

**Final Report on Grand Cook Off Collaborative Fundraiser
Held Saturday, September 27th, 2014
At the Sooke Child Youth & Family Centre,
6672 Wadams Way, Sooke, B.C.**

The dedicated members of the Sooke Region Volunteer Centre (SRVC) are always on the look-out for opportunities to promote and support volunteerism in the Sooke region. When in June of 2014 they heard about 'Project Serve Day' they discussed options that might work to support the greater non-profit community.

Project Serve is a joint effort of the University of Victoria and Volunteer Victoria which takes place in late September each year. Volunteer Victoria members are invited to put forward proposals that would engage a number of university students from around the world in community service. Our proposal of a collaborative cooking event that would raise funds for more than one organization was well received by the organizers. The event was scheduled for September 27th

The plan was to bring non-profit groups together to 'cook, bake and can up a storm'. The resulting products, pies, bread, jams, etc. would be sold and the proceeds shared between the participating organizations. SRVC were successful with their proposal and engaged 14 'free' volunteers through UVic & Volunteer Victoria's Project Serve Day. In addition, three members of the Sooke Region Community Health Initiative (CHI) committee and two Rotary Club of Sooke members came forward to be part of the general pool of volunteers.

Originally planned as a busy day of preserving, the weekend became a full festival weekend. Sooke Family Resource Society (SRFS) organized the 10th Anniversary Celebration of the Sooke Child, Youth and Family Centre, locally referred to as the CASA Building, on the same day. The next day, Sunday, September 28th, Sooke Region Food CHI organized an Apple Fest at the Sunriver Community Gardens. SRVC was able to secure tables at both events enabling us to sell much of the product quickly, as well as supporting these event organizers through purchasing booth space.

The original plan included use of multiple commercial kitchens around Sooke, having pie making in one, canning in another, etc. We then discovered that we could use all three kitchens in the Sooke Child, Youth and Family Centre and which made the whole project so much easier to manage. Having said this, there was much to learn about managing this type of event.

Alanda Carver from Sooke Therapeutic Yoga Society made a large pot of soup and we had donated bread from Cobs Bakery via Sooke Family Resource Society. This fed our volunteers and the Sooke Family Resource Society volunteers as well.

We made apple pies, apple caramel pies, rhubarb/apple crisps, apple caramel crisps, blackberry/apple crisps, blackberry jam, yellow plum jam and prune plum jam. Since product

was heading out the door to the sales table as they came out of the ovens we have no accurate record of production and sales for this event.

We had a large supply of flour, sugar, lard, salt and lemon juice left over. We put a request for interest out to all of the organizations in the Sooke region that produced food as part of their services. Several organizations accepted our offer and we could have shared more widely as, sadly, requests from two organization reached us too late. The supplies were already distributed!

Participating organizations that either directly helped with the project or received assistance, some fitting into both categories, included:

- Rotary Club of Sooke – provided 2 members to man our sales booth at the SFRS event
- Sooke Therapeutic Yoga Society – made soup to feed our volunteers and helped with baking – received a proportional share of the proceeds.
- Sooke Region CHI – provided 3 volunteers to help with baking
- Sooke Region Food CHI – provided advice and supplied apples through their gleaning process, they also received support through our purchase of a booth at their event.
- T’Sou-ke Arts Group – donated \$20 towards supplies
- Sooke Fall Fair Society – donated \$20 in appreciate of the left-over baking supplies we donated to them
- Sooke Family Resource Society – provided guidance and use of one of the kitchens, as well as donating 4 L. caramel sauce! In addition, they also received support by way of our booth purchase as well as baking supplies for their programs
- School Dist. 62 – Ed West Alternative School – provided the use of their kitchen
- St. Vincent de Paul Society – donated canning jars and rings
- Meals on Wheels Society – were a beneficiary of some of the left-over baking supplies
- Vital Vittles Friday Lunch Group – were a beneficiary of some of the left-over baking supplies
- Sooke Senior Drop-in Society – were a beneficiary of some of the left-over baking supplies

We also received donations of fruit

40.9 lb plums

3.9 lb. blackberries

3.7 lb. rhubarb

160.5 lb. apples

4 quarts caramel sauce

Business sponsors:

Parry Bay Sheep and Stillmeadow Farms in Metchosin – 2 bags locally grown wheat flour

Sooke Harbour House – fresh herbs

Cysco Supply – baking supplies

Of all these wonderful contributors only two came forward to receive a share in the proceeds, those being the Sooke Region Volunteer Centre and the Sooke Therapeutic Yoga Society. The proposal was for participating organizations to receive a portion of the proceeds based on the number of participants from each group. Sooke Region Volunteer Centre (SRVC) had three volunteers there (Bev, Kira & Marlene) and Sooke Therapeutic Yoga Society (STYS) had one (Alanda). Thus proceeds were divided 3/4 to SRVC and 1/4 to STYS. SRVC chose waive an administration fee.

Things we learned for similar events in the future:

1. A Food Safe Certified volunteer is needed in each kitchen and they must have a runner to assist.
2. Each kitchen needs to be set up the night before with all of the supplies that will be needed for that project.
3. Each kitchen needs to prepare only one project at a time (i.e. jams or pies, etc.)
4. Plums need to be pitted before freezing, if at all possible. If not possible then they need to be thawed and pitted prior to the event.
5. Frozen fruit needs to be thawed and inspected for quality prior to the planned use.
6. Events that provided opportunities for sales on the day of the cooking and the next day facilitated sales. Later sales were much slower. Public events provide the best opportunities for volume sales.
7. Jam making: the old fashioned cook-down method is too slow for this type of event. Use the Certo method only, when making jams. Jams also take time to be tested so sales cannot happen on the day of making.
8. A system of recording the number of products made needs to be figured out. The hot pies and crisps were heading out the door to the sales booth as they came out of the oven so we have no record of actual numbers made and sold.

Marketing and Promotion:

This event was first promoted to the over 200 non-profit organizations in the Sooke Region. Initially six organizations came forward to participate and receive a share in the proceeds. For various reasons all but two had to back out.

Next a call out for donations of fruits and vegetables was made through emails, FaceBook, the community website www.sookeregionresources.com, articles in the Sooke News Mirror and the Sooke Voice News, as well as posters around town.

As the day of the event approached we edited our posters and promotion to include the Wadams Way Market and the FoodCHI AppleFest events.

Once the festival weekend passed the bulk of sales were made from the SRVC office with further email and newsletter promotions being sent out. We also put an advertisement in the

Sooke News Mirror on October 31st, 2014 in an effort to sell the remainder of the product. This ad received no direct response.

One SRVC member also set up and manned a booth at the Sooke Elementary School Christmas market on Saturday, November 15th, 2014 in order to sell more product and share information about the volunteer centre. This type of even is more productive than advertising also providing an opportunity to promote the Volunteer Centre.

Income total		\$1,160.30
Less Expenses		<u>434.70</u>
Net income		<u>\$ 725.60</u>
Distribution		
Sooke Region Volunteer Centre 75%		<u>\$ 544.20</u>
Sooke Therapeutic Yoga 25%		\$ 181.40
Less: value of jams supplied for sale	\$70.00	
Canned crabapple sauce to Alana	<u>\$40.00</u>	<u>\$ 110.00</u>
Amount paid to STYS		<u>\$ 71.40</u>

Income and Expenses sheet attached as Schedule 'A'.