

# Full Speed Ahead

*By Bruce Evans and Peg English*

Burnell Thomas Bauman, aptly nicknamed "Buz," has always, to use the language of sports analysts, had a "motor." In grade school, he was the fastest kid on the playground; when he was "It" in a game of tag, whomever he turned his radar on had no chance to escape. In 7th grade he won the "Old Ozzie" football-throwing contest, defeating even 8th grade competitors from all three District 15 grade schools. In high school, he was the football quarterback, enthusiastically barking signals, leading the way.

As an adult, his professional life was perpetual motion, continually evolving toward ever greater technical expertise and ever greater leadership responsibilities. He worked briefly in construction, then became deeply involved with computers, which were just beginning to be an important part of the business world. In 1963, after studying at the Automation Institute and the IBM Education Center, both in Seattle, he went to work for the Bon Marche, quickly stair-stepping his way from electric accounting machine operator to the company's first-ever computer operator to maintenance programmer to operations manager to operating systems programmer to programming manager. In the process he supervised dozens of staff members, who appreciated his generosity in helping them if they were struggling with a task, and was instrumental in redesigning or creating computer applications that led the Bon to become one of the most advanced retail data processing centers on the Pacific coast. Somehow he also managed to find time to do some teaching at the Automation Institute, earn a real estate license, and serve on the Board of Realtors for Snohomish County, of which his father was the president.



In 1975 Buz became operations manager for Manus Services Corporation, a computer services bureau, where he remained until retirement in 1997. At Manus his work ethic was legendary. He would often come to work at 3:00 a.m. to perform system operator activities so that the computers could be used during business hours for client work. He would do whatever was needed for the good of the cause—drive trucks, do carpentry, repair walls, organize company picnics.

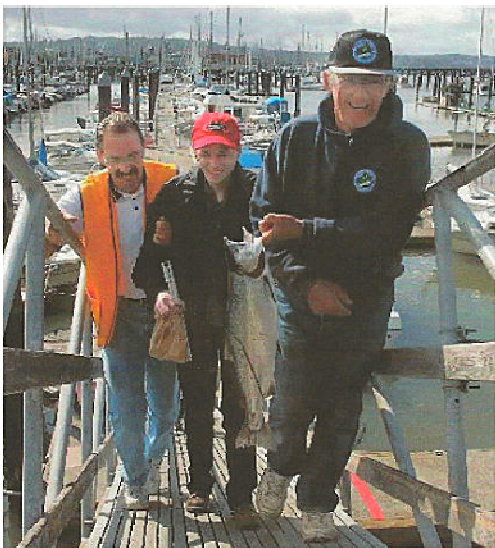
In retirement, Buz's life has continued to hum. He remains active and interactive. A lifelong fisherman (One day at age seven Buz caught a small trout on Lake Cavanaugh, where his family had property. The catch did not excite him, but then he got creative. He used the trout as bait and dropped it in front of what turned out to be a 16-inch bass. When the bass was hooked, so was Buz. "That turned me on," he says. He began fishing regularly at Shell Creek in Edmonds, branching out as he got older for salmon fishing out of Haines Wharf in Meadowdale. Swapping fishing stories with classmate Darrell



Harrison while targeting the Potholes area of eastern Washington also enhanced his love for and knowledge of the sport.), Buz in 1999 joined the Everett Steelhead and Salmon Club and served as its President in 2003 and 2004. He is an integral part of the club's outreach to the community, especially its youth programs. Each spring and summer he and other members conduct clinics for Snohomish County boys and girls ages five to 12. At various venues—Silver Lake, Monroe, Marysville, Smokey Point—they teach kids how to choose rods, reels, tackle,

and bait and how to practice the art of fishing—how to "put the bait where you want it to go." They stock ponds and conduct fishing derbies, giving the kids a chance to succeed. Through charitable contributions, they are able to provide all of the kids with a rod. Hundreds participate, and most come back from year to year until they age out. In 2009 he and a fellow club member, the late Jim Branch, also established the Everett Steelhead and Salmon Youth Organization.

**Everett Steelhead and Salmon Club**  
**So the blind can see fish**



Lions Club member Ken Beecher, fisherman Jordan Claudfelter & crew member Buz Bauman walk up the ramp to weigh in Claudfelter's Coho.

"I love working with kids," Buz says. He takes great satisfaction in helping them "get into nature and away from their electronic devices" and gets enormous pleasure in seeing their excitement when they catch that first fish. When he's out in the community—shopping at Fred Meyer, say—kids will often recognize him by his signature "hairy" hat (the same one he sometimes wears to class picnics) and come up to say, "Hey, I know you." For its work with youth the city of Marysville honored the organization with its Citizens' Volunteer Award in 2014. Ironically, although most of

his charges proudly take home the fish they catch, Buz himself is mostly a catch-and-release or catch-and-give-away guy. He doesn't particularly enjoy eating fish—except for pickled herring, a jar of which he will occasionally snag from a grocery store shelf.

But Buz not only works the water—he busily works the land as well. His gardening specialty is raising many varieties of tomatoes, ranging in size from cherry types like Sun Sugar to beef-

steaks like Goliath ("I have juicy types and meaty types," he says) from Pacific Northwest-friendly seeds that he gets through Territorial Seed in Oregon and other catalogues. He starts them off, some 2,000 of them, in his backyard greenhouse, then in April is ready to sell or give away some of the plants and transplant the rest into his own garden. After seasons of trial and error—"I kept doing it and kept doing it and kept doing it"—Buz perfected his technique. "My system works," he says, "and I get satisfaction from that." First he tills the garden, which, importantly, has full exposure to the sun. Then he tills in a concoction of steer manure, Epsom salts, bone meal, and vegetable fertilizer, puts down soaker hoses and black plastic to keep the weeds at bay and help retain moisture, plants six of the same tomato variety together in a plot,



washes the plants to retard viruses, and connects the hoses to his timed watering system. It takes him a couple of weeks to get that plethora of plants in—"and then I just watch them grow."

His Lynnwood neighbors, many of them Russian or Asian, with whom he shares his crop, heartily agree with Buz's opinion that "There's nothing like a fresh ripe tomato off the vine." Buz's tomatoes, they say, "taste like home" and have brought about a bonding that Buz enjoys. "They bring people to me," he says, "and I like to talk to people. I like to make people happy." Gardeners around the state also seem to agree that his vines produce a special quality. They come from Mt. Vernon, Olympia, even eastern Washington, to get plants from him. "I'm competing with Lowe's and Home Depot," Buz jokes.

Throughout his life, Buz has sought activity and involvement with others. Some days, if he isn't fishing or teaching fishing, if he isn't gardening or talking to people about gardening, he will just jump into his truck to see where it might take him, its motor and his own running in unison. But when asked what has given him the greatest joy and pleasure in life, Buz throttles his motor down, points to his wife Darla, and says, simply, "Her."