

My Monday Memo

April 4, 2022

Adventures in the PNW

Issue 97

Daffodils Galore

By Rachel Brandes

What a difference a couple of weeks can make in the life of a daffodil. Avid readers of the newsletter may recall that Rachel was disappointed when her plans to attend the 2022 La Conner Daffodil Festival on March 12th were thwarted due to lack of flowering daffodils. This sure didn't stop her from making another attempt to view these bright and beautiful fields of flowers. On Saturday, April 2nd, she headed north to visit Skagit Valley and the towns of Mount Vernon and La Conner, Washington and enjoy the blooming fields.



The sun rising over a field of bright yellow daffodils in Skagit Valley, Washington.

As usual, Rachel arrived in town early enough to find a field with the sun setting in the backdrop. She finds these moments in life to be wondrous. There were several fields of daffodils in full bloom and Rachel enjoyed every one of them. Unfortunately, it quickly became apparent that the folks running the show in Skagit Valley have become much less visitor friendly in the past year. At each field, the side of the road where visitors would usually park to enjoy the fields and snap photos were now full of signs advising "no parking at any time." What the? How in the world are visitors to enjoy this beauty if they are unable to stop the vehicle? There is simply no way for the county to *exculpate* themselves for this lack of common courtesy to visitors.

These new signs obviously didn't stop Rachel from snapping a few photos. As a staunch follower of rules, Rachel had to find a way, and since there are no signs stating one can't stop a car in the middle of the road, well, you get the picture. The beauty of arriving in town while most other humans are still snuggly sleeping in their beds is that the roads are empty. Yes, Rachel stopped her car in the middle of the road to snap photos. Skagit Valley can eat crow. She was very careful and only did this on long, straight roads that went on as far as the eye could see.



Rows and rows of daffodils.



If you look closely, you will see these tulips preparing to make their debut.

Technically, the La Conner Daffodil Festival is a March event and April brings the Skagit Valley Tulip Festival. Rachel did spot a beautiful field of red, orange, and purple tulips next to a field of daffodils but was unable to safely get a photo. She did see other fields that showed tulips in the beginning stages of blooming.

Rachel also stopped by [JF Miniature Donkeys](#) to watch the adorable little jackasses and jennets. No luck though; they must have also been snuggly sleeping in their donkey beds when she stopped by the ranch. Maybe next time.

After viewing all the beautiful fields and the donkey ranch, Rachel headed to downtown La Conner for a coffee. She visited Stompin Grounds Coffee. This was one of two open establishments at this early time of the morning and a great find. This coffee shop was filled with fun signs and trinkets, both for sale and for viewing. Rachel spent time enjoying all this shop had to offer and visited with the owner before heading out with her coffee.

Rachel had planned on visiting the downtown shops and enjoying a nice omelet breakfast at one of the local eateries on the water but was not interested in waiting for them to open, so she headed out. On her way across the Skagit Valley River bridge, she saw an interesting tower covered with tulip art. She pulled into the parking lot to snap a photo and spotted an open eatery, a bakery. It has been some time since bread has crossed Rachel's lips and she decided to treat herself. The options were dangerous. Rachel opted for the least damaging, a triple berry muffin, and

enjoyed it on the way home.



Pictured above L to R: JF Ranch minus the donkeys, the tulip tower, and Calico Cupboard and Stompin Grounds Coffee.

Pictured below: Fun finds at Stompin Grounds Coffee.

Saturday was a beautiful day and Rachel enjoyed the drive and singing aloud to her favorite songs. She looks forward to revisiting Skagit Valley later in the month to see the tulips in full bloom. Until next time, enjoy bad carbs one in a while, and be well.

22 for 2022 Happier Project Update

Another month down, Rachel made a few adjustments to her goals for the year to allow for more realistic expectations. Below are a handful of accomplishments for March

- Learn Spanish**- 112 consecutive days of Spanish lessons to date.
- Walk 7,000 steps on average**- March average 5,761, an increase over February.
- Happiness Project Audiobook**- Chapter three completed.
- Zen as F*ck Book**- March entries made, fun book.
- Yoga**- practiced three days a week in March, started another new studio trial.
- Family VHS Tapes**- Completed!!! Now to get them all into MP4 format.
- Oral Communication**- talked with both moms in March.
- Written Communication**- two handwritten cards mailed to loved ones.
- Journaling**- wrote in both Blake and Alec's journals.
- Read Weekly**- Read *Screw Cancer, Becoming Whole* by Molly Kochan in March.
- 31 Day Mindfulness Project**- Card set, completed in March.

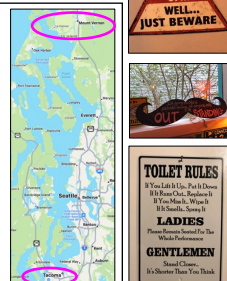
As far as a long-term goal:

- Get Spine Fixed**- Today, April 4th, consult with new spine surgeon.

M₃
A₁
R₁
C₃
H₄

Where in the world?

This week's adventure took Rachel to the Skagit Valley in Mount Vernon, Washington, as well as a stop in La Conner, Washington. Skagit Valley is 106 miles from Tacoma, and just under two hours of drive time. Rachel enjoyed singing at the top of her lungs for the entire drive.



Today is... April 4th

National Walk Around Things Day

On this day in 1968...

Martin Luther King, Jr was assassinated by James Earl Ray in Memphis, Tennessee.

Quote of the Week

"Let me tell you something: it's a very bad practice to walk up on stage and physically assault a comedian. Now we all have to worry about who wants to be the next Will Smith in comedy clubs and theaters."

- Kathy Griffin

MIRA'S PHOTO OF THE WEEK



April Fun Facts, Holidays, & Folklore

Courtesy of almanac.com

The Month of April gets its name from the Latin word *aperio*, meaning "to open [bud]," because plants really begin to grow now.

- April 6th is International Pillow Fight Day
- April 7th is National No Housework Day
- April 16th is [The Pink Moon](#)
- April 17th is Easter Sunday
- April 22nd is Earth Day
- April's Birthstone is the Diamond
- April's Birth Flowers are Daisy and Sweet Pea

Rachel Recommends

Olivia Rodrigo's Disney+ [driving home 2 u documentary](#), a SOUR film. If you don't have Disney+, check out her songs on YouTube. She has some fun, catchy tunes.

Did you find it?

Merriam-Webster's Word of the Day
April 3, 2022

[exculpate](#)

"To clear from alleged fault or guilt."