

North Cascadian

Travelers' Guide 2014

Your passport to the Upper Skagit Valley

FREE



A **Concrete Herald** publication

Clear Lake • Sedro-Woolley • Lyman • Hamilton • Birdsvie • Concrete • Rockport • Darrington • Marblemount • Newhalem • Diablo

Welcome to paradise!

This year's edition of *North Cascadian Travelers' Guide* expands to 56 pages, to bring you even more information about the Upper Skagit River Valley and Darrington, where an eclectic mix of individuals make their homes and livelihoods. This travel guide is unique in that its contents were written and photographed by the people who actually live in the communities the guide spotlights. The result is a reference tool that takes a fresh perspective on the land you're traveling through, with honest advice and tips for how to make your journey even more enjoyable, as well as historical context.

The breathtaking scenery you'll find in the Upper Skagit River Valley remains the top reason to pay us a visit. You'll find fresh air, clean streams, bald eagles, feisty fish, jaw-dropping vistas—and strategically placed campsites that let you stay for awhile to enjoy them.

North Cascadian Travelers' Guide owes much of its success to local writers and photographers who contributed their talents to the effort. Of particular note are area historians Deanna Ammons, Noel V. Bourasav, and Dan Royal, who provided historical perspective for many of the communities profiled in this guide. For more history, go to www.stumppranchonline.com and www.skagitriverjournal.com.

I want this guide to serve you, our guests. Please let me know how I can improve it and I will make every effort to do so. E-mail correspondence is preferred; you can reach me at editor@concrete-herald.com.

Thanks, and enjoy our beautiful Upper Skagit Valley—and Darrington!
—Jason Miller, publisher

On the cover: Sauk Mountain near Rockport, with Skagit River in foreground. The 2.2-mile hike to the summit is one of the most popular treks in Skagit County. Photo by Tim F. Hale, *Flutterbye Images*; www.facebook.com/flutterbyeimages.

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North Cascadian Travelers' Guide

A Concrete Herald publication

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Visit Historic Sedro-Woolley

Enjoy our yearly events which include:
Woodfest - Blast from the Past - Loggerodeo
Founders' Day - The Magic of Christmas



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Rivers run through it

For a very different view of our beautiful valley, visitors and residents alike will enjoy a scenic and exciting raft trip down the Skagit, Sauk, or Suittie rivers.

The scenic Sauk River is the route of spring and summer raft trips. Travelers shoot safely through white water rapids that may send spray over the sides of the sturdy rubber rafts.

Thrilling moments through the rapids are balanced by smooth-flowing stretches that allow time to enjoy the scenery and wildlife.

The quiet raft allows a close-up view of animals. River duck, heron and jays, otter, eagles and other raptors, and even beaver may be seen.

Aluminum-framed rubber rafts are constructed especially for river running and are virtually unsinkable. Each is handled by an experienced guide.

Several professional river rafting companies operate regular trips on the local rivers. Trips include everything from quiet drifts down the Skagit to view bald eagles during the winter months, to wild, white water adventures on the Sauk or

Suittie rivers.

For a scenic, exciting, and different river trip, rafting is an experience that will be long remembered.

Skagit County's namesake

The Skagit River, named for the tribe of Native Americans that inhabited its banks before the white man came, is the singular unit around which Skagit County is formed. Skagit County is only 24 miles deep, but it stretches for 95 miles, from Puget Sound to the west to the crest of the Cascade Mountains at its eastern end.

The headwaters of the Skagit River begin in British Columbia, Canada, enter Ross Lake from the north, serve Ross Dam, Diablo Dam, and Gorge Dam projects for Seattle City Light before entering Skagit County, through which it flows 165 miles to Puget Sound.

Along its course the river is fed by many small streams in addition to the Cascade River at Marblemount, the Sauk River near Rockport, and the Baker River in Concrete. The entire river system drains more than 3,000 square miles of the Cascade Mountain Range. Human



Rafting the Skagit River is a popular year-round activity. During the fall and winter months, bald eagles and other wildlife can be observed more easily from a raft. Anglers on foot and in drift boats ply the waters of the Skagit and other Upper Valley rivers for steelhead and other fishes during fishing seasons.

control over this huge amount of water is maintained by the three dams on the Upper Skagit and by Puget Sound Energy's Upper and Lower Baker River dams at Concrete, which provide beautiful lakes open to the public, as well as hydroelectric power.

The first recorded trip up the Skagit by white men was in 1858. They were seeking gold and came up as far as the Baker River, which they followed to Baker Lake. Others soon followed and spread out into the Cascades.

Their findings set off a gold rush to the upper river in the 1880s that lasted for several years until a lack of rich "strikes" caused it to taper off.

During the period of mining activity and subsequent settlement, the Skagit was the main route up the valley. Sternwheeler river boats ran regularly and, when high water permitted, reached Marblemount and beyond, reportedly as far as Goodell Creek at Newwahlen.

In more recent years, the river was used by tugboats to bring down booms of logs from logging operations. River traffic at present is confined mostly to recreational users, including rafters, kayakers, and boats of steelhead fishermen. The Skagit and its tributaries offer excellent fishing, with the Skagit and Sauk world famous for steelhead.

"Those who contemplate the beauty of the earth find reserves of strength that will endure as long as life lasts. There is something infinitely healing in the repeated refrains of nature—the assurance that dawn comes after night, and spring after winter."

—Rachel Carson, Silent Spring

www.concrete-herald.com



Concrete native Josiah Martin poses with an impressive male silver he pulled from the Cascade River last year. Fish like this one draw anglers to the Cascade and other Upper Valley rivers every year. Photo by Tyler Kales.

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SKAGIT EAGLE FESTIVAL

Four Weekends of Family Fun!
Saturdays and Sundays in January

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Join us as we celebrate the annual return of the majestic eagles to the Skagit Valley. Whether you live in the area or are planning to visit from far away, you'll enjoy the wide variety of indoor and outdoor activities.

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The Skagit Eagle Festival is funded in part by grants from Skagit County Lodging Tax and Humanities Washington.





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Pay attention to bicyclists, motorcycles on North Cascades Highway

The North Cascades Highway (SR 20) is a relatively quiet roadway during the winter, with only the rush of eagle watchers in January to drive the number of motorists up.

But the opening of the pass each year marks the beginning of the summer tourist season, with some of those tourists hitting SR 20 on bicycles and motorcycles.

These means of conveyance offer a sense of freedom and a breath of fresh air that makes it easy to explain why their proponents enjoy them so much. But with that connection to nature comes a vulnerability to which passengers in cars are less susceptible.

Every year the Washington State Patrol reminds motorists to be aware of people on bicycles and motorcycles as they drive SR 20. Those on two-wheeled vehicles also need to observe the rules of the road to help ensure their safety.

Motorcyclists especially are encouraged to slow down on SR 20 as they navigate the curves approaching Washington

Pass on the west side of the mountains, and in Okanogan County on the east side. Every year, first responders are called to wipeouts and collisions in particularly challenging stretches of roadway for novice or unfamiliar riders: They are Spiral Gulch below Liberty Bell Mountain, just east of Washington Pass, and the "Seven Devils" curves, just east of Loup Loup Pass.

Wenatchee District Six WSP Lieutenant Kandi Patrick spoke recently after three motorcycle riders from out of the area collided in a 2012 accident, saying, "About half our motorcycle fatalities involve only the motorcycle. Those are clearly loss-of-control incidents. Many of them occur because riders are taking what appear to be fun curves at too high a speed."

The WSP continues to hammer home its message to riders and drivers: Slow down to the suggested speed limit.

Read
Concrete Herald
The Voice of the Upper Skagit Valley

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Bicyclists, motorcyclists, and even some load-bearing tricyclists like the fellow above roll along State Route 20 year-round. Keeping them safe is a responsibility that is shared between them and motorists.

www.concrete-herald.com

Saddle up!

Riding options abound for horse lovers.



The Cascade Trail—a Rails to Trails path stretching 22 miles from Sedro-Woolley to Concrete—is a popular route for horseback riders of all ages. *Photo by Alona Millison.*

When the cement industry dried up in Concrete in 1968, the need for a railroad line to the town dwindled and the Burlington Northern rails were removed.

Today, a wide "Rails to Trails" pathway—the Cascade Trail—runs 22 miles from Sedro-Woolley to Concrete, offering a stable gravel surface for hikers, mountain bikers, and horseback riders.

Local and visiting riders love the trail, which is maintained by Skagit County Parks and Recreation. It follows the Skagit River along the old rail bed, running parallel to State Route 20 through cultivated fields, open space, scattered woodlands, and river bottoms. The nearby Skagit River provides for some great fishing and nice views, as well as scenic vistas of Sauk Mountain and other Cascade Range peaks.

In Concrete, park at trail's end along Railroad Ave. East of Sedro-Woolley you can park at some places along SR

20. Parking is also available in Lyman, at Baker Lake Rd., and by Challenger Rd.

There are plentiful opportunities for day and overnight riding and stock packing in North Cascades National Park. Major west-side stock trails include the East Bank Trail, the west side of Ross Lake and Big Beaver Trail, and the Thunder Creek Trail. All wilderness party size limits apply. The maximum party size is 12, including all people and stock combined. For more information, go to www.nps.gov/noca/planyourvisit/horseback-riding.htm.

The Harry Osborne State Forest north of Hamilton is rife with trails for day riders and horse campers. Find more information here: www.trailmeister.com/washington/leshilde.html.

Finally, visiting riders are encouraged to connect with Back Country Horsemen of Washington for more information and riding opportunities: www.bchw.org.

Recreation abounds for kids of all ages

In the Upper Skagit Valley and Darrington, playgrounds and recreation facilities for children abound.

Many schools along the way have playgrounds and large fields that are perfect for a game of catch or tag.

In Concrete, the town's largest park—Silo Park—lies just behind the massive silos at SR 20 and Superior Ave. You'll find a large, open field, a skate park, and a playground here. Farther east, a ball field lies behind the large Town Center sign accessed via Douglas Vose Way from SR 20. Still farther east, turn north on Dillard Ave. to discover the secluded Garden Club Park, just before you turn onto the historic Henry Thompson bridge (look for the gazebo on the east side of Dillard).

Rockport State Park, located on SR 20 at the base of Sauk Mountain near Rockport, features several trails that offer short or long hikes for persons of all ages. Information can be obtained from the park's office. Picnic, restroom, and playground areas also are at the park.

Rockport offers an attractive place for children to play at Howard Miller Steelhead Park, located on the Skagit River just off SR 530 and SR 20. An array of playground equipment is located at the center of the park, which also includes picnic, camping, and restroom facilities.

In addition to playground activities, you can enjoy historical attractions. Located in the park are an old Skagit River ferry, an

original settler's cabin, and an authentic Upper Skagit Indian dugout cedar canoe, open to the public year-round.

Drop down to Darrington via SR 530 and check out Old School Park for wide open fields, a picnic area, restrooms, and a planned skate park.

Traveling east to Marblemount, a short detour off SR 20 at the Skagit River bridge leads to a state salmon hatchery. For information about tours—which are typically held during the Skagit Eagle Festival in January—call 360.873.4241.

As you continue east and SR 20 tracks along the Skagit River, keep an eye peeled for pullouts that let you stretch your legs and take in the river's beauty.

A stop in Newhalem will allow you to stock up on food at the Skagit General Store, and give the kids a chance to ring the bell on the old locomotive near the highway.

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"I remember a hundred lovely lakes, and recall the fragrant breath of pine and fir and cedar and poplar trees. The trail has strung upon it, as upon a thread of silk, opalescent dawns and saffron sunsets."

—Hamlin Garland

Clear Lake



Dozens of hardy souls plunge into the chilly waters of Clear Lake every New Year's morning during the annual Penguin Dip. Water temperatures typically hover in the mid 30s at the event.

A quiet place, drenched with history

By Deanna Ammons

Tucked along Hwy. 9 south of Sedro-Woolley, the small, unincorporated community of Clear Lake has seen its boom years and is today a serene place whose residents enjoy its small town feel

close to the larger city of Mount Vernon. Like many Western Washington towns, Clear Lake history is steeped in the logging industry.

John Isaacson, the first pioneer to settle on a claim in Clear Lake, arrived in 1876. Two months later, Robert Pringle purchased 160 acres from the government, his property adjoining that of Isaacson's. In 1882, Xavar Bartl filed on a timber claim at the south end of Clear Lake, followed by several other homesteaders, mostly bachelors. In 1886, Xavar Bartl's son, Jake Bartl, bought 20 acres of the Pringle claim and platted the town of Mountain View. He applied for a post office, but was told that the name had to be changed, as there was already a town by that name in the area. Bartl chose the name "Clear Lake," but that also had to be changed because the Post Office Department wanted only one word. So the name of the town became "Clearlake" in June of 1891, when the post office opened for business in the Mountain View Grocery Store.

The first train came through Clear Lake at the end of 1890, and the next year the Day Brothers built the first lumber/shingle mill. After many changes in ownership, this mill evolved into the Clear Lake Lumber Company (CLCO) in 1899 and became the largest inland mill in the northwest. By the early 1900s, the business district included several hotels, a post office, a meat market, a school, churches, a hospital, a movie theater, several saloons, a train depot, and a

large department store. The Clear Lake Mercantile, a "company" store, became the second largest general store north of Seattle by the early 1920s.

The lumber business experienced 25 years of growth, but by fall 1925, the CLCO could no longer meet its expenses and filed for bankruptcy. The town was devastated from the loss and never fully recovered. Puget Sound Pulp and Timber purchased the holdings of Clear Lake Lumber Company in 1929 and continued in the logging business, but the town's economy never returned to what it had been.

Today the business district of Clear Lake consists of an elementary school, a post office, a grocery store, two churches, an espresso stand, and a service station/mini mart. The Clear Lake Historical Association owns and maintains the abandoned railroad right-of-way through town.

Popular annual events in Clear Lake include the Penguin Dip in January, a street fair in August, and an arts-and-crafts fair in December.

Clear Lake historian Deanna Ammons has lived in the community for 50 years.



This whimsical photo shows the Clear Lake School in 1912, looking south along the old railroad tracks. At this point, the school had eight classrooms and a basement, but no indoor plumbing. The additions shown were removed by 1928, when bathrooms were added and the gym was constructed behind the school. This school was used until 1961, when Clear Lake's fourth school was opened. Photo courtesy of Clear Lake Historical Association.

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Clear Lake BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Historians
1 Deanna Ammons, historian
pda98235@earthlink.net

Clear Lake WORSHIP DIRECTORY

Baptist
First Baptist Church
12732 Hemlock St., Clear Lake
360.856.2767
Sunday School: 9:45 a.m.
Sun. worship: 11 a.m. and 6 p.m.
Wed.: 7 p.m.
John Balts, pastor
E-mail: pastjohn@firstbaptistclearlake.com

Covenant
Community Covenant Church
12605 Highway 9, Clear Lake
360.856.1023 // covenant@wawecable.com
www.clearlakecov.org
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Sun. worship: 11 a.m.
Call for weekly youth group/Bible studies
Tim Hedberg, pastor

Clear Lake EVENTS CALENDAR*

- 2014
- July
 - Clear Lake Triathlon, July 12
(date subject to change: 360.336.9414)
 - August
 - Clear Lake Street Fair, Aug. 23
 - December
 - Clear Lake Arts & Crafts Fair
(date TBA)
- 2015
- January
 - Penguin Dip at the lake, Jan. 1,
usually starts at 11 a.m.

*For updated information on community events, go to the Community Calendar page at www.concrete-herald.com.

*Read
Concrete Herald*
The Voice of the Upper Skagit Valley

Clear Lake



Typically held the fourth weekend in August, the Clear Lake Street Fair hosts all manner of vendors, from local photographers and crafters to a Chihuahua rescue group. Food and fun are the order of the day, with games and face-painting for the kids. For updates on this event in 2013, keep an eye on the Community Calendar page at www.concrete-herald.com.

Celebrate Skagit History

**Skagit County
Historical Museum**
501 S. 4th Street, La Conner

360.466.3365
skagitcounty.net/museum

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\$10 Families
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Sedro-Woolley

Gateway to the North Cascades

Sedro-Woolley, the Gateway City, offers a full range of services while retaining the charm of a rural community. There's much to do! Here's a quick sampling.

- Stroll and shop in the historic downtown.
- Check out the murals downtown inspired by Darius Kinsey, a world-famous photographer of western scenery, logging, and railroads. He had a photo studio in Sedro-Woolley in the late 1890s.
- Enjoy the downtown statues—life-size works of chainsaw art carved out of cedar logs during Loggerades.
- Visit the Sedro-Woolley Museum, where exhibits are designed to resemble stores and businesses in a turn-of-the-century village. New displays were implemented in 2011.
- Walk the trails at the Northern State Recreation Area east of town, and bring a Frisbee to play "golf" on a special course.
- Picnic at Riverfront Park on the banks of the Skagit River.
- Stop by the old steam logging locomotive on Highway 20 on the west side of town, and imagine her bringing loads of "green gold" from the forests.

In addition to several restaurants, automotive facilities, clothing stores, gift shops, pharmacies, variety and hardware stores, medical and dental offices, banks, grocery stores, building supplies, and shoe stores, Sedro-Woolley offers nearby parks and a nine-hole golf course.

Sedro-Woolley provides relaxation for

visitors and residents with four neatly kept city parks.

Bingham Park is easily accessible to travelers at the corner of Hwy. 20 and Cook Rd.

Harry Osborne Memorial Park is a few blocks south, adjacent to the train display. It contains a section of old-growth Douglas fir cut in the 1940s.

Riverfront Park is located on the Skagit River on the south side of Sedro-Woolley. It is reached by traveling south on Township St. to the river. Memorial Park is located on State St. near the Senior Center.

Sedro-Woolley Chamber of Commerce, working with the city and several area business owners, acquired a caboose and log car to place with an existing steam locomotive and tender located on the corner of Hwy. 20 and Ferry St. at the western entrance to Sedro-Woolley.

Visitors are encouraged to drop by the Chamber of Commerce office at 714 B Metcalf St., open weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Saturdays from 9 to 1.

Plenty of travel options

Sedro-Woolley is located at the crossroads for travelers heading east into the North Cascades, bound for mountain recreational or scenic areas, or the North Cascades Highway to Eastern Washington.

State Highway 9 intersects State Route 20 at Sedro-Woolley for motorists traveling to or from Arlington to the south or Mt. Baker to the north.

Westbound travelers may easily reach

See page 12



A happy girl takes a big bite from her even bigger multicolored snow cone during Blast from the Past, one of Sedro-Woolley's most popular annual events. In 2013, Blast from the Past will fill Sedro-Woolley streets with food and fun for all family members from May 31 to June 2.

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Sedro-Woolley
BUSINESS DIRECTORY

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Sedro-Woolley



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"Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul."

"Keep close to Nature's heart... and break clear away, once in awhile, and climb a mountain or spend a week in the woods. Wash your spirit clean."

"When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe."

—John Muir

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Sedro-Woolley

Cont. from page 10

Interstate 5 to Seattle or Vancouver, B.C., as it intersects with SR 20 just west of Sedro-Woolley. Those remaining on SR 20 may journey to meet ferries bound for the San Juan Islands; Victoria, B.C.; or the Olympic Peninsula.

A town by any other name ...

Four British bachelors, led by David Batey, homesteaded the area that was to become Sedro-Woolley in 1878. From 1884–85, Batey built a store and home for the arrival of the Mortimer Cook family from Santa Barbara, Calif., in 1885. Cook intended to name his new Pacific Northwest town Bug because of the number of mosquitoes present, but his wife protested, along with a handful of local wives. Bug soon evolved into Sedro ("Cedro" is Spanish for cedar; Cook replaced one letter to make the town name unique), which was platted and named by Mortimer Cook in 1885.

On the north shore of the Skagit River in Washington Territory, Sedro may have been born in 1885, but it was weaned in 1889, the year when Washington became a state and many other cities burned to the ground. Like most Washington frontier villages, it was hacked and fashioned from cedar and fir trees right out of Paul Bunyan. The proportions were impossible for newcomers to believe until they stepped off a sternwheeler, saw a virtual sea of trees north of the Skagit River and smelled the pungent air up close.

In 1889 the railroad arrived and brought with it a primitive kind of civilization: a motley crew of speculators and roustabouts, along with future merchants. Folks who lived here in 1889 worked from dawn to dusk in the woods or laying rails or plying the river, and Sunday was their only day off, if they were lucky. If they really got lucky, they hoisted their main squeeze up on top of a cedar stump and shook their bones to a Virginia Reel or a square dance on Saturday night.

June Burn, a columnist for the *Bellingham Herald* in the early 1930s, reported that survivors from that pioneer era told her a tall tale about those saloons

on stilts:

"Stores and warehouses and docks lined the riverbank itself. Across the road from the waterfront, the saloons and joints were built on stilts, or anyhow, high off the ground. The sidewalk ran along in front of this line of buildings, also on stilts. When a man had drunk so much he could drink no more, they pushed him out of the door and he generally rolled off the sidewalk and dropped the seven or eight feet into the mud below. Mr. Charles Bingham, the banker, says he has come down many a sunny Monday morning to find the road lined with drunken loggers and railroaders. When the sun would come out and completely thaw them out, they would get up, stumble around a little, and then make off into the woods to their work."

In November 1889, Philip A. Woolley moved to the area with his wife, Catherine. Catherine's diary leaves out the details of Woolley's purchase of his town site and its initial setup. But it's known that Philip, always known as P.A., immediately set out planning his Skagit River Lumber & Shingle Mill and company town a mile northwest of "old Sedro" by the Skagit River, and Catherine returned to their previous residence in



A cowboy struggles to hang on to his steed during the rodeo event at Loggerodeo in Sedro-Woolley. This year's Loggerodeo will be held from June 28 through July 4. For more information, go to www.loggerodeo.com.

"It seems to me that the natural world is the greatest source of excitement; the greatest source of visual beauty; the greatest source of intellectual interest. It is the greatest source of so much in life that makes life worth living." —David Attenborough

"Living in a rural setting exposes you to so many marvelous things - the natural world and the particular texture of small-town life, and the exhilarating experience of open space." —Susan Orlean

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Makhala Fox from Birdsview waves to the crowd while riding during the Loggerodeo Rodeo in Sedro-Woolley in 2011. Fox, who was Darrington Timberland Princess, was visiting royalty at the rodeo and rode with members of the Sedro-Woolley Riding Club. This year's Loggerodeo will be held from June 28 through July 4. For more information, go to www.loggerodeo.com.

Elgin, Ill., to finalize the family's move with daughter Kate and sons Bill and Bert.

One can only surmise about Woolley's gamble to move to Skagit County and make such a commitment.

We can imagine how Woolley must have licked his chops when he climbed

down from the stage and saw fir 200 feet and taller, limbless for the first 100 feet, perfect for both ship masts and the cross ties that he had been marketing for the

See page 13

Sedro-Woolley WORSHIP DIRECTORY

Episcopal
St. James Episcopal Church
810 Puget St.
360.856.2825

Methodist
Central United Methodist Church
1013 Polke Rd., Sedro-Woolley
360.856.6412 / centralumcsw@yahoo.com
www.dgim-umc.org/home-sedro-woolley
Adult Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Sun. worship: 11 a.m.
Marilyn Kalkhan, pastor

Nondenominational
Christ the King Community Church
805 A Melcalf St.
360.853.2039

Inspire Church of Skagit County
805 Township St.
360.856.0871

North Cascades Christian Fellowship
118 N. Ball St.
360.856.2277 // 360.856.6997

Sedro-Woolley Community Church
901 Talcott
360.855.1673

Sedro-Woolley Community Fellowship
817 Melcalf St.
360.855.0800

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This photo's handwritten caption claims this to be the first house built in "Sedro"—before Sedro and Woolley joined to become Sedro-Woolley. The cabin likely was built around 1878. Photo courtesy of Noel V. Bourasaw, www.skagitriverjournal.com.

Cont. from page 12

past 25 years. He was so excited, he said in his paid biography, that he felled the first tree on the site himself, quite a feat for a 58-year-old man, years away from working in the woods. By 1896, businessmen in Sedro and Woolley were campaigning for a merging

of the two towns. Cooler heads realized that the only way to successfully do so was to connect the two towns with a hyphen. Sedro and Woolley merged on December 19, 1896.

Historian Noel V. Bourasaw, who writes at www.skagitriverjournal.com, contributed to this story.

Sedro-Woolley EVENTS CALENDAR*

| 2014 | |
|-----------------|---|
| June 6–8 | Blast From the Past |
| 28 | Loggerodeo through July 4 www.loggerodeo.com |
| July 3–6 | Loggerodeo www.loggerodeo.com |
| 26 | Yellow Ribbon Motorcycle Poker Run www.swcommunitytroopsupport.com |
| August | Events TBA |
| September 12–13 | Founders' Day |
| October 31 | Halloween Kids' Parade, 5 p.m., trick-or-treating afterward |
| November | Events TBA |

| | |
|------------|---|
| December 6 | "Magic of Christmas" Parade, Breakfast with Santa, Community Center, 9 to 11 a.m. |
| 13 | Holiday Home Tour, 4 to 9 p.m. |

| 2015 | |
|-----------|--|
| January | Events TBA |
| February | Events TBA |
| March TBA | Story Walk |
| April 3–4 | WoodFest, Sedro-Woolley High School |
| 18 | Easter Egg Hunt, Riverfront Park |

*For updated information and details on community events, go to www.sedro-woolley.com.

Read
Concrete Herald
The Voice of the Upper Skagit Valley

Sedro-Woolley



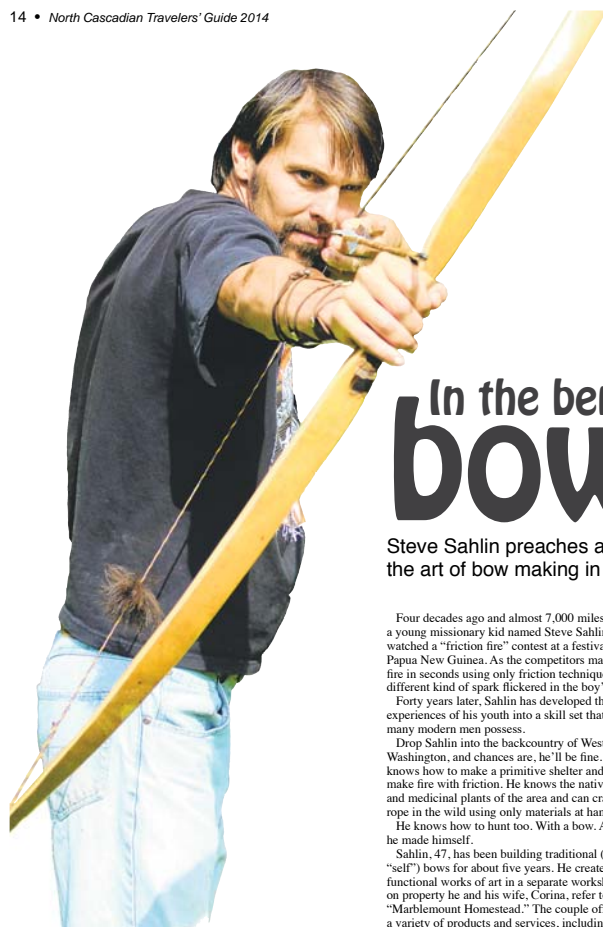
A sheriff's deputy played by Brian Backman fires his gun for a bank robbery reenactment during Blast from the Past, scheduled in 2013 from May 31 through June 2.

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In the bend of the bow

Steve Sahlin preaches and practices the art of bow making in Marblemount.

Four decades ago and almost 7,000 miles away, a young missionary kid named Steve Sahlin watched a "friction fire" contest at a festival in Papua New Guinea. As the competitors made fire in seconds using only friction techniques, a different kind of spark flickered in the boy's mind. Forty years later, Sahlin has developed the experiences of his youth into a skill set that not many modern men possess.

Drop Sahlin into the backcountry of Western Washington, and chances are, he'll be fine. He knows how to make a primitive shelter and how to make fire with friction. He knows the native edible and medicinal plants of the area and can craft a rope in the wild using only materials at hand.

He knows how to hunt too. With a bow. A bow he made himself.

Sahlin, 47, has been building traditional (a.k.a. "self") bows for about five years. He creates his functional works of art in a separate workshop on property he and his wife, Corina, refer to as "Marblemount Homestead." The couple offer a variety of products and services, including

cheesemaking classes, wilderness skills, life coaching, goat husbandry classes, fiber products, and Sahlin's handcrafted wood bows.

"I like to think in some way I was influenced by growing up in Papua New Guinea," said Sahlin. "I have some pretty strong impressions from growing up there. I have a bow from there."

The craft

Sahlin makes his bows from single pieces of dense hardwood, such as yew, red oak, maple, and Pacific dogwood, although he said "it's more about the design than the strength of the wood species; you might have to change the design to accommodate the species."

For example, bows made from denser woods can be thin and narrow; less dense woods can yield a wider bow.

Sahlin gets his wood from friends and lumberyards. The lumber section employees at Home Depot must love when he shows up,

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Cont. from page 14

knowing he's about to spend long minutes pondering the selection of milled red oak, looking for a perfect, straight-grain piece with no knots.

Sahlin works with only a few simple tools. Initial rough work is done with a draw knife or hatchet. From there a clamp, rasp, and cabinet scraper allow him to hone and smooth each bow to perfection. Against a wall of his workshop stands a "tiltering tree," a device that he uses to put predetermined pounds of pressure on a bow in progress, then check to make sure the bow's "limbs" are bending evenly.

Each bow is finished with a leather grip and a single ruffed grouse feather tucked into it.

Deceptive simplicity

Sahlin has made a science of bowmaking, although he insists it's actually a rather simple process.

"To make a bow that's high-performance—one you can hunt large game with—there's a lot to know. You can go to a one-day bowmaking class and go home with a bow that will work, though," he said.

Sahlin's bow design traces its ancestry to ancient bows that were excavated from peat bogs near Holmegaard, Denmark. The Holmegaard bows have been dated between 9,000 and 12,000 years old, and are marvels of design, said Sahlin.

"[Archaeologists] discovered their designs were very advanced. In one way, the design looks simple, but like most things, there's a lot more to it than meets the eye. They had some pretty sophisticated ways to design and tiller a bow. Those people knew what they were doing; they lived and died by their bows for hundreds of years. They passed along their knowledge through generations. The primitive ways were actually pretty sophisticated. Some of the most common, modern designs are basically the same version of those Holmegaard bows."

Crafting a bow demands attention to the strength of the wood with which one is working. Compression and tension forces come into play; the crafter's job is to find the sweet spot where the bow can deliver an arrow without breaking.

Even Sahlin misses that target sometimes: In one corner of his workshop lie pieces of broken bows, testaments to overestimating how much stress a piece of wood could tolerate.

"A bow is a stick nine-tenths broken," said Sahlin. "When you're making a bow, you are asking a lot of that piece of wood. You're stressing it to the point of almost

breaking, because you're harnessing the most stored energy out of it to send the arrow. You want to push it, not break it."

The hunt

Tall, lean, and sinewy, Sahlin hunts deer with a 72-inch self bow, a creation that matches his build and strength. The bow is crafted of heartwood and sapwood yew. A strip of rawhide is glued to the back of the bow—the side that faces away from the archer. The handle is buckskin. The bow's draw weight is 55 pounds, well over the minimum 40 pounds for deer.

In his quiver are several arrows, some of which Sahlin made. One has a mock orange shaft, with turkey and goose feathers arranged in a helical "fletch"—mounted in a slight spiral pattern to make the arrow spin in flight, increasing its stability.

Sahlin's bow and arrows are nearly flawless, to accommodate one drawback.

"The limitation of self bows is not their power; it's their range. You need to be closer to your game—15 to 20 yards or even closer—10 to 15 yards ideally, and no more than 20 yards. A lot of the Native American bows were pretty small and not very powerful—not heavy draw weights. But they were getting so close to their game, they didn't need to be much more powerful."

—J. K. M.



Marblemount bowmaker Steve Sahlin puts a bow in progress under tension, then uses a small wood block with a protruding nail to check the bow's evenness. Any slight imperfection in the bend will cause the nail to stick, telling Sahlin what areas need to be scraped more.

Marblemount Homestead

Steve and Corina Sahlin own and operate Marblemount Homestead near Marblemount. They offer a variety of classes and services, including cheesemaking, wilderness skills, goat husbandry, life coaching, and fiber arts. Learn more at www.marblemounthomestead.com.

—J. K. M.



An array of handmade self bows lies on the center table in Steve Sahlin's Marblemount workshop. Sahlin uses a handful of wood types to craft the bows, and recently started tucking a single ruffed grouse feather into the grip as his signature finishing touch.



Sahlin draws a cabinet scraper along the back of a bow, slowly peeling off just enough wood to create a perfect, even bend when the bow is fitted with an arrow and drawn to fire.

On the make for morels

Come spring and fall, some Upper Skagit Valley residents can be seen diligently pawing through the leaf litter at the bases of old cottonwood trees.

They haven't taken leave of their senses, be assured. They're simply on the hunt for morel mushrooms.

The most commonly sought morels in this area aren't true morels; they're a variety of false morel, sometimes called cottonwood morels (*Verpa bohemica*) because they tend to crop up beneath mature cottonwood trees.

In the spring and fall, after several days of rain and then sunlight, the morels show up—and we can't seem to get enough of them. Mushrooms are the fruiting bodies of a much larger fungal organism in the soil; therefore, it's a good idea to simply pick what you need without disturbing the soil, where the "mother" organism lives.

Several studies have indicated that picking mushrooms doesn't have a negative effect on future crops. This makes sense because, as fruiting bodies, the job of mushrooms is to spread spores—kind of like apples or berries are designed to spread seed. This process can be helped if something picks them and moves them around.

One way to ruin a cottonwood morel patch is to use a rake. One of our favorite patches was ruined for several years by someone who went through it with a garden rake. Evidently this disturbs the mycelium of the mushroom in the soil. These mushrooms don't seem to like areas that flood frequently either. My dad told me this years ago and I have found it to be true. I know of one very interesting spot where a clump of cottonwoods is half in and half out of the regular flood zone. You can find morels on the high ground in this clump, but not where it floods regularly.

My dad taught me how to hunt these mushrooms. I understand his dad would eat them by the skilletful. I also know people who have gotten sick from eating just a few, so you should take care not to overdo with these mushrooms, especially if you have never eaten them before. Evidently even large quantities didn't faze my grandpa. I don't like mushrooms, so I don't eat them. Typically I give them to someone who likes them. I only picked a few this year and gave them to my wife, who had never tried them before. It turns out that she doesn't like them either, but they didn't make her sick.

Morel hunting is a lot like Easter egg

hunting, except the mushrooms are light brown and well camouflaged in last year's leaves unless they are on a large, exposed white stalk. I know I left some behind because my eye is not really that good. It would probably be better if I looked for morels more often. My Uncle Ez was very good at morel hunting. He was so color blind that he had to look at which light was lit in a stop light in order to tell whether he could stop or go, because he couldn't tell the colors apart. When it came to morel hunting, this was a huge advantage because he was looking only for the shapes of the mushrooms and wasn't distracted by color. I remember going to a favorite patch with my dad and my dad looking at some tree tracks in the mud and turning around in disgust after pointing at the tracks and saying, "That was Ez. We might as well go somewhere else because we aren't going to find any here."

If you go morel hunting, pay attention to where you're walking. You'll want to stay off private property, for starters. Gathering any kind of mushroom within the North Cascades National Park (including the Ross Lake and Lake Chelan areas) is also prohibited.

Good eatin'

When you're ready to chow down on a few choice morels, clean them thoroughly, rinse them, soak them, and rins them again. Let them sit for 20 minutes so they drain well. Try chopping them up and frying them in butter, then adding beaten eggs for a great scrambled egg treat.

Some connoisseurs deep-fry morels after flouring them.

To dry morels, remove the stems and soak them in salt water before using a fruit dryer to dry them. Reconstituting them helps to remove some of their toxins, which exist at low levels and are the reason some people get sick when they eat the false variety.

These are just a handful of ways that Upper Valley locals enjoy false and true morels every spring. You can probably come up with a lot of other menu items for the magnificent morel.

—Pat Buller, Barbara Haight

Editor's note: *Pat Buller blogs at www.comversescades.blogspot.com and is one smart cookie.*

www.concrete-herald.com



This little doll seems pleased with her portion of one day's harvest of morels in the Upper Skagit Valley. *Photo by Barb Haight.*



A Pacific tree frog seems interested in this morel nestled into leaf litter beneath a mature cottonwood tree. *Photo by Barb Haight.*

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A history of conservation in the Upper Skagit Valley

The Ovenell family name is one of the most immediately recognized in the Upper Skagit Valley.

Nestled in an astonishing natural paradise, Ovenell's Heritage Inn and the 580-acre Double O Ranch showcases one of the few working family farms remaining in the state. The property lies just three miles off SR 20 at Concrete (see ad, p. 35).

The original Ovenells pioneered in Skagit Valley in the late 1800s. T. Nelson Ovenell was born in 1861 on Whidbey Island; his son Jim was born in 1893 in Avon near Burlington. He studied science at Washington State College at Pullman in 1911. Jim ran a steam threshing machine for the oat fields that dominated the La Conner flats.

In 1917 he joined the Navy because "they had no shovels in the Navy." After training as an electrician and radio operator, his duty included guiding merchant vessels to Italy and France through the wartime Atlantic Ocean that was dotted by German U-Boats "thicker than flies."

After the war he married Mary and took over his father's steam threshing machine till it became obsolete. In 1935 he took over the ranch in Avon.

In 1945, with a partner, James T. Ovenell bought a 732-acre parcel, at that time a maze of trees and stumps lying along the banks and rolling foothills of the Skagit River. Besides running the ranch, James served in the Washington State Legislature throughout the 1950s, as drainage district commissioner during the 1930s, Skagit County Commissioner from 1940-1946, Chairman of the Soil Conservation Board of Supervisors for 10 years, as a Skagit County Planning Council member and Land Bank Association Board Member, and on the advisory board to the Northwestern Washington Experiment Station in Mount Vernon.

By 1957, James and his wife Mary were designated "Mr. and Mrs. Conservation Farmer by the Skagit Soil Conservation District for their outstanding leadership in the field of conservation and community service," as well as their accomplishments in the operation of the farm. They were among the first farmers in the area to cooperate with the Soil Conservation District, and they used soil conservation surveys as the basis for land clearing operations and farm development.

They cooperated with the Skagit Soil Conservation District to try out new legume and grass mixtures for use on low-stability upland soils, ranging their cattle on the grass-legume fields. They also built two concrete trench silos to conserve excess spring growth as grass silage and for the ensiling of field corn. Utilizing systematic crop rotations, improved hay and pasture seedings, fertilization, riverbank stabilization, and woodland management, they set the standard at every turn.

"We have a 'goose' on our farm that lays golden eggs," James explained in 1960. "By taking good care of it, my family and I expect to continue collecting the eggs indefinitely."

For many years the farm was isolated on the south side of the Skagit River, limited to several crossings by ferry along the river. Getting supplies was not easy. James' son Norm, who helped him originally clear the pasture areas as a lad of 20, taught himself to fly an old propeller airplane between the ranch and supplies downriver.

"Six hours in the cockpit and then I went solo," Norm recalled, prior to his passing in 2010.

Norm air-ferried beef for his neighbors when the river rose too high for the small cable ferries. He also flew out a road survey crew that was down to their last can of beans. The day the Skagit River bridge opened in 1952, his self-propelled combine harvester was one of the first vehicles to cross.

Norm and his brother Lyle took over the ranch in 1959. The first crop to be harvested was flax seed. One year he grew peas, employing pea vinters from Oregon who traveled throughout the Northwest. They had to leave a large perimeter around the pea fields so the deadly Nightshade growing nearby would not mix in with its seasonally green berries.

Traveling between Burlington and Concrete on the old road, the handsome, strapping Norm frequently stopped at a drive-in stand in Hamilton, where Eleanor Jungbluth, an English teacher with a degree in art, sold ice cream and burgers during the summer. Half his age and as high-spirited as she was beautiful, Eleanor soon was giving Norm extra scoops of ice cream. They also worked on church projects together. By Christmas they hiked at Baker Lake to select a Christmas tree. He carried the chainsaw and she

carried two trees—that's how he knew the diminutive beauty could take the hard ranch life. They married in 1965. After a few years, the first of their five daughters was born. As they grew older, each girl got her own steer to show at the Junior Livestock Show.

"We went to a lot of fairs," Norm said. "First place at the Puyallup Fair brought \$100, so we made some expenses," he added. "Timber, our own garden, and our own beef kept us going."

Together they have proudly passed on their family traditions to the five daughters and their families. All the girls worked on the ranch as they grew up, and each started out in 4-H with her own heifer calf, participating in the junior livestock show.

"The lifestyle of a large ranch family includes little time for recreation," Norm said. "It didn't seem like we did a lot of traveling, other than going to fairs, which kept us busy. Going to fairs was our vacation."

All five girls were active 4-H members and all teenagers at the same time. They had up to 35 animals in the State Fair in Monroe during those years.

"They all raised enough cattle to get them off to a good start in college," Norm said. "I told them how much the feed would be and how much pasturing cost. They earned it by working on the ranch. I think it helped them learn a lot about real life," he added.

All five daughters graduated with related college degrees, including one doctorate in ruminant nutrition. All five—Kathy, Kris, Cindy, Karin, and Helen—currently are engaged in different aspects of running the farm.

The entire family has steadfastly kept alive the flame of home arts and farm arts during the many years when corporate fast food held sway. Turning tides now see Americans once again eager and hungry for the comfort and nourishment of real homegrown and homemade foods untainted by pesticides or corporate greed. Norm and Eleanor worked to advance the conservation ethic instilled by Norm's father, James.

"We were at the Cattlemen's Winter School, where our daughter Cindy worked at the time," said Eleanor. "We talked to Tom Holt, a forester, and I asked him what we could do about reforestation and streambed enhancements on our ranch. We wanted to leave this place as close to

its natural state as we could."

They applied for a \$30,000 grant to plant an 1,800-foot windbreak/wildlife shelterbelt with evergreen trees, deciduous trees and shrubs to increase wildlife food and habitat in 1995, and the following spring constructed nearly 8,000 feet of fencing to exclude the beef herd from the river and limit their access to one watering point in the beaver pond area, since hooves and manure damage the waterways and make them less inhabitable for wildlife.

They also planted nearly 5,000 additional shrubs and trees for improved fish and wildlife habitat, including crab apples, roses, red osier dogwood, shore pine, western red cedar, Oregon grape, vine maple, and tartarian huckleberry.

They managed the woodland to keep it productive while providing wood for the home, barns, and feeding sheds. They also set up two permanent experimental plots in cooperation with the University of Washington College of Forestry to study the growth response of second-growth Douglas fir. The family won public recognition again in 1997 when they were named Wildlife Conservation Farm of the Year.

Efforts are ongoing to restore wildlife habitat, maintain current resources, and plant a variety of shrubs and trees to provide new sources of wildlife food and habitat. During the winter the river shoreline is dotted with Bald Eagles that feed on the spawning salmon. For several years an osprey nest perched atop a utility post, while nearby spring-fed beaver ponds provide habitat for juvenile fish and the wetlands accommodate a variety of birds, frogs and other animals.

The Ovenells' focus on good land stewardship has not compromised the quality of farming and ranching. Over the years the farm has raised a variety of crops. At one time they sold winter wheat, sweet corn, and flax seed, as well as beef, for which James was recognized as the first Cattlemen of the Year by the Skagit County Cattlemen's Association.

"Our area boasts some of the Northwest's finest hiking, biking, sightseeing, fishing, mountain climbing, eagle watching, and rafting," said Eleanor Ovenell. "All the things I've enjoyed as a ranch wife of 43 years, I can now give as a gift of peaceful serenity to others."

—Lynn McMillan

Lyman

A place of contentment

Lyman is small—and its residents like it that way. A few miles east of Sedro-Woolley, the community cozies up to the Skagit River, a hidden gem of history and home to one of the most beautiful pieces of architecture in the county.

Turn south on Prevedell from Hwy. 20 and follow the signs to Lyman's small business district and residential areas. Many visitors love the Lyman Tavern and its irreverent tagline. Step inside to see what exactly it means.

Lyman boasts a beautiful town park and gorgeous river views, but arguably its biggest claim to fame is the stunning Minkler Mansion, located on the east side of Main St. Built by Birdsey Minkler, who first settled on the south side of the Skagit River in 1877 (across from present-day Birdview, which is named after him), the mansion dates to 1891 and is on the National Register of Historic Places. Today, it is used as the Lyman Town Hall.

Lyman knows how to throw a party. Show up for the Lyman Car and Craft

Show in July and you'll understand why it's becoming one of the most popular car shows in Washington. Other annual events include the Lyman Townwide Yard Sale, Praise in the Pasture, and Lyman Elementary School's "Back to School Parade," held in September. The parade gives area children a chance to create their own float in hopes of winning a pizza party or other prize for their class.

Five key players

Lyman traces its roots to the early 1870s and owes its early existence to five pioneering men: A. R. Williamson, Valentine Adam, Henry Cooper, Lorenzo Lyman, and Otto Klement.

Of course, these men weren't setting foot on virgin ground. Upper Skagit Indians had camped in the area for many generations. Three large winter houses called *kakawicwul* were located from Minkler Lake to Ross Island in the Skagit River. Two other large winter houses faced each other across the river, at



The magnificent Minkler Mansion in Lyman is a must-see for anyone visiting the area. Built in 1891 by area pioneer Birdsey Minkler, the two-story structure now serves as Lyman Town Hall.

Lyman and Day Creek. The first apparent contact with Europeans occurred when fur and beaver trappers worked the upper section of the river from the Cascades to the Skagit Valley, and then when Catholic missionaries began visiting the river in the mid-19th century.

Williamson, a Pennsylvania native, moved to Washington sometime before 1860 and became the first Upper Skagit River settler, planting hop vines on the north shore of the river, about a mile west of present-day Lyman in 1872.

Valentine Adam was the next settler to leave a mark on the future Lyman, arriving sometime in 1877. An immigrant from Rhenish Bavaria and veteran of the Franco-Prussian War, Valentine staked a claim to 159 acres on the north shore of the Skagit River. He was a road supervisor in the 1880s and 1890s.

Dr. Lorenzo Lyman, from Helena, Mont., practiced medicine while living on what was later named Cockreham Island.

See page 19

Lyman EVENTS CALENDAR*

2014

June
• Lyman Townwide Yard Sale,
June 27-28

July
• Lyman Car & Craft Show, July 12

August
• Praise in the Pasture (date TBA)

September
• Lyman Back to School Parade
(date TBA)

*For updated information on community events, go to the Community Calendar page at www.concrete-herald.com.

Lyman WORSHIP DIRECTORY

Baptist
Lyman Baptist Church
31441 W. Main St., Lyman
Office: 360.626.3287
Sunday School: 9:30 a.m.
Sun. worship: 11 a.m.

"Take a course in good water and air; and in the eternal youth of Nature you may renew your own. Go quietly, alone; no harm will befall you." —John Muir

"I think the environment should be put in the category of our national security. Defense of our resources is just as important as defense abroad. Otherwise what is there to defend?" —Robert Redford

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Above: The Lyman Car and Craft Show fills Main St. with mostly classic automobiles every July. Right: The Back to School Parade gives local kids a chance to show off their float-building talents.

Cont. from page 18

east and southeast of present Lyman. Lorenzo established a post office in his own surname on Aug. 2, 1880, although it is unclear precisely where that post office

was located. Thus the town of Lyman was quietly born.

Meanwhile, back in 1877, Henry Cooper arrived at Cockreham Island and began clearing the dense forest. In 1883, he traded for property on the north side of the

North Cascadian Travelers' Guide 2014 • 19

Lyman



Skagit River and built the first house of future-Lyman on his new property, a two-story home built of milled lumber.

Otto Klement arrived in Lyman on Oct. 12, 1873, after paddling alone across Puget Sound in an Indian's salt chuck

canoe. He took over the reins of the post office on Nov. 9, 1881.

Historian Noel V. Bourasaw, who writes at www.skagitriverjournal.com, contributed to this story.

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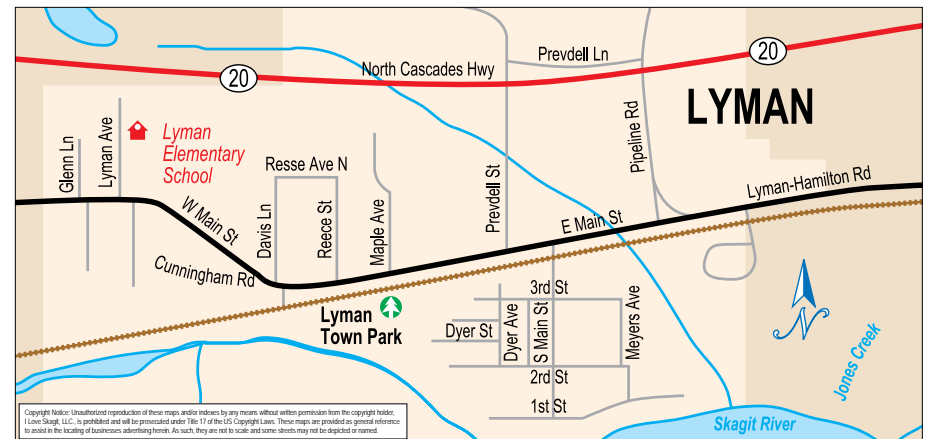
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Day Creek

Community started as "Happy Valley"

By Deanna Ammons

East of Clear Lake and Sedro-Woolley, along the South Skagit Hwy., lies the unincorporated community of Day Creek. Mostly a residential area, Day Creek includes a church (Day Creek Chapel) and looks forward to the reopening of a small general store along the highway. Day Creek also has its own volunteer fire department and fire hall.

Samuel S. Tingley was the first pioneer to settle in "Happy Valley," which was Day Creek's first name. Tingley built a log cabin and, when finished, moved his wife Elizabeth and five children to Happy Valley in July of 1881. He later built a nice house of "sawed" lumber with shake roof and board floors.

The Day brothers—John, Michael, and James—each bought 160 acres from the government for \$1.25 per acre and became well-known loggers in the area in the early 1880s. A creek ran through Michael Day's property and became known as "Day Creek." Since Day Creek flows out of the mountains nearby, the lake was later named "Day Lake."

There was no school in Happy Valley, so students were transported across the river by Indian canoe to attend school in Lyman. In 1888, School District No. 32 was formed and named "Day Creek School." On Oct. 16, 1890, Samuel and Elizabeth Tingley sold a small piece of their property to the new school district for \$1 in gold coin, on which to build a schoolhouse. The school was used for most public gatherings, including church services, for many years. In 1923 a second room was added because of the number of students living in the community. By the early 1950s, the number of students was decreasing as families moved out of Day Creek to find employment. In the fall of 1953, the school was closed for good and the students were bussed to either Clear Lake or Sedro-Woolley.



This photo taken in the early 1920s shows Day Creek at its bustling peak. It shows the Clear Lake Lumber Company's Camp 4, situated at the south end of Potts Rd. in Day Creek. The lumber company flourished from 1920 to 1925, when it went bankrupt. The people in the photo are employees. Some are "flunkies"—we'd call them waitresses today. Photo courtesy of Clear Lake Historical Association.

Farmers began arriving in Day Creek around 1910 and turned the logged-off land into farm land; many hours of hard work were spent removing stumps prior to planting. Most of the dairy farmers hand

milked around a dozen cows until milking machines became available in the 1940s. By the 1920s the community boasted a

See page 21



These lovely ladies posed for this photo sometime between 1920 and 1925. They are "flunkies" (waitresses) for the Clear Lake Lumber Company, which did a rousing business in Day Creek during that period. Only the woman on left is known: Helen McInnis, who lived in Ehrlich, a community south of Big Lake (east of Mount Vernon) that was reachable only by railroad. It no longer exists. Photo courtesy of Clear Lake Historical Association.

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Cont. from page 20

school, two churches, and, for a couple of years, the Potts Store/Post Office on Potts Rd. Clear Lake Lumber Company had four logging camps located in and around Day Creek, and built 20 movable houses that were located at the south end of Potts Rd.; the area was referred to as "Petticoat Alley." Here the married men working for the company could live with their families and not have to travel a long distance to get to work. When the lumber company went bankrupt in 1925, that was the end of Petticoat Alley, Potts Store/Post

Office, and the lumber camps. Most of the families had to move to find employment elsewhere, which had a devastating effect on the small community.

In the early 1940s, other logging companies came in, but they now used logging trucks to transport the timber, rather than hauling timber out on the railroad. The Day Creek store was built and did quite well because of the number of logging trucks passing through and buying gas and other items, but that also came to an end and the store went out of business.

Today the community has an active

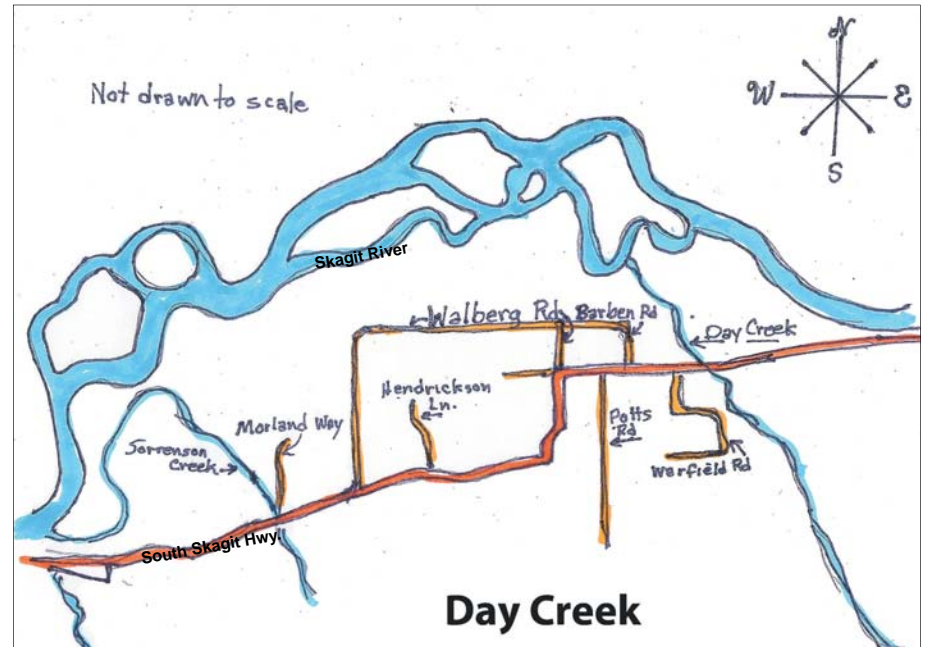
social calendar, with monthly potluck dinners at the fire hall, church events, and hilarity during the summer, when the lawn mower races are held. Local community organizers Kathy Henderson and Donna Pulver are worthy of special mention; they have developed a network of area helpers to serve the needs of the community.

Day Creek historian Deanna Ammons has lived in nearby Clear Lake for 50 years.

Day Creek

Day Creek
WORSHIP DIRECTORY

Free Methodist
Day Creek Chapel
31438 S. Skagit Hwy
Office: 360.826.3696
Sun.: 9:15 a.m. prayer service, 10 a.m. worship
Tue.: Women's Bible study, 9:30 a.m.
Thur.: Bible study, 6:30 p.m. (call for location)
Fri.: Women's Bible Study, 8 a.m. (call for location)



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Hamilton

“The town on wheels”

The wee hamlet of Hamilton began with high hopes that it would prosper from the mining, timber, and railroad industries.

Hamilton has since settled into a quiet residential community after a reroute of Hwy. 20 and industry shutdowns nearly turned it into a ghost town.

William Hamilton platted the community in 1884, and a land boom soon took place in anticipation of the railroad and mountains of iron ore and coal across the Skagit River. The “Pittsburgh of the West” grew rapidly to a population of 1,500, but the big plans never materialized. Additional closures of logging and timber mills further added to the economic slowdown in the community.

Early Hamilton businesses included four saloons, a general store, a bank, a newspaper (*Concrete Herald* began its life in the late 1890s as the *Hamilton Herald*), a drug store, large hotels, and a school. Floods crept into the town

when the Skagit River overflowed its banks, causing merchants to wire wooden sidewalks to hitching posts to keep them from floating away.

Today, many of Hamilton's 300 souls live in RVs that allow them to pack up and go when the Skagit River rises above flood stage—a reality that earned Hamilton the nickname, “the town on wheels.”

Hamilton is small, but it offers a post office, a food mart/cafe, a tavern, and a museum—Pioneer Museum—in the Slipper House, which doubles as the community's Town Hall while displaying photographs and other memorabilia marking the town's history. The Slipper House is located on Maple St. and is open to visitors weekdays from 9 to 11 a.m.

Sedro-Woolley-based Janicki Industries recently built a production facility in Hamilton—an even more welcome addition after a long-time business, Unimin, closed its plant there in



Built around the turn of the 20th century, the Slipper House in Hamilton now wears two hats: It's the community's Town Hall and the Pioneer Museum. Visiting hours are weekdays from 9 to 11 a.m. A town park with a covered picnic area is across the street. Down the street in the other direction lies a skate park and a small grocer. Skagit River access is to the south.

December 2011.

Hamilton straddles Hwy. 20 a few miles east of Lyman. To reach its small business district, turn south on Pettit St. when you see the brick-edged town sign. Amenities for visitors include a skate park, Town Park with covered and uncovered picnic facilities, and access to the Skagit River.

Founded in the late 1800s, Hamilton owes its existence to a number of adventurous families, especially William

Hamilton, who filed the first claim on the land in 1877. In 1884 he started a general merchandise store to meet the needs of early settlers and miners who were working coal mines across the river.

After a slow start, the community grew with lumber mills, hotels, shops, a school, two livery stables, and two stages a day. By 1891 the town was ready for incorporation, with J. B. Wiley elected as its first mayor.



This photo shows the Slipper House in 1901. Photo courtesy of Town of Hamilton.

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This September 1922 photo shows the Hamilton School with its dozens of students. During Hamilton's booming years in the early 1900s, records show enrollment numbers of more than 300 children. Many times, classes had to be held in churches and a local Woodsman Hall. Photo courtesy of Town of Hamilton.

Hamilton WORSHIP DIRECTORY

Baptist
Hamilton First Baptist Church
797 Hamilton Cemetery Rd. at SR 20
Office: 360.826.3307
Sunday School: 9:40 a.m.
Sun. worship: 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.



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Hamilton



A covered picnic area and outdoor picnic tables provide a place to eat in Town Park when the weather is less than stellar. The park is a popular gathering place for residents during townwide celebrations. East of the park lie the Slipper House (Town Hall and Pioneer Museum), a skate park, and Hamilton's small business district.

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—Valerie Stafford
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United General Hospital,
Sedro-Woolley

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Birdsview

A great jumping-off point

By Dan Royal

Ever since the Voigt family resurrected an old Birdsview sign and mounted it near their family business—the Birdsview Brewing Company—it's been a little easier for visitors to the Upper Skagit Valley to know when they're in this delightful community.

Running along Hwy. 20 for a little more than a mile, Birdsview offers several opportunities for recreation. Turn south on Lusk Rd. to reach Rasar State Park on Cape Horn Rd., a 169-acre camping park that had belonged to an original homestead family; next to it is a conservation area. Gas up at one of two convenience stores. Turn north on Russell Rd. to reach a KOA campground. Grab a burger at Birdsview Burgers—and a brew, of course, at the locally owned micro-brewery, Birdsview Brewing Company.

Finally, turning north on Baker Lake Rd. will connect you to more camping opportunities, Grandy Lake, the recreational community of Lake Tyee, and all the fun enticements of Baker Lake, as well as opportunities to hike the less-traveled trails on the southeast side of Mt. Baker, including the trail to Park Butte Lookout.

Rich in history and recreational options, the community of Birdsview holds the unique position of several firsts in the history of the eastern half of the Upper Skagit Valley. During the clearing of two huge logjams that congested the Skagit River area of Mount Vernon between the years of 1876 to 1879, a man of vision and future leader of Skagit County and of the state of Washington by the unique name of Birdsey D. Minkler, sometime during the spring of 1877 traversed with Indian guides by boat approximately 30 miles from Mount Vernon and 50 miles from the delta of the Skagit River.

Birdsey, called Bird by most who knew him, found several creeks on the north side of the river and hidden in heavy timber against the backdrop of snow-capped mountains, and decided this was the place to build a cabin for his young family and also build the first Upper Valley lumber mill powered by the creek, which was named appropriately Mill Creek. The spot also had enough sand bed for steam-powered stern-wheeler boats to drop anchor; lumber could then be towed downriver to be sold on the markets if it hadn't been sold to the families coming into the area or the miners

of a short-lived gold rush in the Ruby Creek area farther east.

For some time in the early years, Birdsview was a community on both the north and south sides of the Skagit River, with Minkler becoming its first postmaster in October 1881, with numerous homestead claims filed in the area. The community covered an area approximately five square miles, with an elevation between 140 and 154 feet in different areas. Keep an eye peeled for the "Birdsview Summit" sign as you travel east on Hwy. 20 through Birdsview. Birdsview used to have a state-of-the-art fish hatchery and many lumber mills, but never incorporated.

Today, as you drive east on Hwy. 20, you'll reach Birdsview Brewing Company first, on the south side of the highway. Offering wonderful home-brewed draft beer and sandwiches, the brewery hosts an annual music festival—Birdstock—to benefit the local Birdsview Volunteer Fire Department. Continue east on your drive and you'll find a local photographer off the highway, who offers the most unique settings for your family photographs.

In addition to Rasar State Park, you'll find a bed and breakfast located on Wilde Rd. Five more private campgrounds are available: the Grandy Creek KOA, Grandy Lake Campground, Timberline Park, Creekside Camping, and Skagit River Woods.

With Birdsview's rich history and beautiful scenery, you can't beat the area for camping while enjoying yearly eagle and elk viewing. More information about Birdsview and its history can be found online at www.stumpbranchonline.com.

Dan Royal is historian for the Skagit County Pioneer Assn. He lives in Birdsview and is webmaster for www.stumpbranchonline.com.

"Harmony with land is like harmony with a friend; you cannot cherish his right hand and chop off his left." —Aldo Leopold

"You will die but the carbon will not; its career does not end with you. It will return to the soil, and there a plant may take it up again in time, sending it once more on a cycle of plant and animal life." —Jacob Bronowski



In 1877 the late Honorable B. D. Minkler built a saw mill at the mouth of Mill Creek in Birdsview, Wash.—the first saw mill built in the Upper Valley area of Skagit County. The mill was operated by water power for several years. In 1911 the timbers remaining on the flume were used to build a summer home near the mouth of Mill Creek. In 1923 a logging railroad was built, running close to the old mill site. At that time the penstock was demolished. The turbine was never removed; it is still lying beneath the ruins of the old mill. Photo courtesy of W. V. Wells, posted at www.stumpbranchonline.com.

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Above: Birdsview Brewing Company in Birdsview. Below: Musicians Jim Fichter (left) and Ray Hamblen of local band Bare Feet make music during the annual Birdstock music festival, a fundraiser for the Birdsview Volunteer Fire Department.



Birdsview musician and darn good photographer Kelly Siebecke snapped this photo of a resting bald eagle near her home last year after a heavy snow.

Camping out requires care

Visiting the mountains, lakes, streams, and hills of the great outdoors requires more care than a casual stroll through a city park. What a visitor does while in the woods can have great impact on the ecology of the area if one is not careful.

In addition to general common sense camping rules such as making sure campfires are out cold, campers now must be aware of how fragile the environment is when hundreds of people are visiting the areas.

Wilderness areas require "no trace camping"; the same practices can be applied no matter where a person chooses to camp. With many federal and state budget cutbacks, availability of campsites with garbage cans, fire pits, rangers on duty, and other luxuries are limited. But the outdoors still beckons and can offer a rewarding experience if care is taken.

- Plan ahead. Know where you are going and what to expect. Bring everything you'll need, including water, garbage containers, and portable stove (many places do not have firepits and during periods of fire danger, campfires are not allowed).
- Don't dump waste water, soap, or

- grease into lakes or streams.
- Respect the privacy and rights of others. Don't make loud noises, pack out your garbage, leave a clean campsite, and make sure your fire is cold to the touch before you leave.
- Stay on established trails and paths; don't take shortcuts. Don't pick wildflowers; leave them so that others may enjoy them too.
- Don't go hiking alone or without proper gear.

Birdsview BUSINESS DIRECTORY

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Baker Lake area

Watery wonderland

North of Concrete, two reservoirs on the Baker River offer a boatload of recreation opportunities, courtesy of Puget Sound Energy (PSE).

Lake Shannon—the first lake—has a boat launch and is a popular fishing and swimming lake. With densely forested hills and rugged ridges that overlook its expanse, the waterway extends for seven miles. Informal recreational activities such as hiking and fishing are permitted, except where otherwise posted.

North of Lake Shannon, the larger Baker Lake offers campsites and more amenities for anglers, campers, and hikers.

The largest camp site, Swift Creek Campground, is located at the site of the former Baker Lake Resort. The U.S. Forest Service, Hoodoo Recreation Services, and PSE collaborated to create the campground in 2010.

Swift Creek Campground is located on Baker Lake Rd., 20 miles north of its intersection with SR 20 (16 miles east of Sedro-Woolley). The new U.S.

Forest Service campground includes 50 campsites, a day-use waterfront, a swim beach, a picnic shelter, and a dock and boat launch. The campground is operated by Hoodoo Recreation Services, the concessionaire for all campgrounds in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

Nine-mile-long Baker Lake offers several other developed campgrounds, including PSE's Kulshan Campground, open year-round with 108 tent and RV sites available on a first-come-first-served basis, and boat launches located along the lake's western shore.

The Baker Lake Trail extends along the eastern shoreline for eight miles before crossing the Baker River at the lake's north end.

On the water itself, you'll find a scenic setting for boating, fishing, swimming, water skiing, canoeing, and windsurfing—all with stunning views of Mount Baker to the northwest.

Preserving and improving salmon runs
The Upper and Lower Baker dams



From Baker Lake, the views of Mt. Baker are unmatched. This 2011 photo shows the dormant volcano letting off a little steam.

provide hydroelectric energy for Washington residents, and form Baker Lake and Lake Shannon, respectively. The Baker River project began in 1926 with the completion of the Lower Baker

hydroelectric plant and its reservoir, Lake Shannon. The Upper Baker dam and its reservoir, Baker Lake, were completed in

See page 27



The construction site for Puget Sound Energy's subterranean power house in Concrete is seen in this November 2011 photo. The doughnut-shaped structure in the excavated area is the facility's "spiral case," the outer shell of the hydro turbine unit. The power house has since been covered over and commissioned into service. Why buried? The slope to the east of the site buried one of PSE's previous power houses in the 1970s.

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1959.

As part of its ongoing efforts to maintain healthy salmon runs up the Baker River, PSE recently completed two major projects at the Lower Baker site: a \$43 million power house below the dam and a new floating surface collector on Lake Shannon.

The new power house will raise the power capacity of PSE's two Baker River dams from their current 170 megawatts to 200 megawatts, enough peak output to serve 150,000 households.

Better for salmon

The 30-megawatt power plant is the latest in a series of fish-enhancement initiatives undertaken by PSE as part of its new operating license for the Baker River Hydroelectric Project. Among other stipulations, the 2008 license requires a minimum downstream flow from PSE's Lower Baker Dam of at least 1,000 cubic feet per second. The project's previous license, issued in 1956, required flows of approximately 80 cubic feet per second to

support upstream fish-passage facilities.

On Lake Shannon, a new floating surface collector that began operations in 2013, generates a current that fools young salmon into thinking they're headed down the Baker River. They are collected in the body of the unit, where some are tagged. They are then transported by boat to a pier and loaded into trucks for transport downstream. On the downstream side in Concrete, the fish are herded into an adult fish trap until they can be transported up to Baker Lake and Lake Shannon.

Fisheries agencies say PSE's investments and collaborative efforts could produce annual sockeye runs on the Baker River of 50,000 to 75,000 fish—a boon for anglers.

A visitors' center operated by PSE

is located near the adult fish trap in Concrete. The center is located just east of the historic Henry Thompson Bridge and features displays, diagrams, mounted fish, and a giant topographic map of the Baker River basin area. Admission is free.

To learn more about the lakes' recreation services, go to www.fs.fed.us/r6/mbs and search their names, or call 360.853.8341.

—J. K. M.

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"A few minutes ago every tree was excited, bowing to the roaring storm, waving, swirling, tossing their branches in glorious enthusiasm like worship. But though to the outer ear these trees are now silent, their songs never cease."

"A few minutes ago every tree was excited, bowing to the roaring storm, waving, swirling, tossing their branches in glorious enthusiasm like worship. But though to the outer ear these trees are now silent, their songs never cease."

"The clearest way into the Universe is through a forest wilderness."

—John Muir

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Upper Valley BUSINESS DIRECTORY

- 1 Skagit County Historical Museum (La Conner) See ad, p. 8
- 2 Skagit's Own Fish Market (Burlington) See ad, p. 7
- 3 Burlington Chamber of Commerce See ad, p. 6
- 4 Deanna Ammons, historian Clear Lake, see p. 9
- 5 Sedro-Woolley Chamber of Commerce See ad, p. 3
- 6 Sedro-Woolley Museum See ad, p. 10
- 7 North Cascade Quick Lube See ad, p. 13
- 8 North Cascades Institute (Diablo Lake) See ad, p. 51
- 9 Pat Rimmer Tire Center See ad, p. 10
- 10 Rogers Towing, Sedro-Woolley See listing, p. 11
- 11 Birdview Brewing Co. See listing, p. 25
- 12 Birdview Burgers See listing, p. 25
- 13 Albert's Red Apple Market See ad, p. 34
- 14 Annie's Pizza Station See ad, p. 31
- 15 Northwest Garden Bling See ad, p. 32
- 16 Perks Espresso & Deli See ad, p. 32
- 17 Sonny Bear's Restaurant See ad, p. 31
- 18 Cascade Mountain Lodge & Suites See ad, p. 31
- 19 Ovenell's Heritage Inn B&B, Cabins See ad, p. 35
- 20 Double O Ranch See ad, p. 35
- 21 Cascade Burgers See ad, p. 27

See page 25

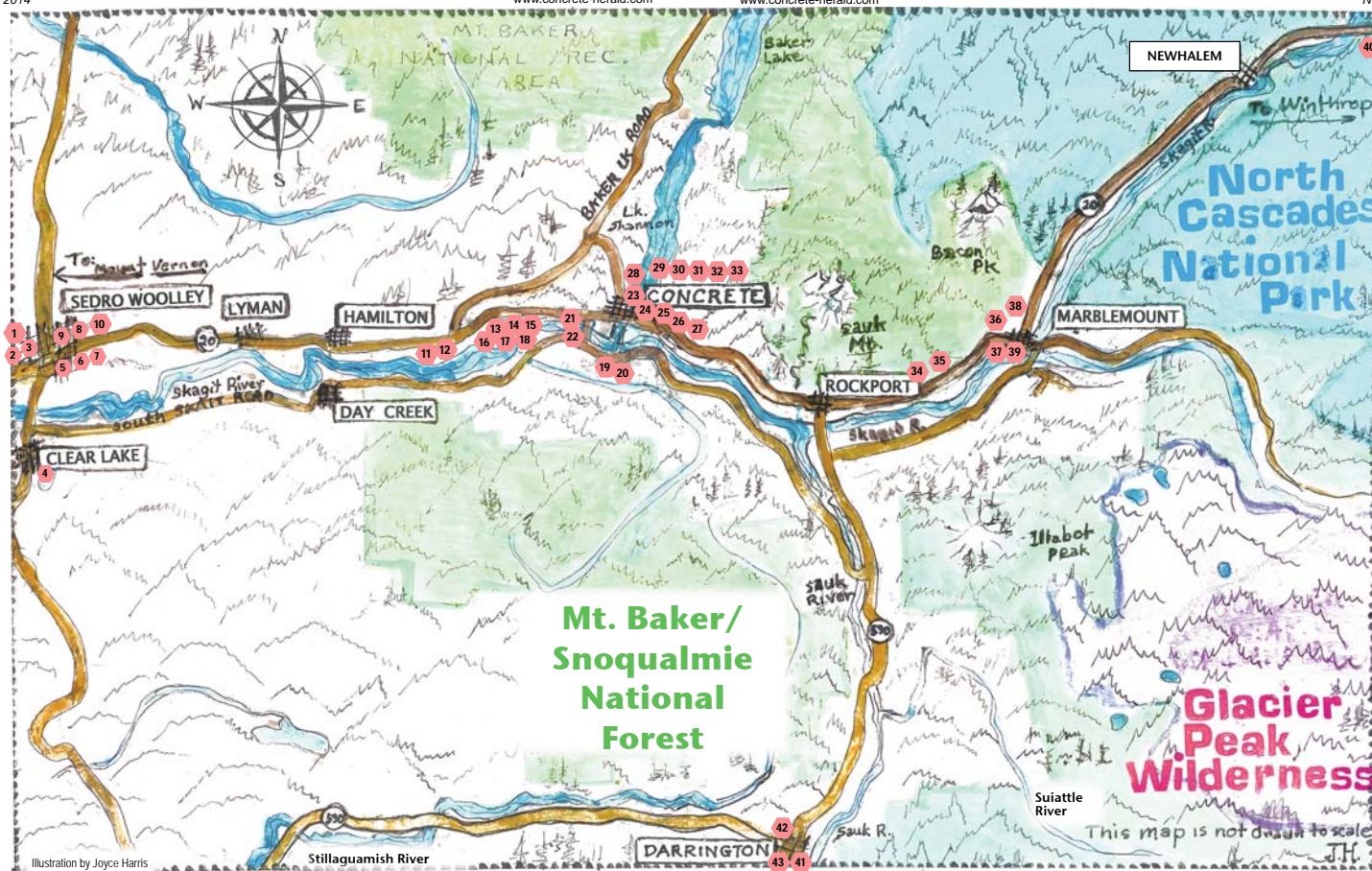


Illustration by Joyce Harris

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- 22 Dave's Towing, Concrete See listing, p. 33
- 23 5b's Bakery See ad, p. 30
- 24 Concrete Chamber of Commerce See ad, p. 56
- 25 Upper Skagit Library See ad, p. 34
- 26 Baker River Woodworks See ad, p. 35
- 27 Concrete Laundromat See listing, p. 33
- 28 Concrete Liquor Store See ad, p. 4
- 29 Cascade Supply See ad, p. 32
- 30 Matty's on Main See listing, p. 33
- 31 Concrete Theatre See ad, p. 33
- 32 Concrete Heritage Museum See ad, p. 31
- 33 Cascade Days (Concrete event) See ad, p. 30
- 34 Cascadian Farm See ad, p. 36
- 35 Glacier Peak Winery See ad, p. 37
- 36 Chom's Chevron See listing, p. 45
- 37 Shim Shell See listing, p. 45
- 38 Marblemount Diner See listing, p. 45
- 39 Mondo Restaurant See listing, p. 45
- 40 North Cascades Institute / Learning Center (Diablo Lake) See ad, p. 51
- 41 Mountain Loop Books & Coffee See ad, p. 43
- 42 Darrington IGA See ad, p. 38
- 43 Gold Nugget Jewelry & Loan Inc. See ad, p. 40

Concrete

Green gateway to the outdoors

Despite its unusual name, Concrete is a delightful combination of beautiful scenery and recreation possibilities, complemented by a full slate of businesses. It's come a long way from the decades it spent covered in gray cement dust.

Located midway up the Upper Skagit Valley, Concrete was named for the cement industry that was once the most important business in the area. Along with the neighboring community of Grasmere to the immediate west, Concrete has numerous stores, restaurants, a gas station, six churches, a grocery store, a liquor

store, professional services, a bank, a post office, and emergency services, including a medical clinic. In 2013, Concrete Theatre went digital and gained 3-D capability.

In spite of its small size, Concrete offers three parks: Silo Park at SR 20 and Superior Ave. S. includes a massive green field, a skate park, and a playground. On Main St. near Concrete Town Center, Veterans Memorial Park includes picnic tables, a baseball diamond, and a tennis court with basketball hoop. As you prepare to cross over the Henry Thompson Bridge at the east end of town,

note Garden Club Park, which currently is undergoing a facelift to add more amenities there.

The Angele Cupples Community Garden north of Silo Park is a must-see. Dedicated in 2010, it already is showing the results of hundreds of volunteer hours and thousands of donated and grant dollars.

Lucrative resources

Concrete began in the late 1800s when settlers, following the gold seekers, placed claims on the lands surrounding the junction of the Baker and Skagit rivers. The west bank was platted by Magnus Miller and called Baker. The east bank was platted by Amasa Everett, who discovered lime and clay deposits in the area. Eventually a cement plant was built there by the Washington Cement Company. The settlement was known as Cement City.

In 1908 another cement company, Superior Portland Cement Company, built a plant in Baker, and in 1909 the two settlements merged into one town: Concrete. Superior Cement also took over the Washington Cement plant.

Many immigrants from Italy, Greece, and other European countries joined the flow of native-born American men in the early 1900s, seeking jobs in the cement plant and limestone quarry. Some brought their families over and the diverse cultures added to the town's unique character. The quarry work was dangerous as the men drilled, blasted, and crushed limestone rock to be used in the cement. Those who were lucky to escape injury or death often died early from lung diseases associated with breathing rock dust.

The raw materials were first shipped from the quarry to rail cars until the first Baker River dam was constructed. Then a tramway was built that could haul loads in a continuous cycle from the quarry to the plant. The tramway stretched right over rooftops of houses along the pathway and a heavy steel mesh net was required under the tramway to keep loads from spilling on people below.

Production of cement fluctuated throughout the years and relied heavily on operation of railroads, industrial booms,

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Grasmere offers an easy stop

On the western edge of Concrete, the community of Grasmere is marked by its businesses, which line SR 20. Look for Albert's Red Apple Market, the Grasmere Village strip mall, and the Cascade Mountain Lodge & Suites/Sonny Bear's Restaurant.

Grasmere is a remnant of a dream. With the arrival of the railroad in the Upper Skagit Valley in 1901, landowner C. W. Greist platted an area on the south side of the new tracks, just west of the town of Baker (Concrete started as two towns: Baker and Cement City).

Greist intended to be the founder of a town called Grasmere, a name taken from a summer home that the Greist family had in England. "Grasmere" is from German, meaning "grassy place."

A number of homes were built in the subdivision and soon there was a general store and a few other establishments, including a saloon. A shingle mill was built by Jerry Metcalf, who later established a lumber yard in Concrete. Since it was a stop on the rail line, a post office was granted and set up in the store of A. Fred Carlson, with Mrs. Anna Carlson as postmaster. The proposed town never developed: Nearby Baker took the business growth, leaving Grasmere as mainly a residential area. The first school house burned down in 1917 and a larger one was built for the Grasmere district children.

As Concrete began to grow, the part of the Grasmere plat south of the cement plant was annexed by the larger community. Other pieces of property adjoining Grasmere were platted for residences on both sides of the railroad. These still remain occupied in the area, which was never incorporated. The post office was closed Jan. 31, 1921. The school was closed in a consolidation with the Concrete district in 1936, after many years of fighting to remain independent.

The original town of Grasmere was north of the railroad tracks. When SR 20 was built along the south side in the 1970s, it rapidly became an extension of businesses supporting Concrete.

As for the extra "s" you see in most of the signage, you can thank the county for that: It misspelled the name on the sign for Grasmere Rd., and subsequent folks incorrectly followed suit.

—Charles M. Dwellley

www.concrete-herald.com

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KINGSTV
Best of
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Friendly

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Pizzas made fresh to order
Subs & Grinders • Pasta
Homemade Soups & Fresh Salads
Soft Drinks • Espresso • Beer & Wine

44568 State Route 20 Concrete, Wa.

Open Tues-Sat, 11am-9pm; Sun 2-8pm; Closed Mondays

★ Hotels/ Motels/ Lodging ★



Located next to the Red Apple Market on Hwy 20 in Concrete

★ Food/ Dining ★



BREAKFAST LUNCH DINNER
Handmade Flame Grilled Burgers
Teriyaki Asian Nachos Steaks Pasta

Take a walk on the Concrete heritage side!

Concrete:

A scenic town with 100 years of history!

Our Historic Walking Tour guide offers three different (easy!) walking routes. Stroll and enjoy the view at your pace. The 16-page guide tells stories and shares photos —what Concrete was and what it is today.

Copies available
at the Concrete Heritage
Museum, Chamber of
Commerce, Town Hall, local
businesses, or request by
mail or e-mail at
concreteheritagemuseum@gmail.com



Concrete Heritage Museum

7380 Thompson Ave.

(one block south of Main Street)

Open Saturdays, Memorial Day

through September

P.O. Box 445, Concrete, WA 98237

www.concreteheritagemuseum.org

Funded by a 2014 grant from Skagit County Lodging Tax.

50's Bakery

Dedicated Gluten Free
Great Food For Every Body
Every food lover's
favorite destination!

- Variety of morning baked goods including cinnamon rolls, french toast and waffles
- Panini sandwiches, hearty salads, and soups made from scratch daily
- Daily specials include lasagna, pot pies or baked macaroni & 5 cheese
- Grab-and-go lunches
- Outdoor dining
- Family friendly, including kids' menu
- Motor coaches welcome
- Wheelchair accessible

A 1940s-style bakery in Concrete serving espresso, old-fashioned sodas, handcrafted pies and artisan breads!

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360.853.8700
45597 Main St., Concrete
7-5 Daily • Closed Tuesday

CASCADE DAYS

"Making memories"

Join In The Fun!
AUGUST 16-17, 2014

Parade, singing, car show!
Kids' activities, music,
contests!
Fun for the whole family!

Concrete

Cont. from page 30

construction of dams (including the Grand Coulee Dam on the Columbia River), and other influences. The company town experienced booms of work and tight budgets when the plant was silent.

Old-timers remember the continual problem of cement dust, which sometimes blanketed everything with white powder, ruining car finishes and glazing windows. The environmental changes of the 1960s forced the company to consider the high cost of remodeling the plant to be environmentally clean, and in 1968 the plant was shut down. At the time of its closure, Lone Star Industries, Inc., owned the operation.

All that remains of the cement operations are storage silos standing at the east and west ends of town, an empty office building with a safety monument in the front yard near the west end of Main St., and the quarry on Lake Shannon, overgrown with trees and bushes.

While the cement industry was providing employment, men also found work on the railroad, in the woods as

loggers, and in shingle mills. The logging industry has provided jobs for generations of families and although the industry has slowed and even faltered in Washington, there still are many who continue to make their living from forest products.

The Baker River, running through a narrow canyon, was noted as a possible hydroelectric site by Superior Portland Cement plant builder John C. Elden. With big money in the East, the project was contracted to Stone & Webster Co., and the first dam on the Baker River was completed in 1925, adding to the logging and cement industries for the town.

The Lower Baker Dam, located just northeast of town and visible by crossing the Henry Thompson Bridge on Main St. and driving up Lower Baker River Rd. to the viewpoint, became the first of two dams built for Puget Sound Power and Light Company—now known as Puget Sound Energy.

The economy of Concrete and much of the Upper Valley is now dependent on logging, tourism, and small, diverse industries. In Concrete Town Center, a painting project in 2012 brightened



Concrete citizens and visitors gathered on May 6, 2009, for a town photo celebrating the community's 100-year anniversary. On May 9, 1909, civic leaders from two neighboring towns—Baker and Cement City—gathered to join as one municipality, and they called the town Concrete.

storefronts, further encouraging visitors to browse the shops, grab a bite to eat, and purchase needed supplies. With the reopening of Concrete Theatre in 2010, Concrete Town Center offers entertainment into the evening on weekends.

Concrete loves its parades, and throws

several every year. The biggest is the Cascade Days Parade in August, which draws thousands to town for the two-day event. Other parades are sprinkled throughout each year, and include Veterans Day, Mardi Gras in February or

See page 33

www.concrete-herald.com

www.concrete-herald.com

Concrete

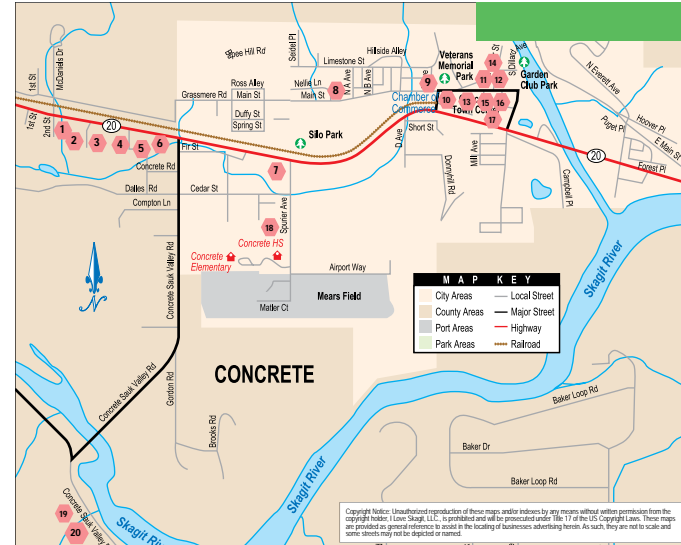
Cont. from page 32

March, July 4, and Christmas, when area volunteers dress up the town in its holiday best. For up-to-date schedules on parades and other events in Concrete, go to www.concrete-herald.com or www.concrete-wa.com.

The town has embarked on an economic development venture designed to better support and nurture its existing businesses, while exploring new opportunities for budding entrepreneurs. Interested persons are encouraged to contact Concrete Mayor Jason Miller at goodwords@frontier.com or 360.853.8213.

For more information on Concrete, go to www.townofconcrete.com.

—J. K. M.



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Northwest Garden Bling

- Gift shop
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- Souvenirs

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nwgardeningbling@frontier.com

Perks Espresso & Deli

from every cup of coffee or latte goes to local charities!

Breakfast, Lunch, Ice Cream, Baked Goods, and Espresso!

Open M-F, 6 a.m. - 2 p.m., and Sat-Sun, 7 a.m. - 2 p.m.

44586 SR 20 • Concrete

360.853.9006

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An Old-Fashioned Hardware Store.

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- Fishing Tackle
- Bike Equipment
- Gold-Panning Tools
- Gift Department

Our friendly staff will help you find whatever you need!

45900 Main St., Concrete | 360.853.8811
Mon. - Fri. 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Sat. 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Concrete BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Gifts

14 **Matty's on Main**
45905 Main St., Concrete Town Ctr
UNIQUE & ANTIQUE JEWELRY & PAWN
NEW INVENTORY WEEKLY
360.333.8851

Events

21 **Cascade Days**
See ad, p. 30

Farms and ranches

19 **Double O Ranch**
See ad, p. 35

Grocery stores

1 **Albert's Red Apple Market**
See ad, p. 34

Lodging

6 **Cascade Mountain Lodge & Suites**
See ad, p. 31

20 **Ovenell's Heritage Inn B&B, Cabins**
See ad, p. 35

Museums

17 **Concrete Heritage Museum**
7380 Thompson Ave. (one block south of Main St., Concrete Town Ctr); see ad, p. 31

Restaurants

2 **Annie's Pizza Station**
(Grasmere Village); see ad, p. 31

8 **Sb's Bakery**
See ad, p. 30

7 **Cascade Burgers**
See ad, p. 27

4 **Perks Espresso & Deli**
(Grasmere Village); see ad, p. 32

Libraries

10 **Upper Skagit Library**
See ad, p. 34

Liquor stores

12 **Concrete Liquor Store**
See ad, p. 4

Theaters

16 **Concrete Theatre**
(Concrete Town Ctr); see ad, this page

Towing services

18 **Dave's Towing, Concrete**
Cash for clunkers, towing and extractions, abandoned vehicle removal, lockouts, fuel delivery. Credit cards and insurance accepted. 360.853.7433 or 360.770.6705

Woodworkers

13 **Baker River Woodworks**
(Concrete Town Ctr); see ad, p. 35

Read Concrete Herald
The Voice of the Upper Skagit Valley

MOVIES & MORE!

Special Events
Live Music
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Fitness Classes

Movie Schedule
Fridays 7-10 p.m.
Saturdays 1:00 & 7:30 p.m.
Sundays 4:00 & 6:30 p.m.

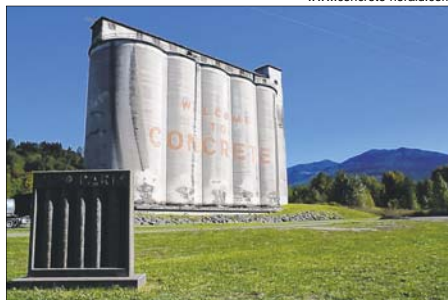
Movie Tickets
General Admission \$8
6 & Under \$4
12 & Under \$7

For More Information,
Visit Us On The Web or Call The Movie Hotline...
www.concrete-theatre.com • (360) 941-0403

Concrete



Employees from Cascade Burgers in Concrete march during a recent Cascade Days Parade in Concrete. The parade is one of the most popular attractions during the two-day event, which pulls more than 2,000 attendees into town.



The community's trademark monolithic cement silos welcome visitors to Concrete and form the southern border of Silo Park. The silos are one of the few structures still standing from the town's cement-producing decades, from the early 1900s to 1968. In 1992, a film crew for "This Boy's Life" painted the "Welcome to Concrete" lettering on the silos, using a process that made the letters look old and faded. The movie's exterior and outdoor scenes of Concrete—as well as some interior scenes—were filmed in Concrete and the surrounding area, and a number of local residents were used as extras. In order to fit the "look" of 1950s-era Concrete, buildings and other elements in town were transformed to look as though they had gone back in time for the weeks that filming took place.

www.concrete-herald.com

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Concrete
EVENTS CALENDAR*

| 2014 | |
|-----------------|--|
| May | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concrete Saturday Market opens May 24 weekend and runs Saturdays through Aug. 30, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.; info at 360.856.1385 |
| July | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> July 4 Parade and Picnic Concrete Old-Fashioned Fly-In, July 25-27 |
| August | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cascade Days, Aug. 16-17 www.cascadedays.com |
| October | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ghost Walk, every Saturday night in October |
| December | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Christmas in Concrete (date TBA) |
| 2015 | |
| January | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skagit Eagle Festival, every weekend in January |
| March | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mardi Gras Parade, Feb. 14 |
| April | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Earth Week in Concrete, (dates TBA) |

*For information on community events, go to event Web sites as noted, www.concrete-wa.com, or www.concrete-herald.com.

**Concrete merchants are
OPEN FOR BUSINESS!!!**

Concrete



This aerial view of Concrete shows the Superior Portland Cement Company plant in full operation, circa 1940. The silos on p. 30 can be seen in the lower left corner of this photo. Limestone from a quarry above Lake Shannon was transported to the plant. Photo courtesy of Cal Portland.

Albert's Red Apple MARKETS

GROCERIES / PRODUCE / MEAT

- Fishing Tackle & Licenses
- 24-Hour Ice
- LOTTO & Cash Machine
- Western Union
- Copies / FAX Service
- Movie Rentals
- Spirits

Take-Out from our Deli!
Hot Dogs - BBQ Roasted Chicken - Pizza

Monday thru Saturday | 9 AM - 9 PM
Sunday | 10 AM - 6 PM
44546 State Route 20, Concrete
360.853.8540 | FAX 360.853.8208
www.redapplemarkets.com

Upper Skagit Library District

457708 Main Street, Concrete
360-853-7939
Open: Tue-Wed 11-8 & Fri-Sat 11-5
www.upper-skagit.lib.wa.us

Feeling Disconnected? We Have:

- Free Wi-Fi 24/7
- Public Computers
- Pamphlets & Maps
- Local Reference
- Trade Paperbacks
- Magazines

Concrete WORSHIP DIRECTORY

Assembly of God
45734 Main St., Concrete
Sun. worship: 10 a.m.; 360.853.8042

Catholic
St. Catherine Mission Church
45603 Limestone St., Concrete
Weekday hours: 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Sat. Mass: 8:30 a.m.
360.855.0077; www.svic.us/cm

Presbyterian
Mount Baker Presbyterian Church
45705 Main St., Concrete
Sun. worship: 9 a.m.
Church 360.853.8585; office 360.595.0446

Lutheran
Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church
46372 Main St., Concrete
Sun. worship: 10 a.m.; 360.853.8814

Nondenominational
Agape Fellowship
Meets at Mount Baker Presbyterian Church
45705 Main St., Concrete, 2nd and 4th Weds., 7 p.m.
360.708.4764

Community Bible Church
45672 Limestone St., Concrete
Sunday School: 9 a.m.; Worship Service: 10 a.m.
360.853.8511 // cbcc@concrete@earthlink.net

BAKER RIVER WOODWORKS

- Custom-crafted home decor and furnishings
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Barn Wood For Sale!
Open Sat. through Mon.

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Stay in a real log cabin and get in touch with your wild side in the great outdoors.

Take a fishing or eagle float trip on the Skagit River. Build a fire in the firepit and relax on your porch, BBQ a steak on your grill or stroll to the river. The eagles and elk have returned along with Canadian geese, deer and a myriad of woodland birds and wildlife. Come enjoy and make family memories. **PLUS, there's Maine-Anjou cattle, beef for sale!**

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Concrete, WA 98237
www.ovenells-inn.com
www.doubleoranchllc.com

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Rockport

Summertime Shangri-La

The Upper Valley community of Rockport is perched on a gentle hillside above the confluence of two rivers—the Sauk and the Skagit. At the foot of Rockport, a county park stretches along the Skagit River and offers shelter and recreation year-round to those who enjoy the many possibilities the river offers.

In Rockport you'll find a convenience store on SR 20, plus the Rockport Pub, a popular local watering hole.

Just a mile or so west of the Hwy. 530 junction, look for Rockport State Park, with its tall stands of old growth Douglas fir and hemlock. Miles of trails wind through the park, bringing hikers through moist bogs and sunlit viewpoints. Overnight camping was phased out in 2010, but day use is still an option. A large picnic area includes restrooms.

For more information about Rockport State Park, go to www.parks.wa.gov/parks and search for it by name.

A quiet getaway after decades of

boomtown activity, Rockport is another small community that saw an early influx of white settlers in the 1800s. The first settlement was the usual homesteaders settling on the river bottom land for farming, but mining activity in the Monte Cristo area, which was reached by a long "tote" road from the Skagit River, suddenly spawned a new town called Sauk City on the south side of the river in the 1890s.

The boom town had three hotels, several saloons, a newspaper, a doctor, a shoe shop, a real estate office, and a general store. The panic of 1893 made it a ghost town, and the remaining general store was moved across the river, where a number of shingle mills formed a community in need of a town. This settlement was called Rockport for its rocky shoreline, which made a good landing for the river boats coming up the Skagit with supplies and passengers.

In the early 1900s, the railroad reached



Kayakers emerge from the Skagit River at Rockport after a spring paddle. The boat launch at Rockport is a popular put-in for anglers and rafters too.

Rockport and the town became the terminus for miners heading for the Cascades, engineers seeking a route for a railroad across the mountains, hunters and anglers, and surveyors seeking a route for a road. Later, when Seattle City Light began explorations and survey for a hydroelectric dam on the upper Skagit, the railroad served to bring in supplies.

The second boom of visitors began in 1928, when City Light began its famous tours to Newhalem and Diablo dams. These tours were overnight trips in which the guests came by train or left their cars in Rockport to board the City Light

"Toonerville Trolley" excursion cars for a rocky, bumpy ride up the Skagit to Newhalem.

These overnight trips gave visitors a chance to spend time in Rockport during arrival and departure. Lush and colorful flower gardens, immaculately maintained by Seattle City Light gardeners, gave Rockport an elegance in the midst of logging, mining, farming, and other rugged settings.

The railway terminus, which also was used by local residents to travel easily

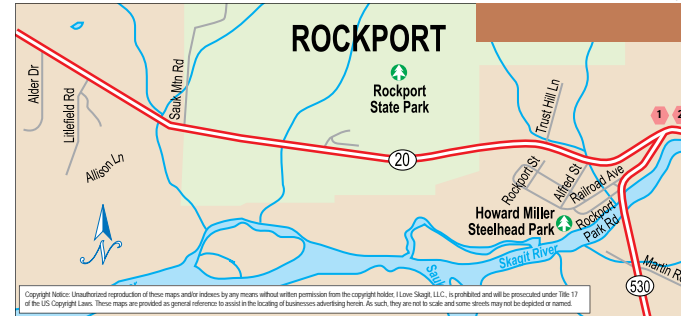
See page 37



Howard Miller Steelhead Park in Rockport is open year-round and boasts two new cabins for rent, beginning in 2013, with two more on the way. The campground is especially popular during the summer months, when it typically fills to capacity. For more information, go to www.skagitcounty.net and search "Howard Miller Steelhead Park."

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Cont. from page 36

to cities and towns to the west, was located in the area where Howard Miller Steelhead Park is now.

Until 1961, crossing the river at Rockport was made with a small ferry. Everything from logging trucks to school buses made the somewhat hazardous trip across the river on the flat boat. Citizen pressure on county commissioners finally

brought construction of the Rockport bridge, which now allows easy access to areas south of the river, including Darrington.

Rockport bustles each summer as visitors are drawn to Howard Miller Steelhead Park, which offers a view of the Skagit River from almost every campsite. For more information or reservations at Howard Miller, go to www.skagitcounty.net and search for it by name.



Built in 1887, the Tom Porter Cabin is one of several historical attractions at Howard Miller Steelhead Park in Rockport. Visitors also can see a shovel-nosed canoe used by local Native Americans and a ferry that was used to transport people, goods, and vehicles from one side of the Skagit River to the other, until the Rockport bridge was built in 1961.

Rockport

Rockport BUSINESS DIRECTORY

- Organic Farms
- 1 Cascadian Farm
See ad, p. 36
- Wineries
- 2 Glacier Peak Winery
See ad, this page

Read
Concrete Herald
The Voice of the Upper Skagit Valley

Rockport WORKSHOP DIRECTORY

Nondenominational
Rockport Christ the King Community Church
11962 Martin Rd., Rockport, WA 98283, 360.853.8746
Pre-service fellowship: 9:30 a.m.
Sun. service: 10 a.m.; Sun. eve. Bible study: 5 p.m.

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this
newspaper



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Come visit our beautiful Home Farm bordering the North Cascades National Park in the Upper Skagit Valley! Enjoy our spacious picnic area, self-guided farm tour, organic berries & more!

HARVEST CALENDAR

MAY flowers JUNE strawberries JULY raspberries
AUG blueberries SEPT sweet corn OCT pumpkins

U-PICK WE-PICK

- organic berries
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98575 SR 20 (milepost 104) | Rockport, WA | Open 7 Days A Week
Phone: (360) 873-4073 Fax: (360) 873-4322

Visit our new tasting room in Mount Vernon, southeast corner of Best Rd. and SR 20.

Darrington



Whitehorse Mountain, Darrington's signature view, looms over the community. Photo by David Fryman.

Breathtaking views, recreation

By Marla Skaglund

Darrington, Wash., is a town of about 1,500 people located in the western foothills of the Cascade Mountains. Darrington is approximately 74 miles northeast of Seattle and offers some of

the best views and outdoor recreation opportunities in the United States.

The mountains that surround Darrington are breathtaking. If you are into bluegrass music, outdoor recreation, hiking,

mountain biking, kayaking, mountain climbing, fishing, or hunting, or if you simply enjoy being near beautiful scenery, Darrington is a great place to be.

Music and recreation

Darrington is home to several music festivals in the summer, including the famous Darrington Bluegrass Festival, Summer Meltdown, and Strutz Fest. A rodeo is typically held in June, and, for the horse enthusiast, once-a-month Play Days are held at the rodeo grounds. Darrington also is home to the only permanent archery range in the U.S.

The area surrounding Darrington offers recreational opportunities. Hiking, fishing, rafting, and rock climbing are some of the activities that take place nearby.

To start your scenic backroad drive up to Cumberland Pass, drive about five miles west from Darrington on SR 530, turn right onto Swede Heaven Rd., drive 1.5 miles, and turn right on Forest Service Rd. No. 18. You are beginning to drive up Mt. Higgins via Segelesen Ridge.

When you have driven 12.7 miles on FS Rd. No. 18, you will catch a glimpse of Segelsen Lake on the right. At this point the surrounding vegetation seems to undergo a magical transformation to lush alpine wildflowers.

After passing the lake, keep right at the Y. At 13.4 miles you will come to the first waterfall lacing the rock faces to the right of the road. When you reach 18.1 miles, you can turn left and drive 1.3 miles to a beaver pond. This is one of many great places for a picnic. (If you opt to turn off to this beaver pond, this side trip needs to be subtracted from your driving directions.) You can also continue for a

short way past the beaver pond and find the very scenic Higgins Creek, a favorite spot with a single primitive campsite just before the bridge over the creek. The road is closed shortly after the bridge.

To continue your trip to Cumberland Pass, return to FS Rd. No. 18 and turn left up the mountain. When you reach 24.1 miles, turn left onto FS Rd. No. 17. The road is paved for a short distance; just a little beyond this, at 24.9 miles, you will come to a second beaver pond. You reach the beautiful Cumberland Pass at 33.2 miles. You can see two huge rock formations with alpine marshes on both sides of the road. Pull over and take your time. Everywhere you look, nature has crafted gardens of rock and water. Wildflowers and butterflies are abundant. Built in 1941, the historic Mountain Loop Highway is a 54-mile scenic corridor along the Glacier Peak, Henry M. Jackson, and Boulder River wilderness areas. The road passes through Darrington and opens in spring, offering a treasure trove of wildflowers, and the forest is vibrant with newly opening leaves.

The Mountain Loop Highway is subject to seasonal partial road closures and is gated during winter and early spring. For road closures and condition updates, go to the Mountain Loop Trip Planner at www.fs.usda.gov/mb. Before you start your trip, you may want to stop by the Darrington Ranger Station or the Verlot Ranger Station and purchase a map of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. If you plan to hike Forest Service Trails, many require a Northwest Forest Pass. In the summer months, as the higher elevation snow melts, the Mountain Loop offers an array of waterfalls along the scenic drive and the many hiking trails accessed from the Mountain Loop. There are hundreds of miles of hiking trails winding through old growth forest, traversing mountain slopes to scenic

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Darrington
BUSINESS DIRECTORY

- Bookstores**
1 Mountain Loop Books & Coffee
See ad, p. 43
- Grocery stores**
2 Darrington IGA
See ad, p. 38
- Pawn Shops**
3 Cold Nugget Jewelry & Loan Inc.
See ads, p. 40

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Darrington



Cont. from page 38

vistas, and old fire lookout sites for great views of surrounding mountains and the rivers below.

Take your time driving this scenic byway and exploring the hiking opportunities. There are several campgrounds and also primitive campsites along the South Fork Sauk River on the Mountain Loop Highway, North Fork Sauk River on the Sloan Creek FS Rd. No. 49, and the White Chuck FS Rd. No. 23, which reopened in 2011.

In autumn the leaves turn into an array of colors, making the Mountain Loop a wonderful annual driving tradition. As the leaves drop from the trees and shrubs, you can see eagles along the rivers and views of mountains and waterfalls open up from the road. As much as the Mountain Loop Highway is a beautiful drive, it also is a historic road traveling east from Granite Falls along the South Fork Stillaguamish River to the mining towns of Silverton, Monte Cristo, and Barlow Pass. Once reaching Barlow Pass, the road bends north along the South Fork Sauk River, then reaches Darrington.

The Suittale, Sauk, and White Chuck Rivers are popular destinations for one-of-

a-kind whitewater rafting and kayaking. Sauk River is well known by many for its class II to class IV rapids. If whitewater is not your thing, there also are scenic float trips down the rivers, where you will see wildlife and mountain views that can be seen nowhere else.

There are many options for camping, with many of the hiking trails offering designated backcountry campsites. There are three vehicle campgrounds—Squire Creek, Clear Creek, and Bedal—offering tent and trailer camping, dispersed campgrounds (primitive with a pit toilet) on the Mountain Loop Highway, French Creek and Sloan Creek roads, as well as Texas Pond on North Mountain. Many of our forest roads have primitive campsites as well.

Driving on scenic forest roads takes you to panoramic views of mountains, wildflowers, waterfalls, and alpine streams heavy with snow melt. When driving on these roads, remember to be a good backcountry neighbor and watch out for wildlife.

Pilots who fly into the airport speak of the breathtaking views of the mountains as they approach Darrington. When you land, you can walk right into town and grab a bite to eat, do a little shopping, or

just stretch your legs and take some time to relax. The Darrington Improvement Club noticed that pilots and friends were tromping through the mud as they walked into town, so they installed a foot path. That's just our way of saying, "Welcome to Darrington!"

Bald eagles an attraction

Every fall the bald eagles return to the Darrington area to feast on the salmon in the rivers.

There are various locations for viewing eagles and their nesting areas near Darrington, including the North Bridge of Squire Creek. Walking to the back area of Squire Creek Campground, located along SR 530, you will reach the Whitehorse Rails to Trails. The old railroad bridge crossing Squire Creek is a popular feeding and nesting area.

Another great place to watch the eagles is Bryson Rd., located northeast of Darrington where the road has washed out. Eagles roost in the trees and wait for returning salmon.

The Old Mt. Loop Hwy. off Sauk Prairie Rd., also is an excellent drive. Park in the area by the gate and walk along the North Fork of the Sauk River to several good viewing spots.

Another popular viewing area is Fortson Mill pond, located along SR 530. Fortson once was a bustling mill town; now only the two millponds and ruins exist. The large Fortson Mill pond is not only a good place to spot eagles, but also an occasional busy beaver.



Slide Lake, north of Darrington. Photo by Martha Rasmussen.

Claims to fame

Darrington is the hometown of television game show host Bob Barker from "The Price Is Right." A scene from the 2001 film "Along Came a Spider" was filmed on SR 530 between Darrington and Arlington. A made-for-TV movie titled "High Ice" was filmed on Darrington's Whitehorse Mountain. The fictional town of Hope, Wash., in the book, *Homespun Christmas*, is based on Darrington. A scene from the 1983 film "War Games" was filmed near Darrington; during one scene, when David Lightman (Matthew Broderick) is in a phone booth and says he is in Colorado, the mountain in the background is Whitehorse Mountain. Octavia Butler's vampire novel *Fledgling* takes place near Darrington.

A brief history

The upper Stillaguamish Valley, where Darrington is located, was once settled by the local Sauk-Suittale tribes in the drainage of the Sauk, Suittale, and White Chuck rivers, which are abundant in salmon and other fish. In 1870 a group of surveyors working for the Northern Pacific Railroad came to the area to chart a pass over the Cascade Mountains to the Wenatchee Valley. Although a suitable route was found, the railroad chose a route farther south. Gold was discovered at Monte Cristo in the summer of 1889 and prospectors began to flood into the Cascade Mountains. A road was punched

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in to Monte Cristo from Sauk City on the Skagit River. Darrington's current location became a halfway point on the road, then a Boontown called "Starve Out."

At one point called "The Portage," the town was renamed Barrington in 1895 following a community meeting. The U.S. Postal Department mistakenly changed the first letter to a "D," resulting in the current name.

The Northern Pacific Railroad branch from Arlington reached Darrington on June 1, 1901. This opened up the possibilities for timber harvesting. Several sawmills started up in the area and with them, small towns and communities.

Over the years, most of the small mills have closed or merged with the mill in town, Hampton Lumber Mill, which is the largest employer in Darrington. The Northern Pacific Railroad was abandoned in 1991, and the tracks were pulled

in 1994 to begin construction of the Whitehorse Rails to Trails.

Darrington was officially incorporated on Oct. 15, 1945, the same year the first Town Hall was built. The Town Hall housed the city clerk and mayor, fire department, library, and community center with a dance floor. The following year the community came together to raise money for a new fire truck. This fundraiser was named Timberbowl and the tradition lasted for several decades. Timber was a very important part of the Darrington economy. Today, "Darrington Day" is the townwide event that includes music in the park, an open air market, and specials held at local businesses. Many people come out to enjoy the camping and trails of Darrington's surrounding wilderness areas. Boulder River Wilderness, Henry M. Jackson Wilderness, and the Glacier Peak Wilderness.

Darrington has a total area of one square mile, all of it land. Darrington is

a small community where many of the people know each other. The town is surrounded by mountains, the highest of these mountains is Whitehorse, with an elevation of 6,852 feet to the southwest. The elevation of the town is only 554 feet. Three roads provide access through the North Cascades from Darrington. To the south is the Mountain Loop Highway, a Forest Service Scenic Byway that connects to Granite Falls at 56 miles.

State Route 530 takes you north from Darrington along the Sauk River to Rockport.

The closest town to Darrington is Arlington, which is a 27-mile drive west on SR 530 along the Stillaguamish River and Whitehorse Rails to Trails. Before the "new" SR 530 connected Darrington to the valley below, it was an all-day trip to drive to Everett. The term "going down below" is still widely used among community members, meaning going out of town.

After the landslide between Darrington and Oso closed SR 530 in March 2014, Darrington residents have had to reach I-5 by taking "the long way around," via Rockport and Concrete, and out to the freeway. Hopefully during the 2014 summer visitor season, SR 530 will open, so that our guests can more easily enjoy all the city has to offer.

Logger pride

The Darrington School District educates approximately 570 children each year on a single K-12 campus. The mascot for the school is the Loggers, named after the industry on which the town was built.

The Parent Student Teacher Association is very involved in the local schools. School assemblies are held several times per year, where students are awarded for academic achievements, as well as constructive behavior. There also is a

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Wildflower heaven

From the hillsides of Sauk Mountain to the lush green alpine meadows above Darrington, wildflowers are a fact of life in our beautiful corner of the Pacific Northwest.

Photographer Shari Brewer of Darrington loves to capture images of the beautiful flora in our area. Here's a sampling of her work.



Lupine



Stone Crop



Blue Bells



Labrador Tea



Bog Bean



Evergreen Violet



Salmonberry



Gentian



Marsh Marigold



Paint Brush

Darrington

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drama club for the high school and middle school. They perform twice annually. Darrington has consistently fielded highly competitive teams for both men's and women's sports. The sports available to Darrington students include football, basketball, baseball, volleyball, tennis, and wrestling. The sports in Darrington are coached by teachers who are on staff at the school and by local townspeople.

In 1981 the Darrington Loggers won the State B Championship for baseball, but the Loggers also are successful in other sports. The men's basketball teams have continuously played in the state championships. In 2011 the women's basketball team placed 5th in state.

Darrington also has had several successful wins in the wrestling program, including Bill West winning at 190 lbs. in 1972, Andy West winning at 215 lbs. in 1998 and 1999, and Kolton Palmer winning at 160 lbs. in 2010. In 2013, freshman Mason McKenzie captured second in state at 220 lbs.; he went back in

2014 and took the title. In 2013, the girls' volleyball team placed third in state.

First Nations people remain

The Sauk-Suattle Indian people have lived under the gaze of Whitehorse Mountain for many generations. They live as hunters, gatherers, and fishermen in the region of Sauk Prairie near Darrington. In the early days, they were known as the *Sah-lu-meh*.

In the past they were canoe people, navigating the swift waters of the Sauk, Skiatte, Stillaguamish, Cascade, and Skagit rivers in river canoes. Though their homelands are in the foothills of the North Cascades, they often traveled downriver to Puget Sound. There they harvested fish, shellfish, and other foods not available in the mountains. They even voyaged in large seagoing canoes.

They traveled over the mountains to gather food, herbs, and other necessities. They became skilled horsemen, trading with tribes from Eastern Washington. Their free-roaming horses grazed among relatives there.



North Sauk Trail. Photo by Martha Rasmussen.

Effort to rehab North Mountain Lookout gaining traction

A family of four bounces up Forest Rd. No. 2810 a few miles outside Darrington. As they round a corner, a lookout comes into sight above the treetops. They park and carry their gear up the 41-foot tower. The kids are thrilled, the parents are enchanted. They can see below them the little mountain town they just drove



This concept view of North Mountain Lookout shows a rehabilitated perch from which to enjoy panoramic views near Darrington. Image courtesy of Dykeman Visual Marketing.

through. The rocky, glacier-clad peaks are their closest neighbors. They are surrounded by peace and the awesome hand of nature, and it's theirs for the whole weekend. They've just discovered their new family tradition.

That's the vision for the Friends of North Mountain—or one version of it.

The Friends are a partnership between the Darrington Historical Society, The Forest Fire Lookout Association, and the Darrington Area Business Association. Since our first meeting on March 30, we've been making progress on clarifying our ultimate vision, still flexible at this point as more stakeholders share their energy and ideas. We've contacted other fee-based, publicly accessible lookout towers in Canada and the U.S. to use as possible templates for the North Tower. The Jersey Jim lookout in Colorado holds particular promise. A 55-foot tower accessible by motor vehicle and open seasonally, it is often booked for the season a couple of days after opening for reservations.

Creating a fee structure will be important to the sustainability of the project to cover the costs of annual maintenance to the tower and cabin, as well as the many miles of DNR road that lead to the structure. With only two other rentable lookouts in Washington, the prospects are extremely good for North Mountain to become a popular destination for people across the Northwest.

On June 13, Friends of North Mountain partnered with Friends for Public Use, clearing two miles of blowdown from the road to the lookout and assessing its condition and future work needed. The road is now drivable all the way to the top.

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though still rough in spots.

Our current projects include undertaking the cultural review process required for all structures of this age (nearly 50 years). The outcome of the process will determine significant details of the ultimate design of the cabin and to some extent the viability of the project. If you have experience with this process or have a background in archeology or historical architecture, please contact the Friends.

In addition we'll be creating our materials list and projected budget, and looking for people with the skill sets to serve on our future board of directors, and discussing our fundraising strategies.

If you would like to see this project succeed and are willing to add your energy, ideas, and enthusiasm, send an e-mail to roselle.rasmussen@gmail.com. This lookout tower is an asset to our community and has the potential to become something great.

—Roselle Rasmussen

Road warriors

What do you do when one of your favorite backcountry roads has been closed because there isn't enough money for the U.S. Forest Service to maintain it? If you're Darrington's Martha Rasmussen, you form a volunteer group to take on the task of monitoring the most crucial forest roads and doing what you can to keep them open, navigable, and beautiful.

Rasmussen's crusade began in summer 2011 with a planned day hike to Circle Peak. "I found that because of an access road closure, I'd have to hike an additional seven miles to get there. That got to me," she said.

After a conversation with her husband, Darrington chiropractor Nels Rasmussen, "I started forming a plan," she said.

Rasmussen met first with Darrington District Ranger Peter Forbes, who oversees the area's portion of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. She explained her idea to create a volunteer-based group of road-maintenance workers who would do everything short of using heavy machinery to keep backcountry access roads open.

Forbes was agreeable, and brought North Zone Roads Manager James Mitchell into the conversation. With 1,400 miles of roads to maintain, Rasmussen's plan seemed like a good idea to the men, so Friends for Public Use was born.

Rasmussen held her first work parties



Members of Friends for Public Use pause for a photo while working on Illabot Creek Rd. near Rockport in July 2012. From left, Brian Berggren, FFFPU founder Martha Rasmussen, Don Bangert, April Bangert. Not pictured but also working on the road that day were Paul Wagner and Phyllis Reed.

in April 2012 and logged 54.5 volunteer hours. In May it was 72 hours. In June it leaped to more than 200 hours as the group tripled its volunteer base. It seemed Rasmussen was not alone in her concern for public access.

"I prayed that someone would be as crazy as I am—and there's a lot of them out there," said Rasmussen. "I had no idea how this was going to work. I just knew that somehow it had to work."

Rasmussen's crews have worked on several forest roads, including FR 28 and 18, Clear Creek Rd., White Chuck Rd., Rat Trap Pass Rd., and several more. On Oct. 28, 2012, they were on Illabot Creek Rd., 15 miles in from Hwy 530, clearing culverts, shoveling muck out of ditches, picking up garbage, and pulling volunteer alder shoots out of pullouts.

"We don't do road maintenance; we just try to keep the roads healthy," said Rasmussen.

Their tools of choice are flat shovels for scraping bridges, point-tip shovels for digging, pick mattocks, long-handled claw cultivators for clearing out culverts, flashlights for peering into culverts, come-alongs for moving larger objects, pry bars, and "lots of garbage bags."

On the job

Work parties are designed to get roads ready for adoption. DAFFPU volunteers

Darrington

Darrington EVENTS CALENDAR*

- 2014
- May**
 - Darrington Day, May 31 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
 - June**
 - National Trail Day, June 7
 - Darrington Timberbowl Rodeo, June 21–22, 2 p.m. shows
 - July**
 - July 4 Parade on Darrington St., 1 p.m. July 18–20 www.darringtonbluegrass.com
 - Darrington Rock & Gem Show, July 19–20, Mansford Grange, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 - Biker Sunday, July 20
 - August**
 - Summer Meltdown Festival, Aug. 7–10, Whitehorse Mountain Amphitheatre www.summermeltdown.com
 - Sauk-Suattle Indian Tribe Powwow (dates TBA) www.sauk-suattle.com/powwow
 - StrutFest Music Festival (dates TBA)
 - October**
 - Mansford Grange Harvest Festival, Oct. 11
 - December**
 - Holiday Bazaar, Dec. 6
- *For more information, go to event Web sites as noted, www.darringtontourism.com, or www.concrete-herald.com.



Three Fingers Mountain. Photo by Martha Rasmussen.

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Marblemount

Community with a colorful history

The community of Marblemount, located in the last large river plain of the Upper Skagit Valley and surrounded by high, snow-capped mountain peaks, has often been compared to alpine villages in Europe.

Located on the North Cascades Highway where the Cascade River joins the Skagit River, the community is a favorite haven for outdoor enthusiasts who enjoy hiking, camping, fishing, hunting, eagle watching, river rafting, or just looking at scenery.

Attractions in the area include all of the above, plus the state fish hatchery and the North Cascades National Park ranger station. Take Cascade Rd. out of Marblemount to enter North Cascades National Park.

Several restaurants, two gas stations, two convenience stores, and a post office are located in the little hamlet too.

Visitors enjoy the friendly hospitality of Marblemount as they stop to stretch their legs, get something to eat, or fuel up vehicles before the journey over the mountain passes to the east.

A short walk over the Skagit River bridge on Cascade Rd. brings a spectacular view of the gently flowing river, high mountain peaks, and lush greenery. Sometimes mighty salmon can be viewed in the shallows as they make their way upstream.

For a quick taste of the outdoors, park at the Shell station and follow the roadside sign to Pressentin County Park, which

includes a birding trail—a well-mowed strip of land that traverses the perimeter of the old homestead that was once on the property.

Despite the mountain setting, the altitude of Marblemount is only about 350 feet above sea level and the climate is moderate.

Marblemount was the hub of mining activity in the Upper Valley when the lure of gold brought hundreds of miners to the area in the 1800s. Prospectors journeyed up the Cascade River or Ruby Creek, near the summit of North Cascades Pass, to search for the valuable metal. However, transporting the gold back to civilization proved too difficult and the era of lively mining activities ended.

Logging and millwork, construction of the three Seattle City Light dams, and mining of talc and other minerals provided employment and a continued population in the community.

Only one of the original buildings still stands; it was converted into the Log House Inn, which is no longer in operation. Another old landmark, the Marblemount Hotel, or "Sadie's Place," was torn down when the state highway department widened the highway through the community.

Old-fashioned community get-togethers are popular in Marblemount. Events often are held at the Marblemount Community Hall, which neighbors the Marblemount Diner to the east, on SR 20.

More info is at www.marblemount.com.

www.concrete-herald.com



Members of the Washington Civil War Association reenact that turning point in U.S. history, April 2010. The reenactment was a fixture on the streets of Marblemount for several years before the economy hampered the group's efforts. The reenactment included a historically accurate camp, as well as faux battles that filled SR 20 with smoke from rifled muskets and cannon fire. Keep an eye out—and hopes up—for their return in 2014 by going to www.marblemount.com.

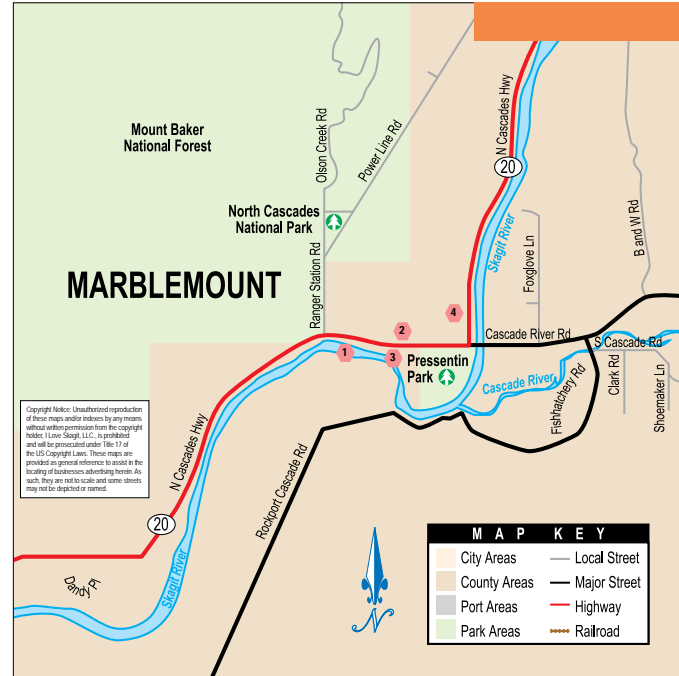


This 12-foot-tall carving of a Sasquatch on private property in Marblemount hints at the popular Pacific Northwest legend. Reports of Bigfoot sightings are common in the Upper Skagit Valley. The most recent one was in December 2012 at Lake Tyee north of Concrete, where large footprints were spotted in the snow. Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization representatives visited the community in late December, took plaster castings, asked questions—and determined the prints were likely a hoax.



Wildwood Chapel is a nondenominational retreat from the tensions of driving. It is located between Rockport and Marblemount on SR 20, across from The Eatery. The Rudy Clark family obtained the tiny building from the Stevens Pass Highway after the chapel was vandalized, and restored it to its present condition. Thousands of visitors have paused in the little chapel for meditation and rest since its dedication in 1977. Several weddings also have been held there.

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| MAP KEY | |
|--------------|--------------|
| City Areas | Local Street |
| County Areas | Major Street |
| Port Areas | Highway |
| Park Areas | Railroad |



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 Thurs.: Morning Breakfast, 8 a.m.
 Dave Nichols, pastor
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"In a few decades, the relationship between the environment, resources, and conflict may seem almost as obvious as the connection we see today between human rights, democracy, and peace."
 —Wangari Maathai

"By polluting clear water with slime you will never find good drinking water."
 —Aeschylus

"The environment is everything that isn't me."
 —Albert Einstein



Look for the Pressentin Park sign on the south side of SR 20 as you enter the business district in Marblemount from the west, and feel free to enjoy this 55-acre, day-use park, which offers a picnic shelter, fishing, hiking, and plenty of wildlife. The land was given to Skagit County by Warren Pressentin and dedicated in August 1991.

Newhalem

Company town with attractions for visitors

Owned and managed by Seattle City Light, Newhalem is part of the Skagit Hydroelectric Project, which extends 40 miles along the Skagit River from Newhalem to the Canadian border.

City Light has generated hydroelectric power on the upper Skagit River since 1918. There are now three dams on the river and one on a nearby creek, all of which provide power to the citizen-owners of Seattle.

Visitors to Newhalem are greeted by "Old No. 6," a train whose working days in the area ran from 1927 to 1954. The train sits in front of the Skagit General Store, which was established in 1922 as an employee commissary to serve the needs of the workers and their families on the Skagit River Hydroelectric Project. The store underwent an intense remodel in 2012 and reopened in mid-May 2013. Step through its doors to stock up on all manner of food and refreshments, including the store's famous homemade fudge.

Newhalem and Diablo to the east are the jumping-off point for the Skagit Tours (see ad, p. 41), offered through a partnership among City Light, the National Park Service, and the North Cascades Institute. Here's a brief look:

- **Diablo Lake Boat Tours** start with a guided walk. Participants next board the Alice Ross III sightseeing boat and embark on a cruise of glacier-fed Diablo Lake, venturing into locations that are typically hidden from view when traveling by highway or hiking on trails. Tours are offered Thurs. through Mon., from July 4 through Sept. 9. Reservations are required and boats are filled on a first come, first served basis.
- **North Cascades Explorer Tours** take participants behind the scenes in a guided shuttle tour. The tour includes a picnic lunch and several short, easy hikes that inform participants about the natural and cultural history of the area. Tours are led by a National Park Ranger and a

naturalist from the North Cascades Institute.

The tour begins in Newhalem with a walk through the Ladder Creek Falls Gardens and a peek at the inside of the Gorge power house. From there the tour moves to Diablo for a view of the famous incline lift, which once carried entire train cars (sometimes filled with tourists) up the side of Sourdough Mountain. In 2013 guests will be able to visit the famous Art Deco lobby and viewing gallery of Diablo power house—normally closed to the public—and see the power generators up close.

The rest of the tour focuses on the natural history, biodiversity, and geology of the North Cascades.

Explorer Tours are offered Sat. and Sun. from July 5 through Sept. 8.

- **Power House Tours** will be offered for six days in 2013. Starting in Newhalem, the journey includes visits to the Gorge power house visitor gallery and Ladder Creek Falls Gardens. From there, the group will move to Diablo to see the interior of

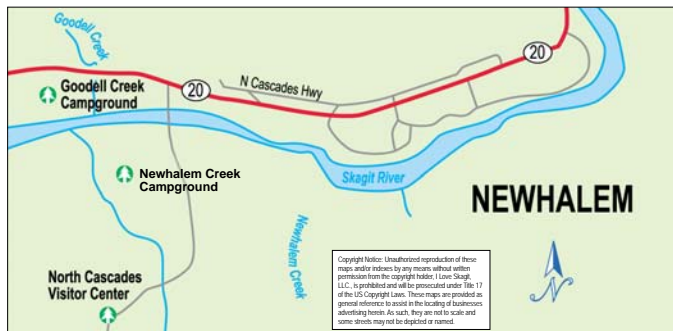


A Newhalem landmark, the "Old No. 6" train was purchased in 1927 for \$7,500. She carried supplies and equipment to build the dams and power houses at the Seattle City Light Upper Skagit project, then brought personnel and tourists to the area until 1954. In the 1970s, a local group of business people and community activists who called themselves the "Skagit River Railway Volunteers" restored the train to operating condition and ran it for a short time as a tourist attraction.

Diablo power house from its Art Deco lobby and viewing gallery. The tour ends with a ride on the Alice Ross III, exploring Diablo Lake and a look at the interior of Ross power house. Reservations are required. Tours are

offered on Fri. and Sat., June 21–22, Sept. 20–21, and Oct. 4–5. Newhalem Walking Tours let visitors enjoy the company town and its history and amenities at their own

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Newhalem



While visiting Newhalem, relax beneath the "Temple of Power" sculpture west of the information center. Designed by former Artist in Residence Dan Corson, the "Edwardian" gazebo uses recycled bushings from the Diablo switchyard to support its domed ceiling. Those bushings originally were filled with oil and used in giant circuit breakers.



With more than 30 years' history under its belt, the Newhalem Softball Tournament draws teams from all over Skagit County to Newhalem every July. Money raised from entry fees goes to a different charitable organization each year.

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pace. Admission is free. Tours are offered Thurs. through Mon. from July 4 through Sept. 9, at 2 p.m., starting at the Skagit Information Center in Newhalem.

Brochures for a self-guided tour of Newhalem also are available, with stops at the locomotive, store, and more. A fold-out map is included in the brochure.

Seattle City Light contributed to this article.

Ladder Creek Falls lands outdoor lighting design award

Seattle City Light's restoration of the historic Ladder Creek Falls light show at the Skagit Hydroelectric Project in Newhalem won a Paul Waterbury Award in 2013 for Outdoor Lighting Design Excellence from the Illuminating Engineering Society.

The lights at Ladder Creek Falls were installed by City Light's second superintendent, J. D. Ross, in the 1920s and '30s as part of his efforts to win public appreciation for the municipally owned Skagit Hydroelectric Project. Ross was intrigued by the possibilities for using light in artistic ways and wanted to create what he called "a paradise of color in the wilderness."

Ladder Creek Falls was selected from 386 projects around the world that were submitted for consideration in the Illuminating Engineering Society's annual contest. Other award winners included The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation site in Seattle and projects in Lebanon, Japan, and Qatar.

For early visitors, the Ladder Creek Falls lights created a fairyland symbolizing the new wonders of

electricity. Over the years, the original, historic system slowly fell into disrepair. By the end of 2004, the lighting system was completely dark.

In 2008, City Light started working to restore the lights. The design team of Berger Partnership and Candela was hired to design the new system to recreate the historic appearance while meeting current electrical and safety codes.

Candela completed the designs in 2009. Valley Electric was awarded the \$900,000 contract and started construction in 2010. The labor-intensive work, which also included rebuilding concrete stairs and installing a seating area, handrails, guard rails, signs, and benches, is now complete as a part of the utility's dam operating license requirement to preserve historic attributes and provide recreational opportunities. Visitors will be able to enjoy a spectacle of changing lights within the glacier-fed falls nightly from dark until midnight.

About 30 programmable, energy efficient LED light fixtures were installed to replace the original 1,000-watt spotlights.

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Diablo

Ecosystems and education

East of Newhalem lies another Seattle City Light company town, Diablo. With just two small residential areas and the workings of hydroelectricity, the community could be overlooked easily. But don't let that fool you. Several amenities exist here to entertain and educate visitors.

After exiting SR 20 at the Diablo sign, travel northeast on Diablo Rd. and look for the Gorge Lake Campground on your

right (you're actually traveling along the easternmost portion of Gorge Lake at this point). This primitive campground (bring water or a filter) is free and first come, first served. And yes, there's a toilet.

In Diablo proper, signs point to the Sourdough Mountain trailhead. Nearby you'll see a replica of the Davis power house, the first such structure built on the Skagit in 1900 by Glee Davis, a pioneer homesteader in the area. His

remarkable engineering feat generated 3.75 kilowatts—only enough to light the top elements of an electric range today.

Diablo Lake: a jade-green gem

The beautiful Diablo Lake reservoir is the most accessible of the three reservoirs that lie behind the City Light dams: Ross, Diablo, and Gorge. Diablo gets its signature pastel green color from glacial "flour"—dustlike rock particles that are released from three glaciers that drain into the lake.

To access Diablo Lake, take the North Cascades Environmental Learning Center exit off SR 20, six miles east of Newhalem. The road drops to the base of the lake; you'll then drive across the top of Diablo Dam.

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Follow the road to the learning center and spend a few minutes visiting.

Back out on SR 20, continue to Colonial Creek Campground, located at milepost 130. Here you'll find 142 campsites of varying accessibility, along with many opportunities for day hikes. No reservations; first come, first served.

Colonial Creek Campground offers a pier and boat launch on Diablo Lake. Kayakers and canoe paddlers travel from here to three boat-in campgrounds on Diablo: Thunder Point with three campsites, Hidden Cove with one site, and Buster Brown with three sites.

More information on Colonial Creek Campground and other area campsites is posted at www.nps.gov/noca/planyourvisit/car-camping.htm.



Diablo Lake as seen from an SR 20 overlook above it. The 910-acre reservoir backs up behind Diablo Dam, one of three dams that comprise Seattle City Light's Skagit River Hydroelectric Project.

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The incline lift at Diablo once carried entire train cars (sometimes filled with tourists) up the side of Sourdough Mountain. The lift is one stop on the North Cascades Explorer Tour, led by a National Park Ranger and a naturalist from the North Cascades Institute. Explorer Tours are offered Saturdays and Sundays from July 5 through September 8. Tours depart from the Skagit Information Center in Newhalem at 10 a.m. and last about five hours. Reservations are required. For more information, go to www.seattle.gov/light/hours/skagit.

Diablo



The Wild Ginger Library at North Cascades Environmental Learning Center supports the North Cascades Institute's mission of inspiring people to conserve and restore Northwest environments through education. The library provides books and other resources to help people think about and understand the world around them, engage in discussions on environmental problems, and see their relationship to the broader world. The Wild Ginger Library particularly focuses on information and stories of the Pacific Northwest, especially the North Cascades. For more information, go to <http://nccascades.org/discover/ncecl/wild-ginger-library>. Photo by Rick Allen.

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North Cascades National Park

Explore the American Alps

By Cindy Bjorklund

The North Cascades range reaches its finest expression in the North Cascades National Park Complex, where a dense concentration of jagged glaciated peaks towers above alpine meadows and deep valleys, and results in supremely majestic scenery.

The North Cascades National Park Complex contains more glaciers than any other protected area outside Alaska, representing one-quarter of all glaciers in the lower 48 states. The 312 active glaciers include ice fields, cirque glaciers, and hanging glaciers, which create unique microclimates and habitats and are dramatic indicators of climate change.

From deep forested valleys to alpine peaks, the park encompasses extreme gradients of climate and topography that contribute to an impressive diversity of habitats and species. There are old-growth forests, glaciers, snowfields, lakes, ponds, tarns, wetlands, rivers, and streams within the park, which ranges from the wet west side to the dry climate of the east side.

The North Cascades are the core of a vast mountainous ecosystem of protected public lands spanning the border of the U.S. and Canada. The park stretches from Hozomeen at the border with Canada southward to the northern tip of Lake Chelan. Hozomeen, above Ross Lake, is accessible only by foot after driving to the northern end of Ross Lake via Canada. The park complex is composed of North Cascades National Park, Ross Lake National Recreation Area, and Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, a complementary suite of protected lands, united by a contiguous wilderness overview.

The North Cascades Scenic Highway is one of the nation's most spectacular mountain drives. The area has long been known as the "North American Alps." Characterized by rugged beauty, this steep mountain range is filled with jagged peaks, deep valleys, cascading waterfalls, mountain lakes, and hundreds of glaciers. Near Washington Pass (5,477 feet) the massive bulk of Liberty Bell and Early Winter's spires appear to block any passage through this mountain fortress.

It was not until 1972, following years of proposals and explorations, that the modern road was built to traverse the

North Cascades. State Route 20 from milepost 134 (east of Diablo) to milepost 171 (west of Mazama) closes each winter because of snowfall (usually late November through late April).

The highway begins in the pastoral valley of the Skagit River and crosses the jagged glaciated peaks of the North Cascades Mountains. The byway skirts the emerald waters of Ross Lake before descending rapidly into the dry Methow Valley.

The park provides wilderness travelers with great challenges of physical endurance, route finding, and navigation. Four hundred miles of trails and climbing routes provide mountaineers with solitude, challenge, and fulfillment.

State Route 20 offers challenging bicycling terrain for experienced cyclists. For water-based recreation, Ross and Diablo lakes offer opportunities to paddle, use a small powerboat, or fish.

There are several large bodies of water within or at the edge of the park. The Skagit River is the largest river draining into Puget Sound and is the third largest river on the West Coast. At more than 1,400 feet deep, Lake Chelan is the third deepest lake in the U.S. Within the Lake Chelan Recreation Area lies Stehekin, a community that provides visitors with an opportunity to see and experience life in a remote setting that is not accessible by roads and is surrounded by wilderness. The only ways to come are by boat, foot, or plane.

The three reservoirs within the Ross Lake National Recreation Area were harnessed for hydroelectric power before Congress established the park in 1968.

Beginning in the 1920s, people journeyed from Rockport to Newhalem by train to enjoy the mountains and to visit the Skagit River Hydroelectric Project. Constructed by Seattle City Light between 1919 and 1967, the three dams form Ross, Diablo, and Gorge reservoirs. The dams supply electricity to the citizens of Seattle. The Skagit Information Center in Newhalem and the nearby Ladder Creek Falls Trail and the Trail of the Cedars offer opportunities to learn about the hydroelectric project, as well as the natural and human history of the upper Skagit River.



The view from the top of Cascade Pass in North Cascades National Park is one of the finest in the region. The 3.7-mile hike from the trailhead doesn't have to end here, though; from this popular resting point, some hikers push on to Stehekin. Photo courtesy of Andy Porter Photography. www.northwesternimages.com.

Seattle City Light offers summer cruises on Diablo Lake and provides a regularly scheduled shuttle service between Diablo and Ross lakes.

The North Cascades National Park Complex offers several special features. Preserved within the park is abundant evidence of nearly 10,000 years of cultural and technological development. This long history reveals a range of human adaptations to changing climates

and environments at all elevations of the North Cascades. Native Americans used this corridor as a trading route from the Eastern Plateau country to the Pacific Coast for more than 8,000 years. Beginning in the mid-1800s, white settlers arrived in search of gold, fur-bearing animals, and a place to establish a new home. Today's visitors can enjoy

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an abundance of outdoor recreation opportunities.

The general absence of artificial light within the park ensures preservation of majestic nighttime views. Natural sounds dominate, supporting natural ecosystem function and providing an unrivaled wilderness experience.

Traveling from west to east, there are several points of interest along the North Cascades Scenic Highway.

The park headquarters are in Sedro-Woolley. The office is open year-round, with current information about roads and trails in the national park and Mount Baker Snoqualmie Forest with a bookstore operated by the North Cascades Institute.

A few miles west of the western boundary of the park, one enters the Skagit Wild and Scenic River System. The Skagit watershed flows south from British Columbia, originating in glaciers of the high peaks.

The park spreads to the north and south of SR 20, encompassing more than 680,000 acres, 94 percent of it being official wilderness—a "sea of peaks." Its rugged topography is home to a multitude of plant, animal, and fish species. Rare lichens, ancient cedars, Chinook salmon,

bald eagles, marmots, mountain goats, the elusive fisher, and some 1,600 identified species share this diverse and expansive landscape. Birdwatchers find plenty to see throughout the watershed from the park down to where the Skagit River flows into Puget Sound.

The 94 percent of the North Cascades National Park Complex that is designated Stephen Mather Wilderness combined with adjacent wilderness provides a 2,000,000-acre contiguous wilderness area, creating the North Cascades ecosystem. Contiguous designated wildernesses include: Mount Baker, Pasayten, Noisy-Diobusud, Lake Chelan-Sawtooth, Glacier Peak, Henry M. Jackson, and Wild Sky Wildernesses. Beyond the state border in Canada, there are the Chilliwack Lake Provincial Area, the Skagit Valley Provincial Park, and Manning Provincial Park to combine with the wilderness areas in Washington State.

Continuing east, near the town of Newhalem is the North Cascades Visitor Center, which offers travelers more information about North Cascades National Park. Here you will find park rangers, maps, information, exhibits, audio-visual programs, trails, and

viewpoints.

There are miles of outstanding trails here and farther up the road as the North Cascades Highway weaves among Gorge, Diablo, and Ross Lakes. Views of these reservoirs and dams are easily accessible from roadside pullouts or short hikes.

The unusual pale turquoise green color of the water is due to suspended particles washed down from glaciers above.

A short distance east lies the town of Newhalem, a community built by Seattle City Light to house dam workers. The 1920s-era homes will take you back in time. Skagit Tour's Diablo Lake boat and walking tour tickets are available here. The tours feature gourmet lunches provided by the North Cascades Environmental Learning Center on Diablo Lake, using locally grown ingredients.

About six miles past Newhalem is a road that turns north, dropping down to cross Diablo Dam and ending at the North Cascades Environmental Learning Center.

In 2005 North Cascades Institute opened North Cascades Environmental Learning Center on Diablo Lake in the heart of the North Cascades. A partnership with the

North Cascades National Park

National Park Service and the City of Seattle, the Learning Center is surrounded by millions of acres of protected public lands. It is a hub of discovery into one of the wildest, most biologically diverse landscapes in North America. Learners of all ages come to explore and participate in innovative programs that inspire and enrich their lives. Proceeds from the sales in the park bookstores help fund free programs for youth.

The 30-mile stretch of the Ross Lake National Recreation area offers great recreational opportunities and easy access to the North Cascades. Views from the Diablo Lake and Ross Lake overlooks (mileposts 132 and 134, respectively) reach north to Canada and south into the glaciated valley.

Colonial Creek and Newhalem Creek campgrounds offer the most vehicle-accessible campsites in the park, with summer programs and excellent ancient forest hikes.

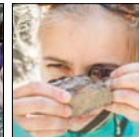
Cindy Bjorklund is a National Park Service Ranger at North Cascades National Park.

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North Cascades National Park

You're the visitor: Be cautious—and smart—around wild animals

Traveling into North Cascades National Park puts you in some of the most beautiful country in the U.S. It's important to remember that "wilderness" includes the word "wild," which applies to the country and its inhabitants. You're in their backyard now, so be wise about how you interact with them.

Avoid surprising animals at close range. Whistle, talk, sing, or otherwise make noise when hiking in areas where visibility is limited or bear sign present. Take no pets; they are prohibited in the backcountry. A dog's valor may turn into retreat, bringing an infuriated bear to you. Be alert to sign (droppings, diggings, fresh tracks, etc.), sounds, or other indications of bears. Be particularly wary when hiking wildlife trails, salmon streams, or other areas where bears concentrate.

Food and beverages should never be left unattended. Foodstuffs with strong odors such as fish, cheese, sausage, and fresh meats should be stored in a food cache, a bear-resistant container, or suspended 10 feet above ground. Carry all refuse and garbage out! Buried refuse will attract bears.

Keep packs and other personal gear on your person. It is easy to become separated from belongings left lying on the ground when a bear unexpectedly approaches. Bears will investigate, often destructively.

Bears approach anglers because they have learned to recognize them as a source of food. Stop fishing when bears are present.

If you keep a fish, you should remove the fish immediately to a proper food storage area.

Do not approach bears

The minimum safe distance from any bear is 50 yards; from a bear with young it is 100 yards. These are *minimum* distances; there are many times that greater distances are required.

Regardless of precautions taken, you may come across a bear. Usually they will run away. A bear standing on hind legs may only be trying to sense you better, not preparing to attack. Even a charge is often a bluff, ending abruptly short of physical contact.

If you see a bear at a distance, turn around or make a wide detour. Keep

upwind if possible so the bear will get your scent and know you're there. Talk in an assured tone to communicate your presence. Treat animals as if cubs are nearby. Assume the bear will be defensive. Do not approach closer to scare a bear away; you may be considered a threat.

Avoid actions that interfere with bear movement or foraging activities. Be satisfied with a distant photograph, or use a telephoto lens. Many fatalities and injuries have been related to photography.

Do not corner an animal. Allow them plenty of space and an escape route.

Bears are typically solitary animals. Much of their communication at feeding aggregations serves to maintain spacing and avoid conflict. Bears appear to have only a limited repertoire for this purpose. These behavior patterns are not highly ritualized, as in some species; therefore, their meaning is largely dependent on the context of the situation.

The following are behavior descriptions and a general interpretation of meaning to help you understand what a bear may be trying to tell you. Remember, each bear is an individual and each encounter is unique.

Postures

Standing on hind legs: A bear standing bipedally is typically not expressing aggression. Bears generally stand on their hind legs to gain more information, both olfactory and visual.

Stationary lateral body orientation: A bear may stand broadside to assert itself in some instances. In encounters with a human, it has usually been interpreted as a demonstration of size.

Stationary frontal orientation: If a bear is standing and facing you, it is certainly not being submissive. This is an aggressive position and may signal a charge. It is likely waiting for you to withdraw.

Vocalizations

Huffing: When a bear is tense, it may forcibly exhale a series of several sharp, rasping huffs. A mother may also huff in order to gain the attention of her young.

Woof: A startled bear may emit a single sharp exhale that lacks the harsh quality of a huff. If her cubs woof, a mother will immediately become alert to the situation.

Low popping: Females with young often emit a throaty popping sound, apparently to beckon their cubs when danger is sensed. A mother vocalizing in this manner should be considered nervous and extremely stressed. Bears other than sows also jaw pop.

Growl, snarl, roar: Clear indication of intolerance.

Other indicators

Yawning: Indicates tension. This behavior may result from the close proximity of another bear or human presence.

Excessive salivation: A clear sign of tension, salivation may appear as white foam around the bear's mouth.

The charge

The vast majority of charges are ones in which the bear stops before making contact. The intensity of the charge or associated vocalizations may vary, but it is distinct in that it is an aggressive or defensive act clearly directed at another bear or human. Bears may charge immediately, as a sow fearing for her cubs, or may emit stressed or erratic behavior before charging.

There is no guaranteed lifesaving method of reacting to an aggressive bear. Some behavior patterns have proven more successful in close encounters than others. Take a calm, assured posture. A firm voice and gradual departure are better than a retreat in panic. Include the nature of your surroundings in your reaction.

As a last resort, lie face down, protect your neck with your hands and arms, and don't move. This requires considerable courage, but resistance would be futile. Numerous incidents exist where a bear has snuffed and departed without serious injury.

Thoughts on Grizzly and black bears

American black bears and Grizzly bears can be difficult to tell apart. Size and color are not distinguishing characteristics. Both species vary greatly in the color of their coats: Black bears are not always black, and Grizzly bears are sometimes black and not always grizzled. This can make it very difficult to distinguish between the two.

Black bears and Grizzly bears have many things in common. Both sleep

through the winter. Both are powerful, fast, and protective of their young. Both species are poached for illegal sale on the black market.

Both bears eat a variety of foods, most of them plants. Both have good eyesight and an excellent sense of smell; they can detect scents from miles away. During the course of a year, both bears use a variety of habitats, from low valleys to high meadows. Both are highly intelligent and individualistic. Both bears learn quickly how to get food and garbage from people, a habit very difficult to break.

There are differences between black bears and Grizzly bears, too. Grizzlies grow larger than black bears and, as adults, are not the agile tree-climbers that black bears are. Though not always a definitive characteristic, Grizzlies tend to have a concave rather than straight facial profile. Grizzlies have a muscular shoulder hump and longer claws adapted for digging, which they do vigorously. Tracks can also be used to distinguish between the two bears. Grizzly bears can be more aggressively protective of their young and their food than black bears, though you should be very careful in the presence of either.

In 1975 Grizzly bears were designated a "threatened" species under the Endangered Species Act. It is illegal to hunt Grizzly bears in any national park. Black bears can be hunted in certain designated areas of National Recreation Areas. Check with the park for specific regulations.

Safety in cougar country

A cougar has all of the grace and playfulness of a house cat; it purrs and has a taste for catnip. Our familiarity with domestic cats can lead to some misconceptions about cougars, however. They are wild animals and must be respected as such.

Although few people ever see this elusive cat in the wild, sightings and encounters in the national parks have increased in recent years.

Cougars are entirely capable of lethal attacks on people, and predatory attacks by cougars have occurred across the western U.S. and southwestern Canada during at least the last 50 years. Some

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incidents occur when people behave in a manner that resembles a cougar's normal prey. Expanding development and subdivisions into cougar habitat, particularly in areas with high deer populations, and residents who leave pet food or small pets or other animals outdoors at night seem to be factors that contribute to increased frequencies of cougar attacks.

When you visit the backcountry of North Cascades National Park, you are in cougar habitat. Keep this in mind and follow some basic rules.

For your safety

Never approach a cougar, especially a feeding one. Cougars are unpredictable individuals, but will normally avoid a confrontation.

If you encounter a cougar, be sure to give it a way out.

Keep small children close to you while hiking, and do not allow them to run ahead or lag behind on the trail. Pick them up if you see fresh sign of a cougar.

Hiking in a small group is best. Particularly in areas where cougars have been sighted, avoid hiking alone.

Jogging is not recommended. People running or moving rapidly may be at higher risk. A walking stick makes a useful weapon in the event of an encounter.

If you encounter a cougar

Stop. Do not run. Immediately pick up small children. If you were sitting or bending over, stand upright. Spread your arms, open your coat, try to look as large as possible. Maintain eye contact with the cougar, and attempt to slowly back away.

If a cougar acts aggressively

Be assertive. If approached, wave your arms, shout, and throw sticks or rocks at it.

If attacked, fight back aggressively. An attack from a cougar is an unlikely event and, by taking these precautions, you can reduce the chances even further. By taking care, you will help enable all of us to continue to share America's wildlands with these magnificent animals.

Outside of national parks, the cougar is listed as a game animal in Washington in most states, so hunting is allowed according to state game regulations. Hunting is not allowed in most units of the National Park System, including campgrounds and the Ross Lake National Recreation Area.

Cascade Loop: A mini tour of Washington

One of the most popular attractions of the Pacific Northwest is the Cascade Loop, a scenic drive that gives the traveler a view of a cross-section of Washington State.

Travelers can identify the loop by colorful signs placed along the route, which circles over the North Cascades Highway to Wenatchee, back over Stevens Pass, and across Puget Sound to Whidbey Island to rejoin State Route 20.

Cascade Loop takes the motorist from the shores of Puget Sound with breathtaking views of the San Juan Islands and distant Olympic Mountains to the fertile farming valleys surround the Mount Vernon area.

Driving east on SR 20 into the North Cascades, visitors are greeted by the smaller communities along the Skagit River: Sedro-Woolley, Lyman, Hamilton, Birdview, Grasmere, Concrete, Rockport, and Marblemount.

The lure of the mountains brings a feeling of serenity as the hills draw close to the river valley. On clear days, year-round glaciers that cap high mountains can be seen from the valley floor.

The six-mile stretch between the Seattle

City Light towns of Newhalem and Diablo contains probably the most dramatic scenery found anywhere. Steep canyon walls climb to glaciers with several waterfalls cascading down to the river on both sides. The color of the rocks, the reflection of the lakes behind massive concrete dams, and the clean smell of evergreens gives the motorist reason to stop at almost every roadside turnout (and there are many).

Climbing over the North Cascade Highway through Rainy and Washington passes, where mountain meadows are as close as the side of the road, the visitor is greeted by stately Liberty Bell Mountain.

A scenic overlook is provided at the top of the highway pass before it starts its descent; the side trip is well worth the time.

Motorists will drop next into the Methow Valley as the road journeys into Winthrop, a town remodeled to capture the look of an 1890s western town.

Leaving the Methow Valley at Pateros, the road climbs past the deep blue of Lake Chelan and returns to follow the mighty Columbia River. Representing one of the many hydroelectric dams on the Columbia

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River, historical Rocky Reach Dam includes a visitor center.

Wenatchee provides a big-city stopover amidst fruit orchards before the traveler follows the highway west along the Cascade Loop.

West of Wenatchee, Leavenworth attracts visitors with a Bavarian theme. Winding through Tumwater Canyon, a special treat during the fall foliage peak, the road climbs back into the mountains through Stevens Pass, a popular skiing area during winter months. As Cascade Loop journeys westward, little towns dot the Skykomish River Valley, including historic Snohomish. Everett provides a variety of big-city attractions.

To complete the loop, a ride on a ferry from Mukilteo to Clinton on Whidbey Island brings you back to the starting point.

The Cascade Loop may be traveled in a weekend, a month, or in many short trips. The Cascade Loop travel guide and DVD describe the route in detail and are available by going to www.cascade-loop.com.

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North Cascades National Park



Plan your North Cascades National Park trip online

Dreaming of seeing the North American Alps? Here are some helpful links for researching and planning your trip.

- www.experiencewilderness.org/news/new-hikes-sights-maps-provide-family-fun
- www.nps.gov/noca
- www.twitter.com/ncascadesnps
- www.youtube.com/user/northcascadesnps
- www.facebook.com/northcascadesnationalpark
- www.flickr.com/photos/northcascadesnationalpark

Plan your visit

- www.nps.gov/noca/planyourvisit

Lodging

- www.nps.gov/noca/planyourvisit/accommodations-and-services.htm

Drive-in campgrounds

Caution, motorists!

When driving on State Route 20 in our rural Upper Skagit Valley, remember that you're driving through our backyards. Our children may be present—even during the school year. Keep your eyes peeled for our little ones—and us! Thank you!

—Citizens of the Upper Skagit Valley

- www.nps.gov/noca/planyourvisit/camping.htm

Maps

- www.nps.gov/noca/planyourvisit/maps.htm

Hiking and climbing maps

- www.nps.gov/noca/planyourvisit/maps.htm

Wilderness camping and hiking

- www.nps.gov/noca/planyourvisit/backpacking.htm

Climbing information

- www.nps.gov/noca/planyourvisit/climbing.htm

Operating hours and seasons

- www.nps.gov/noca/planyourvisit/hours.htm#cp_jump_21563

For more information, call the NCNP Headquarters at 360.854.7301 or 7304.

Read
Concrete Herald
The Voice of the Upper Skagit Valley

Camping out requires care

Visiting the mountains, hills, lakes, and streams of the great outdoors requires more care than a casual stroll through a city park. What visitors do while in the woods can affect the ecology of the area greatly if they are not careful.

In addition to general common sense camping rules, such as making sure campfires are out (coals are cold to the touch), campers now must be aware of how fragile the environment is when hundreds of people visit the same areas.

Wilderness areas require "no trace camping"; the same practices can be applied no matter where a person chooses to camp. As federal budgets continue to shrink, availability of campsites with garbage cans, fire pits, rangers on duty, and other luxuries are limited. But the outdoors still beckons and can offer a rewarding experience for everyone if care is taken.

1. **Plan ahead.** Know where you are going and what to expect. Bring

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everything you'll need, including water, garbage containers, and portable stove (many places do not have fire pits; during periods of fire danger, campfires are not allowed).

2. **Don't dump waste water, soap, or grease into lakes or streams.** Carry water away from the source and dispose of it away from the source.
3. **Respect the privacy and rights of others.** Don't make loud noises, pack out all garbage, leave a clean campsite, and make sure your fire is cold.
4. **Stay on established trails or paths.** Fragile vegetation can easily be destroyed by careless trampling. Don't pick wildflowers; leave them for others to enjoy.

The mountains, forests, and rivers are beautiful places to visit, but they also can be hazardous if caution is not observed. Don't take off on hikes alone or without proper gear. Be careful crossing streams, snowfields, or steep areas. Notify the park service if you plan to take an overnight hiking trip.

Enjoy your stay. But remember, it's up to you to take care of our big "backyard."

Wild animals: Be aware!

When visiting the rural areas of the Upper Skagit Valley and the North Cascades National Park, it pays to remember that you're in somebody else's backyard. Thousands of wild animals call this place home—and some of them ... well, let's just say that some of them won't play well with others if they feel threatened by you.

To make your visit here pleasurable and safe, observe these tips.

Bear

- Avoid surprising animals at close range. Whistle, talk, sing, or otherwise make noise when hiking in areas where visibility is limited or bear sign is present. Take no pets; they are prohibited in the backcountry. A dog's valor may turn into retreat, bringing an infuriated bear to you.
- Be alert to signs (droppings, diggings, fresh tracks, etc.), sounds, or other indications of bears. Be particularly wary when hiking wildlife trails, salmon streams, or other areas where bears concentrate.

- Food and beverages should never be left unattended. Foodstuffs with strong odors such as fish, cheese, sausage, and fresh meats should be stored in a food cache or a bear-resistant container, or suspended 10 feet above ground. Carry all refuse and garbage out; buried refuse will attract bears.
- Keep packs and other personal gear on your person.
- Bears approach anglers because they have learned to recognize them as a source of food. Stop fishing when bears are present.
- Do not approach bears.

Cougar (mountain lion)

When you visit the backcountry of a Northwestern national park, you are in cougar habitat. Keep this in mind and follow some basic rules.

- Never approach a cougar, especially a feeding one. If you encounter a cougar, be sure to give it a way out.
- Keep children close to you while hiking and do not allow them to run ahead or lag behind on the trail.
- Hiking in a small group is best. Jogging is not recommended.
- A walking stick makes a useful weapon in the event of an encounter.
- If you encounter a cougar, stand upright, spread your arms, and shout.

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North Cascades National Park



National park advocates create new American Alps organization

The American Alps Advisory Committee has prompted creation of a new conservation group (American Alps) to lead the campaign to expand the North Cascades National Park.

The American Alps Legacy Proposal recommends adding more than 237,000 acres to the national park and enhancing family recreation opportunities in it. Proposal details can be found on the campaign Web site at www.americanalps.org.

The North Cascades Conservation Council (NCCC) initiated the American Alps Legacy Project in 2008.

Supporters of the American Alps Legacy Proposal highlight the conservation, recreation, and economic benefits of expanding North Cascades National Park.

Adding low-elevation trails and expanding camping opportunities will make the park more accessible to families with young children.

An economic study conducted by Powell and Associates has shown that expanding North Cascades National Park, including iconic sites such as Liberty Bell, and enhancing family recreation opportunities will increase visitation to the park and create more than 1,000 new jobs in communities surrounding the park.



Tucked in the foothills of the North Cascades, the historic town of Concrete is surrounded by natural beauty.

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