

Reprint **Island Tides**

Visit www.islandtides.com to read the current edition and more find more interesting articles on other BC, national & international topics in our extensive archive of newspapers and articles.

Reprint from Volume 20 Number 19

October 2, 2008

Chores or Way-of-Life? ~ Brian Crumblebulme

It always amuses me when visitors look around the yard and garden, and say, 'What do you folks do here anyway?' The rehearsed answer is, 'Oh, drink beer and sleep'—because you know very well the visiting interlocutor is not suited to a rural lifestyle.

Leaving aside the obvious question of career or business needs, the way we occupy our time speaks volumes about how we fit in and how we value the Islands' good life. It is the little things that are the measure.


Say you need to make lunch; do you open a can of something to heat up, charge off to the bakery for a slice of pizza and sausage roll, or do you walk into the garden for a few fresh veggies, cut off a slice of bread (bread that you made), apply local cheese and chutney, and pour a glass of homemade wine? Does your lifestyle extend to quality food and eating from the earth you nurture, or is food just another fuel?

How about chores? Do you like cutting the grass in springtime? I do, and I like the smell of fresh grass and the instant gratification of creating order out of chaos, if no, then why grow grass? Washing dishes are also a chore or a pleasure and we do it every day.

Cleaning out the chicken house is a bi-annual event I cannot say I look forward to, but once into it there is a pleasant aesthetic about the job and the anticipation of what I will do with all that compost.

Chores, then, are part of living and by definition, living in the moment implies doing everything for the sheer delight of doing it. Philosophically, this is not new; Epicurus developed his thesis twenty-three-hundred years ago: live for the moment and enjoy all of it. 'If dinner is only a piece of bread, then relish it.' All of which may be counter to the prevailing culture that promotes the easiest, softest, cheapest, quickest and stupidest way to do everything—except live.

In discussion with my wife the other day, we separated a few chores from pleasures and compared notes: cleaning the toilet, no problem, laundry likewise, cooking is definitely a pleasure, as is eating even when the food is not great. Going 'online' is a chore, in fact my wife would rather clean the toilet than click mice.

My choice for bottom chore is shopping; 'Let's make a deal, I'll take out the compost and sort the recycling, you buy the groceries.' 

© Island Tides Publishing Ltd. This article may be reproduced with this attribution, in its entirety, with notification to Island Tides Publishing Ltd.

'This article was published (Oct 2, 2008) in 'Island Tides'. 'Island Tides' is an independent, regional newspaper distributing 17,500 print copies in throughout the Gulf Islands and the Canadian Strait of Georgia from Tsawwassen to Campbell River, BC.'

Island Tides, Box 55, Pender Island, BC, Canada. Phone: 250-629-3660. Fax: 250-629-3838.
Email: islandtides@islandtides.com. Website: <http://www.islandtides.com>
