

## That tough year of 1990

It was autumn of 1989 and my wife Charlotte and I were moving in. We'd been married for a couple of years, and this little run down farmstead was all we could afford. Everything about the place had seen its better days. House, barns, trees, even the mailbox was rusted half shut. We assessed our situation, but we couldn't have imagined what was in "storm for us"!

The winter and spring seemed normal enough, I was working for the seed company, but Charlotte was probably right, that I couldn't run the farm and work out at the same time. I gave a two week notice, and prepared to be my own farmer, full time. By the end of May, I had about 7 acres of garden planted. Peas and beans, and corn and onions and spuds, and spinach, lettuce, carrots, and beets, parsnip, arugula and leeks, we even had radishes, turnips, squashes, cucumbers, and cabbage, not to mention strawberries and raspberries and garlic, nope, not much time for an easy chair. We spent our days weeding and transplanting, and planting crops everywhere. I was still busy spreading compost and preparing to plant later crops, and then the storms came! June 5<sup>th</sup> will live in my memory forever. The dark grey clouds carried billions of gallons from the sea to the delta, day after day. It was freaking me out, as the lakes kept getting bigger and deeper, drowning crops, causing me to crumple to my knees! Why did I quit my job, why did I decide to do this crazy farming scheme? I was learning some tough lessons the hard way. When the rains finally stopped on the fifteenth, the sixteenth was a toasty 93°! My neighbors peas melted in the mud, mine were healthier than everyones. My compost kept the roots alive, when most fields just died. I right then and there, learned what should have earned me some time in that recliner chair. My peas were about 6 inches tall when that first deluge dropped 2 and a half inches in about an hour! They were barely sticking above the water, for nearly two weeks!

Every day it rained, every time we thought the rains had stopped, we were disappointed to realize that they had not. The soil had turned to soup, where the land wasn't completely covered. I sank over my boots trying to dig ditches to ditches that were constantly nearly full. Skagit silty clay has a long history of dumping itself constantly in the ever expanding delta. Then came the bay dikes and river levees, protecting you and I, while miraculously feeding millions and millions of you and me. No, these soils are capable of fantastic yields, but it doesn't

come easy, this sort of excess water has to be pumped out into the bay. It's below sea level where we grow some of the best produce on the west coast. Nearly 90 crops have been commercially grown here, but most of our 90 thousand acres are grown to about 12-15. Lets see now, potatoes, barley, wheat, spinach, beet, and cabbage, for seed. Brussels sprouts, brocolli, cauliflower, cucumber, straw and blueberries, corn and grass for cows, makes 14. Leeks and carrots and ornamental trees are making me realize how off my estimate was, heck, there's Tulips and daffodils and beans, green, and dry. That's 20 crops that have at least a hundred acres. Twenty acres of lettuce and peppers and then poom into my mind pops the pumpkins and squash, several hundred acres of each. So there you go, we can't think much longer, or we'll remember the newish hazelnut planting, nearly a hundred acreas of them. Twenty five crops of 20 acres or more, that's a professional estimate of the Skagit crops circa 2020, by a fella who aught to know. Anyway, what I learned was that the compost I had concocted, saved my day. My compost kept me from having a nervous breakdown, had I not seen some solid silver lining in the disaster, I might have lost my mind. I found it extremely true that physics rules the day, sometimes we're just in the way, some of the storms of the Skagit have been very unkind. This one, just couldn't quit, I had a lot of loss, but not as much as my neighbor farmers, so I took it in stride, did my best, and had a 283 dollar taxable income that year. Butter was still on our bread and the bills got paid, it was a year for this short story, I think.

Yeah, the rest of the summer was fairly normal, all the way into October, before some early snows came, and piled high. Feet and feet of the heavy white stuff were all over the mountains, while the lowlands were nearly as wet as in June. At least most of the crops were out of the field, the Brussels sprouts harvest had not yet begun, however, so there was more loss to come. In the spring, I'd planted a half acre of orchard, and they'd nearly drowned, so I had dug trenches and was laying the drainage tile when the "Pineapple Express" came rumbling into town. The rain was too warm, it had come straight from the tropics, lickity split. It melted the snow, torrents were let loose! The Skagit River was raging, and the flood fight was on. Now the levee on the south fork was right across the road. I had a one ton truck that was used to haul sandbags in the torrential downpour. Kids from school, inmates from prisons, old to young, all shouldering a part of the load, of sand that was shoveled into sandbags, that were hauled to soft and leaky places on the levee.

The rains were incessant and hard, more rain and snowmelt than in nearly a century! The storm finally passed through and the skies were clear and blue. We'd been at it for days, shoveling and hauling and packing sandbags, so I'd earned a short rest on the dry side of the levee. A trailer full of sandbags was about an hour away, so I closed my eyes and dozed for a few minutes with the surging river just a few feet away! I'd never seen anything like it, the river was about to overtop the levees, but the rains had stopped and the river was cresting, we kinda thought we'd won the fight. The trailer arrived and the sandbags were unloaded, so we few sandbaggers hopped the trailer being pulled along the top of the levee, for the ride back to the sandbag staging area. Nolan was the tractor driver, I felt fairly comfortable dangling my legs over the trailers edge. We were circling back around, not too far from where we'd just unloaded a couple hundred bags. There was some commotion, and a pickup driving fast, I hopped off and ran and...we'll be right back just after this commercial break. If you're ever in the Skagit Valley, in spring, and the daffodils and Tulips are in bloom, you have to check out the coolest small town in the United States, Laconner, Wa. There are cool characters that are a part of the neighborhood. Mayor Hayes will sell you some jewelry, Brenda and Hilary will serve you the best hashes in the northwest, and Kim will caffeinate your day, and the market will help you with your picnic, especially on those sunny days. Of course there's Marlo and Gary and Gable at the famous "Nasty Jacks Antiques". I could go on and on, but this commercials time is done. Then, I ran some more to where Greg was throwing sandbags in a hole! It was at the edge of the water, right near the top of the levee! All of a sudden the sandbag shot out the other side! The problems had just begun, the proverbial "Oh sh\*t", came to my mind! Pretty soon it was fully understood that there would be a massive river running through Fir Island, in just a short time. There were animals to be moved, equipment, furniture, and all manner of thing that needed to be hauled to higher ground. Even though we were exhausted, the real work had just started. I turned and ran back to the trailer, there was nothing further to be done, but get back to my farm and start loading my truck and trailer with the most valuable possessions. We had the freezer full of frozen food, a tractor and mower and a shop full of tools, we had no idea how high the water would get, we were tired, but we didn't need to be fools. Walt and Alice and Michael were all a big help. Nobody can handle a massive flood all by themselves.

The river continued to recede, but not until there really was a river running through the ever widening gap in the levee. As soon as emergency monies were approved, the Army Corp of Engineers and local truck drivers started hauling rock, a big dump truck would drive by every minute, around the clock. Each one shook our house like a 3.5 earthquake! Yet we felt more fortunate than many, the waters not too far away were more than eight feet deep! Yeah, the water stopped rising at the floorboards of our house. I only lost one chicken, most of my flock knew better than to leave their roosts and haybales, where I'd left them some food. My friend Chris, let me stash my stuff at his farm, up on the hill, above the flooding that was everywhere. As soon as the repairs were underway, and the water was receding, I moved my stuff back home, but we didn't know that the rains would again return. The levee breached on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November, nobody could have guessed that another "Pineapple Express", would come again so quickly. It was again raining in torrents, and the river was raging once again, this was stressing all of our minds. The breached levee was partially rebuilt when the next deluge dumped, so when the river rose it was right back to moving everything again! Yeah, the first and second floods were only two weeks apart, between the two, there was barely enough time to impart anything but woe, from the heart.

My neighbor Roy sailed his sailboat around our basin island, I think a few people actually skied. It took a long time to finally get fixed, well into the next year. That year more than any other, hassled my head to where I feared I would show the tears running down my face. Somehow we survived to farm for another quarter century.

## Tulip Pedal

Each March as the northwest mystic sky started to show the sun through cracks in the clouds, we were tempted to get on our bikes and pedal around the farm roads to see how the daffodils, tulips and irises were progressing. The colors were spectacular. Rows of intense yellow daffodils striped the fields. And later in April the Valley tulips displayed patch work quilts of peachy orange sewed to fiery red sewed to deep purple. Our spring bike trips never disappointed.

One year, 1981, Community Homewell, a visiting nurse agency, wanted to start a Hospice service. Needing financing, they hired Paul Murray, a resident of La Conner, to fundraise. Paul had to come up with serious money because his own salary would be dependent on his success. Paul was one of the spring bikers enjoying the flowers each March and April. He thought it would be a good idea to share this beauty with others... which became his fundraising project. He came up with the idea of hosting a casual bike ride through the back roads of Skagit farmlands to view the Magic of the Skagit in distilled color.

He explained his vision to the flower farmers then asked if they would share with him a map showing the fields that would be planted in daffodils, and which color of tulips would be planted where, and expected dates for the high point of the bloom. Then he pushed them a little further and asked if they would describe the bulb planting and growing process to the bikers during their Tulip ride. Some farmers were interested the first year and more grew interested and more enthusiastic in later years. Paul thought the 'Tulip Pedal' would be a fitting name for marketing the event. This event was one more chapter in the long history of appreciating the farming lifestyle in the Valley.

Next, Paul recruited his spring biking friends dubbed the 'team', Ron Shrigley, Joan Cross, Mary Anderson, Rusty Kuntze, Libby Mills, Dan O'Donnell. We were assigned the tasks of publicizing, selling T-shirts, and marking the route according to the farmers' planting maps. We ordered the shirts and posted announcements on community bulletin boards, advertised in local newspapers, and community calendars in preparation for the Saturday event.

On the Saturday morning of peak bloom 1982, the 'team' woke at 5am and drove around the prescribed route, taking a 10 pound bag of flour to mark arrows at significant turns in the route. Upon returning to La Conner, we set up the T-shirt tables and started the fundraising. We made enough money the first year from 500 participants to kick off Community Homewell's Hospice program. We had so much fun, we did it again a second year and drew over 700 visitors. Paul now had a secure job.

During the third year for added attraction, Dan O'Donnell and Ron Shrigley organized a Bike Criterium race. It started south on First Street, up Commercial hill to Second St. passing the Gaches mansion, the Methodist Church and down the hill turning left on

Washington St. returning to First St..... and around and around and around. For safety we recruited Bud Moore to place hay bales at crucial corners. It was a popular race in the biking community because of the hills, a straight away and the tight corners. Bikers from Seattle, Vancouver and beyond swarmed La Conner. Excitement, competition, storytelling chattered in the air. Bikers showed off their latest neon garb, carbon framed bikes, and gears. Shoes locked into pedals for up-swing leverage as well as down strokes. The clicking of bike shoes on the sidewalks was background music to the competition. The Calico Cupboard served up coffee and tasties.

And booom! The race was on. The speed was dizzying watching on Second St. then running down the Benton St stairs to see them again and again pass the bank and the Fire Engine Museum. It was an event to look forward to all year.

By the fourth year the Tulip Pedal was too big to manage with thousands of visitors for our small 'team', we passed it on to the La Conner Kiwanis club for their fundraiser. The following year they moved it on to the Mt. Vernon Chamber of Commerce.

Now each spring thousands of visitors come to the Skagit Valley for Daffodil and Tulip Festivals, Art and Craft shows, delicious food, crafted beer and epic ice cream cones.

Paul's vision of sharing Skagit's blooming spectacle grows every year. The lesson he learned was 'be careful of what you wish for'.



**Handing Uncle Art's list around the Rexville**

*Monday, seeded spinach. Cultivated and hoed beets.*

*Tuesday, Wednesday: hoed beets.*

*Thursday, reseeded spinach. Friday, beets.*

*Saturday, hauled manure and plowed small lot  
where manure pile is. Sunday, went to church.*

"It must have been May," says Alan, scanning  
the scrap of writing wedged for near a century  
behind a dresser drawer. "The beets are up to here  
when the spinach goes in. Manure—well, when you've  
got animals, that's year round." Alan comes for coffee  
after he feeds the cows. Manure

is this month's only crop, snow cooling  
the Ford F250s parked out front.

Between seasons of great labor, this short  
parentheses, when ditch commissioners,  
grunts and visionaries rest their limbs  
a little longer by the coffee urn. Football.  
Generators. Weather. What my old uncles  
might have mulled with their own friends  
feet up for these few fallow weeks.

Geese feast on wheat. The big implements  
slumber in barns. When mechanics  
wake them with a wrench, the gray rest  
ends. "That's how it is here," grumbles my brother.  
"Winter goes on and on and on  
and then one day you wake up  
and you're already behind."

## Rosario Strait

Home to thousands of salmon,  
tides running like Olympic sprinters,  
pools of orange kelp, herring hundreds of feet underwater,  
first strike pulls the tip of the rod under the surface,  
boats bunch up like scared geese, it's as hectic as a riot.  
Running for the rod, quickly tightening the drag, setting the hook,  
feeling the strong pull as the king runs deeper,  
hearts racing, palms sweating, geared up to land,  
line unspooling, nearly none left,  
cuss words thrown left and right, son of a bitch,  
the rod can't take much more, but the king gets tired,  
cranking and cranking, always keeping tension,  
ten minutes pass, twenty, from the shadows  
my monster finally breaches the cold depths, glistening silver,  
rolling over, bright spots, blackmouth, shining like a star,  
net out, and the monster is corralled,  
in the boat it jumps, fighting for life, but stands no chance,  
my club strikes the head knocking it out cold, gills cut, bleeding out,  
all life gone, twenty-five pounds.  
Celebration erupts, boat rocks, high fives all around,  
The cussing now celebratory, hell yeahs and headed home.  
streamlining across the glassy water, headed to the docks,  
finally home, dinner is served, thanks to Rosario Strait.



# The Red House

**WC: 824 - Age: 14** I have lived in Skagit Valley my whole life and have enjoyed every minute of it's beautiful land and welcoming community. I have moved twice and have lived in three different houses in the valley, but there was a certain house that seemed to say more 'Skagit Valley' than the rest. We called it, *The Red House*, I moved there when I was three years old and lived there until I was ten. The house was originally along the Skagit River but when the dike was built, to prevent flooding, the house was put further back off the river and on a road away from the dike. The house was a farmhouse, it was red with bright white trim. It was old, it had hardwood floors that would creek as you walked and the wind would shake the house back and forth in the many windstorms that occurred in the valley. It had an amazing yard though, living in a hilly neighborhood now you forget how nice it is to have a flat yard.

Along the road where you would turn into our driveway we had ditches on both sides to collect all the rainwater and to keep it from piling up in our yard. Sometimes at night when we were coming home and it was dark, I would get worried that we were going to accidentally turn into the ditch, but we never did. Good thing we had put up some reflectors so we knew where the driveway to the house was! The ditches were also home to many animals, including herons. We even named them when I was a little girl, there were always two birds that would hang around in the fields around our home and we named them Harry and Henrietta the Heron. Who knows if they were actually the same two herons, but we always would see them together and me and my sisters were convinced that it was always Harry and Henrietta.

There was this one year we decided to let our back lawn grow the whole year and my dad mowed all sorts of paths in it! This was because at the time we had my cousin's old play jeep that you would charge the battery and drive in when you were a little kid. We would take our little jeep and drive through the paths and since the jeep only sat two people we would tie a play wagon behind us and just ride it all around. I

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loved driving around my sisters! We would even play games in the dry grass and hide in the grass and build forts, which looking back seems like such a bad idea for my seasonal allergies! Anyways, we had fun and when it finally got too hard to maintain, we decided it was time to cut it down. The grass was taller than me at the time and there was no way that our lawn mower could cut it, so my dad tried to convince a man that would hay bail the fields around us that had a machine that could cut down the huge mess of a lawn, but he said that it would take forever because it was thick and too heavy to cut down and bail. My dad even offered to pay him and let him keep the hay bales for his farm and he still declined the offer. This is just how bad our lawn had gotten! A few days later he asked another man that was working on the fields nearby if he could cut it down and he said sure, but I didn't want this grass as hay, it was too thick. He cut it all down and my dad spent days trying to get all of the grass in a pile and off the yard. The big pile finally decomposed itself away. This was still one of my favorite memories at that house, although I can't imagine what the neighbors thought, they must've thought we were crazy to let our lawn grow that long!

We of course had lots of other amazing stories, activities, and adventures at this house. We had fun digging up the last of the potatoes that the farmers would miss in the nearby fields, we loved seeing all of the snow geese flying above, we had so much fun in that house. Until it got too small for all of us growing girls and it was time to find a bigger home, so we decided to start looking for a new house. I still have lots of fun memories in *The Red House* and it was a fun place to grow up in. That house introduced me to the valley and showed me that Skagit Valley is a wonderful place to live. That house definitely made a lot of *Magic Skagit Stories* to tell for years to come, just like I am doing now nearly five years later!

## Skagit's Rain and Beauty

I stepped off the plane and caught the cold frigid rain on my warm skin. The cool air crashed over me like a wave, my hair was blown every which way. I couldn't believe I was back in this gloomy state once more.

I had lived here once before, it's my birth place, and my only knowledge of home had always been that little white house on the end of the cul de sac. Years after living in the same house, my mom got tired of the rain and mud, and dreamed of poolside evenings instead. I was young when we first moved out of the "white house," but when my mom brought up the possibility of moving away from cold and damp Snohomish, Washington to bright and sunny Denver, Colorado, 8 year old me was ecstatic. Little did I know, four years after moving to Colorado my mom would say "I miss the rain, we should move back to Washington." So here we are, getting off the plane to our new house in Mount Vernon, Washington.

The house was small but comfortable, perfect for my family of four. It was very old fashioned, the stairs creaked, the paint was chipped, and the doors sounded like nails on a chalkboard. But we weren't interested in the inside, because the backyard made up for all the little details. The backyard was filled with roses, and had perfect hedges hovering over you. The grass was green, and the flowers were vibrant. The rain had made this place flourish with colors and smells that make you want to dance around like you're in a romantic 90s movie. I couldn't wait to grow a garden or plant all kinds of diverse flowers, but we still had a truck to unload, and rooms to settle into.

My room was flooded with natural light, a rusty window covered the far wall from corner to corner. Every angle in the room was covered in cobwebs, and dust coated the ground. No one had lived in this house for some time now. I started by taking a broom to the dust and dirt, and had my older sister help me reach the cobwebs with a feather duster I found under the bathroom sink. The ceiling was tall, shaped and angled to form a 'A'. I had so many ideas to make this room feel more, you know, roomy. After the

room was spick and span, I started unpacking my things. I hung my wrinkled clothes on the small rack in the closet, and folded the rest to put in a dresser that was far too big to fit the amount of clothes I had. I had chosen to donate most of my summer clothes, so I had more room to buy clothes that better fit the weather. We unpacked for the next day or two, leaving the house occasionally to buy food and kitchen supplies. Once we had unpacked, we went on a long drive, to see all the beautiful sights, and get a lay of the land. I remember driving past nearly 20 roadside coffee stands, seeing fields and fields of tulips, and seeing Mount Baker for the first time. So many things to explore, things I had never seen or done. Was Washington always this beautiful? Maybe I was too young to remember.

Since then I've grown to love rain, it creates beauty and harmony through nature. I never realized how much I would enjoy sitting by the rusted window reading, while the droplets of rain hit the glass. I never realized how much I would enjoy trying new coffee and foods. I never realized how peaceful storms can be. A lot has changed since I moved, I've changed as a person. I've found a respect for small things like rainbows in the sky after a week of rain, and all the round-a-bouts scattered around the valley. Little things like the herd of deer that prance around where the road meets the thick forests. Even little things like the smell of the pine tree in the morning, and the beauty of dew drops on blades of grass. Skagit Valley has shown me that even on my rainy days, there can be a sense of peace and control. Everyday I thank the rain for all the beauty it brings.

## The Magic of Skagit

The Magic of Skagit County  
Is in the memories.  
All those alluring  
Beautiful memories.  
We all have them  
So let's take a trip down memory lane.

Do you remember promenading  
down the triangular patterned sidewalk  
Being 5 years old  
And trying to walk inside that pattern.

Or being by the farmers market,  
When the tulips come,  
And seeing the bustle and liveliness.  
Of everyone with smiles and joy on their face.

Do you remember when you'd walk by Pacionis  
and smell all of the wonderful food  
They'd be making inside.  
To just want and crave  
Something delicious.

Or be walking down the county fair  
Where you'd see the glass flame worker  
And just find this imperfect  
Little turtle for five dollars.  
It would be so tiny and fragile  
It could break so easily  
But you'd not care.  
It was perfect.

All of the wonderful memories  
With family  
Annoying and irritating  
Or wonderful and joyous.  
The memories you make  
So incredible,  
That's what Skagit magic is about.

*The Long Skagit Summer*

2021  
Teen Poetry 2<sup>nd</sup> Place  
Tyson Benefit

The smell, the sound, the birds, the trees  
That good feeling, of a nice summer breeze  
How nice it would be, to do it all over ago  
How nice it would be, to go back in  
Never tough, never bad  
Never short, never sad  
The long Skagit summer,  
Away from it all,  
The longer the better  
The stress would fall  
The long Skagit summer,  
With the family,  
In the pool,  
No stress,  
Everything was cool,  
Beach days, oh what a sight,  
Or everyone together,  
By the campfire at night,  
Barbeque and fresh mowed grass,  
How long how long,  
Until the next one is gone,  
The long Skagit summer,  
When will you be back,  
I'll wait for you again,  
And that's a fact

## Skagit County Attractions

Skagit county is a farming community and is mostly fields. There's a couple farms within a quarter mile from me including just animal farms. We have produce stores everywhere and are able to grow really good crops. And we get so much rain that we can produce massive amounts of crops while spending little amounts of money on water for sprinklers. The county grows about 90 different types of crops. And as of 2017 there were 1,041 farms. Near me I can easily point out 4 that I could walk to in under 10 minutes. There are over 12 big farm fields that are close and when I say big, I mean massive. There are a ton of farming neighborhoods with tractors ready for the fields. Local farmers produce 300 million dollars a year on crops and livestock. Because we have such great farming soil and weather conditions we are able to grow tulips which is a major tourist attraction and makes farmers a lot of money.

We also have great entertainment. We have many national parks and museums as well as recreation buildings where you can do your hobbies and practice your skills. There's a county fair with games and other activities also and that is really fun. There's nice campgrounds and things to do like playgrounds and parks. We have beaches to hang out on and zoos to go see animals. One time we went to the county fair and this is what happened. We walked in and we were immediately greeted with the smell of food. There were a ton of food stands and food trucks and it was hard to just walk by them. We were not very hungry so we wandered around the fair and saw a bunch of animals and artists as well as a bunch of rides. We saw my cousins and we got food and ate together.

We went to a maze thing that they had that was a big room. Every wall was a mirror and we had to get through it. Then there was a dunk tank in another area and we played that. There were some rides but they were mostly just small rides. There were a bunch of different types of areas to go to as well, for example there was a eating area which had all the food trucks and stuff and then there was a game area, which had all the games spread out in a big area, and then there was a ride area. This had all the rides like the mini train and there was a tiny roller coaster, it didn't go very fast but it was for little kids anyway so i didn't go on it. But there were many things to do. So skagit county isn't just a farming county, it is great for farming but it has many other attractions and activities. The things like tulips bring more attraction than the fair of course but it's nice to have some fun things.

## The Small Town Girl

There was a small town in Washington named Mount Vernon, a quiet town, but friendly. The year was 1967. My name is Elizabeth, I'm 13 years old and the middle child of three siblings. I love living in Mount Vernon because there are so many things to do. It is Saturday and me and my friends went to the Lincoln theater downtown. It was our favorite thing to do on the weekend. I loved going to the theater so I could get away from my siblings. The weekends were nice because me and my friends love walking around town. The hard thing was I had to be home before 6:00 so I can help mama with dinner or mama would be mad because I would be late. After supper me and my older sister Poly go up stairs to our bedroom and get ready for bed, but we had to help my younger sister, Juney, get ready for bed while mama gets ready to go out and play bingo, and dad gets ready to go play poker. So that leaves me and Poly in charge for the night.

It is now Sunday, mama made the best chocolate chip pancakes, with local Skagit Valley strawberries, it was the best! After breakfast my family and I get ready to go on a walk along the Skagit River with our puppy Jack. He loved going on walks downtown so did I. After we were down on our walk me, poly, mama, and Juney went to see the tulips, while dad went to go help my grandpa on his farm, which was on Fir Island. In just a few months, it will be my birthday and my grandpa will be giving me a new horse. So this August I will be showing my horse in the Skagit County Fair for the first time.

It's August now, and I have been waiting all summer to show my new horse, Trixie, that my grandparents got for me for my 14th birthday. After I get her all settled into her stall, I walk around the fair and see what carnival games they have there. Then I went to mama and asked if I could have a couple dollars to get some tickets to go on some rides because I had about three hours before it was showing time. Mama warned me to be back to have 10 minutes before showtime, but said yes otherwise. I saw my



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It was finally September and that meant I was finally starting Junior high . I was going to Mount Vernon junior High School, home of the Bulldogs. I was nervous because I was going into junior high school and how many classes I would have and how many people there would be. I was extra nervous because what if my friends and I weren't in the same class together. The first day of school was pretty scary being with some people and I did not know and I didn't see a lot of friends from my old school. It's been a week so far since I've been in junior high and I love it so much. I'm on the school's photographe team for the school's newspaper team and I met a new friend named Ethel and we have so much in common. Ethel has two brothers instead of two sisters and she is the middle child as well. It turned out after we started talking, she was the girl that I tied against in the horse show and won against. I can't wait for more fun adventures to happen during the rest of the year. It was know the middle of the year and my class is taking a field trip to leconer

## The Great Skagit List

This is a great Skagit County.  
This place is a bounty.

The tree is really, really tall, taller than my dad.  
This place is very good, and we are glad.

We are not close to the Republic of Korea.  
We listen to songs by Sia.

We live on Rainier St., not on the Republic of Korea street.  
We are not eating meat.

Burlington is not where we stay.  
La Conner is a perfect place to play.

Skagit Magic is very nice.  
We eat rice.