



# The Whole Village

# Bark



## Winter 2016

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## Rare Breeds Reunite

by: Julie Nasmith

Trina and Willow arrived at Whole Village last summer. They are solid black Kerry cows with a wide crown of horns – a rare Irish breed of which only about 1,000 exist. They are the first cow bred specifically for dairy products – their milk is sweeter than store-bought and easier to digest.

Speaking of rare breeds, Barbara and Milton Wallace joined our community in the summer of 2014. Their community history stretches back to the heyday of The Farm in Tennessee and meanders through British Columbia en route to Ontario. Their experience and dedication to community has been a tremendous gift to Whole Village. For 18 years they owned a farm community called Sun Run near Lindsay, Ontario where they taught

sustainable living to many volunteers and interns. Trina was born at Sun Run 17 years ago. When Barb and Milt sold Sun Run to a carefully chosen buyer who would continue their project, they sold the cows as part of the package.

When they and a group of Whole Village residents decided to form a team to produce fresh milk and milk products for our own use, a search began for just the right cows. After several dead ends, Milt discovered that the current owners of Sun Run were willing to sell Trina and her one-year-old daughter Willow. A few months later, after pastures had been prepared and weeded and electric fencing erected, Trina and Willow arrived at Whole Village to much fanfare.

**COWS** continued on back page



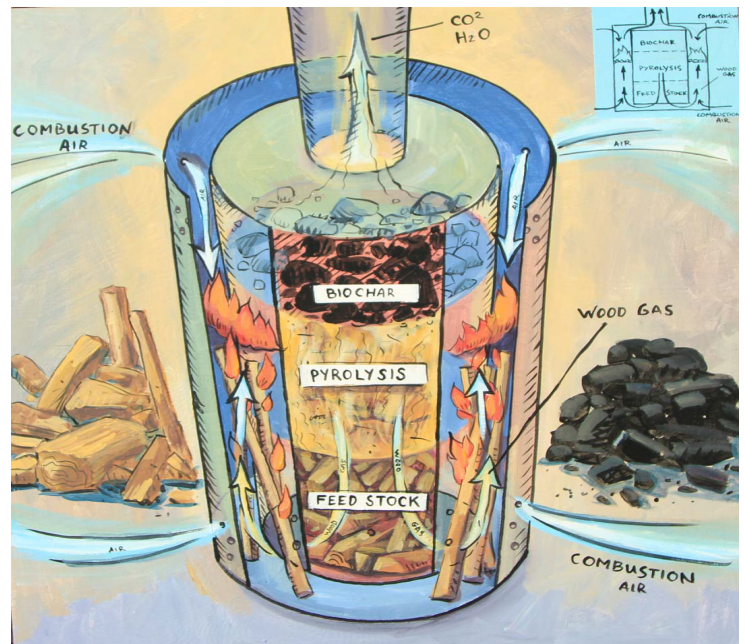
# Burning Desire for a Better World

by: Barbara Wallace

An exciting new project has been slowly developing over the last year – biochar production and use. For those of you who are not familiar with this term this is a brief description: Biochar is the result of heating woody carbon-containing waste materials to high temperatures without the presence of oxygen – a process called pyrolysis. This process results in a stabilized form of pure carbon that when buried sequesters this carbon for thousands of years. It is a process that utilizes nature's absorption of atmospheric carbon dioxide in the process of growing trees and plants. This partnership with nature is a relatively easy way to reduce atmospheric carbon dioxide and global warming.

Biochar has several other advantages as well, especially in the nourishment, protection, and development of soil. We began some simple trials this year comparing the soil quality and plant growth rate in soils with or without biochar. Soils with biochar showed remarkably more development of mycorrhizal fungi and stronger water retention. Biochar in soil also speeds the recycling of nutrients.

In our first three pyrolysis trials we used a simple two-barrel design called TLUD [Top Lit Up Draft]. The sealed, smaller inner barrel contained the woody materials to be pyrolysed and the space between that smaller barrel and the larger, unsealed barrel is filled with wood to fuel the process. This wood is lit from the top and various openings in the larger barrel support the updraft process.



Internal temperatures in the inner barrel reach high levels resulting in the development of stable carbon. Once this stable carbon has cooled, it is crushed and then activated for sequestration by inoculating it with biological matter such as manure, compost, or urine. Since our initial test trials showed positive results, we hope to enlarge the scale of our biochar production and areas of application to include the tree nursery, fruit trees and other fruits, vegetables, flower gardens and pastures.

## Soil, Food, People

by: Jon Gagnon

Our land is constantly changing. Whether it be from pasture to fruit orchard or strawberries to annual vegetables, we are always striving to keep the soil rich and full of life. In 2014 we were in a transitional phase, with previous farmers moving on and new members filling in the gap so we could still provide the community with fresh, seasonal produce. Following the success of that season some of those members have formed an agricultural cooperative, which left us with plenty of garden space and a myriad of opportunities.

After several winter farm plan meetings it was decided to use cover crops on a large portion of the garden to get a handle on some difficult perennial weeds that had crept in. Unfortunately we had to disturb the soil microorganisms by plowing and cultivating the field to eradicate the worst of the weeds, twitchgrass. Once we were able to weaken its ability to grow through cultivation we then hand-broadcast buckwheat seeds with the help of the participants from our Permaculture Design Course. Since buckwheat grows quickly and fully it shades out the sun from the low-lying twitchgrass. Later on, just prior to seed pods

forming on the buckwheat, we cultivated the fields again and broadcasted winter rye, which holds the nutrients from the soil over the winter so they do not wash away during spring thawing. Because of this work next year's garden will be much more manageable and bountiful.

With a small portion of garden space that was suitable for vegetables we chose to grow crops that were more challenging or were not economically feasible for the market gardeners to grow. This led us to brassicas and dried beans, respectively. We grew cabbage, broccoli, brussel sprouts and cauliflower using row cover to protect against several pests, notably swede midge and flea beetle. As an additional precaution, we also planted earlier than usual to attempt to give the plants time to recover from transplanting prior to the first life cycle of swede midge. The fine balancing act of removing the row cover during the peak summer heat and at the same time avoiding infestations was challenging and is, as with most farming tasks, a work in progress.

Soil continued on back page

# Welcome to Ken Metcalf

by: Brenda Dolling

More than 15 years ago Ken Metcalf read about Whole Village through a link in a Harrowsmith magazine article about intentional communities. During a subsequent tour of the Caledon property being considered for purchase he was reminded of the farming history of his father's family. Ken's teen years working on relatives' farms and later study of an agriculture course at Fleming College moved him toward a country life. Ken has supported Whole Village over the years attending work bees, reading minutes and newsletters, as well as living on site and helping the community with his labour and ideas.

Ken parked a trailer by the farm pond for three years and helped out when visiting on holidays. He later moved into rental quarters in Greenhaven for periods of time over two years.

Ken's love of the land, of healthy living, and of friendships in community were important factors that pulled him closer. He took early retirement and joined Whole Village as a member/owner of a one-bedroom suite in Greenhaven. After six months he reflects on his journey and comments, "I feel good about my decision."

Ken drives a local school bus, enjoying the scenery along the country roads. "I'm liking semi-retirement," Ken remarks. He also joined the Caledon Bruce Trail Club to connect with fellow hikers. As someone who likes joining in teamwork on a farm, he's finding his niche in our community by doing odd jobs, cutting wood, and getting involved in forest management. Although it's taken some time, Ken has finally found the "right fit" for this stage of his life. We welcome him to the Whole Village community!



## The Children of Whole Village



KIRAN

Simon

Luke



Shawna

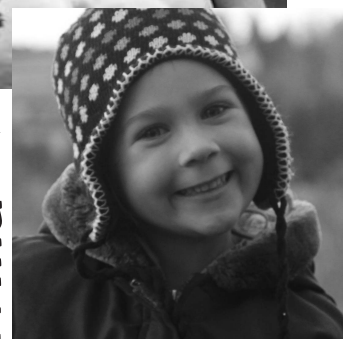


ANJA

Smith



Evelyn



Mila

# Greenhaven Mural



Maxim Grunin, a former resident of Whole Village, is an acclaimed artist with decades of experience, both in galleries as well as classrooms. When he wasn't teaching children art, offering shiatsu or helping in the gardens he was making art at a prolific pace. Perhaps his most notable piece was this mural showcasing Whole Village, including the people, natural elements and animals that make this such a magical place. After gathering the community's feedback on what they were interested in and sketching out a few options he went to work; first priming the wall and sketching out the main features then adding the detail and colour and finally some lighting and shadow elements. We could not be more excited with the finished product.

Thank you Max, and good luck on your future travels.

## Whole Village Workbees

10am-4pm, lunch included

Check our website for dates and more information:

[www.wholevillage.org](http://www.wholevillage.org)

## Soil continued

For the dried beans we also experimented with using white clover as a cover crop in between rows to minimize weeding. We also "experimented" with not weeding at all, much to some members' dismay!

As a whole the growing season went very well, albeit a little too dry at times. We were able to experiment with some fun-to-grow crops, fill our freezers with produce for the winter months and provide local and seasonal produce to our friends and neighbours.

## COWS continued from front page

Milt says Trina is particularly good around people – she loves to be petted and scratched and is very careful to swing her horns away from the side someone is standing on. Willow hasn't yet discovered the joys of connecting with humans but she's learning.

If all goes according to plan, milk production should start in the spring. All the milking will be done by hand with only small stanchions to hold the cows' heads in place while they're being milked.

We're fortunate that Barbara spent a lot of time at Sun Run perfecting the art of producing dairy products. Among other things she discovered that scrupulous washing of the bottles to prevent mould makes a big difference to the outcome. Hard cheeses are somewhat tricky but yogurt, butter and cottage cheese are relatively simple. We are eagerly anticipating the delicious and healthy results.

## Perma Culture Design Course

July 24 - August 6, 2016

Whole Village, Caledon, Ontario  
[wholevillage.org](http://wholevillage.org)

Water Harvesting and Uses  
Organic Gardening  
Soil Fertility and Composting  
Fruit & Nut Production  
Forest Gardening  
Ecovillage Design  
Poultry Care  
Appropriate Technology  
Eco Forestry  
Edible Landscaping  
Ecological Landscape Design

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