



# THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

Posted – Thursday, Sept. 8, 2011

## **Barnyard animals highlight annual Whatcom County Farm Tour**

ROBERT MITTENDORF - THE BELLINGHAM HERALD

Get an appreciation of the region's rich agricultural heritage with the fourth annual Whatcom County Farm Tour from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 10.

The free event is at various locations around the county, sponsored by the Sustainable Connections network of businesses as part of its Eat Local Month. Many of the farms offer tours and free treats and activities in addition to items for sale.

"There's lots of animal stops this year, which is fun for the kids," said Sara Southerland, Sustainable Connections' food and farming outreach coordinator.

What kid doesn't love a farm?

"They get their hands in the dirt and get to explore," Southerland said.

Several new farms are featured, including Camelot Ranch Alpacas, 3405 Bay Road in Ferndale, where a fiber project is the featured activity; and Bellingham Country Gardens, 2838 E. Kelly Road, which presents a scarecrow-making contest and offers information about the Whatcom Farm to School Program and classes at Common Threads Farm.

Also new is Farmer Ben's at 1461 Van Dyk Road, where the Elenbaas family raises antibiotic- and chemical-free Angus beef, Berkshire pigs and free-range hens. Kids can meet the family's pet pig Flower and its Great Pyrenees dog Lars.

Returning this year is Heritage Lane Farm, at 9333 Guide Meridian Road north of Lynden, which boasts rare farm animals such as Navajo-Churro, Southdown and Oxford sheep, mulefoot pigs and Delaware and buckeye chickens.

Perennial favorites that are worth a visit are Belle Wood Acres, 231 Ten Mile Road (off the Guide), and Boxx Berry Farm, 6211 Northwest Road in Ferndale.

Dairy fans will enjoy the tours of the milking operations at Edelweiss Dairy, 1519 Timon Road in Everson, which is part of the Organic Valley cooperative.

For more information about the tour, including a link to a Google map, go online [sustainableconnections.org](http://sustainableconnections.org) or call 360-647-7093.

### **'BIG SKY' AUTHOR VISITS**

Former Whatcom County resident Kirby Larson, the Newbery Honor author of "Hattie Big Sky" and other novels and picture books for children and young adults, will be at Village Books, 1200 11th St. in the Fairhaven district, to discuss her newest book, "The Friendship Doll."

Larson, who graduated from Sehome High and Western Washington University, will be appearing at 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 10, in the downstairs meetings room - right off the Village Green.

"The Friendship Doll" follows the story of 58 preciously hand-crafted Japanese dolls that were given to American cities and museums in the late 1920s. Many were removed from display after the attack on Pearl Harbor that drew America into World War II in 1941.

Fans of the "Dear America" series and the American Girl stories will enjoy "The Friendship Doll," which - like Larson's other works - is rich in detail and written with warmth.

### **'WUTCRAKER' AUDITIONS**

Bellingham Children's Theatre is preparing to repeat its "Wutcraker" holiday farce with an Imagination Party and potluck from 7-10 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 17, at the theater, 1412 Cornwall Ave., between Magnolia and Champion streets.

Drue Robinson, BTC's artistic director, said the gathering is part brainstorming session and part informational meeting. She said the play is part spoof and part social commentary.

"It's a wacky parody of the famous ballet," Robinson said. "It's a relief to anyone who's sick and tired of watching 'The Nutcracker.'"

Last year's event sold out at Bellingham High's auditorium with a production that featured local celebrities, including two former mayors.

Robinson said that in addition to actors, the production needs sponsors and volunteers for costuming, publicity and other backstage tasks. All ages are welcome, from children to adults.

Open auditions for the "Wutcraker" are set for 6-8 p.m. Friday, Sept. 23, and 3-6 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 24, at BTC.

Meanwhile, BTC's theater-related classes start this week. For more information, call 360-734-9999 or go online to [bellinghamchildrenstheater.com](http://bellinghamchildrenstheater.com).

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