

'SOMEONE SAVED MY LIFE'



"I fell, and someone saved my life," 85-year-old Jerry Swan-son (pictured) told the Ear.

Around New Year's, Jerry was walking, when he tripped and fell over backward. Two men helped him up, and he thought he was OK.

Shortly after the fall, off-duty bus driver MacKenzie Jones spotted him, and noticed that he "wasn't walking like Jerry." He is a frequent passenger on her bus route, so she offered him a ride home. "I was just trying to find something to do, and I found it," she said. It must have been serendipity, because she was a certified nursing assistant for 11 years.

She got out and helped him into her car, but to her alarm, he almost passed out when he got in. It was obvious to her that something was very wrong, even though "he sang me two church songs that were absolutely beautiful," she recalled.

He just wanted a ride home, but MacKenzie insisted that he get medical care. "Jerry, you just need to get checked out," she told him, and drove him straight to Providence Seaside Hospital.

And it's a good thing she did. His No. 3 cervical vertebrae was cracked; if he had just gone home, it's likely he would have died or been paralyzed. The hospital sent him by ambulance to Oregon Health & Science University Hospital, and now he's in Wheeler, recovering.

His only complaint about the whole experience was not about the pain, or about having to wear a cervical collar. Nope. "They cut off my new suit!" he exclaimed.

Far more important is his need to express his heartfelt gratitude to MacKenzie for saving his life. "She needs to be thanked," he emphasized. "This is a great thing, as far as I'm concerned. It's always good to be able to say thanks."

"I just was glad I was there when I was there, and that I could help," MacKenzie said. "He reminds me of my dad — so much like my dad."

"I hope more people help other people," is her message to the community. "We need more of that."

PROCEED WITH CAUTION



Pictured, a photo of a **playground sign** observed in an U.S. Coast Guard housing complex, sent in by Nate Martin. In case you can't read it, it says: "Welcome. This playground equipment is intended for children 2-5 years of age. Adult supervision is required. Please observe playground rules."

"Astoria: A great place to raise your kids," Nate quipped. "Or to teach them to lift themselves up."

HOT FOX



Believe it or not, a **fox** was spotted roaming around for seven or eight minutes in the **Fukushima** nuclear power plant's highly radioactive No. 2 reactor containment vessel in Japan. His visit was captured by a camera on site, according to a report in The Mainichi, a Japanese daily newspaper (<http://tinyurl.com/nukehotfox>), then seen by a plant operator from Tokyo Electric Power Co., which provided the photo.

Power company staff don't have any idea how the fox got in there, as there was no sign of him on any of the walking or driving routes into the facility. Even so, and despite being zapped with high doses of radiation, the animal, who appeared to be about 4 feet long, "did not show any signs of weakness" on the video.

Alas, three-headed fox sightings won't come as a surprise.

In One Ear

by Elleda Wilson
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MONSTER COOKIE



Yes, young Parker Dougherty really is holding a huge **22-inch** cookie in the photo shown. It was baked for him by local Seaside chef Mark Kenny.

"He likes cookies and stuff," Mark explained, "and being that age, who wouldn't want a cookie that big? Let's go for the gusto."

So, what happened to the cookie, as if you can't guess? "He ate it," Mark replied. "He's pretty tall for his age, and he can put some food away."

Mark is the chef who made the **50-pound bacon cheeseburger** on his Weber grill for Alli Calder's Sweet 16 Birthday Party in Gearhart in 2011. That meaty monster was capped with 3 pounds of bacon, 5 pounds of cheese, 3 pounds of onions, 12 tomatoes and Thousand Islands dressing (burp).

Later, the chef also made an **89-pounder**, but had a hard time getting it off the grill. "Forty-nine guys ended up eating it," he recalled. "I like to do things that are extraordinary."

By the way, Guinness World Records says the largest hamburger weighed 2,014 pounds, and was prepared Sept. 2, 2012, at the Black Bear Casino Resort in Carlton, Minn. (<http://tinyurl.com/tonburger>). Don't know if that includes the 327 pounds of toppings. Break out the Pepto Bismol.

Back to the cookie. So why did Mark do it, really? "You always try to inspire kids when they are young," he told the Ear, "and let them know that you can do extraordinary things if you set your mind to it." Mission accomplished, quite tastily.

IT AIN'T SO



An alarming story from **Superstation95.com** has been Amaking the rounds on Facebook lately, "US West Coast Earthquake Warning as Cascadia Subduction Zone Surges," which is chock-full of official authentic-looking charts and graphs to make it sound even scarier (<http://tinyurl.com/whoashake>).

"As of 0231:30 (Jan. 17), the initial water column height is 2,738.80 meters deep (8,985.56 feet)," the article says. "Two minutes and 30 seconds later, that same water column height had dropped to 2,738.66 meters deep (8,985.10 feet). Where did the **four inches** of water disappear to?" They seem a little confused, as they later mention that it's **four feet** of water.

Regardless of whether they mean inches or feet, the article makes the assumption the North America and Juan de Fuca tectonic plates shifting caused the change in water column height, and that the Pacific Northwest is in imminent danger of experiencing "the big one."

The wave graph Superstatio95 used to make its point is real — it is from the website (<http://tinyurl.com/b46404>) of a buoy 230 nautical miles west of Astoria, Station 46404. What they fail to mention is that the graph looks almost the same every day.

The article was soundly debunked as a hoax both by a geologist on KGW (<http://tinyurl.com/debunkKGW>), and by the National Weather Service, who tweeted "Tides naturally change water column height at buoys up to several feet every day."

The long and short of it is this: Yes, the Cascadia Subduction Zone is a real threat. Did anything significant happen Jan. 17? No.



Who's ready?: The North Coast News of Ocean Shores, Washington, reports that the **Quinault Beach Resort and Casino**, also in Ocean Shores, is planning a \$25 million expansion that includes a new 500-car parking garage that can also serve as a **tsunami evacuation shelter** (<http://tinyurl.com/parkwave>) — meaning that between the garage and the new Ocosta School in Westport, Washington, the other North Coast will have two tsunami shelters. And this North Coast has ... ?

Diggin' it: Did you know that the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (**DOGAMI**) has a huge amount of **publications** available online at www.oregongeo.org/pubs/? There are tsunami evacuation and inundation maps (read 'em and weep), landslide databases, Cascadia newsletters, information about Oregon's mineral occurrences, prospects, and mines (Clatsop County will surprise you), and much more — all in all, an interesting way to entertain yourself on a rainy winter afternoon.

Remember him?: Teenaged **Colton Harris Moore**, the **Barefoot Bandit**, stole a \$450,000 boat in Ilwaco, Washington, and left it in Warrenton — just one of his many escapades before being caught and sent to the hoosegow. He is pictured in a self-portrait, taken while he was on the run.

Well, we haven't heard the last of him. There's an update on CBSNews.com (<http://tinyurl.com/banditcbs>), which mentions that he now has a **blog** and **website**, www.tidalsocata.com. The blog has come-hither installments like, "Why I Stole Airplanes," and is apparently being written while he's in prison. A guilty read, if ever there was one.

QUOTABLE

Laurie Caplan told the Ear that local Astorian, **Larry Taylor** (pictured), chairman of the Clatsop County Democrats and active in the Democratic Party of Oregon, was quoted in none other than the venerable **New York Times** in a Sunday, Jan. 17, article, "Clinton Campaign Underestimated Sanders Strengths, Allies Say" (<http://tinyurl.com/nytlft>). Here's the quote:

"Hillary struggles to convey sincere passion with issues that matter to the general public, unlike Bernie Sanders and Elizabeth Warren," the Democratic senator from Massachusetts, said Lawrence Taylor, a superdelegate from Oregon. She does so best in the televised debates, said Mr. Taylor, who believes those forums have made her 'stronger' and helped her come across as more trustworthy."

Congrats, Mr. Taylor. Not too many can say they've been quoted in The New York Times.

EUREKA!



The Moose State has been giving up her secrets of late with an exciting discovery: the location of the **remains of a lost whaling fleet**, found off Alaska's arctic coast. The 33 ships were abandoned in 1871 after becoming ice-locked, and the incident is depicted in a Harpers Weekly 1871 illustration, courtesy of the Robert Schwemmer Maritime Library.

A **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration** article online (<http://tinyurl.com/icedin33>) says: "The ships were destroyed in a matter of weeks, leaving more than 1,200 whalers stranded at the top of the world until they could be rescued by seven ships of the fleet standing by about 80 miles to the south in open water off Icy Cape. No one died in the incident but it is cited as one of the major causes of the demise of commercial whaling in the United States."

It probably didn't help the business, either, that to make room for the survivors, the rescuing ships had to jettison their valuable cargoes of whale oil, bone and whaling gear.

NOAA has searched for the remains of the fleet on other occasions, and has already found gear salvaged by the local Inupiat, and timber wreckage. But this time, Eureka!

"Using state-of-the-art sonar and sensing technology," the article says, "the NOAA team was able to plot the 'magnetic signature' of the two wrecks, including the outline of their flattened hulls. The wreck site also revealed anchors, fasteners, ballast and brick-lined pots used to render whale blubber into oil."

Thanks to NOAA, an arctic maritime history mystery has finally been solved.

COMMUNITY NOTES

SATURDAY

Sit and Stitch Group — 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Custom Threads, 1282 Commercial St. Knitting, crocheting and needle work. For information, call 503-325-7780.

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

Scandinavian Workshop — 10 a.m., First Lutheran Church, 725 33rd St. Needlework, hardanger, knitting, crocheting, embroidery and quilting. All are welcome. For information, call 503-325-1364 or 503-325-7960.

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 \$7. 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

Knochlers 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). Renew Oregon Ballot Initiative regarding coal and agenda items and election of delegates for state convention. For information, call 503-717-1614 or go to <http://clatsopdemocrats.org>

TUESDAY

Stewardship Quilting Group — 9:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., First Lutheran Church, 725 33rd St. All are welcome. Donations of material always appreciated. For information, call Janet Kemp at 503-325-4268.

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.

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Columbia Senior Diners — 11:30 a.m., Peace Lutheran Church (lower level), 565 12th St. The cost is \$7. 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.

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

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