Did I hear bagpipes? No Foolin'!

by Lisa Hitch

There is only one morning every year where being awakened by a bagpipe outside my bedroom window seems normal, and that is the morning of the Family Centre No Foolin’ Event! Celebrating this for the third year now, my children anticipate this crazy morning all year long. Where else can we eat pizza, hot dogs and ice cream for breakfast? (Yes, I tried to point out the bagels, fruit and yogurt, to no avail.) This year, they shot out the front door at 7:15 and eagerly joined the crowd walking in from all directions. They enjoyed shaking hands with Thunder, the Vikes mascot, sword fighting with balloon animals, getting henna tattoos, and receiving little prizes. My partner and I, bleary-eyed, followed along shortly after and were quickly perked up by the lively young jazz musicians, the gumboot dancers, the man playing the traditional Chinese Er-Hu (two-stringed violin), and a great cup of coffee (more than one, actually). One of the highlights was meeting and greeting neighbours whom we often see, but do not often have the opportunity to chat with. And to top my morning off, I won a ticket to go whale watching, which I’ve never done before – very thrilling! The No Foolin’ Event has this uncanny way of bringing us all out early in the morning with smiles on our faces. And of course this couldn’t happen without a great deal of organization and sponsorship. Thank you to Tomoko and Andrea as well as all the workstudy students for your hard work and great ideas.

Many of our sponsors for the No Foolin’ event were the merchants of Cadboro Bay Village – just down the hill from Family Housing. The Family Centre would like to give a HUGE thank you to these businesses for their continued support of UVic’s families!

Pepper’s Foods
Martin’s Place Restaurant
People’s Pharmacy
Dairyland
Nestle
Starbucks
Silk Road
Dusting Divas All-natural Housecleaning
Ric’s Grill

Springtide Whale Tours
Olive Olio’s
For Good Measure
La Dolce Vita
Golden Gate Restaurant
Little Thai Place
Butchart Gardens
Royal BC Museum
Cinecenta

UVic Bookstore
Victoria Conservatory of Music
Crystal Pool & Fitness Centre
Oak Bay Recreation
Saanich Recreation
What is Easter?

As with almost all "Christian" holidays, Easter has been secularized and commercialized. The dichotomous nature of Easter and its symbols, however, is not necessarily a modern fabrication.

Since its conception as a holy celebration in the second century, Easter has had its non-religious side. In fact, Easter was originally a pagan festival. The ancient Saxons celebrated the return of spring with an uproarious festival commemorating their goddess of offspring and of springtime, Eostra. When the second-century Christian missionaries encountered the tribes of the north with their pagan celebrations, they attempted to convert them to Christianity. They did so, however, in a clandestine manner.

It would have been suicide for the very early Christian converts to celebrate their holy days with observances that did not coincide with celebrations that already existed. The missionaries cleverly decided to spread their religious message slowly throughout the populations by allowing them to continue to celebrate pagan feasts, but to do so in a Christian manner.

As it happened, the pagan festival of Eastre occurred at the same time of year as the Christian observance of the Resurrection of Christ. It made sense, therefore, to alter the festival itself, to make it a Christian celebration as converts were slowly won over. The early name, Eastre, was eventually changed to its modern spelling, Easter.

What does the bunny have to do with Easter?

The Easter bunny has its origin in pre-Christian fertility lore. The Hare and the Rabbit were the most fertile animals known and they served as symbols of the new life during the Spring season. The bunny as an Easter symbol seems to have its origins in Germany, where it was first mentioned in German writings in the 1500s. The first edible Easter bunnies were made in Germany during the early 1800s of pastry and sugar. The Easter bunny was introduced to American folklore by the German settlers who arrived in the Pennsylvania Dutch country during the 1700s. The arrival of the "Oschter Haws" was considered "childhood's greatest pleasure" next to a visit from Christ-Kindel on Christmas Eve. The children believed that if they were good the "Oschter Haws" would lay a nest of colored eggs.

Food Matters

Organic Farming in Saanich

Haliburton Community Organic Farm is the product of a unique relationship between the District of Saanich and citizens who are concerned about the loss of productive agricultural land. Because of this new relationship, land that was once at risk of becoming a subdivision is now a community farm that will produce food and help train organic growers.

Southern Vancouver Island farms could potentially provide much of the region's food, but today only 10% of our food comes from local farms. Haliburton Community Organic Farm will work towards increasing the supply of locally grown organic food, training new farmers, and encouraging people to grow their own food.

You can help by contributing your time. The HCOF holds regular work parties for such tasks as planting crops, pruning fruit trees, clearing invasive plants, building fences, and renovating the house. If you would like to participate, please visit our website at www.haliburtonfarm.org.

Exam Anxiety

Exam season is just around the bend and although it might signal the end of a semester, it is also a time of high stress and worry. Here are some tips that may help you when approaching exams and ease some of the high anxiety we all feel:

1. Use good study techniques to gain cognitive mastery of the material that will be covered on the test. This mastery will help you to approach the test with confidence rather than have excessive anxiety.

2. Maintain a positive attitude as you study. Think about doing well, not failing. Think of the test as an opportunity to show how much you have learned.

3. Go into the test well rested and well fed. Get enough sleep the night before the test. Eat a light and nutritious meal before the test. Stay away from junk foods.

4. Stay relaxed during the test. Taking slow, deep breaths can help. Focus on positive self-statements such as "I can do this."

5. Follow a plan for taking the test. Don't panic even if you find the test difficult. Stay with your plan!

6. Don't worry about other students finishing the test before you do. Take the time that you need to do your best.

7. Once you finish the test and hand it in, forget about it temporarily. There is nothing more you can do until the graded test is returned to you.
Our Family Suggests...

In this recurring column, we will hear about activities and events suggested by residents of Family Housing. Is there something that your family likes to do? Send us your recommendations!

Support our young entrepreneurs!
The weather is getting warmer, and along with the spring flowers, stands are cropping up all over -- opportunities to purchase lemonade, cookies, handmade jewelry and other treasures. It’s always great to take the time to stop and peruse the wares, or to sample the goodies. Setting up shop is a product of many cumulative skills: planning, writing, counting, leadership, community building, and organization. We’re really lucky that our kids have the safe and supported environment to work together on things like this. As parents, we can help to support them!

Family Centre News & Notes

FAREWELL FROM PRACTICUM STUDENT TAKAKO

Thank You Everyone! I’ve completed my third year CYC practicum. I’d like to thank you all of you who supported me a lot and were kind to me. It was a really valuable experience to do my practicum at such a warm place! THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

ATTENTION SWIMMERS!
Unfortunately as of April 2nd the free swimming program at McKinnon pool from 2-3pm every Saturday and Sunday will be canceled. I am sorry for this but if you would like to see another program like this, please tell the Family Centre.

RUNNING GROUP CANCELED
The morning running group is no longer meeting. However, if you are interested in participating in such a group, please contact the Family Centre!

The Nitty Gritty
Facts and questions about Family Housing

Laundry Room Leftovers
The laundry rooms of Family Housing are a centre for an informal exchange program -- leave something you can’t use, take something that could be useful. There is also a bin from Big Brothers/Big Sisters for unwanted clothes and other items that is collected periodically. However, using the laundry rooms as a dumping ground for broken items or unsorted trash left over from moving out seems to be an ongoing problem, especially at the end of the month. Leaving mattresses or other furniture outside the laundry rooms creates a hazard, and they become unusable once played upon and exposed to the elements. Let’s ensure that the laundry room exchange continues. Check the February issue of News & Views for detailed information on trash and recycling.

Children’s Corner

GROW YOUR OWN EASTER GRASS!

1. Take the bottom plate of a planter or any shallow dish OR take an Easter basket and line it with tin foil.
2. Half fill with potting soil.
3. Lay down seeds (wheatberries or oat kernels work best).
4. Cover with more soil, water regularly and watch it grow!

By Easter you’ll have a basket of bright green grass, perfect for the Easter Bunny to hide some eggs in!

Easter Riddle

What did the grass say when it was ill?
"I’m feeling kind of green."
Submit to the Newsletter!
This is your newsletter, and we can't do it without you -- submissions of all kinds are welcome. Send us your thoughts, opinions, suggestions, stories, poems, recipes, tips or ideas! The email is fcnews@uvic.ca, or you can drop your submission off in the envelope on the board outside the Family Centre.

DEADLINE FOR MAY NEWSLETTER: April 20

Family Centre Programs

Check our website for full program descriptions:
http://web.uvic.ca/family-centre/

Storytime & Playgroup
Tuesdays, 10am to 12pm.

International Community Kitchen
Tuesdays 4 to 6pm.

Playgroup
Wednesdays, 10am to 12pm.

Breakfast Club
Wednesdays & Fridays, 7:30 to 9am.

Knitting Night
Second & Fourth Friday, 7 to 9pm. (Contact Family Centre for April dates.)

Community Programs

Easter Eggstravaganza
Fri. April 7th, 2006 6:00 to 8:00 pm
Entertainment, egg hunt, craft stations, treats and visit form the Easter Bunny. This event sells out every year, so please pre-register. This event is most suitable for children under 8. (250) 475-7100, Gordon Head Recreation Centre.

Calling All Cottontales
Hop over to the Bruce Hutchison and Central Saanich Branch Libraries for stories about bunnies, chicks and eggs. Make a spring craft to take home. For ages 5-8. Registration begins April 1. April 15th: Bruce Hutchison 2:30-3:30pm, 727-0104; Central Saanich Branch 2:30-3:15pm, 852-2013.

2nd Annual Great Victoria Easter Egg-Stravaganza
Sunday, April 16, 9am-12pm. at St. Ann’s Academy. Pancake breakfast, Easter egg hunt, entertainers and children’s fun zone. $18/family; $6/person or $20/family; $7.50/person at the gate. 835 Humboldt St. 388-5251 or bgca@shaw.ca.

Performing Arts Festival
79th Annual Performing Arts Festival (formerly known as the Victoria Music Festival) is now running from Sunday March 26th through to Wednesday, May 10th 2006. Enjoy excellent daily entertainment by more than 5000 of Victoria’s outstanding young performing artists. For more information please go to: http://www.gvpaf.org/ or call 286-9223.

Free Swims!
The following pools have scheduled free family swims!
Crystal Pool: Wednesdays 7-9pm June 14
Gordon Head: Fridays 7-9pm May 15
Esquimalt: Sundays 12-1:30pm April 30, May 28 and June 25
Juan De Fuca: Tuesdays 7-8:30pm April 25 and May 23
Oak Bay: Sundays 9-11am May 14 and June 18

VIVA Chois
Sound music education for all young people ages 6 - 16. Tuition is reasonable, but financial assistance is available. No experience or audition required for most levels, and most rehearsals take place at UVic, courtesy of the Faculty of Education. For more information, call 472-2655, or go to www.vivachoirs.ca.

Victoria Waldorf Society
The VWS celebrates seasonal festivals throughout the year and is preparing for their annual May Day celebration. They host monthly craft nights for parents and parent and child playgroup opportunities. New members are always welcome. To join the listserv, or for more information, email victoriawaldorf@yahoo.ca.

Interesting, Useless Fact
On Wednesday of next week, at two minutes and three seconds after 1:00 in the morning, the time and date will be 01:02:03 04/05/06.... [1,2,3,4,5,6]
That will never happen again.
You may now return to your (normal?) life.

NEWS FLASH
New Family Centre Director

We have just received notice that a new Family Centre Director has been hired! She will start work shortly, and will introduce herself in next month’s News & Views. Drop by the Family Centre to welcome her and find out about the newest member of our family!