

At Work for You Port of Skagit

Good Jobs for Our Community
Spring 2015



Carolyn Tenneson Wahl, left, owner of Old Wooden Spoon Baking Co. LLC of Sedro-Woolley, and her mother Beverly Tenneson prepare products for baking in the commercial kitchen at Bayview Business Park.

Commercial Kitchen Cooks Up Success

When the Port of Skagit built its commercial kitchen in the Bayview Business Park in 2011, the facility was envisioned as an incubator that would provide emerging food businesses a place to prepare products for the market.

Now, three-plus years into a partnership with From the Farm Treats, the port can point to a solid record of success for its commercial kitchen. According to statistics compiled by From the Farm Treats, which has been managing the kitchen since it opened, 39 individual businesses used the facility during 2014 with usage averaging 29 hours per week. Nine additional businesses are planning to start using the kitchen in 2015, and 11 more individuals or partners have inquired about starting businesses that would utilize the kitchen.

From the Farm Treats also supports 16 food processors that use the commercial kitchen as their processing plant. Many of these are able to create value-added products, thanks to the availability of the kitchen.

"We built the commercial kitchen because people in the community were telling us that a facility like that was needed," said Bill Shuler, president of the port commission. "The success of this project shows that good things can happen when people work together."

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- 20-Year View
- Bob Nord Retires
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COMING EVENTS:

April

4/6 Special Meeting & Tour

4/14 Regular Meeting and Strategic Planning

May

5/12 Regular Meeting and Strategic Planning

June

6/9 Regular Meeting

Check website for times and location of meetings.
www.portofskagit.com



**Port of
Skagit**

Twenty Years at the Port of Skagit and Still Counting

Earlier this year the Skagit port commissioners took time in one of their meetings to mention that I had just completed 20 years of employment at the port. That got me thinking about some of the changes I've been part of at the port during the past two decades.



We certainly have completed some big infrastructure projects – Skagit WIN, development of Crosswind Drive and the runway project at the airport, and multiple dredgings of the Swinomish Channel, to

name a few – and have secured important tenants on our properties. But I prefer to focus on the changes we've made internally that are helping us to move forward into the future. Here are four of them.

For many years, our approach to economic development was the keep our doors open and wait for the next big employer to come calling. That was OK for a while, but eventually the calls dwindled to a trickle. In response, we developed a marketing strategy to proactively focus on the specific sectors of aerospace, marine and value-added agriculture. The result has been not only a high occupancy rate

for our properties, but also increased employment and development opportunities for the overall community.

We also have learned that the port can best contribute to the community's prosperity when we take the approach that private sector success often rests on public sector infrastructure. That's why we're working so hard these days to secure a productive future for the Northern State property in Sedro-Woolley.

Another important change in focus was from seeking jobs of any sort to good jobs that pay well enough to support a family. The best way the port can help local families succeed is to provide a good job for each parent.

Related to that, we also changed our approach to economic development by broadening our scope. These days, we consider any good job created in the port district to be a victory, not just the ones on port property. And we will work with most anyone in the community who is trying to make this happen.

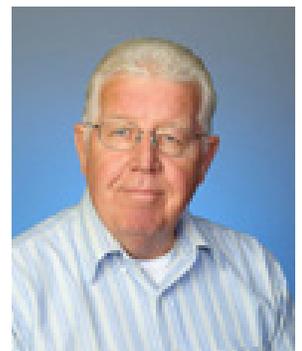
I'm very curious to see what changes the next 20 years will bring.

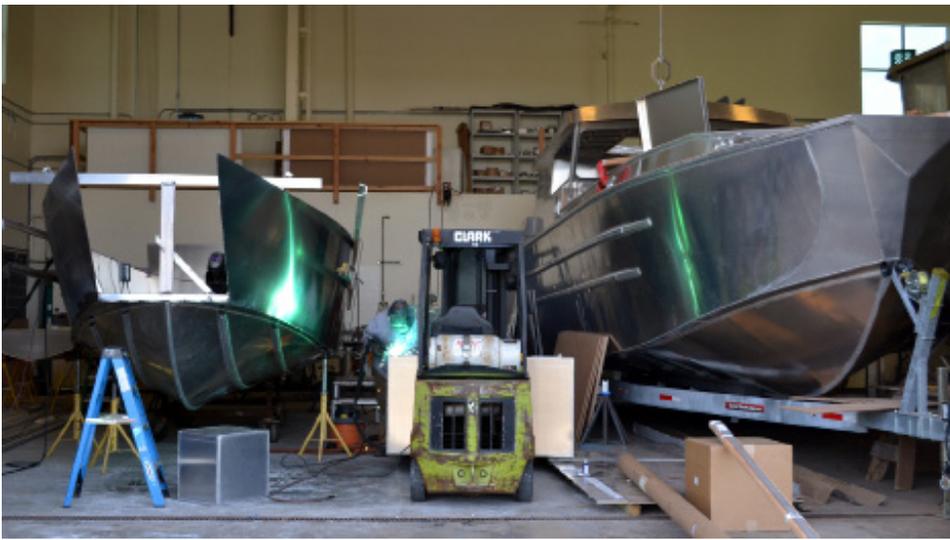
Patsy Martin

Port of Skagit Executive Director

Transition – The Skagit Port Commissioners congratulated Bob Nord, Airport Supervisor / Project Manager, at their December commission meeting on his retirement after completing 25 years as a port employee.

Bob came to work at the port in December 1989 as a maintenance technician and took on increasing responsibilities over the years. He was instrumental in many port projects, most notably the Runway 10-28 Crown Conversion and Longitudinal Gradient Adjustment at Skagit Regional Airport in 2011 and 2012. Prior to joining the port, Bob completed a long career in the U.S. Navy.





A welder for Hard Drive Marine works between two of the boats currently under construction in the company's new La Conner facility.

Bellingham Boat Builder Moves to Marina

Hard Drive Marine, a builder of custom aluminum boats formerly based in Bellingham, has relocated to the Port of Skagit's La Conner Marina.

The company's new home is a 6,000-square-foot marine services facility at 539 N. 3rd Street, Suite A, with 25,000-square-foot outdoor storage area. Company owner Tom Day said he made the move because there is a great manufacturing environment in Skagit County and room to grow.

Highlighting the line of Hard Drive Marine products is the LC series landing craft. Other products include commercial fishing boats, public service vessels and island cruisers. The company, which has built about 40 boats since forming in 2007, will employ seven to ten people in La Conner, Day said.

"We build a very special line of vessels, designed as working service boats that eliminate the need for docking and ferrying on rugged, remote coastlines," the Hard Drive web site states. "These boats build houses, they deliver machinery, they ferry people, they shuttle cargo. And on the weekend, they are the boat that allows us to spend more of the day on that favorite, water-access-only beach."

Each Hard Drive boat is built by hand to meet the specific needs of the owner. For instance, a recent project is a Bristol Bay boat that will be fishing the 2015 season. The FV Armada measures 32 feet by 15 feet complete and is powered by a Scania 13-litre, 750-horsepower engine coupled to a 611 24-inch Traktor jet.

The Hard Drive Marine web site is <http://harddrivemarine.com/>

Know Your Port

Governed by an elected board of three commissioners, The Port of Skagit serves as an economic development engine for the Skagit Valley by concentrating on our mission, *Good Jobs for Our Community*. At the same time, we take care to provide transparent governance and excellent public service at minimal cost to the taxpayers in our district.

The port commissioners establish policy, approve budgets, retain the executive director and provide oversight of the port. The public is welcome at meetings of the commission, which normally take place on the second Tuesday of each month, starting at 3 p.m., in the commission hearing room of the port administration building, 15400 Airport Drive, Burlington.

The Port of Skagit owns and operates three key facilities: Skagit Regional Airport, Bayview Business Park and the La Conner Marina. Combined, the port's three facilities are home to more than 83 businesses that employ some 1,200 workers in sustainable household wage jobs.

Port of Skagit Commissioners

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Bill Shuler, president
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South Basin at La Conner Marina Getting a Maintenance Makeover

At first glance, the South Basin docks at the La Conner Marina may appear much as they have for the past few years. But the closer you look, the more improvements become visible as a result of a maintenance project that began last fall.



The project involves replacement or repair of structural columns that have been damaged or deteriorated throughout the years. The Port of Skagit also is performing maintenance on electrical outlets and the upland electrical connection to C and D docks.

The Port's maintenance crew completed the receptacle replacement work on the power pedestals and painted the power pedestal boxes. Our crew also replaced a significant number of cleats on the docks.

In January, the port awarded a contract for additional structural and electrical improvements on the South Basin project to a local contractor, Seven Sisters, Inc. of Sedro-Woolley. Seven Sisters planned to perform the electrical work this spring and a subcontractor, Tiger Construction, is completing the structural elements.

Next up for the marina is dredging of the South Basin, which is expected to happen toward the end of this year's boating season.

Port Takes Over Operation of RV Park at La Conner Marina

The Port of Skagit assumed control of the recreational vehicle park at the La Conner Marina when the lease for the property, held by Advance Resorts of America Inc., expired on January 31.

The port's long-term goal is to repurpose the property for industrial maritime uses in accordance with the port's mission, said Patsy Martin, executive director. She acknowledged that it may take some time before a tenant is ready to build a facility there, so in the interim the port will take over operation of the RV park. The four-acre park

consists of 68 RV sites.

"We recognize the value of an RV park to the La Conner community and will continue to run this one as long as it's feasible," said Bill Shuler, president of the Port Commission. "But the port's primary purpose is to spur economic opportunity growth, which we accomplish by attracting industrial businesses that create good jobs paying sustainable community wages. That's the best use of this property."

Port staff in the marina office will run the park.

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INFORMATION:

Is there information you would like to see in At Work For You, or do you have questions related to a story that was featured? Please contact Carl Molesworth, Community Outreach Administrator (360) 757-0011

PORT LEADERSHIP:

Kevin Ware, Commissioner District 1
Steven Omdal, Commissioner District 2
Bill Shuler, Commissioner District 3

Patsy Martin, Executive Director



Port of Skagit

*Inspiring Success
Delivering Excellence*