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Mountain snow, river water



SKAGIT TWOFER – Before the Skagit River can run to the sea, as its north fork does near the Rexville Grange, it starts off as snow on top of Mount Baker and other North Cascades peaks. A sparse 2024 snowpack means lower summer river levels.

– Photo by Craig Barber

New agreement with Skagit PUD will let farmers irrigate all summer

By Anne Basye

With the snowpack at 69% of normal and spring precipitation uncertain, local farmers have one piece of good news: if a drought develops, they can count on water from the Skagit Public Utility District.

On April 9 the PUD approved a one-year interlocal, seasonal transfer for surplus water rights from the PUD to Skagit County Drainage and Irrigation Improvement Districts 15, which supplies water for 8,500 acres on the flats east of Best Road and Consolidated Diking Improvement District 22, which supplies water on Fir Island.

Most of the time, the two districts can pull water from the Skagit River under their own permits. But their water rights

are “interruptible,” which means the pumps are shut off when the instream flow drops below 10,000 cubic feet of water per second – a metric for keeping fisheries healthy. Uninterruptible rights holders like the PUD and the oil refineries can keep drawing from the river.

Four times in the last nine years, including 2023, the PUD has responded to drought by temporarily transferring a portion of its water rights to the two districts. The time-consuming application and approval process through the Washington state Department of Ecology can delay needed irrigation just a little too long.

This year the PUD, the two districts, Skagit Valley Farms and the Skagit Drainage and Irrigation Districts Consortium worked together to put

something in place before a drought is declared. Once approved by the DOE, this non-emergency agreement will establish a temporary water rights transfer period that will continue until Oct. 1. When the CFS drops below 10,000, farmers can pump water under the PUD’s allocation. The districts and SVF will pay a water transfer fee. All parties hope that this agreement can lead to multiple-year arrangements in the future.

“We are surrounded by water, so people think we have a lot of it, but we can’t pull ground or well water near La Conner because it’s too salty,” said John Thulen of Pioneer Potatoes. The same can be true for fields on Fir

(continued on page 8)

Winter snowpack low as spring starts to heat up

By Ken Stern

At winter’s end, the North Puget Sound basin snowpack is 56% of median, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service states in its April 1 Washington Water Supply Outlook Report. This is lower than the March 1 basin snowpack measurement of 60% of median.

Peak snow accumulation has passed or is near for all major basins in Washington, the report states. Snow

drought conditions, even severe, is the status in the Puget Sound Basin, Olympic Peninsula, portions of the Lower Yakima, and across much of northern Washington and into the Idaho panhandle.

Most Northern Cascades monitoring sites north of SR 20 reported below 50% to 60% of snow water equivalent on April 14, shown on the NRCS website.

The northern Cascades snowpack deficit is termed “more severe,” as are

basins along the western front of the central Cascades, the Lower Yakima, Olympic Peninsula and northeastern Washington.

The report’s 1-month climatic outlook predicts higher chances of above-normal temperatures and higher chances of below-normal precipitation for much of the state.

The April through September streamflow forecasts for the northern Puget Sound basin are below normal, ranging from 69% to 85% of median.

Little rain fell in March; fourth driest since 2000

By Ken Stern

Remember the inch of rain in eight days at March’s end? That was one-half the month’s total, not enough, as the 2 inches was one-third below March’ century average of 3 inches. It was the first month since November rainfall was below century averages.

Only six of the 15 days of measurable precipitation were over 0.1 inch.

This was the fourth driest March this century. Three have been since 2019. All four had 2 inches or less of rain.

The last decade rain has been below the century’s average. Of the 12 years with less than three inches, seven are since 2015.

There has been four years of over four inches including five inches in 2017.

Rain Report: March

Rainfall, March 24-30: 0.54”
 Rainfall in March: 2.0”
 Number of rain days: 15
 Least rain, one day: 0.01”, 3 days
 Most rain, one day: 0.50”, March 23
 Least rain: 1.35”, 2019
 Most rain: 5.0”, 2017
 Average rainfall, 2000-2024: 3.0”
 Rainfall in Feb.: 3.2”
 All totals in inches. Data from WSU Mount Vernon.

Still, the 14.4 inches of rain since Dec. 1 is almost 1.5 inches above the

century average for the period.

The month began cold, with frosts March 5-7 and the daily average temperature below 40 degrees the first week.

Two high temperature day records were set, 66.6 degrees March 16 and 67 degrees March 17.

The average daily temperatures just about matched the century’s average, with the average morning low of 37.9 0.6 degrees above average. The average daily high of 52.3 degrees is the century’s average. The month’s daily average temperature of 45 degrees was slightly above the last 25 years average temperature.

Measurements and data are at Washington State University’s Mount Vernon weather station on Memorial Highway.

Cyberattack probe shuts down casino

By Bill Reynolds

The Swinomish Casino & Lodge has had a run of bad luck lately.

Having braced for a busy April and heavy traffic volumes from the annual Skagit Valley Tulip Festival, the gaming center and dining venue 8 miles north of La Conner has been closed since April 6 while an unspecified cybersecurity incident is investigated.

Cyberattacks are usually aimed at accessing, changing or destroying sensitive information. They can also involve extortion via ransomware or interruptions in normal business procedures.

Internet service at the Swinomish property is believed to have been impacted, according to a report filed by KIRO-TV News of Seattle.

“We are working with law enforcement and

(continued on page 6)

Give your input to school on new superintendent

By Bill Reynolds

La Conner School Board members want input on what approach should be taken as they seek a successor to Superintendent Will Nelson, who is stepping down after three years.

Nelson announced earlier this month that he will be leaving June 30 to accept a teaching post at Western Washington University in Bellingham.

The board’s superintendent search process began Monday when school staff participated in the first of two listening sessions designed to discuss filling the pending vacancy.

The second session, targeting community participation, is at 7 p.m. Thursday, April 18, in the district office board room.

(continued on page 6)

First-quarter town tax revenue lags

By Ken Stern

La Conner Town Council members and residents attending the April 9 meeting heard the down news: March’s sales tax revenues are 15% below 2023. Year to date, sales tax revenue is down 15%, \$124,353, from \$146,681.

All tourist-driven tax revenues are lower and considerably below projections, as reported to the town council in March by the state’s Department of Revenue. The \$33,930 collected in sales tax was 15.6% below 2023. The \$3,382 for the fire department tax was 13.8% below last year and the \$6,869 in lodging tax collections was down 15%. But 2023 and 2022 were record setting tax collection years for sales tax revenues. The 2024 sales funds are the third highest March totals.

The lodging tax revenue is below the pandemic years, 2020 and 2022-2023 but still the fourth highest collected for the month.

These figures are January expenditures. The year opened wet and cold, probably dampening tourists interest in venturing to La Conner.

The real estate excise tax to date is \$14,343, 18.5% below last year’s 3-month \$17,000 in a difficult real estate environment. Similarly, year to date property taxes collected are \$9,657, on par with past years’ first-quarter totals.

March revenues from the water and wastewater funds contribute over one-third of year-to-date totals to the four budget line items. The \$115,474 gained from the compost fund provided additional revenue.

First quarter revenue totals lag slightly behind 2024 budget projections.

Totals are based on January collections from town businesses and online purchases delivered to La Conner addresses and reported to town council by the state’s Department of Revenue.

La Conner has a calendar fiscal year.

From the editor —

Tell Rick Larsen no to Israeli aid

Earth Day is Monday, April 22. This is not an Earth Day editorial and not because the almost holiday atmosphere and platitudes reverently uttered by politicians and corporate heads have hijacked the original intent. It is the same with Mother's Day, which started after the Civil War.

In 1870 Julia Ward Howe called for a "Mother's Day for Peace" dedicated to the celebration of peace and the eradication of war. Howe hoped mothers could prevent the cruelty of war and the waste of life since mothers alone bear and know the cost. That is from almanac.com/content/history-mothers-day.

The Earth Day website states U.S. Senator Gaylord Nelson acted and organized in 1970, because, "until this point, mainstream America remained largely oblivious to environmental concerns and how a polluted environment threatens human health."

War's cruelty, wasted lives, a polluted environment and human health threatened. These are all words and phrases that ring true, define hopes, purposes and higher aspirations. Being pro-Earth necessarily means being anti-war.

The opposite to both these Days and their original meaning is taking place in Gaza, Israel and now across the Middle East. The Israeli government defines itself as at war with Hamas, but the most true statement it has made is that it seeks the complete destruction of this militant, terrorist organization.

For this is an invasion, not of a country but of a 26-mile-long, 76-year-old enclave of refugee camps imposed on over 2 million people whose grandparents were forcibly displaced to this Mediterranean shore after being driven from their homes in Palestine in 1948.

The Israel Defense Force is an invading army that has relentlessly attacked with jets, missiles, tanks and all the advanced armored military might that the United States government has provided.

All these words matter. So does stating that the Oct. 7 Hamas terrorist attack was a brutal terrorist assault, wanton in its massacres and cruelty.

Six months later, the Israeli invasion has been a brutally sustained assault, willful in its inhumane total destruction. Worse than the near complete destruction of Gaza physically has been the 33,000 deaths to date and the tens of thousands more that will follow from no food, water or medical care. Israel has guaranteed generations of hatred, having destroyed all avenues to a just and equitable future. A first-world nation has bombed a third-world nation back into the stone age.

The mental, social and psychic trauma in the population is complete.

Trauma and tension throughout the region is high with little public signs of calm or sanity. Israel and Iran, with explicitly religious-led governments, are committed to doctrines of an eye for eye savagery. Israel's April 1 assassination of Iranians inside Iran's Syrian embassy led to Iran's barrage on Israel last Saturday.

Where does it end? U.S. military aid to Israel is fuel offering more gasoline to pour on already too hot flames. The U.S. House of Representatives is poised to approve the accelerant. Rep. Rick Larsen is likely to vote to approve spending our tax dollars on more death and destruction. That is a thoughtful and bad decision.

As his constituents, we can attempt to minimize the blood on our hands.

Writing and calling Rep. Larsen to urge a no vote is worthy work. Leaning on Larsen is a noble but likely futile effort. It is worth the time.

Contact his Washington office: 202-225-2605; email via: larsen.house.gov/contact/.

— Ken Stern

Program by League of Women Voters of Skagit County

News and media literacy: Are you informed or influenced?

Do you know fact from propaganda when see or hear it? Learn more at the April 29 forum "News & Media Literacy: Informed or Influenced?" The League of Women Voters of Skagit County offers its second program in their series of voter education, part of their ongoing commitment to community engagement and understanding of key electoral issues.

Speakers are Andrew Paxton, Skagit Valley Herald executive editor and Skagit Valley College librarians Elena Bianco and Libby Sullivan.

Join them Monday, April 29, 6:30-8 p.m. at the Public Utility District building, 1415 Freeway Drive, Mount Vernon.

With the lines between information and influence often blurred, understanding the dynamics of media and news

consumption is more crucial than ever. The intricacies of news consumption, media bias and the role of digital platforms in shaping our opinions will be discussed. How can we investigate sources to determine whether their content is trustworthy and factual? Participants will learn how to analyze information sources, distinguish between fact and opinion and understand the impact of media on democracy and election outcomes.

The evening is for all seeking a deeper understanding of the media's role in elections and democracy. Whether you are a seasoned news consumer or someone looking to navigate the media landscape more effectively, this presentation will offer valuable insights for everyone.

Source: League of Women Voters of Skagit County

Town offers Jensen property looks

The Town of La Conner will show residents the Jensen property at 4 p.m., Thursday, April 18. Meet at the Channel Cove south end parking lot.

A community mingle "regarding uses" of the Jensen property will be held at 6 p.m. Thursday, April 25, at the Civic Garden Club on South Second Street.

Hypermilers are champs at saving gas

By Greg Whiting



A few years ago I was managing an experiment aimed at determining whether it was practical to power cars with hydrogen, instead of gasoline. Most of the cars were small gasoline-engine SUVs which had been modified to burn hydrogen.

Hydrogen, at automotive operating temperatures, is a gas that must be compressed and stored in high-pressure tanks. The tanks are made of carbon fiber. They look a lot like very large scuba tanks. A hydrogen storage system small enough to store aboard a car can only hold enough hydrogen to match the energy content of about four gallons of gasoline.

So, even if a hydrogen-burning internal combustion car could be made as efficient as a normal small SUV, it would only be able to run about 80-90 miles.

To improve the range of the hydrogen SUVs, we used hybrid engines, rather than straight internal combustion engines.

Hybrids are programmed to turn the engine off when the car is stopped in traffic. They use the brakes to charge the hybrid (traction) battery and they run on energy from the battery when

possible. With a hybrid engine, our drivers routinely got about 120 miles per fuel fill.

However, one driver, RT, was getting even better mileage. He usually brought the car back to the fueling station after 140 miles. One time, when he had taken an unexpected midday detour that increased his driving distance, he made it to almost 160 miles. I'm not sure the car would have gone another hundred yards on the fuel it had left when he returned.

I asked RT how he had done it. He introduced me to the concept of "hypermiling." Through his driving techniques alone, he had driven about 33% further than our other drivers on the same amount of fuel.

Hypermilers are drivers who enjoy the sheer challenge of finding out how far they can stretch the fuel they use in their cars, no matter what fuel type they're using. RT viewed his effort to get

better mileage than everyone else as a fun competition.

Despite its excellent results, hypermiling isn't for everyone. It takes time to plan ahead and can require some habit changes. RT would plan his routes in the morning for the entire day, with the specific goal of avoiding traffic and hills. He would commute to work a half hour early and home a half hour later, just to avoid traffic. He was an early user of GPS maps even when he knew exactly where he was going, because the GPS systems warned him about traffic congestion and provided alternate routes.

RT would overinflate his tires a little, which reduces rolling friction. It lowers tire life and safety a bit, but since he was also making a serious effort to keep his speed around 45 mph most of the time, he wasn't worried about getting into a high-speed accident. Maintaining a consistent speed and going below the speed limit both improve mileage substantially. A hypermiler's ideal speed is probably around 40-45 mph, where most cars are able to run at their lowest engine speed in their highest gear before stalling.

Three housing complexes awarded \$1.6M

By Ken Stern

The Channel Cove complex, managed by Home Trust of Skagit County, will have \$336,144 in Washington state Department of Commerce Housing Preservation Program funding. Statewide, 31 low-income housing complexes were awarded \$19.9 million Commerce posted on its website.

Repairs will be made to 18 apartments at Channel Cove rented to people making 50% or less of the area median income.

In Skagit County, \$1.6 million is being invested to upgrade 113 units in three complexes. Catholic Housing

Services of Western Washington was awarded \$667,010 for improvements to 15 of its units at La Casa de Santa Rosa in Sedro Woolley and the Urban Shelter America Group will receive \$552,269 to aid 80 units at its Mount Vernon Ridgeview Terrace Senior Apartments.

The Department of Commerce made awards to preserve and repair 873 units of affordable housing in 14 counties of existing Housing Trust Fund multi-family rental projects. Over \$56 million was applied for by 72 programs.

Awards were decided based on eligibility and the urgency of physical repairs.

"Repairs and maintenance

costs play a bigger role than ever in preserving affordable housing," said Commerce Director Mike Fong in a news release. "Housing Preservation Program investments are an important way to extend the service of affordable housing that is already available, ensuring these projects can serve communities around the state for generations."

Lack of affordable housing is directly related to homelessness. The Department of Commerce estimates that Washington state needs to create 1.1 million new housing units over the next 20 years to keep up with the projected need for housing at all income levels.

10 a.m.-2 p.m. April 27

Return leftover medicines to Swinomish PD

The public can bring leftover or expired prescription and over-the-counter drugs to the Swinomish Police Department for disposal 10 a.m.-2 p.m. April 27. Liquids up to four ounces in their original containers are accepted.

The Swinomish Police

Department is located at 17353 Reservation Road. There are three other drop-off locations in Anacortes, Mount Vernon and Sedro Woolley.

Free Naloxone, also known as Narcan, will be available.

Do not bring intravenous solutions, injectables, inhalers,

syringes, chemotherapy medications, medical waste, vaping devices with batteries that cannot be removed or cannabis and illicit drugs.

Visit unitedgeneral.org/prevention for more information.

— Source: United General District 304

County commissioners to meet in Anacortes

Skagit County will host a community meeting open to all in Anacortes Monday, April 22, 5-7 p.m. at the Anacortes Senior Activity Center 1701 22nd St..

The county commissioners

and representatives from Planning and Development Services, Public Health, Public Works, the Department of Emergency Management, Facilities Management and the

Sheriff's Office will respond to community questions.

Information: 360 416-1300; jrogers@co.skagit.wa.us.

Source: Skagit County

State Parks offer free admission on April 22

In honor of Earth Day, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission is offering a free day at all state parks Monday, April 22. Visitors will not need to display a Discover Pass for day-use visits.

The next free day is June 8, for National Get Outdoors Day, another of the 12 free days annually.

State legislation creating the Discover Pass allows State Parks up to 12 free days each year when the pass would not be required.

Source: Washington State Parks

LETTER POLICY

Please write! Letters to the editor of up to 350 words are welcome, as are longer analyses and statements.

Write a 500-word guest column.

Deadline: 5 p.m. Sunday for next issue.

Include your name, address and phone number for verification.

Letters are edited for civility, clarity and style.

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After winter windstorm training success, FD 13 eyes wildfire exercise

By Bill Reynolds

A recent training exercise was so well-received that Skagit County Fire District 13 officials are considering another such drill in the La Conner area later this year.

The March 30 windstorm scenario was so successful that the local fire district, which serves rural La Conner and the Swinomish Reservation, may stage a wildland fire training event during the peak of dry summer conditions here.

"I suggest we have a similar drill for a wildland fire on the reservation," Capt. Ted Taylor told fire district commissioners during their meeting at the Snee Oosh Road station April 11.

"I think wildland fires are our greatest threat," said Taylor, the district's emergency management coordinator. "I'd like to put something together in August."

Commission chair Bruce Shellhamer and board member John Doyle offered their support, citing the effectiveness of last month's windstorm training.

Doyle noted that the windstorm exercise, which came off smoothly, revealed the need to establish spending authority rules in an emergency.

"I'd like to evaluate how this is done elsewhere," Doyle said. "We want to avoid a situation where we have money in the bank and then not being able to spend it in an emergency. It's something we need to sort out before a major event happens. That's what the exercise was all about. It was a very good drill, a real complex drill."

Taylor concurred.

"I thought the drill we had was excellent," he said, offering praise to Capt. Gary Ladd for its planning and execution.

About three dozen people joined fire district personnel for the training.

"The primary objective was to determine the effectiveness of our ability to communicate to a unified command," Ladd said. "That was extremely successful."

Ladd said HAM radio operators from Anacortes were among the day's participants. They later agreed to offer a class in Shelter Bay, he said.

Ladd and Capt. Jesse Strinden said the exercise benefited from input on unified command structures provided by Brad Reading, a Shelter Bay resident who spent four decades in fire services in south Snohomish County.

"He's a wealth of knowledge," Ladd said of Reading.

"Brad was helping us out with a lot of information," Strinden said.

Looking ahead to potential wildland fire training, Shellhamer and Doyle said the windstorm exercise can serve as a road map going forward.

"We can implement some of the things that we learned from this one," Shellhamer said.

SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

Celebrating the life of David Ehman, October 1950-October 2023, 1-3 p.m. Saturday, April 27, at the Edison Granary, 14136 Gilmore Ave. Edison. Program begins at 1:30 p.m.

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"Since 1913"

Sales tax added for streets, sidewalks

By Bill Reynolds

Town council members last week paved the way to pay for future work on La Conner's streets, sidewalks and trails.

The panel during its April 9 public meeting unanimously approved a 0.1% sales tax to fund the town's new Transportation Benefit District.

The council action is tentatively set to take effect July 1.

Council members opted for the sales tax rather than an increase in local vehicle license fees to provide revenue for the TBD. Town Administrator Scott Thomas said the sales tax will be paid in part by those who drive to La Conner to shop.

"The revenue will fund transportation-related projects and maintenance," he said. "That includes streets, signage, sidewalks and trails."

The tax will be in place for 10 years, Thomas said. Establishing a higher tax rate would have required a referendum vote.

"There is a one-tenth of one percent limit on what the council can impose," he said. "You would have to go to voters to increase that amount. We're not doing that now."

There was no input from the audience before the council vote.

"You guys are awfully quiet," said Mayor Marna Hanneman. "I get nervous about that."

She also expressed some nervousness over declining sales tax revenue figures reported for the first quarter of 2024. This year's receipts for January, February and March totaled \$124,353.37, down from \$146,681.27 realized

in the first three months of 2023.

"I'm hoping it's just because of the cold, wet weather we've had," Hanneman said. "But the numbers are going in the wrong direction. The town was packed this past weekend, though, so, I hope it's just an anomaly."

Remaining on the financial front, Hanneman said La Conner officials have met with State Rep. Dave Paul (D-Oak Harbor) and U.S. Rep. Rick Larsen (D-Arlington) to gain their support for a town fireboat. More talks are planned in the months ahead.

"We need help with funding for a fireboat," Hanneman said. "We're going to keep out front on this."

Council member and La Conner firefighter Ivan Carlson echoed Hanneman's sentiments. "One of the things that Dave Paul told us is the state likes to be the last one to put money in," said Carlson. "So, I think we'll also want to meet with the Port (of Skagit)."

In the meantime, councilor MaryLee Chamberlain, a member of the Skagit Valley Clean Energy Cooperative, reported that two grant applications have been submitted to the state Department of Commerce to solarize the La Conner School District campus and La Conner Fire Department station.

"I think we have a chance with this round of grants," Chamberlain said. "There could be some money for us to help our commu-

nity with (climate) resiliency."

She said the Commerce Department could make its decision on the local grant applications by the end of May.

"We'll keep our fingers crossed," she said.

The Jensen property on La Conner's south end, sold to the town at roughly one-third its assessed value, will be on the council's radar this month. A public site visit of the property is scheduled for 4 p.m. Thursday, April 18, and a "community mingle" seeking input on how the parcel should be utilized is April 25.

"We're encouraging neighbors (of the property) to be part of the site visit," Planning Director Michael Davolio said.

Independent of the new Transportation Benefit District, grant funding will cover costs of pedestrian improvements on Washington and Road Streets. The council took a step toward launching that project by approving \$45,400 for engineering services submitted by David Evans and Associates. The total grant award package is \$240,000.

Town Public Works Director Brian Lease, who was instrumental in the success of the town's successful grant application, said he anticipates his department will be able to resume progress this week on the long-awaited Conner Waterfront Park pavilion.

"It's been a busy time for us," he said.

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Our Guest Speakers:

- Elena Bianco—Librarian, Skagit Valley College
- Libby Sullivan—Librarian, Skagit Valley College
- Andrew Paxton—Executive Editor, Skagit Valley Herald

When: Monday April 29, 2024, 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM
Where: Skagit PUD meeting room
1415 Freeway Drive, Mount Vernon

In Person Only
Post-event audio recording will be available on our website at <https://www.skagitlw.org>

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Braves outperform big schools in Skagit Showdown

By Bill Reynolds

First Street isn't the only place in town with parking issues. The Whittaker Field parking lot on N. Sixth Street was jammed with vehicles April 10 when La Conner hosted the annual Skagit Showdown Track & Field Meet, drawing teams and fans from 2A Burlington-Edison and Sedro-Woolley and 1B Mount Vernon Christian.

Some visitors thought their only parking option was inside an open gate leading to the school bus garage. One driver even parked in front of the gate, briefly causing heartburn for La Conner bus drivers returning from afternoon routes.

La Conner High School head track coach Peter Voorhees warned drivers to move their vehicles lest they be locked inside. People got the message. Meanwhile, the pace was fast

and furious on the Whittaker Field oval. La Conner standout and reigning state 2B hurdles champion Tommy Murdock won his two signature events while placing fourth in the long jump and running a leg of the Braves' third-place 4x200-meter relay team.

Murdock swept the Skagit Showdown boys' 110-meter (15.61) and 300-meter hurdles (40.29), hitting the tape first with a large throng at the finish.

Murdock showed his versatility with a long-jump leap of 18-10.5. He also joined teammates Yandel Rosales-Rojas, Marlin Bralens and Simon Bouwens in posting a 1:40.19 finish and new school mark in the 800-meter relay.

For his part, Bralens earned boys' athlete of the week honors for handling the baton. He ran second, taking the handoff from Rosales-Rojas.

"Yandel was moving faster than

I anticipated," Bralens told the Weekly News afterward. "He was running around the corner pretty quickly."

Their smooth exchange set the tone for a nearly 2 second edge over the Sedro-Woolley quartet of Mason Requa, Anthony Pena, Theo Ellsworth and Riley Bowen.

Meanwhile, Bouwens added to the Braves' point total in the double dual competition by placing second in the 100 meters (11.94) and fifth in the 300 hurdles (45.57).

La Conner's Flint Huizenga contributed a second-place effort in the 60 meters (8.17) and a third in javelin (136-8).

"He keeps improving by the week," Voorhees said.

Alex Martin likewise chalked up a pair of top five finishes for the Braves. He claimed third in the discus (111-8) and fifth in the shot put (36-5).

On the girls' side, La Conner's Morgan Huizenga captured two golds (javelin and high jump) and eighth-grader Nora McCormick won the 100-meter hurdles in 16.82.

Huizenga led a 1-2-3 Lady Braves finish in the javelin, letting fly with a toss of 90-1. Addison Wigal placed second at 79-11 and Reese Bird, another eighth-grader, was third with a 79-3 throw.

In the high jump, Huizenga cleared the bar at 4-10 while Kiana Jenkins, also an eighth-grader, took third at 4-6.

Jenkins added silver in the 400 meters (1.02.71). Lydia Grossglass clinched third in the 100 hurdles (17.67) and fourth in the 300 hurdles (54.43).

Wigal, the Lady Braves' athlete of the week, also produced a fifth-place finish in the discus (60-0) and teamed with eighth-graders Aisley Zimmerman, Finley

Hancock and Kim Williams to place fourth in the sprint relay with a 59.44 clocking.

"Addison had a very good meet overall," Voorhees said.

In addition, Nora McCormick, Maeve McCormick, Huizenga and Grossglass were third in the 4x200 relay (1:58.59).

Voorhees noted that it was a big day for La Conner's eighth graders as they competed against high school students from bigger schools.

"It was cool to see them have these awesome performances," Voorhees said.

He said La Conner didn't enter some Skagit Showdown events to save energy ahead of the 24-team Cashmere Invitational.

"That's always a big meet," Voorhees said. "We're looking forward to it."

Murdock sweeps hurdles, Jenkins 2nd in 200 dash

By Bill Reynolds

No rest for the weary. That age-old mantra applied to the La Conner High School track teams last week.

Just three days after hosting the much-anticipated Skagit Showdown, La Conner thinclads competed at the 24-team Cashmere Invitational April 13, where senior Tommy Murdock swept the boys' hurdles events and eighth grader

Kiana Jenkins placed second in the girls' 200-meter dash.

Murdock captured the 110s in 15.00 and 300s in 40.23 to pace the Braves, who finished eighth on the leaderboard.

The boys, with Flint Huizenga placing sixth in the javelin (140-1), totaled 23 points.

Class 1A Meridian amassed 124.5 points to win the boys' team title.

Jenkins and the La Conner girls

clinched seventh place on their side of the meet with 37 points.

Lynden High, a Class 1A entry, scored 106 points for the girls' championship.

Jenkins posted a time of 28.10 in the 200, narrowly losing to Liberty Bell's Taylor Hover (28.09).

Jenkins also joined teammates Lydia Grossglass, Maeve McCormick and Morgan Huizenga on La Conner's 4x100 and 4x200 relay entries, each of

which placed fifth. Their sprint relay time was 53.8. They finished the 800-meter relay in 1:52.42.

In addition, Huizenga was third in the javelin (100-1) and fourth in high jump (4-8).

McCormick finished seventh in the 100 meters (13.57), Grossglass was eighth in the 300-meter hurdles (54.05) and Kim Williams placed eighth in the triple jump (30-6.25).

Next up for the track teams is the Eason Invitational in Snohomish this Saturday and the 116th annual Skagit County Track & Field Championships at Mount Vernon High School April 24-26.



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Braves' ball teams have a bumpy road trip

By Bill Reynolds

Travel wasn't kind to the La Conner High School baseball and softball teams last week.

The Braves suffered a pair of heartbreaking one-run extra-inning losses while the young Lady Braves were dealt double-digit setbacks during visits to Coupeville and Friday Harbor.

The Braves were edged 9-8 at Coupeville last Thursday and 5-4 at Friday Harbor Saturday. Each NW2B/1B league contest was decided in the bottom of the eighth inning as when La Conner dropped a 13-12 verdict at 1A Sultan on April 2.

"It's hard to believe we've lost three straight one-run games in the bottom of the eighth inning," coach Jeremiah LeSourd told the Weekly News. "I'm not frustrated. The kids have been playing well. Our pitchers are giving us a chance to win and we're hitting the ball."

LeSourd is hopeful his team's luck will change when it visit Concrete tomorrow and Darrington on Friday ahead of a string of home games later this month.

"With all these games stacked

up the way they are," he said, "we're fortunate to have depth with our pitching. We don't have to rely on just one guy."

The Braves (4-5 overall; 1-4 in league) defeated Darrington at home in March.

La Conner was on the verge of

upsetting Coupeville, a perennial title contender, until being snake-bitten by a couple late fielding miscues.

The Braves had scored three runs in the top of the seventh to

(continued on page 6)



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Ask a Master Gardener

What's in your potting soil?

By Bruce Lindsay
WSU Extension Master Gardener

Local gardening stores offer a multitude of soil mix choices this time of year. This overview of the attributes of soil and how to amend commercially produced potting soils will increase the success of your container and raised bed plantings. This article is posted on the Ask a Master Gardener Blog and provides a comprehensive explanation and strategies for improving commercially produced soil.

All soil primarily consists of sand, silt and clay mineral particles. Sand is visible to the naked eye. Clay is the size of bacteria. In a natural setting, soils have pores made by plant roots and insects, essential for drainage and allowing air to enter the soil for roots to breathe. The size of the pores is also essential for water movement and the soil's ability to retain water.

In contrast to well-balanced mineral soil, commercial potting soil typically has very few of these properties and has several problems. Most bagged potting soil consists of ground wood and bark from recycled forestry products. The potential hazard with some commercially bagged soils is the possible presence of weeds such as horsetail (Equisetum) and the potential presence of herbicides from sprayed landscaping or hay that persists throughout the composted state.

Amendments
Commercially produced soils, often recycled forest products, are sold in large bark chunks as mulch or finer-grained material as potting soil. These products have inherent problems, such as nitrogen deficiency, which can be solved with amendements.

Fertilizer with some phosphorous and potassium is one way to address nitrogen deficiency. Some fertilizers also contain micronutrients, which can be beneficial. Use a significantly diluted solution (1 tablespoon per gallon) of soluble fertilizer and frequently monitor your plants to see how they are doing.

Since the RFP in purchased soil bags is very porous, much of the fertilizer will drain through the pot in one application. Adding well-composed organic matter or humus materials will help provide effective nutrient retention.

Humus is very good at holding water. Adding well-composted materials to a soil mixture will also add beneficial bacteria and fungi essential for many processes. Another benefit is that humus has a net negative charge that can hold onto cations such as potassium, calcium and magnesium, giving the soil cation exchange capacity essential to plant growth. For a deeper dive into soils, including amendements that will address cation exchange capacity, the soil's capacity to hold water and the addition of slow-release fertilizers, go to the link for the

full article: skagitmg.org/potting-soils/.

While forestry products recycled as commercial potting soil have drawbacks, amending these insufficiencies is an easy process. It is much better to use RFP products than to burn, bury or dump them into the overflowing waste stream. Armed with awareness of the limitations of modern "potting soil" and knowing some remedies, gardeners can buy these products feeling confident with scientific knowledge.

Bruce Lindsay became a Skagit County WSU Extension Master Gardener in 2015. He has an MS degree in geology and an MS degree in soils and has mapped soils in Nevada, Arizona, California and Washington.

Museum sale at school this weekend

By Anne Basye

The Skagit Historical Museum's annual Sale at the School runs 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Friday-Sunday, April 19-21 at the Skagit City School, 17508 Moore Road on Fir Island.

Museum Director Jo Wolfe is excited about this year's sale pieces. The vintage treasures and collectibles include a room of tools, model cars and costume jewelry and other items from the estate of Darlene Youngquist, who died last summer at the age of 99.

"Year after year, people save their lovely items for this sale," said Wolfe. Inventory highlights posted on the Museum's Instagram and Facebook feeds let buyers preview the goods.

While many sale items are historical, Wolfe emphasizes that none come from the Museum's collection. "Museums follow strict ethical guidelines," she said. "You can't say, 'I like

this chair, it would look good in my house, why not de-accession it and I'll pay the museum a couple hundred bucks?'"

Any item that the Museum decided to remove from its collection would have to be de-accessioned, then sold by a third-party seller or at an auction. Shoppers can take home their purchases with a clear conscience.

Even better, proceeds help support museum operational expenses. Its current exhibit "Signs, Signs, Everywhere Signs" features the life and work of Skagit County sign maker, graphic artist and painter Bob Mortenson. The mural on the Nasty Jack's building at Morris and First streets is his most prominent La Conner sign.

The Skagit City School will be open again for two programs showcasing women. On April

28, Jesse Kennedy shares how mystery writer Mary Roberts Rinehart led a 1916 expedition across Cascade Pass. On May 5, Samish Island resident Jan Jones will share stories told her by Mary Scott, a Stick Samish woman who always described herself as half English, half Indian and one hundred percent American. Both programs begin at 2 p.m.

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Swinomish plan Earth Day activities

By Bill Reynolds

Earth Day is a global event that encourages people to act locally.

And those activities don't have to be limited to April 22, the 54th anniversary of the day universally recognized as the start of the modern environmental movement.

The Swinomish Indian Tribal Community is a prime example. On April 25, Earth Day initiatives start at 8 a.m., including a plant project at John K. Bob Ball Park, fish net recycling by the web shed off Moorage Way, ti-

dying up at the rain garden and a general clean-up at Swedeb's Park.

There will also be a noon potluck lunch at the Swinomish Boys & Girls Club Center and a 1 p.m. dedication at the 13 Moons Elder Garden.

In addition, large refuse containers will be placed around Swinomish Village for tribal use from April 22 to May 6.

While April 22 is recognized worldwide as Earth Day, it is celebrated in some venues on the spring equinox in March.

Or, in the case of Swinomish this year, it will

be observed April 25.

Earth Day is an annual celebration raising awareness of the need to protect Earth's natural resources for future generations. The day's origin traces back to events in the 1960s when a focus on the environment emerged following an oil spill off Santa Barbara on the California coast and fires on the Cuyahoga River in Ohio.

Inspired by those and other environmental disasters, U.S. Sen. Gaylord Nelson of Wisconsin helped establish the first Earth Day on April 22, 1970.

Cyberattack

(from page 1)

Those who have recently visited the casino-hotel have been advised "out of an abundance of caution" to check their account statements and monitor credit reports for any suspicious activity. "If we learn data was impacted by this incident," casino managers said in their statement, "we will contact affected individuals as soon as possible."

The closure has impacted casual casino guests and staff alike. A KIRO news crew on site last week met with employees who were told not to come into work due to what was initially attributed to "technical issues."

"They're sure losing a lot of business," a social media poster said last week in response to a casino closure update provided by the Swinomish Tribal Senate. "I hope they get it figured out quickly."

The Weekly News was contacted on Friday by the casino's marketing and advertising representative.

Those who have recently visited the casino-hotel have been advised "out of an abundance of caution" to check their account statements and monitor credit reports for any suspicious activity.

She paused weekly advertising until the situation is resolved. "We are expecting them to be closed for a bit longer," said marketing consultant and media planner Adele George.

However, a TV commercial promoting Swinomish Casino & Lodge appeared over the weekend on a Root Sports Northwest broadcast of a Seattle Mariners baseball game with the Chicago Cubs.

The Swinomish casino gaming floor has around 700 slot machines and a variety of table games, according to reporter Ed Silverstein of the Casino.org website.

A Zippia, Inc. data science team determined that the Swinomish Casino & Lodge, with nearly 200 employees, generated about \$16 million in revenue in 2023.

The casino made national news last October when one of its guests placed a \$10 bet and won a \$1,490,484.45 jackpot.

Stewart was hired following the resignation of Whitney Meissner, who left after three years to become an administrator in the large Lake Washington School District in King County.

Meissner followed Peg Seeling, then the district's curriculum and athletics director, who became interim superintendent following the resignation of Tim Bruce, who had led the district since the 1990s. The campus performing arts center is named for him.

Bruce transitioned to a teaching role at WWU, the same path now being followed by Nelson.

School search

(from page 1)

"Your insights and perspectives are highly valuable as we navigate this process together," board members said in a statement released by executive assistant Cheri Kahns on April 12. "Your participation and input are crucial in ensuring that we make informed decisions that align with our mission, vision and values. We look forward to hearing from you and working collaboratively towards our shared goals."

These sessions are to foster brainstorming, gather comments and suggestions and engage in meaningful discussions for the selection of a new superintendent, officials said.

Nelson, who has worked in the private sector as well as public education, was successful in implementing several new educational initiatives - including mastery-based learning - upon his arrival in 2021. He succeeded interim superintendent Rich Stewart, who served during the 2020-21 academic year, a period marked by social distancing and remote instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stewart was hired following the resignation of Whitney Meissner, who left after three years to become an administrator in the large Lake Washington School District in King County.

Meissner followed Peg Seeling, then the district's curriculum and athletics director, who became interim superintendent following the resignation of Tim Bruce, who had led the district since the 1990s. The campus performing arts center is named for him.

Bruce transitioned to a teaching role at WWU, the same path now being followed by Nelson.

Road trip

(from page 4)

Burks, a senior southpaw, started on the hill for La Conner and fanned seven Friday Harbor hitters. He helped his cause with a first inning single.

Jackson, an eighth grader, led the Braves with two base hits. The La Conner softball team, after taking a 1-0

first inning lead, fell 14-2 at Coupeville as the Lady Wolves remained unbeaten (4-0) in league play. Friday Harbor, 4-1 in NW2B/1B softball standings, blanked La Conner 15-0.

The Lady Braves (0-4) will look to break into the win column against Concrete (0-6)

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The Lady Braves (0-4) will look to break into the win column against Concrete (0-6)

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LEGAL NOTICES

TOWN OF LA CONNER NOTICE OF ORDINANCE

Notice is hereby given that the Town Council of the Town of La Conner, Washington, passed Ordinance No. 1245 at the April 9, 2024 Town Council meeting. A summary of Ordinance No. 1245 is as follows:

An Ordinance establishing the Transportation Benefit District funding.

Complete copies of Ordinance No. 1245 are available at La Conner Town Hall, P.O. Box 400, La Conner, WA 98257

Dated this 10th Day of April, 2024

/s/ Maria DeGoede, Town Clerk Published in the La Conner Weekly News, April 17, 2024.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON IN AND FOR THE COUNTY OF WHATCOM IN THE ESTATE OF: DAVID W. GREENE, DECEASED. No. 24-4-00265-37 PROBATE NOTICE TO CREDITORS RCW 11.40.030

The person named below has been appointed as Personal Representative of this estate. Any person having a claim against the decedent must, before the time the claim would be barred by any otherwise applicable statute of limitations, present the claim in the manner as provided in RCW 11.40.070 by serving on or mailing to the Personal Representative or the Personal Representative's attorney at the address stated below a copy of the claim and filing the original of the claim with the court. The claim must be presented within the later of: (1) Thirty days after the Personal Representative served or mailed the notice to the creditor as provided under RCW 11.40.020(1)(c); or (2) four months after the date of first publication of the notice. If the claim is not presented within this time frame, the claim is forever barred, except as otherwise provided in RCW 11.40.051 and 11.40.060. This bar is effective as to claims against both the decedent's probate and nonprobate assets.

DATE OF FIRST PUBLICATION: APRIL 3, 2024 PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE: ANNE G. MILLER and NOAH J. GREENE ATTORNEY FOR PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE: Colin R. Morrow, WSBA #53779 ADDRESS FOR MAILING OR SERVICE: Carmichael Clark, P.S. 1700 D Street Bellingham, WA 98225

CARMICHAEL CLARK, P.S. /s/ COLIN R. MORROW, WSBA# 53779 Attorney for Personal Representative

Published in the La Conner Weekly News, April 3, 10, and 17, 2024.

LEGAL NOTICE REQUEST FOR SERVICES

The Sedro-Woolley School District is requesting sealed bids for Bakery Service. Bids are due no later than 4:00 p.m., pdt, on Wednesday, May 1, 2024. Bids may be delivered in person or mailed to: Sedro-Woolley School District, Attn: Allison Johnston, Food Service and Warehouse Director, 801 Trail Rd., Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284. Each bid must be clearly labeled "Bakery Service, Bid #2425-101" on the outside of the envelope. The Sedro-Woolley School District reserves the right to waive any informalities or irregularities in the bidding, or reject any/or all bids and to accept a bid or bids which are deemed to be in the best interest of the District. Complete instructions & specifications are available at the District Office.

Published in the La Conner Weekly News, April 10 and 17, 2024.

LEGAL NOTICE REQUEST FOR SERVICES

The Sedro-Woolley School District is requesting sealed bids for Photography Service. Bids are due no later than 4:00 p.m., pst, on Wednesday, May 1, 2024. Bids may be delivered in person or mailed to: Sedro-Woolley School District, Attn: Brett Greenwood, Executive Director of Business, Operations & Student Support, 801 Trail Rd., Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284.

Each bid must be clearly labeled "Photography Service, Bid #2425-100" on the outside of the envelope. The Sedro-Woolley School District reserves the right to waive any informalities or irregularities in the bidding, or reject any/or all bids and to accept a bid or bids which are deemed to be in the best interest of the District. Complete instructions & specifications are available at the District Office or online.

Published in the La Conner Weekly News, April 10 and 17, 2024.

SUPERIOR COURT OF WASHINGTON FOR SKAGIT COUNTY No. 24-4-00180-29 PROBATE NOTICE TO CREDITORS (RCW 11.40.030)

In the Matter of the Estate of Patricia R. Stowe, Deceased

The personal representative named below has been appointed as personal representative of this estate. Any person having claim against the decedent must, before the time the claim would be barred by any otherwise applicable statute of limitations, present the claim in the manner as provided in RCW 11.40.070 by serving on or mailing to the personal representative or the personal representative's attorney at the address stated below, a copy of the claim and filing the original of the claim with the court in which the probate proceedings were commenced. The claim must be presented within the later of: (1) Thirty days after the personal representative served or mailed the notice to the creditor as provided under RCW 11.40.020(1)(c); or (2) four months after the date of first publication of the notice. If the claim is not presented within this time frame, the claim is forever barred, except as otherwise provided in RCW 11.40.051 and 11.40.060. This bar is effective as to claims against both the decedent's probate and non-probate assets.

Date of first publication: April 10, 2024

Victoria Conrardy Stowe Personal Representative SKAGIT LAW GROUP, PLLC MEGAN OTIS MASON-HOLDER, WSBA #29495 Attorneys for Personal Representative P.O. Box 336/227 Freeway Drive, Suite B Mount Vernon, WA 98273 Published in the La Conner Weekly News, April 10, 17, and 24, 2024.

SUPERIOR COURT OF WASHINGTON FOR SKAGIT COUNTY No. 24-4-00189-29 PROBATE NOTICE TO CREDITORS (RCW 11.40.030)

In the Matter of the Estate of Lyle R. Wesen, Deceased

The co-personal representatives named below have been appointed as co-personal representatives of this estate. Any person having claim against the decedent must, before the time the claim would be barred by any otherwise applicable statute of limitations, present the claim in the manner as provided in RCW 11.40.070 by serving on or mailing to the co-personal representatives or the co-personal representatives' attorney at the address stated below, a copy of the claim and filing the original of the claim with the court in which the probate proceedings were commenced. The claim must be presented within the later of: (1) Thirty days after the co-personal representa-

tives served or mailed the notice to the creditor as provided under RCW 11.40.020(1)(c); or (2) four months after the date of first publication of the notice. If the claim is not presented within this time frame, the claim is forever barred, except as otherwise provided in RCW 11.40.051 and 11.40.060. This bar is effective as to claims against both the decedent's probate and non-probate assets.

Date of first publication: April 17, 2024

Richard D. Wesen Co-Personal Representative Ronald G. Wesen Co-Personal Representative SKAGIT LAW GROUP, PLLC MEGAN OTIS MASON-HOLDER, WSBA #29495 Attorneys for Co-Personal Representatives P.O. Box 336/227 Freeway Drive, Suite B Mount Vernon, WA 98273 Published in the La Conner Weekly News, April 17, 24, and May 1, 2024.

NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETING PUBLIC HEARING OF THE LA CONNER SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS TITLE VI GRANT THROUGH THE OFFICE OF INDIAN EDUCATION NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the La Conner School District Board of Directors will hold a public hearing to review our proposed Indian Education Grant (Title VI) 2024-2025 Application. This program is designed to address the unique cultural, language, and educationally related academic needs of American Indian and Alaska Native students, and ensure that all students meet the challenging State academic standards. The meeting will be held at 12:00 p.m. on Monday, May 6, 2024, in the District Office Board Room, 305 N. Sixth St., and via Zoom.

The meeting is open to the public and comments will be taken during the public hearing including parents and students, to become more familiar with the Title VI program, and speak for or against any part of the policy, procedure, and grant being discussed. Contact Beth Clothier, Director of Teaching and Learning at 360-466-3171 ext. 3294 or bclothier@lc.k12.wa.us with questions or concerns. Input will also be presented from NAPAC our Native American Parent Advisory Committee. Documents are available on our website, BoardDocs, in the district office.

Written testimony, needs to be submitted by 11:00 a.m. on Monday, May 6, 2024, to: Board of Directors, c/o Will Nelson, Superintendent La Conner School District No. 311, P.O. Box 2103/305 N. Sixth St., La Conner, WA 98257 Dated this 12th day of April 2024. Published in the La Conner Weekly News on April 17 and 24, 2024.

Written testimony, needs to be submitted by 11:00 a.m. on Monday, May 6, 2024, to: Board of Directors, c/o Will Nelson, Superintendent La Conner School District No. 311, P.O. Box 2103/305 N. Sixth St., La Conner, WA 98257

Dated this 12th day of April 2024. Published in the La Conner Weekly News on April 17 and 24, 2024.

Weekly SUDOKU

Answer

Grid of numbers: 5 2 9 7 8 6 3 1 4, 3 7 6 5 1 4 2 9 8, 4 1 8 3 2 9 5 7 6, 6 4 7 1 5 3 8 2 9, 1 5 3 8 9 2 6 4 7, 9 8 2 4 6 7 1 3 5, 8 3 1 9 7 5 4 6 2, 7 6 4 2 3 8 9 5 1, 2 9 5 6 4 1 7 8 3

Super Crossword

Answers

Grid of letters: R I G S S A R A H E A R P S C A M O, I L L S T R A C I D R O O L O L A Y, C L O T H I N G E N S E M B L E G A L S, H E T O R A D O N E B L E K E D F A L T, E A T A T Z A P P A B R A V E F A C E, S N A P O N S L A P S A T E N A M O R, T A L E N T S H O W C L O T N A P S, R E H M S I R S R E S T, I M A C L O W C O A T O F P A I N T, R E D U B S C A T I O R I F E M O O, I D I R E L A X I N G M U S I C P U N, S E E A R A L G E E S E S S E N E, H A U G H T Y A I R S G R R H I S S, R E A L M E S A E A S E, A L T O A A H S B O D Y W E I G H T, G O S O L O S I S T I N E W A L L O W, E Y E M A K E U P I T A L O H A I L E, L A T Y A M S R P M V I A D Y E, E L S E Y O U R E P U T T I N G M E O N, S T E P E T A I L C R A N K L O K I, S O S A D E L C O H Y P E S K N E



Aqimuk's Kitchen

By Patricia Aqimuk Paul, Esq., Food Editor

Dehydrated bananas



We got bananas! Lots of bananas! Sometimes organic bananas. Ripe bananas. Overripe bananas. Replenish the banana bowl every week. Eat bananas for health. Once, on my travels to Brazil, I bought a bunch of bananas from a man selling them on a sidewalk in the very large city of Manaus. These bananas were slightly green and, at the same time, a bit black. They differed in size from the ones we buy at our supermarkets, being smaller and yet plump. The seller was so excited to get 25 centavos (worth about 5 cents) that he hurriedly got up from his cardboard seat on the sidewalk. He went on his way, down a dusty ravine. I walked back to my hotel, bananas cradled in my arm.

- Ingredients**
- Ripe bananas, 4 or 5
 - Lemon juice, ½ cup
 - Water, ½ cup

Preparation

Turn on the dehydrator to 135 degrees to warm it up. Mix the bottled lemon juice with the water. Peel

and slice the bananas, putting the slices into the lemon water. This will help the bananas stay a light color. Place the slices on a dehydrator tray, keeping each slice separate. Dehydrate 4 to 8 hours. They will be leathery when you peel them off the tray. Store airtight.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Complete Events Calendar on laconnerweeklynews.com

NOT TO BE MISSED

The Skagit Community Band presents "In A Mellow Tone," its annual jazz concert. Join the band with free concerts at 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 26, at Maple Hall in La Conner, and 3 p.m. Sunday, April 28, at Brodriak Hall at Anacortes High School. Donation gladly accepted. For more information, visit Skagitcommunityband.org.

LIBRARIES

La Conner Swinomish Library. 520 Morris St., La Conner. 360-466-3352. www.lclib.lib.wa.us. Open 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Friday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday.

- Storytime for Children. 11 a.m. every Friday.
- Tech Help. 3-5 p.m. every Monday.
- Dungeons & Dragons Club. 3-5 p.m. every Tuesday. No experience necessary.

Mount Vernon Public Library. 315 Snoqualmie St., Mount Vernon. 360-336-6209, mount-vernonwa.gov.

- Seedling Storytime: 10:30 a.m. Tuesdays. For young ones who may be shy.
- Board Games: 1-5:30 p.m. Tuesdays. Classic board games for a variety of ages.

Anacortes Public Library. 1220 10th St., Anacortes. 360-299-

8067, CityofAnacortes.org.

- Family Storytime: 10-11:30 a.m. Fridays. For ages birth to 5, siblings welcome.
- LEGO at the Library: 3:30-5:30 p.m. Mondays. LEGO bricks provided.

Burlington Public Library. 820 E. Washington Ave., Burlington. 360-755-0760, burlingtonwa.gov/library.

- Bilingual Storytime: 10:30-11:30 a.m. Saturdays. For ages 6 and under and their caregivers. Enjoy stories and songs in English and Spanish.

MUSEUMS

Pacific Northwest Quilt & Fiber Arts Museum. 703 S. Second St., La Conner. 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. qfamuseum.org, 360-466-4288. Current exhibits:

- La Conner in Bloom Challenge 2024: Roots and Threads: A Garden in Transition, through April 28. The 2024 challenge invited artists to explore change as they create a garden-related piece.
- Shift Change: Curated by Brian Nigus, through April 28.
- Stone Portraits and Sacred Stonecapes: Artwork by Denise Labadie, through May 5.

Skagit County Historical Museum. 360-466-3365 or skagitcounty.net/museum. Hours 11 a.m.-4

p.m. Thursday-Sunday. The museum is seeking donations of vintage, holiday wares, craft supplies, collectibles and unique items for their annual Sale at the School in April. Contact jwolfe@co.skagit.wa.us. Current exhibits:

- Signs, Signs, Everywhere Signs: The Art of Bob Mortenson features the life and work of local sign maker, graphic artist and painter Bob Mortenson of Mortenson Signs of Mount Vernon. His signs are all over the county, from Rockport to Anacortes. Through Sept. 29.

Museum of Northwest Art. 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday, noon-5 p.m. Sunday and Monday. monamuseum.org, 360-466-4446. Current exhibits through May 12:

- Silva Cascadia: Under the Spell of the Forest features two- and three-dimensional works by Northwest women artists.
- At the Seam: The exhibition asks to look not only at the individual works but also at the "seams," where works representing different artistic trends and cultural identities come in touch with each other.
- My Roots: Honoring the Cultural Identity of Skagit Valley's Under-Resourced Children: Outside In Gallery.

from 2-5 p.m. every Thursday. Non-essentials every first Thursday. 17444 Sneeh Oosh Road, La Conner. 360-856-2211. helpinghandsfoodbank.org.

Skagit Valley Humane Society. 18841 Kelleher Road, Burlington. 360-757-0445. Find volunteer and donation opportunities online at skagithumane.org.

MUSIC

Ukelele Fun & Song Circle. Meets 1-2 p.m. Wednesdays, Burlington Senior Center. For more info, email yoga-heartspace0@gmail.com.

Shelter Bay Chorus. Meets 4:30-6:30 p.m. every Thursday, Shelter Bay Clubhouse. No auditions. Call Joan at 360-941-7507.

MEETINGS

Town of La Conner Council Meeting. 6 p.m. Tuesday, April 23, at Upper Maple Center. For current agenda, go to www.townoflaconner.org. Sign up for "Notify Me" to get current town information.

Skagit Conservation District. Regular board meeting at 7:30 a.m. every fourth Wednesday at 2021 E. College Way, Suite 205, Mount Vernon. 360-428-4313.

Rotary Club of La Conner. laconnerrotary.org. Meetings 6-7 p.m. every Monday at Shawn O'Donnell's restaurant. Optional dinner, 5:30 p.m.

Little Mountain Gamblers. Gamblers Anonymous meets at 6:30 p.m. every Tuesday at Mount Vernon Senior Center, 1401 Cleveland Ave.

SERVICE & VOLUNTEER

La Conner Sunrise Food Bank. Food distribution from 2:30-5 p.m. every Monday, 602 S. Third St., La Conner. 360-488-3878. laconnerfoodbank.com.

Swinomish Helping Hands Food Bank. Food distribution

Super Crossword

APPLICATION PROCESS

ACROSS

- 1 Big trucks
5 "Serial" podcast host Koenig
10 Brothers Wyatt, Virgil and Morgan
15 Like GI garb, often
19 Woeful things
20 Bingham of "Baywatch"
21 Slobber
22 Nivea rival
23 Outfit
26 Lassies
27 All upset, with "up"
28 "... flaw — feature?"
29 Actor Knotts
30 Wrung (out)
32 Deli classic
33 Bother a lot
35 Frank of rock
38 Outward display of courage
40 Attachable with a click
42 Hits, as a fly
44 Fill with love
45 "The X Factor," e.g.
47 Congeal
49 Short sleeps
50 Diane once of NPR
51 Gentlemen
53 Breather
56 Apple option
59 Cow sound

- 62 Primer for a wall, e.g.
67 Names anew
70 Outdoor enclosure for a tabby
72 Abundant
73 Cow sound
74 Despot Amin
75 It's often played during a massage
78 "Let us spray," e.g.
79 Recognize
80 Central Asia's — Sea
81 Honking birds
82 Old Jewish ascetic
84 Snootiness
87 Cur's warning
89 Snake's warning
90 Not bogus
91 Small plateau
93 Give relief to
96 Choir female
99 Responses to massages
101 Something revealed by a scale
107 Fly without a co-pilot, e.g.
110 Like a famed Vatican chapel
112 Roll around in mud or dust
113 Mascara, e.g.

- 115 Writer Calvino
117 Ethiopia's — Selassie
118 Ovid's lang.
119 Tubers often candied
120 Engine speed meas.
121 By way of
123 Tattooist's supply
124 Otherwise
126 What eight answers in this puzzle might say if they could talk?
131 Increase, with "up"
132 Internet sales
133 Increase, with "up"
134 Villain in "The Avengers"
135 609-homer Sammy
136 AC— (big name in auto parts)
137 Promotes heavily
138 Leg joint

DOWN

- 1 Most wealthy
2 Actress Douglas who starred in "Grace of My Heart"
3 Pertaining to an opening of the larynx
4 Former jet to JFK
5 Mix, as batter
6 Desi of Desilu Studios
7 Sleazy paper
8 King topper
9 Furry feet in back
10 Biblical utopia
11 Shirt part
12 Clemente of baseball
13 Oompah band genre
14 Shirt part
15 Tooth on a gearwheel
16 A Gulf state
17 Patroller around a food court
18 Bivalve mollusks
24 Sweltering summer day
25 Ivory, e.g.
31 Lion's hideout
34 Fast glance
36 Burnt residue
37 Gp. once led by Arafat
38 Raft wood
39 Soda brand
41 Utmost
43 Dickens' miser
46 Opposite of lge.
48 Three, to Fifi

- 52 Slippery road condition
54 "The Hunger Games" escort
55 Blueprint data, in brief
56 From Dublin or Cork
57 Jason's wife, in myth
58 "Ta-ta!," in Tours
60 Central Florida city
61 Crayon stuff
63 Less of a lie
64 Louvre Pyramid architect
65 Adjectives modify them
66 Message-leavers' cues
68 Astronomer Tycho —
69 Mattress brand
71 Fierce female feline
76 1972 Eric Clapton hit
77 Chinese menu letters
83 Aussie girl
85 Newlywed man
86 "Got it, man"
88 San Luis —
92 Slightly excessive
94 "How cute!"

- 95 Ugly foe of Popeye
96 Neverending
97 Not deserting
98 Frightful flies
100 Like always
102 "Ode — Grecian Urn"
103 Costa — Sol
104 Use as a skating surface
105 Mount — College (Elaine Chao's alma mater)
106 12-year-old kid, say
108 Set in place
109 Gave the nod
111 — City (Ohio town named for William Henry Harrison's moniker)
114 Theatricalize
116 Like sheep
120 Move, to a Realtor
122 Tattooist's supplies
125 Green org.
127 Cousek of The Cars
128 Endeavor
129 Spying setup
130 Big name in civ. rights

CLASSIFIEDS

To run an ad, please stop by the office (119 N. Third), call 360-466-3315, or email: production@laconnernews.com
BEFORE NOON ON FRIDAYS

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FIND PUZZLE ANSWERS ON PAGE 6

Weekly SUDOKU

by Linda Thistle

	2			6	3			
		6	5	1				8
4				2				7
6					3			9
	5		8					4
	8	2		6		1		
		1	9				6	2
7					8			5
	9			4		7		

Place a number in the empty boxes in such a way that each row across, each column down and each small 9-box square contains all of the numbers from one to nine.

DIFFICULTY THIS WEEK: ◆

- ◆ Moderate
- ◆◆ Challenging
- ◆◆◆ HOO BOY!

POLICE BLOTTER

SKAGIT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Sunday, April 7

11:36 a.m.: Not what it seems – Subject driving on Maple Avenue lost control of her car and hit the sign for the dental office. The sign was knocked over but the suspect fled the scene and was later located at her residence. The driver was cited for suspended driving and hit and run. La Conner.

11:55 a.m.: Animal last rites – Caller asked about an injured deer on the side of the road. A deputy arrived and found the deer was now deceased. A note was left for public works to remove. Best Road at Summers Drive, greater La Conner.

Monday, April 8

1:31 p.m.: Dogs being dogs – Caller had questions on loose dogs running in her fields and causing crop damage. The laws were explained along with civil action that could be taken. McLean and Barrett roads, greater La Conner.

Tuesday, April 9

7:40 a.m.: Cat's last act – Cat hit by car and was in bad shape. The cat was taken to pet emergency and euthanized. Dodge Valley and Best roads, greater La Conner.

1:27 p.m.: Tulip gazers – Tulip traffic complaints for vehicles parked in roadway and unsafe u-turns. Traffic units continue to patrol the area. Best Road, greater La Conner.

Wednesday, April 10

10:25 a.m.: Big city move – Impatient

driver eastbound on Morris thought the car in front was taking too long at the stop sign. As the front car started to go, the second car pulled out into the oncoming lane and passed in the intersection. The passing car had to swerve back quickly due to oncoming traffic and clipped the car they had passed. The driver was cited for unlawful passing and causing a collision. Maple Avenue at Morris Street, La Conner.

Friday, April 12

1:14 p.m.: Who's in trouble? – Report that kids were fighting on the bus and the driver braked hard to stop the fight. Parents complained to the school district which is handling this internally. Morris and S. Sixth Streets, La Conner.

1:25 p.m.: In dog mode – Caller called about a dog locked in a car with no windows down. This was a Tesla and was in dog mode with the AC on. No issue. Beaver Marsh Road, greater La Conner.

Saturday, April 13

12:52 p.m.: Avoid driving weekends – More complaints about traffic being slow and blocking roads. Traffic units working the area. McLean and Best roads, greater La Conner.

9:28 p.m.: Fire crew saved boat – A 28-foot boat was taking on water in the marina and needed pumps to keep it afloat. Fire responded with pumps and the water level was maintained until repairs could be made. The operator had run aground earlier and believed he put a hole in the transom. N. Second Street, La Conner.

Langley's team approach tackles tourism

By Judy Booth

“The Langley Chamber of Commerce is supported through grants that are specific to tourism,” notes Nicole Whittington-Johnson, the Chamber’s executive director. Additionally, there is Langley Creates, a state-designated creative district, part of a Washington state program that helps communities turn their cultural and historical assets into economic growth, a non-profit created by the Langley Chamber of Commerce. Plus, there is the Langley Main Street Association championing the downtown’s economic revitalization and historic preservation.

“The Murder Mystery weekend in February is one of the top festivals. People come from all over the world – three thousand people attended this year. It started in 1984 and has grown ever since. People love how merchants are characters that wear multiple hats – checking their point of sales, then putting on another hat!” said Whittington-Johnson.

The city’s events list includes a Whale Festival in March – a pod

of gray whales show up every year – a parade in April and a parade on July Fourth with an hour of floats, marching bands, even marching violins.

A town tradition since the 1970s in August and September is the Soup Box Derby – not “soap” box. People from 9 to 99 build soup-box cars and risk barreling down the First Street hill.

Island organic farms draw tourists throughout the summer.

The creative district is developing an outdoor museum and arts corridor to bridge the downtown with the community center. “We are right on track for it to be a strong year,” said Whittington-Johnson.

Inga Morascini, public relations and marketing director for Whidbey and Camano Islands Tourism and the county’s tourism leadership team recognized that just sustainability in tourism was enough. They decided to consult with Regenerative Travel Council, a consulting firm specializing in regenerative tourism.

After a year of analysis to learn what the island culture was and what produced the best tourists – defined as people who cared

about the environment – they decided to target that market while at the same time insuring locals would continue to live there comfortably.

Regenerative tourism, like regenerative agriculture, uses a holistic approach to create conditions that will continuously renew and lower carbon emissions for entire environmental and ecological systems. That’s a tall order.

Morascini said they were tailoring their tourism towards people who want to get out of doors; gain knowledge of local history; of the culinary, cultural and agricultural aspects of the region; pursue experiences such as mushroom hunting, farm visits and organic farming – all leaning heavily on experience rather than just driving up and down the island.

Regenerative tourism defines success as net benefit – added value, not volume. It is a holistic approach to the well-being of the entire ecosystem.

“We want tourism to add to our environment, not take away from it – a much better approach,” concluded Morascini.

We’re watching.

Irrigation

■ ■ ■ (from page 1)

Island, especially at its south end near Skagit Bay.

Thulen and dairy farmer Jason Vander Kooy agree that a secure water supply is good for farmers and people who lease land to them.

“When you decide where to

put crops, the first question you ask is, is there water available?” said Vander Kooy. “A potato is 90% water. Without water you don’t get much of a potato. When any plant is drought stressed, we start getting disease problems. The same thing is true when you and I are dehydrated.”

Well-irrigated, high-quality potatoes and other crops mean less waste. The birds and insects that

depend on the ditches for water are also happier. Even the farm-workers benefit. “When there’s no harvest, there’s no work,” said Vander Kooy. “When there’s lots of harvest, there’s lots of work.”

In District 15, water is pumped into a network of gravity-fed ditches that stretch from Kamb to Best Roads. Filling them is a two-day job and when the river level goes down, pumps shut down and the ditches empty, “we lose way too much water,” said Vander Kooy. “Keeping the ditches full is much better. When the pumps are on, they don’t even change the level of the river by the thickness of a piece of paper. In effect, we are pumping eight CFS out of the river that is flowing 10,000 CFS.”

A public notice of the agreement will be published soon and PUD general manager George Sidhu believes the new agreement will be authorized by the end of May, long before the water in the Skagit River falls below 10,000 CFS.

“Even though the snow level is not the greatest, right now I’m not too worried about water, but who knows?” said Vander Kooy.

“The important thing is we all got together, the consortium, the PUD, the farmers and figured it out. Collaboration, that’s important.”

Raisin' the Roof Barn Party

SUNDAY, MAY 5TH 2024 at 6PM-9PM

- Line dancing (with lessons!)
- Cinco de Mayo Taco Bar
- Silent Auction
- Inspirational updates & stories
- Local Artisan Booths

Info & Tickets:

More Info:
crossroadsyr.org
Kim@crossroadsyr.org

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Delicious \$23 Dinner Includes:

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Baked Potato • Cole Slaw
Garlic Bread • Beverage
Ice Cream Bar

Fresh tulips for purchase

In A Mellow Tone

Skagit Community Band presents Our Annual Jazz Concert

Friday April 26th 7:30 p.m.
La Conner – Maple Hall

Sunday April 28th 3:00 p.m.
Anacortes - Brodniak Hall

Free admission, donations gladly accepted.

For more information and directions go to:
Skagitcommunityband.org

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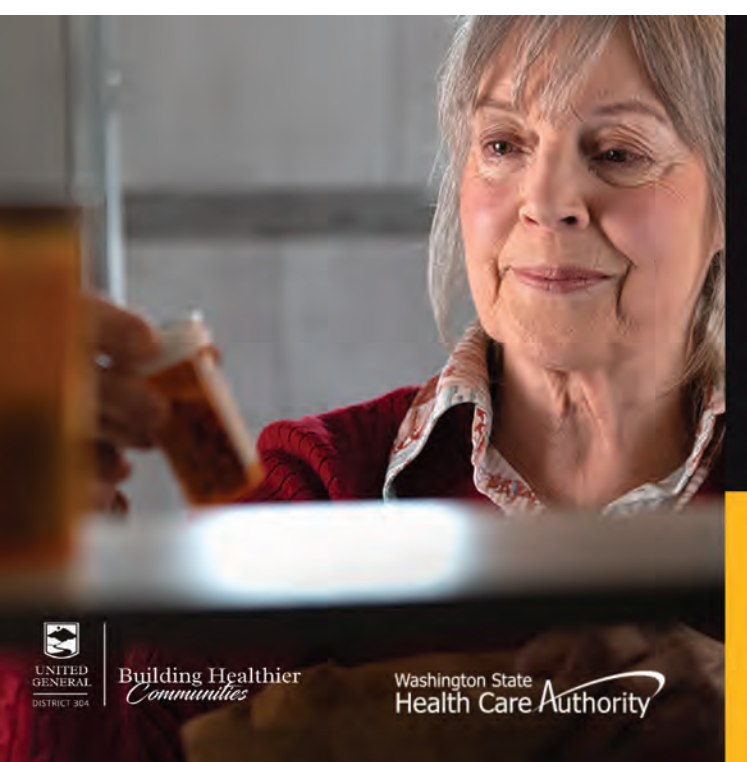
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