

Wilcoxes serve as Grand Marshals

The Grand Marshals for this year's Prairie Days Parade will be longtime Yelm community members Barrie and Susan Wilcox, from Wilcox Farms in Roy.

The Wilcoxes said they are excited and surprised they were selected to serve as Grand Marshals.

"We feel really honored," Susan said. "My husband was in the parade as a child and our children were in the parade, so the parade means a lot to us."

Cecelia Jenkins, Yelm Chamber of Commerce executive director, said the honor is "long overdue."

Barrie has fond memories of participating in the parade when he was a child with his siblings and cousins.

"They would shut the whole Main Street down and play music and everyone would just dance," he said.

The couple met in college and have been married for 51 years. They built their home on Wilcox Farms, where he still works as an advisor, in 1966.

In their free time, they enjoy skiing and going on bicycle tours around the world.

"We ride on a tandem bicycle. It keeps us together and it's fun because we can talk together the whole time," Susan said.

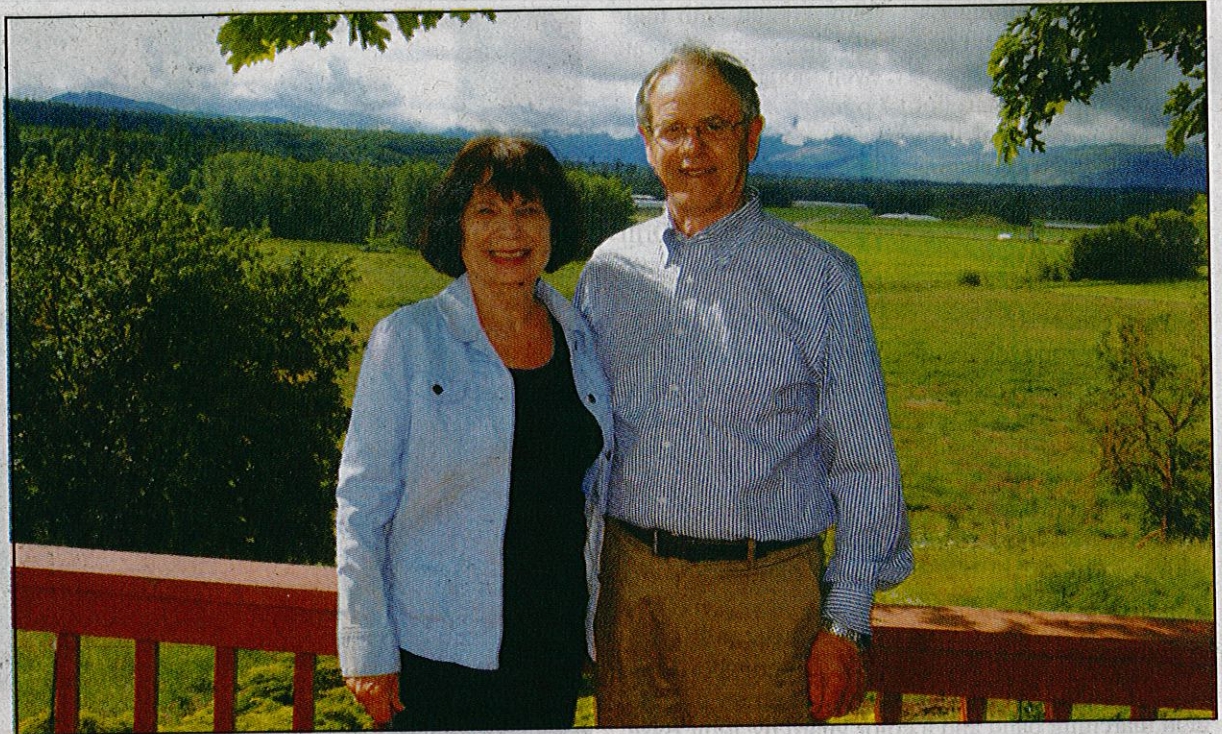
Barrie's grandparents started Wilcox Farms after taking a train from Seattle to McKenna in 1909. His father, Truman Wilcox, was one of the original participants in the Prairie Days Parade.

"Our family really does go back," Susan said.

Susan, who is originally from Ontario, Ore., will be participating in the parade for the first time.

Each year she looks forward to attending the parade to catch up with old friends.

"The whole community turns out. People you



Nisqually Valley News file photograph

Susan and Barrie Wilcox are this year's Grand Marshals for the Prairie Days Parade. The Wilcoxes are pictured at their home in Roy. They will be riding in their 1928 Chevrolet Touring Car.

haven't seen in years you'll see, and it's really fun for the whole community to get back together," she said. "You see the people your kids went to school with and their parents. That's what really makes it really special."

The Wilcoxes will ride the parade in one of their antique vehicles – a 1928 Chevrolet Touring Car – as they wave to the crowd.

Active in their church, Yelm Lions Club and their alum group from University of Puget Sound, Barrie said they are proud to be part of the Yelm community.

"They are dedicated Prairie Days and community supporters," Jenkins said. "How fortunate our community is to have such amazing people among our volunteer team."