

## **Hoquiam Farmers Market News - Ham And Bean Soup Edition**

### **Local News**

Posted by: Anonymous

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Mmm. Ham and Bean soup. Two factors combine to make this the perfect recipe to cook this week; first, I actually have a ham bone and ham leftovers, thanks to a fabulously delectable Easter ham. Secondly ( this may not come as a surprise to you) it is cold outside. Not just slightly chilly, not merely add-another-layer-because-there's-a-nip in the air- nope, this is downright cold weather we're having. Perfect for a hearty and filling soup! If you kept my recipe for Grandma Bennett's Rolls from a few weeks back, now is the time to try them out too!

Not only is this a nutritious soup, but, like many of the finest soups ever created, it is made from ingredients that you already have on hand. That pleases the Scottish part of me immensely. I dislike wasting anything, particularly food. It is estimated that the average American family wastes 14% of the food which they purchase. I know, you wrap up some cheese and forget that it's in the frig until curiosity prompts you to peak in that baggie. Instead of a tasty treat, a science project has overtaken what once was cheese, and it gets tossed into the garbage can. Six hundred dollars per year could be saved if we kept a better watch on what we buy and use it in a timely fashion. Refrigerator Soup is the term for the scrumptious meal that could be created from those bits and pieces from the food that you already have on hand! Making Refrigerator Soup is also extremely creative and a great way to shake off the shackles of always following a recipe. Be brave! Toss in the gravy from last night's chicken dinner, use the cheese to grate on top for a gourmet finish. Make croutons from the last slice of bread. Forget about exact proportions- this is your statement of ultimate freedom! Be the Boss of your kitchen!

Ham and Bean Soup, guaranteed to warm you thru and thru!

1 cup of dried Lima Beans, soaked overnight in enough water to cover

Spice mix;

1 tsp sea salt 1/2 tsp. Paprika

1 tsp. Pepper 1/4 tsp. dried Rosemary, crushed

1/4 tsp. ground Cumin 1/2 Tsp. dried Coriander

Yes, the Hoquiam Farmers Market has excellent spices at affordable prices!

Heat heavy pot over medium heat and add 2 Tbl. Oil

Drain beans and add to oil along with 1/4 of the spice mix. Cook until the beans start to brown, about 10 minutes

Add;

1 lb. Leftover Ham 3 small potatoes, diced

2 large carrots, diced 1 Tbl. minced garlic

½ of the spice mix

Cook for 5 minutes. Then add 1 small onion, finely diced and cook for 2 more minutes.

Add 4 cups of water and the rest of the spice mix. Now is when that ham bone goes in too! Lower the heat and simmer on low for about 1 ½ hours, stirring every 10-15 minutes. Add more water if needed.

I love this quote; &lsquo;Never let the search for the perfect get in the way of the perfectly good&rsquo;. Your Refrigerator Soup may not turn out perfect each and every time, but it will be perfectly good. This is a darned good attitude to adopt about many things in life. Be judicious- if you are a brain surgeon, I do expect a high level of competency and precision- but if you are fussing over something simple, learn to let it go. Perfection is something human beings are not really expected to achieve anyway. We bumble and stumble our way through life, and when we do something that stands out as excellent, we should be surprised and delighted by such an unexpected miracle! Never lose that sense of surprise, and never become discouraged when perfection proves to be elusive.

One of the ways in which everyone can attain a level of self satisfaction and accomplishment is thru the act of Spring Cleaning. Let&rsquo;s face it, the weather is not luring you out into the garden or onto the beach, so you may as well turn your energies toward the clearing out of excess stuff. Aberdeen, Hoquiam, Ocean Shores and McCleary are all sponsoring free access to LeMay Transfer Station ( isn&rsquo;t that a roundabout way of saying &lsquo;the dump&rsquo;?) There is a schedule of designated days according to where you live, and you can call Le May&rsquo;s at 533-1251 for information about schedules and questions on disposing of certain items. Like old paint. A few years ago I loaded up all of those nasty rusty buckets of leftover paint and gleefully took it all to the Hazardous Waste facility at Le May&rsquo;s. This is a free service at any time of the year, just call for the days and hours. Honestly, I felt like I&rsquo;d had a long vacation, it was such a relief! I&rsquo;d make excuses to saunter past that shelf in the basement just so that I could admire that nice clean space.

If you have things that are still useful, but not to you, there are many options for putting them in the right hands; the Salvation Army takes many donations, the Union Gospel Mission maintains a warehouse of household items to share with those in need, and the Habitat for Humanity can take that sink leftover from your bathroom remodel and sell it in their re-sale store in Hoquiam.

The Hoquiam Farmers Market is all spiffed and polished, although our outdoor projects are on hold until the weather warms up sufficiently for paint to dry. Everyone knows that you clean your house especially well before company is due to arrive, and we are having LOTS of company on Saturday! April 10th is when we are doing our part to help get those pesky US Census forms properly filled out and put in the mail. Which sounds like it might be drudgery, but not when you can turn the task into a great party, and that is precisely what we are doing. We are offering free space to outdoor vendors, and will provide canopy booths to keep the sun from beating down on the guest vendors who will be with us for the day. I have already gone on record to say that the weather will be changing and by Saturday I fully expect balmy warm weather. The Westport Rusty Scupper (what IS a scupper!?) Pirates will be performing, the Grays Harbor Banjo Band will be twanging and strumming, Italian music presented by Mr. Peducci will fill the air, artists and craftspeople will be displaying their wares, and there will be free- yes, you did read right- free food available. A Census Stew will be cooking, an official Census cake will be served, and the Farmers Market will be showing off and being the best hosts that we can be.

If you would like to be a part of the festivities, please give me a call at 532-3235 and we'll talk!

The US Census officials will be helping folks to fill out the forms, a GH Transit bus will be transporting party lovers for free, and the Hoquiam Post Office is eagerly awaiting a flood of Census forms! Grays Harbor does not have a history of responding enthusiastically with completed Census information, and we need to change this! The figures that are assembled from these forms are vital to the federal dollars that come into our local schools and cities. A few more completed forms might possibly make the difference in your child's favorite teacher keeping their job. It might mean that another traffic light is installed on a busy intersection. It may insure that a skilled medic is on call when an ambulance is needed. Bring your neighbor, because we promise to make Saturday an awesomely easy and fun way to be a good citizen.

Barbara Bennett Parsons, ½ Scotswoman and lover of good soups! Hoquiam Farmers Market , the place to be- open Wed. Thru Sun., located at 1958 Riverside

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