

# Living on a Lake in the Country

By Gayle Rich-Boxman

*Living in the country is good for the soul.*

Unless you originate from New York City and thrive on lots of noise and scads of people, you might find that the above statement can relate to you either for weekend relaxation or as a totally new lifestyle.

In 2002, my husband and I bought property at Fishhawk Lake which began as a weekend getaway. We would leave from Beaverton and brave

the fresh country air would permeate through our open windows and ease the angst of the week.

Seven years ago, we moved to Fishhawk Lake full time. What a change to go from the urban sprawl with Washington Square, Fred Meyer and lots of traffic right in our backyard to state forestland, higher elevations, no street lamps and a simpler way of living.

What it can do for you is give you a chance to SLOW DOWN. I no longer drive at breakneck speeds. If someone is tailing me a bit too close, then I just pull over and let them by. It

is about breathing deeply, taking in the beautiful vistas, and finding a sense of balance in your soul. Paying attention to the little things like the way the Nehalem River would glisten in the filtered sun as you drove along the curves of Highway 47. Slowing down for the lumbering Roosevelt elk that cross your path in

the fall and winter months. I've even had a dozen cows, 2 llamas, a horse, a coyote or two, deer and a really large black steer meandering along my stretch of road while driving—which certainly is a sight for anyone not born in the country!

Living in the country often causes you to exercise more. There are more possibilities for walking, hiking,

biking and jogging without having to dodge traffic and breathe gas fumes endlessly (or pay enormous fees to sweat inside four walls and have to share equipment with some other sweaty body). Instead of constantly parking yourself in front of the TV for some

mind-numbing activity, you lean more towards getting outside because it's a better sound for your peace-of-mind. It's quieter and you get to take in the sounds of nature while "working out." You might get the chance to view Mother Nature at her finest. You could meet up with squirrels racing in front of you taking their stores of pre-winter goodies to hide in their various spots to find later in the season. You could see two fawns standing stock still not four yards away from you and not moving a muscle. You could catch sight of a Cooper's Hawk looking down



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the 5:00 traffic on Highway 26, knowing that in less than half an hour, we would be winding down by traveling along the country roads going through Vernonia and eventually slipping down the very quiet Fishhawk Road and 4 miles further to the entrance to Fishhawk Lake. The feeling was akin to letting out a big sigh of relief as traffic would die away and

crime. For example, you would NEVER think about leaving your house unlocked at night in a big city, but out in the country, it's much more commonplace. Neighbors look out for each other. You get to know each other's habits and if there is a sudden change, someone cares enough to look into it! I even had one of my neighbors call to make sure I was okay because they didn't see lights on for an extended period of time—a habit that they had gotten used to seeing. If someone is heading "into town" they might call and ask if you need something

picked up at Costco. Or they might just drop by for a chat. People actually KNOW their neighbors—what a concept! We are a friendly bunch, who will also respect your privacy but be warned—you may have to get used to waving



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at you from a few branches above your head after your dogs have flushed it out of a bush while on their daily walk.

At night, because it is so SO quiet, you might hear the splash of a fish leaping after a bug in the air, or hear the repetitive sound of an owl hooting periodically. And the STARS! Bountiful amounts in the clear night skies, with regular sightings of shooting stars all for you own private enjoyment. I even got to view the last lunar eclipse right in front of me as if it was my own personal IMAX film while standing on my front deck.

Living in the country gives you the opportunity to worry less about

don't know—or honking your horn as a pleasantry and not an act of aggression.

So, if you want to get in touch with your soulfulness, or quiet the craziness in your head, or maybe even think about living longer because you've lowered your blood pressure and your stress level, check out living in the country. We'll leave the light on for you!

You can contact me, Gayle Rich-Boxman, Broker with Vernonia Realty directly at: (503)755-2905 or e-mail me: richbox@centurytel.net You can also check out my website for current listings in the Fishhawk Lake community: <http://www.lakehomesatfishhawk.com/>.



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