

A PERSSON OF INTEREST



Paul Persson (pictured), Astoria High School class of 1967, former resident of Astoria, has recently completed the Pacific Crest Trail,” his sister, Astorian **Pauline Moberg** told the Ear. On Aug. 16, a celebration party was held at the home of **Lyle Forde** in Lake Stevens, Wash. Friends from North Dakota, family, and fellow PCT hikers enjoyed a barbecue in his honor, and Pauline and her husband, **Bill**, were there, along with Paul’s niece, **Esther Moberg** of Seaside.

WISC News reported that 65-year-old Paul, a retired nurse, began the 2,658 mile hike March 14 at the U.S. border in Campo, Calif. (<http://tinyurl.com/ppersson1>). He finished his trek Aug. 9 at E.C. Manning Provincial Park in British Columbia. You can read his blog and see his photos at <http://tinyurl.com/ppersson2>

In 2013, he hiked 1,300 miles of the trail, and did 500 miles last year. He began this year’s trek with plantar fasciitis, a painful foot injury, and slept on the trail the entire five months. He had lost 38 pounds by mile 470, but he told WISC he’s now “in the best shape I’ve ever been.”

Paul’s PCT trail name is Bipolar, and he is hiking for mental health awareness and to remove the stigma, a cause close to his heart, as he “came out” as bipolar on the trail in 2013. “I think that we like to keep mental illness hidden,” he said. “There have been a number of occasions where I think it’s been very therapeutic for me and other people who wanted to talk about it.”

And, the trail provided many opportunities for him to form new friendships. “I put it this way: I meet someone on the trail for the first time and I know them all my life ... We share so much in common, we’re immediately lifetime friends.”

But, there can be a lot of time alone on the trail, too, he recalled — sometimes he would go for four days without seeing anyone. But even the solitude had its upside, he noted. “It’s a wonderful time to think through things.”

A ROMP AND A RING



Cassidy Williams, 29, admitted that she tricked her parents into adopting **Dood**, a golden retriever who is now 5 years old. Understandably, she was heartbroken when she heard that Dood, who is living with her family in Utah, was diagnosed with terminal bone cancer in July — just before her wedding to **Matthijs**, 33, planned for early August in **Manzanita**, CNN reported (<http://tinyurl.com/doodsea>). What to do?

The solution was pretty simple. Her father canceled his flight to the coast, and instead drove Dood (who had never been out of Utah) to Oregon to be the **ring bearer**, and incidentally see the ocean for the first and only time in his life. Dood is pictured at the wedding with Cassidy and Matthijs, courtesy of CNN.

Fortunately, Dood is still in pretty good shape, so he was able to enjoy his role as wedding attendant, and — after a moment’s uncertainty — a romp in the ocean. His reaction? “Priceless,” the bride recalled.

“He was so happy, he had so much energy,” Williams told CNN. “He did a fantastic job as the ring bearer.”

GET BENCHED



The Friends of McClure Park would like to give a special thanks to **Austin Adams** (pictured),” **Judy McElroy** wrote. “Austin wanted to help breathe new life into **McClure Park**, and chose to craft a beautiful wooden **bench** as his Astoria High School Senior Project. Astoria Parks and Recreation has installed the bench, and a concrete walkway leading up to it, on the west slope of the hillside.”

In case you’re wondering, McClure Park is at Seventh Street between Franklin and Grand avenues.

“Please,” Judy requests, “come check out the fabulous view it offers.”

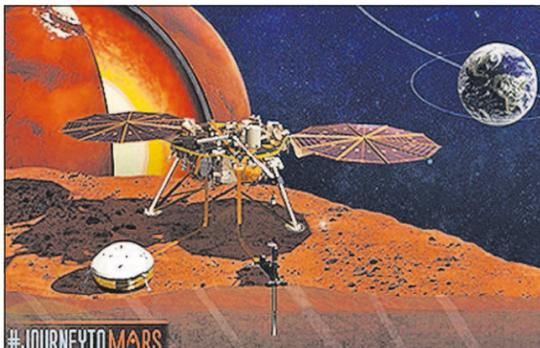
In One Ear



by Elleda Wilson

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NAME DROPPING



Have you always wanted to **go to Mars**? Gizmag.com reports that **NASA** will shuttle your name to Mars on a silicon microchip on board the **InSight** Mars lander, and is now accepting submissions from the public (<http://tinyurl.com/gotoMars1>). The InSight is pictured in a NASA illustration.

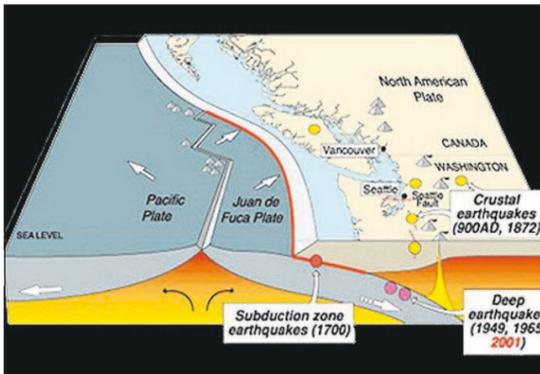
“InSight is scheduled to launch from Vandenberg Air Force Base in California in March 2016, and will be the first planetary mission to launch from the U.S. West Coast,” the article says.

It is expected to land on Mars near the equator next September to begin a 720-day study of the planet, including placing instruments on its surface and drilling 15 feet deep to see how the planet was formed.

Want to get in on the fun? Just go to <http://tinyurl.com/gotoMars2>. All names must be submitted by midnight Eastern Time Sept. 8. No, it doesn’t cost anything.

See, sending yourself into space isn’t just for billionaires. The Ear couldn’t resist. Can you?

CAN YOU HEAR ME NOW?



It used to be believed that the 700-mile-long **Cascadia Subduction Zone** (pictured) was dormant, because it was so quiet. Until the 1990s, that is, when it was discovered that it ruptured in 1700, causing what the Japanese called an Orphan Tsunami.

With that discovery came the realization that the subduction zone has actually been accumulating enormous energy between the two locked tectonic plates, just waiting to unleash a whopping earthquake and tsunami. But scientists have been baffled why no smaller earthquakes were being detected in the meantime.

A recent article in the Seattle Times says the mystery has been solved. The **National Science Foundation’s Cascadia Initiative’s** sea floor seismometers and sensors, which began being deployed in 2011, detected “nearly 600 small earthquakes off central Oregon during their first year of operation.” The quakes are so small, and so deep in the ocean, they don’t register on land-based instruments (<http://tinyurl.com/zonepops>).

The sea floor data collection ends in September. When all of the information is gathered, scientists hope to be able to figure out which sections of the fault are the most tightly locked, and which sections would slip the most during a mega-quake — knowledge essential to eventually set up tsunami warning networks.

WHAT’S THAT?

Do you ever have a problem answering when a tourist asks you **what kind of ship** is sailing by on the Columbia River? As Judge Judy says, “Umm is not an answer.”

GCaptain has a handy-dandy guide to what’s what, <http://gcaptain.com/ship-identification-101>, with a description and photo of each type of commercial vessel you’re likely to see, from crude carriers, to dry bulk carriers (one is pictured), to containerships, to Pure Car and Truck Carriers (PCTCs).

Of course, if you really want to dazzle ’em, send them to www.marinetraffic.com, so they can see exactly who and what is where on the river around Astoria at any given time.



FOG ON FIRE



Caleb Wertz passed through Astoria while he was on a bicycle trip with his cat, **Marilyn** (both of them are pictured). Homeless when he started, Caleb traveled from Southern California to Oregon, east to Idaho, north to Spokane, Wash., west to Seattle, and south to San Francisco — then the duo hitchhiked into Corvallis, where they finally settled down.

The journey inspired him to write a book, **“Fog on Fire: 4,000 miles on the road”** because, “I had to let the entire trip out of my mind,” he explained. Yes, of course, Astoria is mentioned. The book is available at Lulu.com or www.aboutCaleb.com

Some of their travels were downright harrowing. One evening it was getting late, and he was at the top of Stevens Pass, Wash., without a bike light. He had get down the mountainside fast, before dark, so he loosened his grip on the brakes, and the duo took a wild ride — descending thousands of feet of curvy road to the bottom, and Deception Falls.

Apparently, Marilyn absorbed the downhill plunge with typical feline aplomb. Caleb, less so. “It wasn’t as dreamy as I had imagined,” he noted.

STAMP STAMPEDE



David Smith of Gearhart sent in an interesting little tidbit, very timely in this season of presidential election furor: **Stamp Stampede** (www.stampstampede.org). Organized by **Ben Cohen**, cofounder of Ben & Jerry’s ice cream company, the goal is, simply, “Stamp Money Out of Politics.”

Literally. The website sells stamps that imprint various slogans onto currency; the goal is to amend the Constitution to get special interest money out of politics. A couple of sample bills are shown.

“... Each stamp sold will stamp 1,095 one dollar bills, or three dollars a day for a year,” the website says. “But we hope you’ll stamp a lot more. After all, it’s slightly subversive, totally legal, and a lot of fun.” Have at it.

TRUTH WILL COME OUT



One of U.S. history’s mysteries has been solved thanks to DNA, and the answer is right in Portland, KGW reports (<http://tinyurl.com/wharding1>).

The 29th president, **Warren G. Harding** (pictured inset), who was married, died suddenly during his presidency in 1923. After he died, his mistress, **Nan Britton**, publicly claimed that he was the father of her child, **Elizabeth Ann Blaesing** (the president’s only known offspring).

Harding’s family was outraged, not to mention scandalized, and even more so when Britton’s memoir, “The President’s Daughter,” was published in 1927. They denied that the child was Harding’s (even insisting he was sterile), and many people flat out called Britton a liar. Historians tended to side with the family, and Harding is usually mentioned as being childless.

Until **Ancestry.com** jumped into the fray, that is. DNA testing was done on Elizabeth Blaesing’s son, **James Blaesing** (pictured), 65, of Portland, and some Harding descendants. The results? It’s a 99.9 percent certainty that Nan Britton was telling the truth all along — making James Blaesing Warren Harding’s grandson. He is pictured, courtesy of KGW.

“You know what this is? It’s a love story,” Blaesing said of his grandparents. “It was true love, especially on her side, and I know he felt the same way. And he got trapped.”

“I was so jazzed,” he told KGW. “It was just so exciting to find out. Here it was, after all my grandmother and my mom went through, and here’s the truth.”

COMMUNITY NOTES

SATURDAY

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

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 Dinners — 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

Knockin’ 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.

Astoria Toastmasters — 6:30 p.m., Hotel Elliot conference room, 357 12th St. Visitors welcome. For information, go to www.toastmasters.org or call 503-894-0187.

TUESDAY

World War II Warbirds — 8 a.m., Labor Temple Diner, 934 Duane St.

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 Dinners — 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 Kiwanis Club — noon, El Tapatio, 229 W. Marine Drive. For information, call Robert McClelland at 503-894-0187 or Susan Brooks at 503-741-0186 or 503-338-4994.

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.

A Course in Miracles — The Astoria ACIM study group meets weekly from 3 to 4 p.m. For information and location, call Nelle Moffett at 916-307-9790 or email moffett@cgifellowship.org

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>

Evergreen Masonic Lodge No. 137 — 6:30 p.m. dinner, 7:30 p.m. meeting, 201 N. Holladay Drive, Seaside. All Masons and their families are welcome. For information, call 503-717-0808.

WEDNESDAY

Moms Offering Moms Support Club — 9 a.m., Capt. Gray Port of Play, 785 Alameda Ave. For information, go to www.momsclubofastoria.org or email president@momsclubofastoria.org

Help Ending Abusive Relationship Tendencies — 10 to 11:30 a.m., The Harbor, 1361 Duane St. HEART covers subjects related to the effects of domestic violence on children, parents and other family members, dynamics of power and control, and how to recognize red flags. For anyone in an abusive relationship, or who knows someone who is. Call Audrey Williams ahead to reserve a spot at 503-325-3426, ext. 104.

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 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 Dinners — 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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