

POSITIVELY PINNIPED



Yes, sea lions can be upstanding citizens. NavyTimes.com recently featured a story about how **sea lions** and **dolphins** are helping Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) teams detect and recover mines, and are playing a role in port security (<http://tinyurl.com/navyhelpers>). One of the 50 sea lions on the team is pictured in a photo by Kathleen Gorby/Navy.

According to **Mike Rothe**, the marine mammal program director at Space and Naval Warfare Systems Command in San Diego, during the Iraq invasion, dolphins and sea lions tagged mines on the bottom of the Persian Gulf for divers to find and disable. Sea lions are also used in mine-dropping training in San Diego.

"In Kings Bay, Georgia, that water's like coffee with cream in it," Rothe noted. "It's nearly impossible to see anything, yet our sea lions are able to do a bang-up job in detecting swimmers" who are spying or trying to sabotage a ship.

The marine program is going strong "until there's other hardware or technology that can do what they do," Rothe said. But, he added, "so far there's nothing that can catch a rogue swimmer like a California sea lion."

MYSTERY BUOY



April 12, my friend **Karen Hoyt** and I found this bad boy just south of Silver Point in Cannon Beach." **Pam Chater** wrote to the Ear about her photos of the **buoy**, which are shown. "As directed we called the police, and they responded immediately." They put tape around it, but they didn't remove it.

Where did the buoy come from? A call to the U.S. Coast Guard revealed it is not one of theirs. The answer? Judging from photos, it's a Canadian submarine indicator distress buoy (<http://tinyurl.com/AFTind>). Apparently, each of the four Victoria Class submarines is outfitted with two of them, one fore, and one aft. This one is marked "AFT."

So how did the buoy wind up on the Oregon Coast? Emails to the Fisheries and Oceans Canada have produced no answers. Pam noted that a Coast Guard helicopter was flying low and slow over the beach near the buoy on Saturday (did they pick it up?). There was also a king tide Saturday. All we know is, at the end of the day the buoy was gone — disappearing as mysteriously as it appeared.

PACE YOURSELF



Several media sources recently ran a story about a new study with a headline similar to this one, from ABC News: "**More People Could Survive Tsunami If They Walk Faster**" (<http://tinyurl.com/fastwalk>). The Ear's third-grade bratty alter ego said, "Well, duh! Really?"

Yes, really. When a Cascadia Subduction Zone tsunami is on its way, you'll only have about 15 or 20 minutes to get to higher ground (or inland) before the water rolls in after the earthquake. Chances are the roads will be too damaged to get away by car, meaning you'll have to walk. Briskly.

The figures from the study spell it out: "Geographers estimated 21,562 residents (of Oregon, Washington and California) would not make it to safety if they walk slowly — at about 2.5 mph. But if they walk faster, at about 3.5 mph, the death toll drops to 15,970."

So, now tsunami preparedness has also become about getting healthy to walk faster. Better lace up those walking shoes and get moving.

In One Ear



by Elleda Wilson

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Hey Dude: Dust off your bowling shoes. **Jeff Daly** tells the Ear that fans of *The Dude* (Jeff Bridges) and the cult bowling movie "The Big Lebowski" are in for a treat — the first annual *It's Lebowski Time Festival*, May 1, starting at the Astoria Event Center, where highlights of the film are being shown from 7-8 p.m.

Lower Columbia Bowl will have open lane bowling (and dancing) from 8 to 10 p.m., and nifty prizes (like a Cannery Pier Hotel stay and restaurant certificates) will be given at 9 and 9:30 p.m. for best/worst Lebowski character costumes.

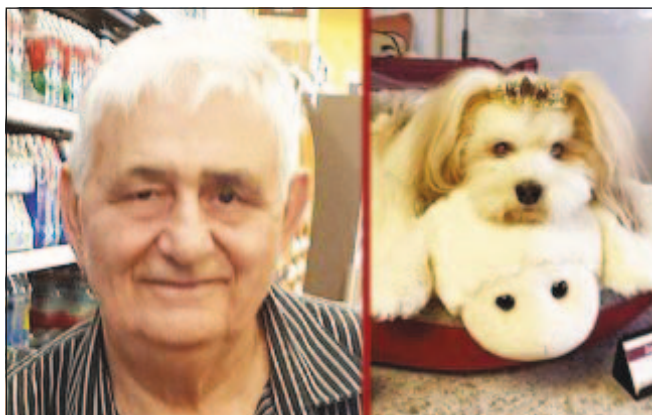
A ticket price of \$20 gives access to all events. Buy your ticket in advance at Frite & Scoop, and receive a free ice cream. Of course, White Russians will be served during the festival to honor the film, and the Glam Tram will be available to transport Lebowski-ites to other businesses celebrating the festival with their own White Russian presentations. The Dude abides.

Love fest: The Oregonian was practically swooning over Astoria with "**Astoria: 20 things we love about Oregon's first city**" (<http://tinyurl.com/20Astoria>), a slide show with commentary by Terry Richard, who wrote several travel posts about Astoria last year (<http://tinyurl.com/14Astoria>).

The Astoria Bridge is mentioned (of course), and the Astoria Column, Sunday Market, the sea lions, the Riverfront Trolley, several local businesses — well, you get the idea. However, tacked on the end, after No. 20, he also mentions Seaside, Cannon Beach, and Long Beach, Wash., which made the Ear a little huffy. Hey, it's supposed to be about loving Astoria, for heaven's sake.

No way: Overheard at the **Astoria Column** by **Jennifer Lindstrom**: A tourist dad asked his daughter if she's ready to climb to the top. Daughter, eyeing the engraved paver stones around the column, said "No way, Dad. Look at the names of all the people who died trying to get up there!"

THE SMILE MEISTER



In an April 17 In One Ear story, **Cyndi Mudge** was tickled to receive a **Smile Award** from a stranger in an electric cart at Fred Meyer's. "Who was he?" she asked.

The smile meister is **Richard Ortez**, pictured left. He and his wife, **Diane**, run *Sabra J's Attic* in Cannon Beach. Some time ago, Richard fractured his skull, and it's been a long recovery, Diane told the Ear. "He still has a balance problem, but he's OK mentally. Some get a little bitter, he just went the other way. After his fall, his mission is to make people laugh and smile."

Then, more recently, there was a cancer diagnosis. That's when he started taking his Smile Awards with him when they go shopping, Diane recalled, along with their beloved blind dog, **Chloe**, pictured right. He gives out the awards because he knows "how a little compliment just changes somebody." So who gets an award? Well, people who "smile with their whole face" — but then, you might also get one if you look like you could use a smile. After all, who needs it more?

Richard's not only keeping people smiling, either. "Sometimes it gets a little hard on the budget, but it's dog country at Cannon Beach," Diane said. "He gets a big bag of treats, so when he sees a couple with their dog go by, he'll offer to give the dog a treat. New neighbors came in a few weeks ago, and they have a collie named Buddy. When he sees my husband coming down the street, he bounds out to wait for him to get his treat. It's the cutest thing. All the dogs know."

On the phone, Diane sounds every bit as upbeat as Richard is. "It's been an unbelievable journey, and we hope to retire soon," she mused. "Life is good. It just makes you a little stronger if you have faith, and we have faith. We're going to be married 59 years in July."

"Sometimes I want to be 'poor me' today," she added, laughing, "and he just won't let us."

UP FROM THE ASHES



On April 11, our father, **David 'Big Chief' Magnuson**, lost his house, shop and all of his possessions in a devastating fire," son **David Magnuson** wrote. "He made it out unharmed along with his dog, **Tyson**." Big Chief and Tyson are pictured in Naselle, Wash., after the fire.

"Unfortunately he only recently received disability, and was still in the process of applying for insurance, meaning he was completely uncovered," David explained. "He has lost everything including his house, shop, two Harley-Davidsons, boat, all-terrain vehicle, Camaro Z28, and riding lawn mower."

As if that weren't bad enough, "he was recently forced out of his career as a truck driver when he began to suffer from glaucoma," David recalled. "He has been unable to work for over two years due to his failing eyesight, and has gone through all of his savings over this time."

David has set up an account to help his father out. "We are starting this fund to try to get him started. We need to rebuild his life from the ground up. This will take much more money and time than we could ever ask for but, we are hoping that we can get him on his feet." You can donate at www.gofundme.com/bigchief.

"Please help spread the word for our father and Tyson," David requests. "Thank you all so much for your support. This has been an overwhelming experience, and everyone has been so kind."

EYE TO EYE WITH NESSIE

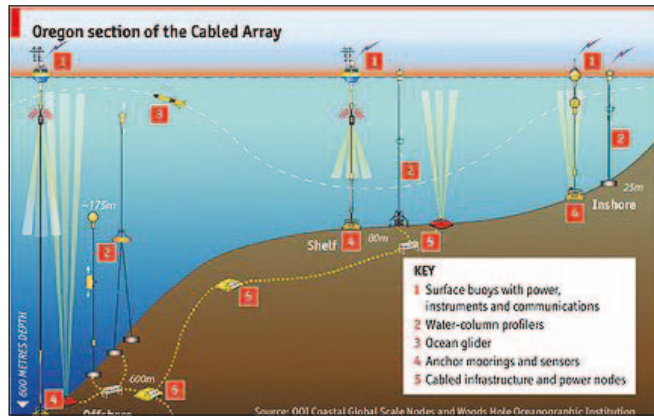


The Ear has just the perfect thing for armchair monster hunters and **Loch Ness Monster** (Nessie) fans. According to the Huffington Post (<http://tinyurl.com/eyenessie>), you can thank Mr. Google for mounting a Street View camera on a boat that gives people a 360-degree view of the loch and its surroundings, and even takes a peek under the notoriously murky surface of the water now and then.

Pictured, a few screenshots from the camera. Intrigued? You can start stalking Nessie here: <http://tinyurl.com/eye2nessie>

Now all we need is a Street View camera to watch our very own Columbia River sea monster, Colossal Claude.

BEYOND MEASURE?



In June, the U.S. Ocean Observatories Initiative and other observatories in the Arctic and Canada (between all of them, they cover every ocean) will start measuring "physical, chemical, geological and biological phenomena from the seabed to the surface," according to *The Economist* (<http://tinyurl.com/measuresea>).

One of the areas of concentration will be the **Cascadia Subduction Zone**, using the **Cabled Array** (pictured in an *Economist.com* graphic), a more than 550-mile-long submarine power and data connection off Oregon and Washington, which will measure the tectonic plates' volcanic and seismological activity and hydrothermal vents' output.

Plus, the cable will be connected to "profiler moorings" that let instruments go back and forth to the surface to take measurements; and, a propeller-driven autonomous underwater vehicle, *Endurance*, will also be gathering information off Oregon's coast.

More good news: Since it's taxpayer funded, the data generated by the project will be open access and free.

COMMUNITY NOTES

SATURDAY

Seaside AAUW — 10 a.m., at the home of Jane McGeehan, Gearhart. Seaside Branch of American Association of University Women monthly meeting. Program is "Pay Equity." Refreshments will be served. For address information and directions, call Karin Webb at 503-735-5919.

Columbia Northwestern Model Railroad Club — 1 p.m., in Hammond. Group runs trains on HO-scale layout. For information, call Don Carter at 503-325-0757.

SUNDAY

National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Support Group — 2 to 3:30 p.m., Seaside Public Library, 1131 Broadway. Family to Family Support Group, for anyone with friend or loved one suffering from a serious brain (mental) illness. For information, contact Myra Kero at 503-738-6165, or k7erowood@q.com, or go to www.nami.org

Line Dancing — 5:30 to 8 p.m., Seaside American Legion, 1315 Broadway. For information, call 503-738-5111. No cost; suggested \$5 tip to the instructor.

MONDAY

Senior Lunch — 11:30 a.m., Bob Chisholm Senior Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside. Suggested donation \$3 for those older than 60; \$6.75 for those younger than 60. For information, call Michelle Lewis at 503-861-4200.

Columbia Senior Diners — 11:30 a.m., Peace Lutheran Church (lower level), 565 12th St. Cost is \$5. For information, or to have a meal delivered, call 503-325-9693.

Warrenton Senior Lunch Program — noon, Warrenton Community Center, 170 S.W. Third St. Suggested donation of \$5 for seniors and \$7 for those younger than 60. For information, or to volunteer, call 503-861-3502 Monday or Thursday.

Astoria Rotary Club — noon,

second floor of the Astoria Elks Lodge, 453 11th St. Guests always welcome. For information, go to www.AstoriaRotary.org

Warrenton Kiwanis Club — noon to 1 p.m., Doogers Seafood and Grill, 103 U.S. Highway 101, Warrenton. For information, call Darlene Warren at 503-861-2672.

Knockers Pinochle Group — 1 p.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside. Cost is \$1 per regular session per person. Players with highest and second highest scores split the prize. Game is designed for players 55 and older, but all ages are welcome.

Diabetes Class — 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., Providence Seaside Hospital, 725 S. Wahanna Road, Seaside. Free help managing diabetes. All are welcome. For information, go to www.providence.org/diabetes or call 503-717-7301.

Line Dancing for Seniors — 6

to 7:30 p.m., Astoria Senior Center, temporarily located at 1555 W. Marine Drive in the old Astoria Yacht Club. For information, call 503-325-3231.

Clatsop County Democrats — 6:30 to 9 p.m., Astoria Yacht Club, 300 Industry St., Suite 201 (at the West End Mooring Basin, above Tiki Charters). For information, call 503-717-1614 or go to <http://clatsopdemocrats.org>

TUESDAY

Do Nothing Club — 10 a.m. to noon, 24002 U St., Ocean Park, Wash. Men's group. For information, call Jack McBride at 360-665-2721.

Senior Lunch — 11:30 a.m., Bob Chisholm Senior Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside. Suggested donation of \$3 for those older than 60; \$6.75 for those younger than 60. For information, call Michelle Lewis at 503-861-4200.

Columbia Senior Diners —

11:30 a.m., Peace Lutheran Church (lower level), 565 12th St. The cost is \$5. For information, or to have a meal delivered, call 503-325-9693.

Astoria Lions Club — noon, Astoria Elks Lodge, 453 11th St. Prospective members welcome. For information, contact Charlene Larsen at 503-325-0590.

Line Dancing for Seniors — 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., Astoria Senior Center, temporarily located at 1555 W. Marine Drive in the old Astoria Yacht Club. For information, call 503-325-3231.

Spinning Circle — 3 to 5 p.m., Astoria Fiber Arts Academy, 1296 Duane St. Bring a spinning wheel. For information, call 503-325-5598 or go to <http://astoriafiberarts.com>

WEDNESDAY

Open Sewing Gathering — 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Homespun Quilts, 108 10th St. For information, call 503-325-3300 or 800-298-3177 or go to <http://homespunquilt.com>

Wickiup Senior Lunches — 11:30 a.m., Wickiup Grange Hall, 92683 Svensen Market Road. Free for those older than 60 (\$3 suggested donation), \$6.75 for those younger than age 60. For information, call Michelle Lewis at 503-861-4200.

Senior Lunch — 11:30 a.m., Bob Chisholm Senior Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside. Suggested donation of \$3 for those older than 60; \$6.75 for those younger than 60. For information, call Michelle Lewis at 503-861-4200.

Columbia Senior Diners — 11:30 a.m., Peace Lutheran Church (lower level), 565 12th St. The cost is \$5. For information, or to have a meal delivered, call 503-325-9693.

Blood Pressure Checks — noon to 2 p.m., Astoria Senior Center, temporarily located at 1555 W. Marine Drive in the old Astoria Yacht Club. For information, call 503-325-3231.

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