

The Westbank Express....



Local Westbank residents Lisa Paynter, her husband Pip Akins and their daughter Eloise sidle up beside one of their newly-built straw bale walls.

Thick walls—peace and quiet! That’s the first thing one notices upon entering this barn-like castle—the immediate feel of a serene, soft and calming atmosphere—even with a flurry of construction surrounding the straw living room. And that’s not the only advantage of a straw bale home. The building’s high R factor keeps the house cool in summer and warm in winter. It’s a post and beam structure, constructed by Ridgeroc Homes. After the framing was completed, bales of straw were stacked between the framing which will be used as insulation. Including the interior and exterior stucco, the walls will be 16” wide—a window-sill lover’s dream and a wall R factor of approximately 35. A conventional home would have an R factor of 12 - 14. Habib Gonzales, a Straw Bale builder and stuccoer and owner of Sustainable Works has been invaluable to Pip and Lisa as they’ve waded through a myriad of uncharted straw. As well, architect Peter Chataway has been working with Pip and Lisa for several years,



designing a house that would incorporate straw into their plans; and family and friends have helped to make this environmentally sustainable house a reality. But what about their heat source? Gas boiler in-floor heating and a small wood-burning stove—no furnace! No electric heat! Will they have a toasty Christmas? We’ll check in next year.

FALL FAIRS

It’s that time of year again to celebrate farmers’ and crafters’ year-long endeavours. Local fall fairs listed below will include 4H entries, lawn tractor races, lawn mower races, midway, horse events, Pro-barrel racing, mutton busting, greasy pig, agricultural exhibits, agri-tourism displays, logging show, petting zoo, music stage, quilt show, commercial vendors, children’s activities, beverage garden, Thoroughbred horserac-



ing, outdoor pet parade, llamas, sheep, cattle penning, gymkhana, food vendors, carnival and competition exhibits of crafts, photography, home-made wine and beer, fruit, nuts, vegetables, eggs, honey, baking, preserves, flowers, yarn, needlecrafts and handicrafts.

- Armstrong: Aug. 31-Sept. 4 (250-546-9406)
- Creston Valley: Sept. 9, 10 (250-428-2920)
- Peachland: Sept. 10, 11 (250-767-2218)
- Princeton: Sept. 3, 4 (250-295-7381)
- Rock Creek: Sept. 17, 18 (250-446-2551)
- Salmon Arm: Sept. 9-11 (250-832-0442)
- Summerland: Sept. 10, 11 (250-583-9178)

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Westbank First Nation

Administrative Office: 250-769-4999
Recreation Dept.: 250-768-7337

District of West Kelowna - Council Mtgs.

- Sept. 1 - 5:00 pm Agricultural Adv. Comm.
- Sept. 6 - 1:30 pm Council Meeting
- Sept. 13 - 1:30 pm Committee of the Whole
- Sept. 20 - 6:00 pm Council Meeting

For questions or further information about the newsletter, please email westbankexpress@gmail.com

Contributing Writers: Gordon Ficke, Rita Pedersen; Editor: Barbara Heaney



From the Kitchen Nook: Peach Cake by Rita Pedersen

Peach cake is delicious at this time of year because of using fresh peaches from our local orchards. Any peach variety from Early Red Haven to Fairhaven or Glohaven makes a tasty dessert although the freestone peaches are easier to work with. Oil a 9 x 13 pan. Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees.

Beat: 3 eggs and 1 cup oil. Add 1 cup of sugar, regular or brown. Add 2 cups of flour, 1 tsp. baking powder, a little lemon rind and ¾ cup crushed walnuts. Mix well and fold into pan. Lay sliced peaches close together over the entire mixture and push them in a little. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon. Bake at 350 for 40 - 45 minutes. Freezes well.

T. B. Reece Founded Westbank Packers in 1930 by Gordon H. Ficke

“My dad, Thomas Benjamin Reece and his wife Eleanor and three children Adrian, Temie and Nelson moved from Scotia, Manitoba to Westbank in 1922.” Milton stated. He had immigrated to Canada from Wales in 1905 and had worked in Manitoba as a farm labourer for a number of years. Later he and his brother-in-law were employed with the C.N.R. in British Columbia building and repairing bridges and trestles. “My father later was trained in carpentry and he had the opportunity to work on the construction of the Saskatchewan Legislature Building in Regina in 1910.” Reece recounted. After that job was finished he returned to Manitoba and would contract out, using his carpentry skills building barns, finishing houses, etc. In 1917 Thomas married Eleanor Angus, born in Canada and her parents were Scottish immigrants.



Around 1919 or so Reece, along with some other fellows decided to drive out in a Ford Model T and explore British Columbia. It was quite an adventure traveling those narrow winding mountain roads in those days. When they arrived in Westbank, Thomas liked it so much that he decided to buy 4 acres from Mr. Hurlburt on Main Street where Westridge Mall is today. Reece remodeled the old home on the property. He also bought a one-acre lot adjoining the back of that lot where he eventually built a packing shed. When he first moved to Westbank he had the contract to move the Westbank Co-op Packing House from its location where the Westbank Lions Community Hall is today to a new site where Hoskins Road is today and was subsequently enlarged. There were a number of packinghouses in town at the time, including B.C. Fruit Shippers, R.A. Pritchard had his own packinghouse by the lake where Pritchard Drive is now and Grieve Elliott also had a small packinghouse for his fruit. These independent farmers sold their own fruit as far away as Saskatchewan. They didn't necessarily have their own labels on their fruit boxes, but by law they were required to stamp each box with their name to indicate the fruit

grower that produced the fruit.

During the 1920s Reece was also contracted to build the irrigation flume that ran from the Powers Creek intake to connect with other flumes that provided water to the various Westbank orchards. In 1930 T. B. Reece built the first packing shed on their property on Elliott and Main Street. It was an open structure and the workers spread the apples out on a table. The packers were skilled to sort and pack the apples according to size and they had to do their job quickly. Three more children, Gwenith in 1925 (married Ken Harding), Milton in 1926 and Elizabeth in 1932 (married Phil Weddell) were born to the couple. “Dad used to say that every time we have another child we needed to buy another five acres!” Milton chuckled. Mr. Reece bought Mrs. Daisy Hardwick's adjoining orchard and home, John Dobbin's orchard, property where Western Financial Services is located including the land where Westbank Towne Centre Shopping Centre is located on the south side of Dobbin Road. This was necessary to expand both their fruit growing and packinghouse operations.

Around 1934 Thomas built their first packinghouse on Brown Road. Long time residents referred to this property as old John Robinson's 'shack town.' This site would be the home of Westbank Orchards. The operation started small and over the years more buildings including a cold storage facility and controlled atmosphere area, were added. Modern sorting equipment was installed and allowed them to put out more tonnage than the old system. Up to 210 bins in a 7-hour shift or the equivalent of 5000 apple boxes of fruit! “In the early 1940s dad purchased Harry Grant's diesel plant that had provided Westbank with its first electrical power. The new role for this generator would be to supply the power required to run the packinghouse. Around 1946 this power plant was sold to the B.C. Power Commission. In 1947 Adrian, Nelson and Milton were handed the reins of the business from their father. In 1956 Adrian sold his interest to Nelson and Milton. The two remaining partners continued to expand their land holdings by purchasing ten acres across from where Alpine Helicopters is today. It was here that they operated a fruit stand into the early sixties. Thomas and his wife Eleanor now had the freedom to travel and they did on numerous occasions. In 1959 the couple had planned another trip, this time to include Australia when tragedy struck. They were heading to Kelowna to pick up their passports when they were involved in a two-car accident. Four people were killed, including Eleanor. As a result of the crash Mr. Reece was hospitalized for a long time.

The Westbank community was shocked. Mrs. Reece was very active in the community, especially with the Westbank United Church and Westbank's Women's Institute, of which she was a charter member. Thomas had drawn up plans for the Westbank United Church and was instrumental in overseeing its construction. In 1973 Thomas Reece died. Nelson and Milton continued to expand and modernize the packinghouse operation and a revolution in fruit growing took hold. Hedge rowing of the apple trees by grafting the tops of the new trees onto dwarf rootstock and then planting those trees close together resulted in shorter branches, thus allowing the sunshine to reach every apple on the tree. This new method replaced the large trees that were spaced thirty feet apart where the sunlight was impeded from reaching the apples growing on the lower branches. As a result too many 'C' grade apples were produced. In 2002 Nelson and Milton leased the packinghouse to another company and they kept the operation going until 2006. For the 2006 to 2007 season the company sent the fruit to Kelowna and the Westbank Packinghouse ceased its operations. In the late spring of 2007 an arson fire completely destroyed the last packinghouse in Westbank.

Pictured above is Milton standing beside the 1940 two-ton truck taken in 1945. Due to a shortage of apple boxes, his father asked him and Adrian to pick up a load of fruit boxes from Vernon. This load consisted of around 1000 apple boxes.

WHAT'S HAPPENING IN SEPTEMBER?

WESTBANK

The Bicentennial Celebration of the Okanagan Fur Brigade Trail 1811 - 2011

September 23rd & 24th, 2011 - Johnson Bentley Memorial Field

Join in on the bicentennial events including Learning Centres of Okanagan Names and Places during the Fur Trade, Canoes and Transport, Furs and Trade Goods of the Time; Arrival of the Fur Brigade Saturday 2:30 to 3:30 pm followed by narrated re-enactment of fur trading, native dancing and singing. Also on Saturday, there will be an Indian Taco Supper from 3:30 to 6:30 pm. For further information contact The Historic Westbank Association at 250-768-9989 or Westbank First Nation at 250-768-7738.

Westbank Outdoor Market

Saturdays until September 17th

8:00 am - 1:00 pm.

The Westbank Outdoor Market is now in full swing with fresh in-season fruits and vegetables, craft items and other wares. Weekly entertainment with local singers and musicians has proved enjoyable and the Lions' chefs Saturday-morning pancakes have been a real hit. Breakfast starts at 8:00 am sharp! Westbank Lions Community Hall parking lot, 2466 Main St.

**Westbank Legion - RCL Branch
288, 2525 Dobbin Road**

🍏 Drop-In Darts every Wednesday 7:30 pm all summer.

🍏 Poker - Tuesday evenings.

Nut Farm Harvest Fair

Sept. 24th - 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

Join the Heritage Farm where there will be a kids activity zone, refreshments, entertainment, local artists' work and local farmers' produce for sale. If interested in

being a vendor reserve a space by Sept. 19th. Contact 250-469-6232 or e-mail alison.urness@cord.bc.ca.

Orion's Fish Bus

Sept. 17th & 18th by The Cherry Pit

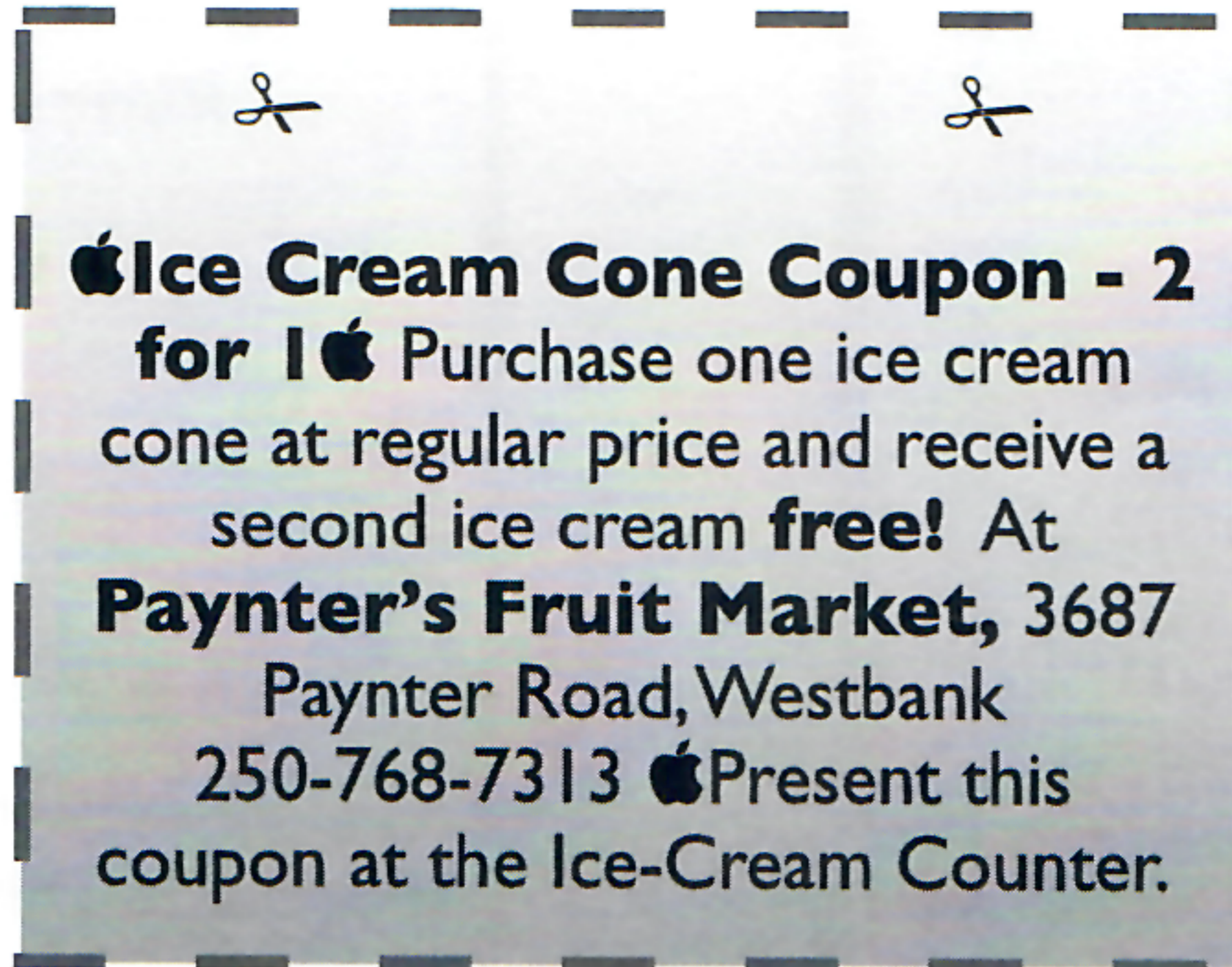
70 peeled Tiger Prawns \$20 or 2 for \$35 or 3 for \$50--Sole, Snapper & Basa \$12.00 each or 3 for \$30. Stop by the Truck and join the email list to get tasty Seafood recipes and a free bonus every \$100.00.

Westbank Lions Club

New website for the Lions

Watch for the Lions new website at www.westbanklionsclub.ca. Catch up on recent events and upcoming activities.

Paynters Fruit Market



🍏 Ice Cream Cone Coupon - 2 for 1 Purchase one ice cream cone at regular price and receive a second ice cream **free!** At **Paynter's Fruit Market, 3687 Paynter Road, Westbank 250-768-7313** 🍏 Present this coupon at the Ice-Cream Counter.

PEACHLAND

Peachland United Church Centennial Celebration

Sept. 2 - Meet & Greet, 7:00 pm Church Hall; Sept. 3 - Dinner, \$25.00 at the 50+ Activity Centre, Sept. 4 - Celebration Service, 10:00 am at Church Hall. Call 250-767-2206.

RUTLAND

September Days

Sept. 22 - 25/11 3:00 pm - 6:00 pm

West Coast Amusements, wrestling, entertainment, crafters, food, direct marketers, games, fun for everyone.

SUMMERLAND

SRG EDC Second Annual Fall Horse Show

September 10 & 11, 2011

Pre-Entry Deadline: Sept. 7, 2011. Early Bird Gift Basket Prize will be randomly drawn from all pre-entries. Rosettes for 1st and 2nd, ribbons to 6th. Blankets awarded for Highpoint. Concession: both days during shows (hot food from 11am-2pm). Potluck-style dinner on Saturday night! For more information call 250-809-4344 or email tamora@shaw.ca.

PENTICTON

15th Annual Pentastic Jazz Festival

Sept. 9 - 11, 2011

Acoustic Swing, Big Band Era, Bad Boys of Dixieland, Traditional Cajun & Zydeco from Canada and the USA. Several bands including Cornet Chop-Suey from St. Louis, Tom Rigney & Flambeau from San Francisco, Tom Hook Trio from New Orleans and the Cactus Jazz Band from Penticton will perform over the 3-day event. For further info. go to www.pentasticjazz.com.

KELOWNA

Library Voices Band at the Habitat

Sept. 20/11 8:00 pm - midnight

Ten-member band that includes full-on horns, strings and accordians. From Regina, Saskatchewan. Nominated for Independent Album of the Year 2009 & 2010. Contact info@thehabitat.ca. 248 Leon Avenue. Advance tickets \$10.00; At the door \$15.00.



MENTON, FRANCE

Menton Lemon Festival

February 17 - March 7, 2012

Citrus-scented Celebration including Gardens of Light, Parade of Golden Fruit and Citrus Exhibition. For a colourful experience and lively music, visit www.feteducitron.com.



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