



Bird whispering

Astorian MICHAEL “SASHA” MILLER, pictured inset, had quite an experience recently while walking with his dog and cat along Pipeline Road. He noticed a BALD EAGLE standing behind a log, eating, less than 20 feet away. Sasha approached, and was able to get “ridiculously close.”

Alas, he didn’t have a decent camera handy. Luckily, he remembered that JEANY POTTER lived close by, so he borrowed her smartphone. When Sasha approached the eagle again (“it was huge”), the bird got spooked and walked — not flew — away, looking like a “lumbering dwarf.” Clearly, it was injured. One of Sasha’s photos is shown.

What to do? Sasha grabbed a sleeping bag from the truck, and dropped it over the eagle. “The bird was panicked and I was trembling. I paused and looked down at it. ‘Calm down. It’s OK,’ I said. I wouldn’t have believed me, but the bird seem to accept at least a momentary standstill. I managed to wrap the bird up, and carried it down the hill, so amped up with adrenalin, I’ve no recollection of its weight.”

He set the bird-bundle down on the grass. Now what? Just then, a police officer showed up, and with the game warden’s help, contacted JOSH SARANPAA, assistant director of the WILDLIFE CENTER OF THE NORTH COAST (www.coastwildlife.org).

“The young man showed no hesitation,” Sasha wrote. “He knew what he was doing.” Josh examined the eagle, then took it to the wildlife center. It turns out they had been searching for the bird, which had been badly injured by hitting a power line. Its wing was ruined, it was emaciated, and it would never fly again. Sadly, the eagle had to be euthanized.

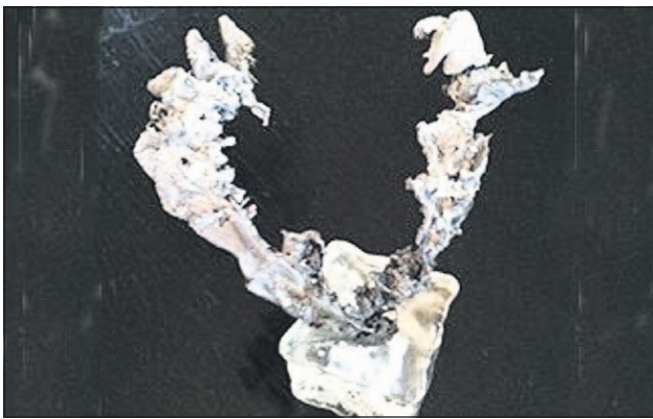
First a white pelican, then a Northern Fulmar. The eagle makes the third wild bird close encounter Sasha’s had in the last year. What’s next for Astoria’s bird whisperer?



The one that didn’t get away

A story on the Weather Channel caught the Ear’s eye: A 400-pound PACIFIC BLUEFIN TUNA recently sold for \$37,000 at Tokyo’s first auction of the new year in “the world’s biggest fish market.” KIYOSHI KIMURA, who is the president of a popular sushi restaurant chain in Japan, had the winning bid (<http://tinyurl.com/richtuna>). The unlucky tuna and Kimura are pictured in screen shots from the video.

According to Japan Times, the sushi maven was tickled, and thought it was a great deal. Why? In 2013 a bidding war broke out for a similar tuna, and the fish sold for \$1.3 million. Yikes.



Get the lead out redux

Is the Finnish New Year’s tradition of UUDEN VUODENTINA is still practiced in Astoria? Yes.

“Our family has done this tradition for years, going back to when I was a child in Astoria, and we continued it for our children.” JOHN NIEMI replied. “Each person takes a turn melting the lead ... and then throwing the melted lead into a bucket of ice water. The lead forms an abstract figure.” Pictured, his photo of a figure which was interpreted as “Togetherness.”

“The oldest woman present, or someone representing her wearing a ‘huivi’ or head scarf, is the ‘Vollentina’ (as we called her), and she interprets the figure as a prediction of the person’s fortune for the New Year. The figure is kept by each person for the year.”

In One Ear



by Elleda Wilson

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A rare sight

Something fun for marine life fans: An ALBINO BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN was filmed flashing its dorsal fin as it was swimming in a river in Central Florida in December by DANIELLE CARTER of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

LiveScience.com (<http://tinyurl.com/albdolphin>) has the story, and the video. A screenshot from the video is shown.

BLAIR MASE, the Southeast region marine mammal stranding coordinator with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) told LiveScience that the dolphin, which appears to be a subadult, was likely herding fish into the shallows to feed. She also noted that albinism in marine creatures is rare, but has been observed in 20 species of whales, dolphins and porpoises; NOAA has only recorded 14 previous sightings of albino bottlenose dolphins since 1962.



Bridge of squirrels

Squirrel lovers, and squirrels, rejoice. The NUTTY NARROWS BRIDGE, pictured, dedicated to the safe passage of squirrels over and above a Longview, Wash., street, has been added to the National Register of Historic Places.

A little background, from the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation website (<http://tinyurl.com/nuttyhistory>), which also provided the photos shown: “AMOS PETERS, the bridge’s designer and builder, discovered the need for the bridge when he noticed a red squirrel ... that had met a vehicular demise. Peters collected the remains of the dead squirrel and carried it home to show his three children.

“After some months in the family freezer, the children ... pooled their allowance money and took the frozen squirrel to a taxidermist ... It was their 1963 Christmas gift to their father. This stuffed squirrel, the inspiration for the Nutty Narrows Bridge, is on display at the office of the Amos Peters Construction Company to this day.”

As Paul Harvey used to say, “Now you know the rest of the story.”



I’ll be back?

KING5 news showed an interview with JOSH BROLIN by entertainment reporter Kim Holcomb of Evening Magazine in Los Angeles (<http://tinyurl.com/jbrolin30>). While they were talking, she asked him about the 30th anniversary of “THE GOONIES,” which is coming up this year. The actor is pictured in a screenshot from the interview.

“I was at Warner Brothers yesterday shooting and I was by Stage 16,” he said. “It’s the big stage, and I just asked if I could be let in ... and I went in and that was ‘The Goonies’ stage where the ship was. I have not seen that stage since 1984.”

“Have you been back to Astoria?” asked the reporter.

“I haven’t,” he replied. “I went back a year later because we did a signing or something, but I haven’t been back there since.”

“I think the 30th anniversary would be a good time,” she said.

“That would be appropriate. Yes. OK, buying my plane ticket now,” he said, laughing.

So will he really turn up here in Astoria for the 30th anniversary festivities? Time will tell.



Bill Dodge sets the scene

Nostalgia nook (this story first ran Sept. 30, 2011): “LAURIE and JEFF MARTIN, owners the SILVER SALMON GRILLE, last Friday turned their lounge into the Pine Valley Inn located in TV’s fantasyland, Pine Valley, Pa., on the four-decades soaper, ‘ALL MY CHILDREN,’” Astorian BILL W. DODGE told the Ear.

“The much-loved soap opera aired its last episode on that date, and fans of the show gathered to make champagne toasts to its departure. Silver Salmon also served tearful guests replica culinary treats characters on the series had eaten over the years.”

Bill, our multitalented local artist, provided hanging art for the permanent sets of the characters Cliff and Nina on the show for almost four years. Pictured above, Bill and Laurie. She’s holding “WINTER ACTIVITY,” one of the pieces that appeared on the series for several years.

At the party, Bill told for the first time how his work ended up on TV. “It involved two-time Academy Award winner KATHERINE HEPBURN, and Broadway star and Tony Award winner DOROTHY LOUDON,” he explained. “It was a matter of being in the right place at the right time. Loudon and Hepburn didn’t know me from Adam until I was in the right place: San Francisco’s venerable luxury hotel, the Mark Hopkins, where my work was represented in their tiny art gallery.”

“The right time was the two stars being in town co-starring in the pre-Broadway opening of a new play, ‘Westside Waltz,’” he continued. “Through two of my collectors, I ended up backstage after a performance to spend time with Loudon and Hepburn in their dressing rooms. Loudon ended up acquiring some of my work. Alas, Hepburn did not.

“But TV design friends of Loudon’s in New York saw my work that Loudon had acquired, and recommended me to the Emmy-winning scenic designer, WILLIAM MICKLELEY of the hit soap opera.” And the rest is art history.



News from the Goondocks

Goonie fans have been waiting with bated breath for news of a “GOONIES 2” after director RICHARD DONNER announced to TMZ last year that a sequel was definitely in the works. A still from the original Goonies movie is shown.

On Jan. 8, Collider.com (<http://tinyurl.com/gooniesup>) caught up with producer FRANK MARSHALL at the Television Critics Association (TCA) Winter Press Tour, and asked him if there was any “real heat” behind Goonies 2.

“It’s in discussion,” Marshall said. “(Donner’s) talked to us about it, and we’ve talked to him. It’s all about the story. We don’t just do sequels to do them. The story has to be there.”

No, there’s isn’t a script yet. “You don’t want to disappoint the fans by just doing a schlocky movie,” Marshall emphasized. “You want to do a real legitimate movie. It’s not going to be a sequel. In the Amblin spirit of Goonies, that’s what has to be.”

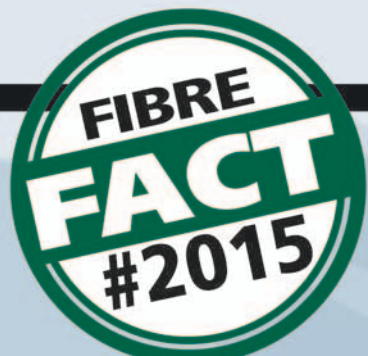
“I believe that the audience wants to discover the movie in the movie theater,” he added. “... You want to see ‘Star Wars’ like you saw ‘Star Wars’ the first time when you had no idea, or ‘Back to the Future’ or ‘Goonies’ or ‘Bourne.’ You don’t want to know what’s coming.”



‘The Gentleman of the Senate’

Oregon history buffs might want to take note that a feature-length documentary “The Gentleman of the Senate: Oregon’s MARK HATFIELD,” which highlights the life and legacy of the late governor and U.S. senator, is being aired on Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB) from 10 to 11:30 p.m. Monday.

“The story of Mark Hatfield (pictured) is about his approach to leadership, the lives he influenced, and his involvement in iconic moments in history,” said RICK DANCER, an executive producer of the project. “There are important lessons here for today’s leaders and the citizens who elect them.”



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