



get out

HIKING ↻ RUNNING ↻ CYCLING

I COULD HEAR IT ALL GOING ON AROUND ME: THE GREAT ORCHESTRA OF MARINE SCIENCE EDUCATION THAT HAD BECOME PART OF MY EVERYDAY LIFE.

BY BETHANY LOUDON

For the Love of Plankton

The *Snow Goose* lives on

IT WASN'T really seasickness, but it might as well have been. Something I had consumed the night before did not sit well with my protesting body. I found myself on the starboard side of the trawler where I work, retching violently into the drink.

To add to it all, there was a sixth grader driving the boat.

In a moment of clarity, I leaned against the steel wall of the main hold cabin and listened to the inland waves crashing against the hull. I could hear it all going on around me: the great orchestra of marine science education that had become part of my everyday life.

I listened to the drone of the engine while one of my crewmembers lowered the plankton net into the water. I could hear another crewmember's voice teaching parts per million inside the main hold cabin, while outside on the bow, students were instructed in the use of a deepwater sample jar to measure salinity below the surface. I could also hear the Captain's voice up in the pilothouse explaining how GPS works, while giving each of his students a few minutes at the helm. I was flooded with a deep admiration for our spry little boat.



For those of you who haven't heard about the *Snow Goose* before, it is essentially a 64-foot yacht converted into a floating classroom. During the summer, a small crew takes the boat to Alaska for a run of eco-tours, but from September through June, the *Snow Goose's* home is Gate 12 of the Squalicum Marina, where it takes out classroom after classroom of middle school kids throughout Whatcom County for field trips on Bellingham Bay.

During these excursions, the boat visits four stations: Whatcom Waterway, Post Point, the mouth of Padden Creek, and the Nooksack River Delta. The objective is to collect data and deter-

mine whether or not Bellingham Bay is ecologically sound.

At each location, students get hands-on experience as they rotate through one of four activity stations, while keeping a lookout for marine mammals and various seabirds indigenous to the area. Every group that comes aboard gets a tour of the Whatcom waterway as we discuss its ecology, natural history and the environmental impact of the working waterfront. Students often step off the dock at the end of the day informed, inspired and eager to be good stewards of their watershed.

The *Snow Goose* has not only a purpose, but a legacy that grows

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DO IT

WED., JUNE 20

CHOWDER CHARTER: The seasonal "Chowder Charter" starts tonight at 6pm aboard the *S.V. Shawmanee*. Cost is \$45 per person. For more info: 734-9849 or bellinghamsailing.com.

THURS., JUNE 21

SOLSTICE RUN: Meet for a Solstice Fun Run/Walk at 8:30pm at Sehome High School, 2700 Bill McDonald Parkway. For more info: 676-4955.

SOLSTICE RIDE: Meet at the Sehome Starbucks for a Solstice Ride to the Pilchuck Tree Farm. All ability levels are welcome. For more info and to register: 756-0504.

CLIMBING 101: Attend a free "Alpine Climbing 101" clinic at 7pm at REI, 400 36th St. For more info: 647-8955.

FRI., JUNE 22

SALMON SPEAK: Reps from the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association will host a "Salmon Speak" campfire program at 7pm at Birch Bay State Park. Donations will be accepted. For more info: 371-2800.

JUNE 22 - 24

STOMMISH FESTIVAL: The 61st annual Lummi Stommish Festival features war canoe races, a Native arts market, music, a carnival, Stommish athletics and much more through the weekend at the Lummi Nation, 2616 Kwina Rd. For more info: 384-2312 or stommish.com.

SOCCER TOURNEY: The public is welcome to come watch the Baker Blast Soccer Tournament happening from 2-9pm Fri., 8am-8pm Sat., and 8am-5pm Sun. at Northwest Soccer Park, 5238 Northwest Dr. For more info: 384-6323 or whatcomsoccer.com.

TENNIS TOURNEY: The 21st Skywater Tennis Tournament happens throughout the weekend at Blaine High School and Resort Semiahmoo. Entry is \$20-\$30 and free to watch. For more info: 650-9139.

SAT., JUNE 23

WORK PARTY: Hook up with members of the Mount Baker Club at 9am for a Bay to Baker trail maintenance work party today. For location info: 392-1015.

STREAM EXPLORING: Search for fish and explore their habitat and history at 9am at Terrell Creek with staff from Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association. The event is free. For more info: 371-2800.

BOCCE FUN: Players are encouraged to wear costumes at today's annual Fairhaven Bowler Hat Bocce Ball Tournament from

DO IT

9am-3pm at the Fairhaven Village Green. For more info: Fairhaven.com.

HEALTH FAIR: All are welcome at the Get Movin' Health Fair from 12-4pm at Civic Field. Health presentations, assessments, stage demonstrations and info booths will be available at the free event. For more info: getmovinwhatcom.org.

JUNE 23 -24

GARDEN TOUR: The Whatcom Horticultural Society will hold a Private Garden Tour from 11am-5pm at five county gardens in Everson and Lynden. Tickets are \$12-\$15 and can be purchased in advance at local nurseries. For more info: 738-6833 or whatcomhortsociety.org.

TUES., JUNE 26

GALBRAITH INTRO: New riders are welcome to an "Intro to Riding Galbraith Trails" at 6pm at Whatcom Falls Park. For more info and to register: 756-0504.

KAYAK SERIES: Mike Passo talks about "The Joys of Kayaking the Pacific Northwest" at a free clinic at 7pm at REI, 400 36th St. For more info: 647-8955. Wed., June 20

CHOWDER CHARTER: The seasonal "Chowder Charter" continues tonight at 6pm aboard the S.V. *Shawmanee*. The three-hour tour includes yummy chowder from Boundary Bay and luscious views from Bellingham Bay. Cost is \$45 per person. For more info: 734-9849 or bellingshamsailing.com.

SNOW GOOSE, FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

with every student that comes aboard, every passenger she's carried to the islands, and every crew-member that's ever cast her mooring lines.

The day I found myself slumped over her starboard rails was truly a personal revelation: It's good to be a part of something that's working toward great things, even on days of gut-wrenching agony. ☺

For more information on the Snow Goose, go to snowgoosealaska.com or email danliden@comcast.net.

fa.nat'ik (fe nat'ik) *adj.*

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EASY TO RECOGNIZE.



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