.

Please deliver all items for auction sooner rather than later, but **no later than Monday, August 3**. It takes time to process and inventory all the donations so bringing them early is much appreciated by your neighbors who have volunteered to help with this task.

Volunteers needed

Like SRN, the Gathering is produced entirely by volunteers. In addition to auction donations, SRN can really use your help before, during and after the Gathering with a variety of tasks. Please contact the coordinators

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Skyline Ridge Runner

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Contributors: Emma Kather, Melissa Munson, Natalie Harger, George Sowder, Carolyn M. Lindberg, Kim Johnson
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Send comments, articles and opinions to the Editor, 14355 NW McNamee Road, Portland, OR 97231, ridgerunner@skylineridgeneighbors.org or fax to 503.621.3450.

Skyline Ridge Neighbors Inc.

Skyline Ridge Neighbors is a nonprofit organization serving rural northwestern Multnomah County through educational, environmental and social programs that inform residents on relevant issues and events. SRN endeavors to better our community, encourage volunteer efforts and openly communicate with residents and outside organizations.

SRN Board of Directors (2009-10)

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Skyline Rural Watch Newsline

Subscribe to SRN's weekly email newsletter of local events and news. Contact the Editor, Rich Edwards, at skylineruralwatchnewsline@hotmail.com or 503.289.7169 to subscribe or submit items for publication.

SRN Website

Visit www.skylineridgeneighbors.org for more news, photos and information about our community. Contact the Webmaster, Agnes Kwan, at webmaster@skylineridgeneighbors.org.

The views and opinions presented herein are those of the authors and are not necessarily endorsed by SRN or Skyline neighborhood residents.

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SRN News

Treasurers Report

Laurel Erhardt, Treasurer

Thank you to Ellen Willemese and Carol Chesanek who took a moment to write a donation check to SRN; and to all who added money to the donation jar at the Sustainable Living presentations; and as always to those whose continuous contribution of time make this such a nice neighborhood to live in.

SRN Income & Expense 4/25/2009 through 6/30/2009

Income	
Ridge Runner Advertising	240
Donations	239
Interest (ING acct.)	37
Total Income	\$516
Expenses	
Administration	260
Ridge Runner Printing, Postage	716
Total Expenses	\$976
OVERALL TOTAL	<\$460>

"Two" Much Fun!!

Emma Kather and Melissa Munson

The number two was the theme on Morgan Road on Memorial Day weekend. Cadette Girl Scout Troop 1613 may be small but they are big into community service and participated in this year's SOLV, almost two months late. Two scouts, Melissa Munson (7th grader at West Sylvan) and Emma Kather (8th grader at Skyline), and their two leaders, Kelly Sue Munson and Carolyn Kather, in two hours collected two tires for their future cars and two bags of trash. The girls will put these community service hours towards their Silver Award. When two people get together, things get done! ☐



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Trash or Treasure

Kim Johnson

The last neighborhood SOLV day was a success, at least from my point of view - granted I had very little to do with it, because I got rid of so many things I never knew I didn't need. The bane of the rural homesteader is the accumulation of what can only be described as trash. Rubbish if you are British. It occurs sometimes quite by accident, always with good intentions. It goes something like this:

Husband: "What are we going to do with these old well pipes?"

Wife: "Let's save them. We could use them for some future unknown project."

Husband: "What future unknown project?"

Wife: "If I knew, it wouldn't be unknown."

The husband agrees to save the well pipes, not because of the future unknown project, not because recycling earns you a better spot in heaven but simply because he doesn't know what else to do with five sections of 20 foot steel pipes that collectively weigh seven thousand pounds. The husband and wife agree to store them in a "out-of-the-way" place for later.

The "out-of-the-way" place is simply a euphemism for trash dump. A place out back that should have a sign that reads "future landfill of America." The contents of such a site are varied. Sixty-two feet of no climb farm fencing. Approximately 82 square feet of plastic woven mesh, the kind marketed as a surefire way of keeping birds from eating the cherries off your trees - simply unfold and drape. A diagram depicts a loving couple unfolding and draping. (All 82 square feet will be tangled up in an unidentifiable mess that should be labeled "divorce in a bag.") Three roofing shingles, because you never know when you might want to roof a building that is three or less shingles wide. A large pile of rusted metal, various lengths and widths. All homesteads have such a pile. It should have an accompanying sign, "tetanus brew pit," as no homestead is complete without a way to get lockjaw.

We had a pile "out-of-the-way" and were more than happy when our boundlessly energetic neighbor called and said he had room in his truck to haul just such a pile. We spent a good 45 minutes hauling various items to the driveway and the awaiting truck. We spent another 75 minutes debating the usefulness of each item as it went in the truck, the husband reassuring that we didn't need

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➤ Summer Gathering (continued from p. 1)

below ahead of time so they know who they can count on your presence and help make the gathering more fun for all of us.

Volunteers are especially needed for the following teams:

- **Fund-raising:** Place items on auction tables Saturday morning; table monitors are needed during the afternoon. Contact Jolene Williams (503.247.7135, jolenefwilliams@yahoo.com).
- **Set-up:** Move and set up tables and chairs on Friday evening and Saturday morning. Contact Karen Garber (503.289.7169, kmgarber@gmail.com).
- **Take-down:** Fold up chairs & tables at end of Gathering and clean up school lawn. Contact Karen Garber.
- **Art Table:** Help monitor kids painting & drawing at the Art Table. (High-schoolers: get 4 hrs. community service!) Contact Libby Merwin (503.621.9867, hisemerwin@gmail.com).
- **Registration:** Greet people, provide name tags, answer questions. Contact Miles Merwin (503.621.9867, mlmerwin@gmail.com).
- **Cashiering:** Help auction item winners to check-out and pay on Saturday afternoon. Contact Miles Merwin.

What else to bring

If you have an easy-to-put-up cloth and aluminum canopy, we would like to borrow it for the day. Please contact Karen Garber.

The Gathering is a great opportunity for neighborhood

cooks to share their fabulous dishes. Please bring a large hot or cold potluck dish. (Put your name on the bottom.) We will have serving utensils. Contact Laurel Erhardt for questions about the potluck (503.621.621.3501, laurel.erhardt@gmail.com).

One of the games again this year is the musical Cake Walk. Bakers are encouraged to donate a cake for the Cake Walk. Contact Natalie Harger in advance (after August 1) (503.621.3215, natalie.harger@gmail.com) so she will know how many cakes to expect.

What not to bring: please do not bring your dog, even on a leash. Thanks.

Family fun and music

There will be a variety of old-fashioned games for the kids, including a tug of war, plus access to the play equipment at the school playground.

Libby Merwin will again be in charge of the Art Table. Materials for painting and charcoal/colored pencil drawing will be provided free of charge. Kids are welcome to stop by the art table, make a drawing or painting, and take it home as a souvenir.

Musical entertainment will be provided by the Skyline Ridge Hill Band. They are all local musicians, lead by bass player David Reisch, a long-time Skyline resident who has played professionally with groups such as the Freak Mountain Ramblers and the Holy Modal Rounders. The band will play from 2-4:30 p.m.

Please donate and volunteer, but most of all, come and enjoy yourself at our annual neighborhood picnic. ☐

New Business Profile: Wealth Underground

Laura Foster

Self reliance and mutual aid are the ethics that fuel three farmers at the new Wealth Underground Farm on Newberry Road. On their quarter-acre plot, farmers Nolan Calisch, Brooke Duling and Chris Seigel grow greens, carrots, tomatoes, basil, onions, and other crops in this their first year. They live on the farm as well. It is the former Margolis property, now owned by Metro.



The Wealth Underground crew, (L-R) Chris Seigel, Nolan Calisch and Brooke Duling, are growing produce for area residents and restaurants. (Photo: L. Foster)

Self reliance means no mechanical inputs. Brooke says, "I want the farm to be sustainable for myself; it's what my back can do in a day." Their goal is not to expand beyond the point at which farming brings joy, connection to their community, and satisfaction...and at which they have the energy and time to cook a home-grown meal at the end of their day. The inherent inefficiency in this very small-scale approach means that the three of them also double as rural entrepreneurs. Nolan is a handyman, specializing in gardening, fence-building and carpentry. Brooke does housecleaning, gardening and babysitting. Chris tutors in math and English, having worked at Hidden Villa, an educational farm in the Bay Area. Both Nolan and Brooke have worked at a large-scale CSA (community supported agriculture) farm, Sauvie Island Organics, which also rents its land from Metro.

Down the road there may be school field trips or other educational components to the farm, but this year Nolan says, "We're gaining allies and figuring our way along." Metro, via its years of greenspace acquisitions, now owns several properties once or currently used agriculturally, and its policy toward these properties is evolving.

The primary goal at the Wealth Underground is self sufficiency, but tempered by the need to generate income as well. Chris writes of the balance between farming and marketing on the farm blog, "We at the Wealth Underground have lightly embraced capitalism in an awkward high school hug, keeping our hips and midsections distant and avoiding eye contact." Farm customers include James John Cafe and Proper Eats in St. Johns. They also sell at the St. John's Farmers Market.

If you live on the hill, you can buy directly from the Wealth Underground, and pick up produce at the farm. Email wealth.underground@gmail.com to place an order (or if you don't have email access, call 503.828.2823). The weekly pick-up is each Wednesday, 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Calling ahead so they can have your order ready is ideal, but dropping in during that time is okay too, if you have time to wait a bit. The farm is located at 14019 NW Newberry Road. The farm blog is at www.wealthunderground.blogspot.com. □

➤ Trash or Treasure (continued from p. 3)

any of the items and the wife reminding the neighbor that his own wife had called twice to remind him not to bring home any out-of-the-way items regardless of their merit toward future unknown projects.

All in all it was pretty painless, even the part

when the boundlessly energetic neighbor bent the well pipes to fit them in the truck and the wife argued with the husband for an additional twenty minutes that in their new configuration the well pipes were perfectly suited to growing various vines and twining things in the garden. No dice, the out-of-the-way was on its way. □

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Forest Landowner Day Set for Sept. 26

Do you own forest land in the Skyline area, whether under forest tax deferral or not? Do you want to learn more about how to keep your forest healthy, make it attractive to wildlife and protect it from weeds and wildfire?

On Saturday, Sept. 26, there will be a special event for private forest landowners in our area that is being organized by the West Multnomah Soil and Water Conservation District (WMSWCD), OSU Cooperative Extension and Skyline Ridge Neighbors.

Participants can choose from a variety of 20-30 minute seminars on topics such as carbon credits, active forest management, non-timber products (edibles, medicinals, etc.), wildlife habitat, conservation easements and fire protection. Sessions will be repeated so people can learn about more than one topic.

Local residents John & Kate Eskew have kindly agreed to host the event at their woodland property on Rock Creek Road. Some of the learning sessions will be conducted in the woods at various locations around the Eskew's forest.

WMSWCD is coordinating planning for the event and will issue a schedule once speakers are confirmed. Registration will be required for a modest fee that will include a barbecue lunch, access to all learning sessions, and printed handouts.

For more information and to receive the schedule and registration materials when they're available, contact Scott Gall at WMSWCD, tel. 503.238.4775 ext. 105 or Scott.Gall@or.nacdn.net.

Survey for Small Woodland Owners

Small woodland owners in west Multnomah County are invited to participate in a survey by the OSU Extension Service. Extension wants to find out what landowners are interested in and how OSU and other agencies can best serve them.

Owners of woodlands of all sizes - from a few acres to the hundreds - are invited to take the survey. Some people will receive a copy in the mail in the coming weeks, but you can request a copy by calling Extension at 503.397.3462. It can also be taken online at <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/columbia>. Several survey respondents will be selected at random to receive a prize. □



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Sustainable Living Seminars Continue

Natalie Harger and Miles Merwin

Skyline Ridge Neighbors' Sustainable Living series continues this fall with two seminars in September and October. The series features knowledgeable local experts who share their practical experience about growing plants, tending livestock and other skills relevant to life in the country. Lectures scheduled so far for this fall are:

Introduction to Permaculture, Saturday, Sept. 26

Permaculture is an ethical method for designing systems to meet human needs for food, water, shelter, and energy which are accessible to all. It strives to emulate and work with natural systems and centers on connecting energy flows to maximize the harvesting of useful processes. Covered topics: Ethics and Principals of Permaculture, Site Observation (the Designer's Recliner), Zones and Sectors, Edges and Stacking Functions, and Wild Corridors. Resources for continuing education will be available. Instructor Donna Maria Prock has studied at several permaculture institutes and is certified through the Cascadia Permaculture Institute.

Raising St. Croix Sheep, Saturday, Oct. 17

Linda and Ed Barnes, owners of Dorsey-Lee Morgan Horse & St. Croix Sheep Farm on Pauly Road, will talk about their sheep. The Barnes are breeders and active in the International St. Croix Hair Sheep Association. They were instrumental in getting the St. Croix into state fairs nationwide and their sheep will be the Feature Breed in the 2010 Oregon State Fair. These hair sheep never need to be sheared, yet you may use their hair. Medium sized and gentle, they are good pets, great to have grazing in your pasture, good sheep for dog training, and they can be very tasty. If the fall lambs are big enough, the Barnes may bring one with them.

Both workshops begin at 9 a.m., last about 90 minutes (including question time) and will be at the Skyline Grange, 11275 NW Skyline Blvd. SRN suggests a donation of \$3 per person or \$5 per couple to defray expenses.

Recap of Spring Workshops

The Sustainable Living series kicked off this spring with three well-attended and highly useful seminars. Look for copies of handouts, relevant links and more information about all these topics on the SRN website later this year.

Randy Young, an OSU Master Gardener and McNamee Road resident, spoke May 9 all about organic gardening. He began by discussing soil properties and how to improve it through composting, mulching, and cover crops. He discussed organic methods for dealing with pests, and said that it's important to select plant varieties that are suited to our climate and are also disease resistant.

On May 23, local beekeeper Mark Johnson spoke to an enthusiastic crowd of about 25 Skyline neighbors on the basics of beekeeping. Armed with honey sticks and a queen bee Mark shared his knowledge and showed us the tools of his trade. The crowd showed great interest in the prospect of having bees for pollination and honey; questions and answers flowed. Keeping bees is an interactive hobby and sometimes profitable. It is about as time consuming as say, having a cat. The queen bee rules, so she must be strong and healthy.

If you have bees or are interested in keeping them, Mark recommended joining a beekeeper association. The Tualatin Valley Beekeeper Association meets at 7 p.m. on the last Friday of each month at the Capital Center located on NW 185th Avenue and Walker Road.

Everything you wanted to know about raising chickens for fresh eggs was covered by local resident Tony Barnard on June 6. After you get your chicks from the local feedstore, Tony described how to set up a "brooder" and all the requirements to care for the chicks in the first two months of life. He had lots of practical tips on constructing predator-proof coops for the older birds.

Your Input Welcome

What subjects are you interested in learning about? Do you have practical skills related to life in the country and a willingness to teach others? Can you recommend a friend or neighbor who does? SRN welcomes your input as we develop new topics for Sustainable Living workshops and recruit speakers. Please contact Natalie with your suggestions (natalie.harger@gmail.com, 503.621.3215). □

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Well Tax Information

George Sowder

A recent email circulated to some neighbors on the hill about a proposed well tax. We need to understand its background and context so that we can gain an informed opinion on such a tax, whether hypothetical or actual. Simply stated, as a local example of the issues involved: there are eleven wells for domestic use on Eliot Road between Skyline Boulevard and Rock Creek Road. Eliot is a very short road. There is no restriction on the number of wells that can be drilled for domestic or residential use. This type of well is exempt from any water rights law.

Certain areas in Oregon have been declared areas of limited groundwater supply with prohibitions on the drilling of new wells (a declaration that comes only after the fact). The Cooper Mountain/Bull Mountain area southwest of Beaverton and Tigard is a nearby area that the State's Water Resources Commission has declared a critical ground water area.

How does this apply to Skyline Ridge?

- The northern Willamette Valley and much of the Columbia River plateau contain many sources of ground water that are isolated in volcanic rock. These aquifers are in the Columbia River Basalt group. Heavy pumping from the basalt and another geologic unit, the Troutdale Formation, have caused declines in these areas.

- We do not know how much groundwater can be withdrawn from our area before existing wells are affected.

- We do know that most of us have wells that produce not much above the minimum standard for domestic use (six gallons per minute). Mine is only eight gallons per minute and my well is 715 feet deep, and was quite expensive to drill, approximately \$30,000 in 1985.

- We do know that this water usually comes from what is called a perched water table or aquifer.

- We do know that it is now required that wells be lined so that small aquifers do not mix in the drilled

well. This limits the well capacity, as small perched water tables or aquifers encountered at different depths are not additive.

- We do know that the Oregon State Water Resources Department is small and underfunded.

- We do know that we do not want to proceed with the drilling of more wells until other wells go dry or have their capacity diminished to the point at which the only recourse would be to drill deeper or drill another well in a different location (with no guarantee that additional water will be forthcoming at reasonable cost).

The tone of the email informing residents of the proposed legislation was alarmist, with this message in the subject line: "They are passing a well tax of \$100 per year."

However, not to be alarmist myself (and not aware of any specific legislation), would it not be wise to gather the data to be proactive on water issues affecting Skyline, so that we know how much water is being withdrawn in an area, and predict how much capacity is available and how many wells can be accommodated, rather than just allowing a free-for-all?

And now to the "crunch": how will we pay for this gathering of data? Is a \$100 per year fee on domestic and other wells too much to ask to perhaps forestall that most horrible of eventualities: hauling water from Plainview in five gallon jugs (which I did for eighteen years).

For more information, see the Oregonian article on Thursday June 18, 2009. (available at www.oregonlive.com/politics/index.ssf/2009/06/archive_oregons_water_issues.html).

Other links related to water issues in Oregon:

www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2009/04/oregons_water_issues_run_deep.html

www.oregonlive.com/news/index.ssf/2009/04/oregon_water_demand_opens_door.html

www.oregonlive.com/environment/index.ssf/2008/12/oregonians_foresee_future_water.html □

Classifieds

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► **Classifieds** (continued)

Something to Buy? Something to Sell? Post your free classified ad on Skyline Online, a place where the Skyline community meets to talk and trade. www.skylineonline.org

Free Mushroom Compost: Shiitake mushroom blocks make great compost and some block will still produce. One full size pick-up load per week. For best compost blocks need seasoning. Contact Mary 503.522.7379.

Brooks Hill Historic Church. Open for weddings, music

events. Beautifully remodeled. Ask about rental discounts for Skyline neighbors. 11539 NW Skyline Blvd. Call Cindy at 503.629.9700 or visit www.brookshill.com.

Rent the Skyline Grange. Planning an event? The Grange may be the perfect spot. Contact Pat Barnard at 503.286.2857 or pbarnard2@aol.com. Visit www.skylinegrange.org for info.

Weed wrenches. Eliminate Scot's broom, holly and other woody shrubs and sapling trees easily with a weed wrench. Borrow one free from Skyline Ridge Neighbors. Contact Sen at 503.621.3331.

Community Calendar

July 17, Saturday: OSU Extension Master Gardeners Hotline open house, noon to 4 p.m., WMSWCD, 2701 NW Vaughn Street, Ste. 453, Portland.

August 8, Saturday: Summer Gathering, 1 p.m. to 6 p.m., Skyline Elementary School. See story this issue for more details.

Sept. 26, Saturday: Forest Landowner Day, time TBA. For info, contact Scott Gall at WMSWCD, tel. 503.238.4775 ext. 105 or Scott.Gall@or.nacdn.net.

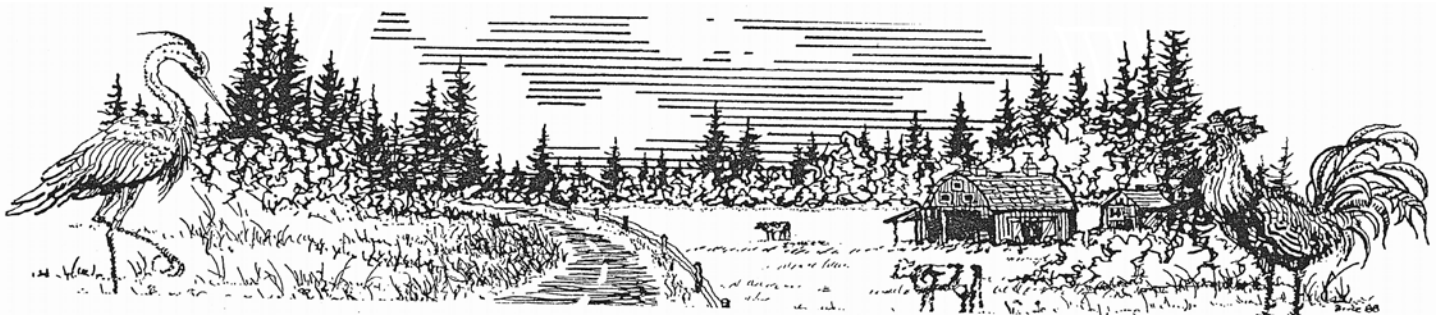
Sept. 26, Saturday: "Introduction to Permaculture," SRN's Sustainable Living series. Starts 9 a.m. at the Skyline Grange, 11275 NW Skyline Blvd.

Oct. 17, Saturday: "St. Croix Sheep," SRN's Sustainable Living series. Starts 9 a.m. at the Skyline Grange, 11275 NW Skyline Blvd.

Got a date? Send your event information to the Editor at ridgerunner@skylineridgeighbors.org or call 503.621.3450.



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