

word nerd

By RYAN HUME

Shively
[ʃaɪv•li]

noun

1. *John M. Shively*: (1804-1893) This Kentucky-born, Oregon pioneer is responsible for plating a significant swath of Astoria based off a land claim he made in 1844. Even though the claim was disputed by the Hudson's Bay Company and Shively fled east, the area is still known colloquially as "Shively's Astoria." On March 9, 1847, he was appointed postmaster of Astoria and returned to open the first post office west of the Rocky Mountains out of his house on the hill at Fort George. In 1849, he chased riches to California during the gold rush, leaving his post unattended. As he returned to Astoria the following year, he lost all of his earnings in a shipwreck only to find that he had been replaced as postmaster by John Adair. He served as a surveyor and road commissioner for Clatsop County and regained some of his fortune in the 1850s when gold was discovered in southern Oregon. He died in 1893 after having been interred in an Astoria hospital for five years.

2. *Shively Park*: A 12-acre, wooded park with trails, covered picnic shelters, a small play area, and various ruins, like the last remnants of the Weinhard-Astoria Hotel, which succumbed to the 1922 fire. Once the site of 1911 Centennial Celebration, replete with a replica of Fort Astoria, an Indian Village, an amphitheater and fountains, much of Shively Park's former glory has gone to spoil by time and inattention

3. *Shively Hall*: a small



Photo by Dwight Caswell

The entrance arch of the Weinhard Astoria Hotel was all that remained after the 1922 downtown Astoria fire. The arch was relocated to Shively Park and still stands.

community hall at Shively Park with a capacity to seat 50-plus.

Origin:

Shively Park was named in honor of Astoria's first postmaster in 1899. Shively is an Americanization of the Swiss and German surname, Schäublin or Schaufelle, which rose out of the Middle High German, *shoup*, meaning a "straw bundle," with the addition of the diminutive suffix *-lin*. Literally translating to "little bundle of straws," the nickname was applied to skinny or gaunt persons. The Shively variation first appears in U.S. immigration documents dating back to the late 18th century.

"In line of official business, Shively had received from the Postmaster General on March 26, 1847, a contract to transport all of the mail from Indepen-

dence, Missouri, to Oregon.... Leaving Independence about the end of April, the Shiveleys reached Astoria in the fall of 1847. The new Astoria postmaster lost no time in setting up the post office in a downstairs bedroom of his home, a house he had purchased from the Rev. Ezra Fisher.... Astoria was the distribution mail center for the entire Northwest, including the present states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and part of Montana, but the office was handicapped by lack of transportation facilities and roads."

—Edith M. List, Howard M. List and J.M. Shively, "John M. Shively's Memoir, Part II," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, Vol. 81, No. 2, Summer 1980, P. 188-189

"My dog and I enjoy our walks in Shively Park, during which we may not meet another soul. Hidden behind one of Astoria's reservoirs, off the road to the dump, Shively Park seems forgotten."

—Dwight Caswell, "The faded glory of Shively Park," *Coast Weekend*, Nov. 19, 2015

BOOKSHELF

By RYAN HUME

Just finished:

"Fortune Smiles: Stories" by Adam Johnson
Random House, 2015



Plot Notes: In "Nirvana," a programmer artificially reanimates a recently assassinated president, who becomes his only real confidant while his paralyzed wife slips further away from him, obsessed with a certain Northwest band whose singer chose an early exit. In "Interesting Facts," a breast cancer survivor alternates between rage and pathos as she views her family and a world that has moved on without her. And in the title story, Johnson revisits the Korean Peninsula, this time to watch the fate of two defectors from the North as they come to terms with their indecipherable new lives in the South.

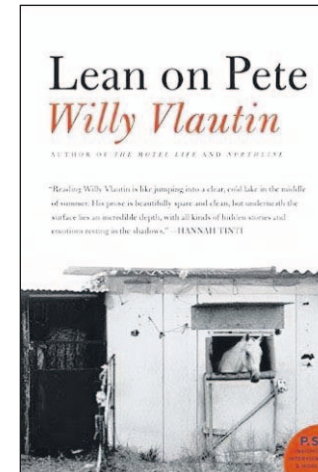
Take Away: In this collection of six long and intense stories, Johnson confirms that we do indeed live in the future right bleeping now, though the prognosis is still out on if we are any better off for it. With his fourth book — his first since taking home the Pulitzer in 2013 for his previous, North Korea-set novel, "The Orphan Master's Son" — Johnson plows headlong into his evolving theme of how technology and other overwhelming, invisible forces shape and mitigate individual human experience, and he grabbed a National Book Award for this collection in November to boot. These stories are dark, sometimes painful even, but, when it's working in sync, as it does in "Nirvana," the title story and "Hurricanes Anonymous," Johnson's shifting prose, his spot-on imagery and his bursts of humor make even the most tragic premise undeniably human. When it doesn't exactly compute, like the

meta-narrative details in the otherwise devastating "Interesting Facts," it is still a testament to his talent that the subjective horror of that story can stick on a person, as trained as a drone's eye.

Recommended For: Fans of George Saunders, Charles Yu, Phillip K. Dick, Gary Shteyngart, and any sci-fi readers looking to discover likeminded beings on the literature shelf.

Other books:

"Lean on Pete" by Willy Vlautin
Harper Perennial, 2010



Recommended By: Buddy Cropp of Godfather's Books in Astoria

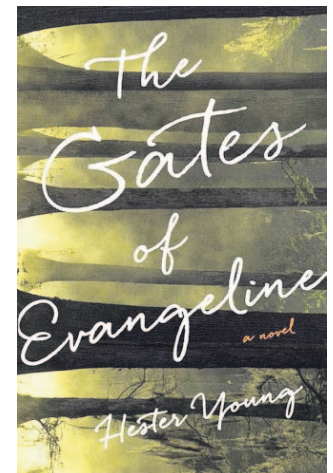
Plot Notes: When 15-year-old underdog Charley Thompson moves from Spokane, Washington, to Portland, things get tough. When his father dies, things get even tougher still.

Why You Should Read: Cropp latched on to this moody, coming-of-age novel by

Vlautin — Portland resident, author of "The Motel Life," and an all-around local favorite — as it was rooted in familiar terrain.

Recommended For: Cropp recommends this novel — told in a natural, comfortable cadence — to anyone working with or around troubled teens, or to any teenager who wants a break from science-fiction and other genre fantasies.

"The Gates of Evangeline" by Hester Young
G.P. Putnam's Sons, 2015



Recommended By: Lisa Reid of Lucy's Books in Astoria

Plot Notes: Led by dreams about children in peril, New York journalist Charlotte "Charlie" Gates, having recently lost her own child, is drawn to Louisiana, the Deveau family and an infamous 30-year-old missing-child case.

Why You Should Read: Reid offers up this pulse-pounding debut, recently named one of Publishers Weekly's Best Books of 2015, as it was one of the few books she read recently that kept her guessing all the way to the end.

Recommended For: Those who will enjoy a Southern Gothic family epic puzzle-boxed inside of a spooky whodunit.