

Becoming poster boy for National Safety Month

All of us need to be aware of the dangers involved in recreation.”

I ran across that headline in an old issue of the Seaside Signal, or maybe I only thought I did in my delirium in the weeks after a calamitous jog at the Cove.

When we first arrived on the North Coast. I was completely oblivious to the risks all around me.

Never turn your back to the ocean, my wife, who grew up on the Atlantic Coast, warned. Sneaker waves are famous here, although I partially blame my tread-bare sneakers this time.

In Seaside, warning signs advise visitors to stay off logs, beware of incoming tides and rip currents. Then there's the beach rock, known by many names.

“Locals call it ‘round rock,’” geologist Tom Horning told me. “A few erroneously call it ‘river rock.’ Geologists call it ‘cobble beach berm rock,’ even though it includes pebbles and boulders.”

Last September, when I was hunting down the dead whale in Cape Falcon, I skipped over the rocks like a tern. That was the late Friday afternoon when Court Carrier of the Cannon Beach Chamber of Commerce called me and told me a humpback whale carcass was being swept past Arch Cape. He advised me to head south of the tunnel. I raced down Highway 101 battling the setting sky. I turned right onto Falcon Cove Road and parked willy-nilly on the roadside. I ran onto the sand in the twilight as the whale was pulled in by the tide. After snapping my photos and interviewing other dead-whale-watchers, I scrambled up the rocks like Spiderman. It was only later that I realized the risk I had taken.

The rock in the Cove originated as rock avalanches that fell into the ocean off of Tillamook Head, Horning explained. “Years ago, a traveling geologist penned an article and declared them a ‘terminal moraine of a valley glacier’ that flowed down the Necanicum valley.”

That's where I fell at the start of a late-afternoon jog — done in by the terminal moraine of a valley glacier.

Half an hour later I was at the Providence Seaside Hospital Emergency Room. X-rays determined I'd broken two bones in my forearm, the radius and the ulna.

Safety month

This is all particularly poignant to me because it is National Safety Month. For that, I could be the poster boy.

Established by the National Safety Council, the campaign's focus is on reducing the leading causes of injury and death at work, on the road and in our homes and communities. Poisoning overtook motor vehicle crashes for the first time as the leading cause of unintentional-injury-related death for all ages combined. Drowning and falls are numbers 3 and 4.

When I interviewed Seaside Fire Chief Joey Daniels a few weeks for another story, he told me he had just come from a one-week ropes class. The idea of swinging over a mountain on a rescue sounds thrilling but terrifying. It's a vital skill on the North Coast.

In March 2016, three men were rescued by the Oregon Coast Guard from the banks of the Necanicum River near Ecola State Park after their kayaks capsized. In April, the Coast Guard rescued a man stranded on a rocky edge by the

high tide at Hug Point near Cannon Beach.

In late-December, U.S. Coast Guard air crew hoisted two stranded hunters and a dog from a Columbia River island on Miller Sands, an island upriver from Astoria.

Rescue and emergency medical service calls make up 73 percent of Seaside Fire and Rescue's 2016 incident log, according to the department's year-end summary. Fires only make up 4 percent. On the beach, lifeguards issued 565 rip tide warnings, conducted 33 water rescues, 20 water assists and responded to 21 calls for beach medical aid.

Staying vertical

The pullout for David Sedaris' new book, “Theft by Finding” reads: “Other people's pain is uninteresting. My own, though, is spellbinding.”

I know he is joking, but like any good joke there is some truth in that.

Over the past few weeks, however, I've found other people's experiences inspiring.

I cheer anyone who can persevere and overcome after a painful setback.

A Gearhart friend endured countless surgeries after a skiing accident and today is able to ski and even surf once again.

I was comforted by the positive attitude of Lou at Seaside's American Legion. He gave me a preview of my own road to recovery as he rehabilitates from wrist surgery. A checker in Safeway shared with me that her body rejected the metal, similar to the plate installed in my forearm. Back surgeries, hamstring operations, arms, shoulders and hips. Even toes. Now that's got to hurt.

And as I was putting this piece to bed, I heard the awful news that my office mate Brandy had fallen and broken her ankle.

Brandy underwent surgery Thursday.

Thoughts and prayers with her during the recovery process.

Safety first

You know that article I thought I'd seen in the Signal from 1966? I found it.

“Hikers should be warned to stay on trails and to keep away from cliffs,” editor Max Shafer in an editorial titled, “All of us need to be aware of the dangers of recreation.”

“It is very easy to get lost on the (Tillamook) Head and it is even easier to fall over a cliff, with disastrous results,” Shafer opined, after enumerating risks of logs, surf, tides, even crab holes.

“All of these hazards are well known to those of us who have lived on the coast,” he wrote. “But visitors are seldom aware of them. We hope that we can go through the summer without tragedy here. But it will require the cooperation of all who come in contact with the visitors.”

The same holds true, 51 years later.

Again and again, I heard, “As long as you stay vertical, you're going to be OK.”

Cheers to that.



BRENNA VISSER/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Back in action after a rocky month.

Meeting with a style maven

I've been told that in 1938 this building was a grocery store that supplied the guest cabins in the neighborhood,” Nell Hutchison said, speaking of her charming home in south Seaside where she's lived since 1998.

Hutchison, who arrived in Seaside by way of Sacramento and who grew up in Minnesota, has been a well-dressed figure in the neighborhood for 20 years. We met in Gearhart where she is a regular patron of the Pacific Way Bakery, known for her droll humor, her poetry, and her head turning outfits.

“I worked for the Department of Justice from 1955 to 1992,” Nell said. “I was an administrator in criminal justice record keeping. I had between 50 and 80 people, including supervisors, reporting to me.” While working for the Department of Justice, she took her college degree, first falling in love with the poetry of T.S. Eliot and then majoring in English and writing poetry. She said it was the tumultuous '70s that inspired her to write. She wrote about family, her frustrations as a woman, and the concept of vulnerability. In 1996 the Sacramento publisher Laverne Frith published her memoir, “When I Was A Child in Minnesota.”

These days Nell occupies herself taking pictures, writing haiku, and playing pinochle.

Her house is full of collections. She is a great collector of ceramics, china, dolls, figurines and cut glass. An entire blue-painted room has been given over to things reminding her of Seaside: shells, sand dollars, images of sea birds, and African violets. “The secret to keeping them is light, but not too much heat,” she said.

It was her color-coordinated wardrobe, however, that drew me to interview her. Perhaps a bit pushily, I inveigled her to show me her closet.

Showing me around her tidy bedroom, Nell showed me a wall of caps and handbags as well as color coordinated drawers of gloves and socks and little purses. A large box of delicious vintage costume jewelry is arranged by brooches, earrings, and bangles. Her closet is turned over seasonally. Purple is her winter color. The summer closet is filled with blouses, trousers, and skirts in shades of aquamarine and chartreuse with a smattering of black and white graphics and Monet-inspired prints.

“A lot of times I'll have a scarf I really want to wear,” she said. “So I'll plan my day's wardrobe around it.”

Nell said her fashion sense is innate. She's never been a reader of fashion magazines. She said she got into clothes while working for the Department of Justice. “Nice clothes get attention,” she said. “I've always tried to fight invisibility.” She said she has always enjoyed being a head turner, and regrets, just a little, that her chosen beach lifestyle doesn't afford many opportunities to dress up.

Now in her 80s, Nell said she enjoys her pinochle games that take place twice a week. “It's a mixed crowd,” she said, meaning there's men and women. She plays at the Seaside senior center and also at the senior center in Astoria. “It's something to look forward to.”

Nell's advice for living well into her eighth decade is pretty simple.

“Take care of business. Don't stress over things.” She says she's not overly sentimental and remains the practical person she's always been. She has a cat who goes by the name of Ms. Truffle. Ms. Truffle has been a kind of artistic muse, inspiring photographs and the writing of haiku. “She's definitely a ms., not a miss,” Nell said of the feline. “She's permitted to sit on any surface she wishes, but I never forget she's just a cat.”

VIEW FROM THE PORCH

EVE MARX



'Take care of business. Don't stress over things.'

—Nell Hutchison

Seaside Fire and Rescue's tips are worth heeding

- Beach conditions change throughout the year and the day. There may be rip currents, holes and drop-offs. If you are not familiar with the ocean or have doubts — don't go out!
- Parents: Do not leave your children unattended. Never swim alone, always have a buddy who knows where your at.
- Life jackets are recommended for weak swimmers.

- Understand rip-current safety.
- Take breaks from the water to warm up and drink fluids.
- Never attempt to rescue someone in distress if you are not trained or equipped to do so. Many of our rescues involve the original victim and a good Samaritan who got themselves into trouble as well. Call 911, and keep the victim in sight to give the lifeguards a report when they arrive.

Build a better world, starting at the local library

The Seaside Public Library's Summer Reading program started June 3 with fireworks and juggling mice. OK, well, maybe the fireworks and performing mice didn't make it in time, I made that part up, but all the kids who did show up had a great time at the fun stations for the kickoff party. Kids who signed up at the kickoff party for summer reading even got a free book.

This year's theme is “Build a Better World.” Events and the reading challenge for all ages will be held all summer long. Children and teens will be reading for free books and prizes, as well as a chance to be in the countywide grand prize drawings. The drawings include a giveaway of several Kindle Fires

BETWEEN THE COVERS

ESTHER MOBERG



and baskets of books. The Seaside Library has won a best practices award two times for our summer reading program from the state library. Goals for summer reading include keeping children engaged and reading all summer long, practicing early literacy skills with our storytime group for children up to 5 years old, while ensuring literacy is the primary focus of all of our programs and events.

One of the events you won't want to miss at the Seaside Public

Library this summer is the amazing International Border Collies who will be at the library on June 22. Some of these dogs are rescue dogs and they can do tricks like you wouldn't believe. They performed at the Seaside Public Library a few years ago and these talented doggies wowed the crowd. We will also have two puppet shows this year. Penny's Puppets on June 30 and the Dragon Puppet Theater (my personal favorite) on July 14. We will also have an event around the once in a life time solar eclipse. If you missed our kickoff party, don't worry. You can still sign up all summer long for the reading challenge. Attending events at the library, as always, is completely free.

Adults can also participate in the

summer reading program and turn in reading hours for a chance to win a prize. Just ask for your reading hours at the front desk. Bring the whole family to the library on Saturday, July 1, for a rousing good musical time as The Friends of the Seaside Library host Brass Ops the 234th Army Band of the Oregon National Guard. The concert will take place at 1:00 p.m.

Brass Ops is a 12-member musical performance team of the 234th Army Band of the Oregon National Guard. The show will include a variety of music that will highlight drums, ukulele, barbershop quartet, and of course the Army brass band. The event will be centered on our Summer Reading Program and much of the music will tell stories

using high energy traditional and contemporary brass arrangements.

For teens, a lot of our great teen events will be helping to build a better world by giving back to our community. Teens will get to make dog or cat toys to donate to our local animal shelter and also make blankets for Project Linus, which donates blankets to children who are seriously ill, traumatized, or otherwise in need. Teens can also do some other very awesome events at the library's weekly Teen Tuesday programs, all of which are listed at the library's website: www.seasidelibrary.org. Stop by the library to pick up a schedule of events and keep reading all summer while we work together to Build a Better World.

SEASIDE
Signal

PUBLISHER
David F. Pero

EDITOR
R.J. Marx

ADVERTISING
MANAGER
Betty Smith

CIRCULATION
MANAGER
Jeremy Feldman

ADVERTISING
SALES
Brandy Stewart

PRODUCTION
MANAGER
John D. Bruijn

SYSTEMS
MANAGER
Carl Earl

STAFF WRITER
Brenna Visser

CONTRIBUTING
WRITERS
Rebecca Herren
Katherine Lacaze
Eve Marx
Esther Moberg
Jon Rahl

Seaside Signal

The Seaside Signal is published every other week by EO Media Group, 1555 N. Roosevelt, Seaside, OR 97138. 503-738-5561 seasidesignal.com Copyright 2017 © Seaside Signal. Nothing can be reprinted or copied without consent of the owners.

Letter policy

The Seaside Signal welcomes letters to the editor. The deadline is noon Monday prior to publication. Letters must be 400 words or less and must be signed by the author and include a phone number for verification. We also request that submissions be limited to one letter per month. Send to 1555 N. Roosevelt Drive, Seaside, OR 97138, drop them off at 1555 N. Roosevelt Drive or fax to 503-738-9285, or email marx@seasidejournal.com.

Subscriptions

Annually: \$40.50 in county • \$58.00 in and out of county • e-Edition: only \$30.00

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Seaside Signal, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103. Postage Paid at Seaside, OR 97138 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright 2017 © by the Seaside Signal. No portion of this newspaper may be reproduced without written permission. All rights reserved.