Hoquiam Farmer's Market News - 45 Degree Edition

Local News

Posted by:

Posted on : September 13, 2012 at 7:05 am

I can feel Autumn in the air. Each final day of summer is a gift, but this morning frost was on the ground in east county. Sigh. Time to embrace the bounty that comes with Fall Harvest!I’m making applesauce this afternoon, the first of many batches that will fill our shelves for the winter. There is nothing in this world better than a pork shoulder roast cooked for 4 hours with veggies, and served with homemade applesauce. Nothing.The apple harvest is slowly gathering momentum- oddly, the organic apple selection is still very limited. I have organic gala and ginger gold apples, but the fuji, granny smith, gravenstein, & red delicious are ‘conventional’. When eating or cooking with the conventionally grown apples, be sure to wash them and peel them. The thick skin of an apple traps and encapsulates the residual effect of the pesticides that may have been used.

The pears are outstanding this week! Todd Bosc, Stark Crimson, and Bartlett- all the finest you will ever taste! Good pears only happen for a brief season- the rest of the year leaves us longing for the buttery smooth sweetness that is ours right now. These are direct from Wenatchee and only .99 per pound, I suggest you stock up now. I have a discount rate of only .80 per pound if you buy more than 10 pounds!Last memory of summer storyI love stories. Not television type stories- real stories told by real people, memories of special times , moments that have stayed with them always. When I hear a story like that it becomes a part of my life. I tuck it away in my mind like a golden treasure. It warms my heart , it feeds my spirit. From time to time I savor the goodness, knowing that a lifelong gift has been given me. Many of my favorites were told by loved ones who are no longer on this earth, so I cherish the stories and remember them. As summer draws to a close, I recall a memory from my dear friend John Hanson from a day in 1922 when he was a young boy of twelve.Johns’ best buddy was also named John and the two were the closest of friends up until the first one died. They grew up in Tacoma, just a few blocks from the harbor. The waterways of Puget Sound were clogged with wooden ships, steam ships, ferry boats, and cargo ships- books about the salty TugBoat Annie were the boys favorite reading. The waterfront was a boisterous, rollicking mass of sailors and dock workers and the aromas of creosote and oil permeated the huge wooden planks. The two boys longed for a boat of their own and imagined themselves boldly setting sail on voyages of high adventure. Since a boat of any kind wasn’t in the family budget, they decided to build a boat. And they did. It was a rowboat made from salvaged wood, and it was a sturdy seaworthy vessel.It wasn’t long before they felt confident enough to undertake the first of many expeditions, completely unbeknownst to their innocent parents. One fine summer day they decided to row to Fox Island. Filled with the vigor and confidence of youth the miles sped by and they landed on an inviting beach. They must have felt as cocky as gold medal winners at the Olympics. The day was perfection and the water calling to them. As with one accord they stripped naked and ran full speed into the water, splashing and diving like two sea otter pups. When they finally emerged from their exuberant play, they realized that they were awfully hungry. As it happens, a field of corn had been planted right up to the edge of the beach and the farmer had been watching them frolic in the water. A wise man, he figured that they hadn’t thought to bring a lunch. But boys need to be fed, and he plucked several ears of corn and told them that they could build a fire on the beach. Pretty soon they were sitting cross-legged in front of the fire devouring one ear after another of steamed corn. John always

said that corn never again tasted so sweet. Every ear of corn for the rest of his life would be measured against the corn eaten by 2 young boys in the summer of 1922.I never eat an ear of corn without thinking of the two best friends and their feast of fresh corn. I smile and think of the many cherished times that I spent listening to John tell me stories of his youth. The day that shone brilliantly in his memory now shines in mine, and I know that I am blessed. It worries me that we live our lives at such a frantic pace that we may forget to share our stories. The busyness overwhelms us, it’s easier to collapse at the end of the day and turn on the television. John and Peggy had an old swing that sat on the bulkhead, and after a summer dinner we would finish the dishes and all squeeze into the swing. Rocking gently, a blanket on our laps, we would sit and talk. Just talk. It’s easy to tell stories when the only sound is the lapping of waves, the only distraction the setting of the sun. We all have stories to share, come- sit on the swing and rest a while. We’ll talk.Barbara Bennett Parsons, manager of the Grays Harbor Farmers Market and Deidra’s Deli in Hoquiam. 1958 Riverside, ph. 538-9747--
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