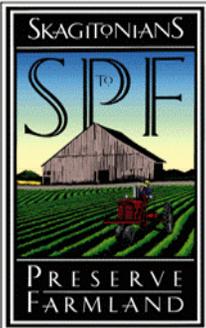


# SKAGITONIAN

Fall / Winter 2015



[www.skagitonians.org](http://www.skagitonians.org)

414A Snoqualmie St.  
PO Box 2405  
Mount Vernon, WA  
98273

360.336.3974

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Darrin Morrison  
President

Alan Mesman  
Vice President

Kevin Maas  
Treasurer

John Roozen  
Secretary

John Anderson  
Julie Blazek  
Dave Hedlin  
Tim Knue  
Steve Sakuma  
Amy Wilcox  
Anthony Young

#### STAFF

Allen Rozema  
Executive Director

Linda Tyler  
Development Director

Elisa Minerich  
Development Assistant

Barbara Martin  
Bookkeeper

Teresa Bennett  
Volunteer

## *A Unique Legacy of Collaboration and Representation*

*By Teresa Bennett*

Recently, SPF's Executive Director Allen Rozema, along with Brandon Roozen, Executive Director of Western Washington Agricultural Association, were guests of SnoValley Tilth, invited to meet and share with them strategies and lessons learned about the balance of farmland preservation, habitat restoration and flood risk reduction.

During the meeting, it quickly became clear to Rozema and Roozen that the Skagit Valley, unlike other agricultural areas in the Puget Sound, already had in place—even before the creation of SPF and WWAA-- the political and social structure to help protect agricultural lands. This was the century-old system of special taxing districts, specifically dike and drainage districts, established with the express purpose of providing crucial infrastructure necessary in sustaining the agricultural land base of the Skagit Valley. Dikes and ditches were put in place, yes, but even more crucial to the sense of collaboration for the common good was the self-taxing, self-regulating system of representation. Farmers were not left to themselves to deal with issues that affected them and their neighbors; each district elected its own commissioners who represented the agricultural landowners within the district. These districts, through their political power, became a government-to-government stakeholder with the right and obligation to be included in any discussion impacting infrastructure and land within these special districts.

These special taxing districts are part of the ethos and fabric of Skagit Valley agriculture and, just like the collaborative practices of pinning for seed production and exchanging land for crop rotation, no farmer in the Skagit Valley works in isolation. As a result, the sense of coming together to sustain and promote the industry as a whole is not just strong and visible, it is completely natural.

What struck Roozen and Rozema is there appears to be no similar support structures for agricultural landowners within other farming areas of Puget Sound. Without special taxing districts and their political power, farmers within the Snoqualmie and Snohomish watersheds have been left to represent themselves, on a case-by-case basis, against those who would convert or restrict the use of their farmland. ***Sometimes it's good to take a moment to appreciate the wise decisions made in generations past and let them inspire our work today.***

*Teresa Bennett is a volunteer for SPF and works in the office three days per week. SPF is grateful to Teresa for sharing her talents and skills for the advancement of our mission.*

## *Thankful For Many Things in 2015*

At a time of year when many are giving thanks, we at Skagitians to Preserve Farmland are also counting our blessings and celebrating many great successes this year.

We are thankful for a huge outpouring of support during our **17th Annual Harvest Dinner & Auction**. We pulled out all the stops and—THANKS TO YOU—we surpassed our goals and expectations!!

We are thankful to have supporters who reside outside of the Skagit Valley, many of whom attended the SPF **"Celebrate Skagit in Seattle"** dinner, which shares the amazing bounty of the Skagit with our Seattle members.

We are thankful for leaders and a community that cares deeply about local agriculture, local food and local farmers!

Most of all, we are thankful for YOU: our members, our volunteers, our board, our sponsors. Whether you support SPF through your time, talents or resources, YOU ARE SPF, and we feel very fortunate to have your trust and belief in our mission and our very important work on behalf of Skagit agriculture. **THANK YOU!!!**

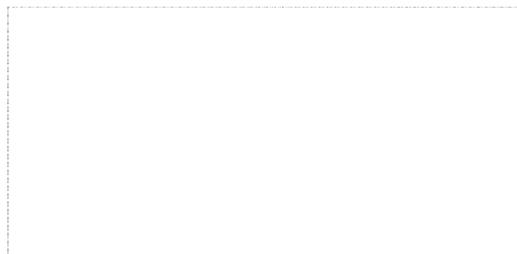
# SMILE from A-Z!!

Holiday shopping is here! Wouldn't it be nice to know that your purchases are helping your favorite non-profit? They will, if you shop online at Amazon Smile! Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of AmazonSmile purchases to the charity of your choice (hopefully SPF!!) It's just like shopping on Amazon: same user ID and password, same prices and selection. Just select "Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland" as the charity you wish to support and then do your shopping at [Smile.Amazon.com](http://Smile.Amazon.com). The donation is automatic!

Thank you for thinking of SPF  
This holiday season!!



Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland  
PO Box 2405  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273



## SPF Events in 2016

One of the most important things that Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland does is inform the public about the importance of preserving farmland and what that means to the Skagit Valley, as well as the Puget Sound region. The battle to save farmland is not a battle that can be fought quietly or without a lot of support!

Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland hosts a variety of events throughout the year as a way of reaching new supporters and staying connected to current SPF Members.

**Here's a look at our 2016 outreach programs and events:**

**Farm Tours**—Hop on the charter bus and enjoy a tour of some of Skagit Valley's favorite farms. Lunch is included. Farm Tours are very popular and informative!

**Talking Fields**—Drive through the Valley and stop to hear what the fields have to tell you about farming, history and Skagit agriculture.

**Our Valley, Our Future Breakfast**—Join SPF for a hearty breakfast and learn about our mission while we recognize achievements in Skagit Ag—past, present and future.

**Crop ID Signs**—Look for our renovated Crop ID Sign program to tell you what's growing in the fields as you drive around the Valley. Relaunching in Spring 2016!!

**Harvest Dinner & Auction**—Our fall celebration featuring outstanding food, terrific auction items and lots of fun!

**Celebrate Skagit in Seattle**—In partnership with the Seattle Culinary Academy, we bring the Skagit bounty to Seattle for an evening of exquisite dining, conversation and celebration.

**InFARmation Radio**—Motorists heading north on I-5 can tune into a special message on our InFARmation Radio station.

## "4% Friday" Thank You!!

Thank you to the Skagit Valley Food Co-op for selecting SPF as the featured non-profit in October 2015 for the Community Shopping Day, known as 4% Friday. Thanks to the generous shoppers and supporters, SPF received

**\$2,264**, which was 4% of the gross receipts for the Co-op that day. Thanks to our SPF members for coming out, stopping at our table to say hi and for showing your support !!



## Strategic Planning with EDASC

SPF had the opportunity to participate in a Strategic Planning Town Hall Meeting recently with the Economic Development Association of Skagit County and key stakeholders within the business community. This was a great process to go through and the group indicated there is overwhelming support of the agricultural industry and a lot of concern that it stays healthy and vibrant. Participating in events like these helps SPF get our mission and goals in front of an important audience and we are pleased to represent Skagit agriculture in this manner.

Would you like to receive our News Bulletins and other communications via EMAIL?

Sign up for our E-Mailing List on our website at [www.skagitonians.org](http://www.skagitonians.org)

Follow SPF on

facebook

flickr

