

Cooper: 'It's a fascinating story'

Continued from Page 1A

Soon enough, the Astoria townsfolk discovered the baron was a fraud. This came as little surprise to Roscoe, then 24, and Soderberg, then 28; both sensed de Winter wasn't on the level. Van Dusen told investigative journalist Tom Colbert that de Winter scammed about 200 people.

De Winter reappeared in Corvallis for a spell. Days before the hijacking, he disappeared again.

Roscoe returned from college for Thanksgiving. He was sitting in a Union-town tavern watching TV when he saw news reports of the hijacking and a sketch of the subject.

"And I said to the guy I was with, 'That looks like Norman de Winter,'" he said.

A man using the pseudonym "Dan Cooper" (misreported as "D.B." Cooper), wearing a business suit and sunglasses, had used a briefcase bomb to hijack a commercial airplane flying from Portland to Seattle, extorted cash and several parachutes once the plane landed and the passengers left, demanded the crew fly him to Mexico, then escaped with the money mid-flight about 50 miles from Astoria.

"I've felt that Norman de Winter and D.B. Cooper were the same guy since the moment it started," Roscoe said. "I've never lost that conviction."

Robert Wesley Rackstraw

Cooper's identity became an instant and enduring source of speculation. The Federal Bureau of Investigation has eliminated hundreds of D.B. Cooper suspects over the years.

In the History special, Colbert — who pitched the show to the channel — and fellow journalist Jim Forbes argue the case for Robert Wesley Rackstraw, a Vietnam veteran and ex-convict who was a prime Cooper suspect and now lives in the San Diego area. In one scene, they ambush the evasive Rackstraw.

Rackstraw has denied the allegations but has a history of teasing reporters with the possibility.

When Roscoe learned of the citizen sleuths' investigation several years ago, he called them up and told them about de Winter.

"One thing led to another, and before you know it, I'm on the History channel," Roscoe said.

Colbert — who, with Forbes, assembled



AP Photo/Reid Blackburn
FBI agents scour the sand of a beach on the Columbia River on Feb. 13, 1980, searching for additional money or clues in the D.B. Cooper skyjacking case, in Vancouver, Wash. Several thousand dollars of the hijacking money was found in the area days earlier.

a 36-member "cold case" team that includes a dozen former FBI agents — claims that de Winter, Cooper and Rackstraw are the same person. An undercover investigator pointed out the coincidence of three master criminals, all with extensive piloting experience, living within 100 miles of each other.

In Part 2, Roscoe, Soderberg and Van Dusen are shown photographs of Rackstraw taken circa 1971. They and other witnesses, some of whom met de Winter in Corvallis, admit a striking similarity between the former suspect and the "de Winter" character who vanished right before D.B. Cooper entered the scene.

"That really, really looks like the guy that I remember," Roscoe says in the documentary.

Few, however, are completely sure. Soderberg's ex-husband, Dave Palmberg, said his reaction is that it's not him.

Mark Fick — an Astoria resident who, at 19, worked with de Winter at a cannery and kept a letter and Christmas card from him — commented on the documentary's Rackstraw footage:

"Mr. (Rackstraw's) voice was a little higher than I remember Norman de Winter's voice," he wrote in an email, but added: "The photo of Mr. (Rackstraw) with the longer sideburns looked much like Mr. de Winter."

The stewardess who spent the most time with Cooper during the skyjacking, Tina Mucklow, says in the show that Rackstraw was not the hijacker.

"D.B. Cooper: Case Closed?" ends with

an FBI agent announcing that the bureau is closing the 45-year-old case, without resolution, to redirect resources toward other investigations.

Unless some extraordinary evidence materializes — namely, the money or the parachute — it seems that D.B. Cooper, whoever he was, got away with it.

Colbert said he and his team plan to hold a news conference Wednesday to protest the FBI's decision.

'A fascinating story'

Roscoe, the owner of Fulio's Pastaria, Tuscan Steak House and Delicatessen, will be named an honorary member of Colbert's "cold case" team because of his de Winter tip.

"This whole story of Norman de Winter essentially involves: Where was D.B. Cooper before he hijacked the plane? That's what nobody ever really talks about," Roscoe said. "Where did he come from? What was he doing?"

A former bartender who served de Winter during the summer of '71, Roscoe said almost no one gave his de Winter/Cooper theory credence until Colbert and his team picked up the threads.

"Everybody would just tell me, 'Oh yeah, you just have such a wild imagination. That's a great story, Peter, but we don't really believe you, so just never mind,'" he said.

Roscoe believes in his gut that de Winter, Rackstraw and Cooper are the same person. The evidence may be circumstantial, but, to him, it is convincing.

"Am I 100-percent certain? I can't go that far yet," Roscoe said. "Only when (Rackstraw) confesses will I be 100 percent sure."

Something else that would seal the deal, he said, would be to find a lost photograph someone took of de Winter during his sojourn in Astoria.

Soderberg, who let de Winter have dinner in the Warrenton home she shared with Palmberg, said there's a lot of credibility to the premise that Rackstraw is de Winter.

"And if he does indeed turn out to be D.B. Cooper, I don't doubt for a minute he was scouting out the country" before the jump, she said, adding: "If nothing else, it's a fascinating story."

Colbert has written a book on his five-year deep-dive into the Cooper case, "*The Last Master Outlaw: How He Outfoxed the FBI Six Times But Not a Cold Case Team*" (now available for preorder at DBCooper.com).



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

The owner of this home fears his property could be enclosed or blocked by a new hotel on the Prom.

Hotel: Lot has been vacant since about 2000

Continued from Page 1A

Inn at the Prom and the Gilbert Inn, which would neighbor the Pearl of Seaside, are both part of Haystack Lodging's properties.

Two homes are either enclosed by the property or adjacent to it, including a duplex at 25 Avenue A and a home at 341 Beach Drive owned by Avrel Nudelman.

The duplex owned by Susan and Dan Calef was built in 1912 as a companion property to a larger home built by photographer William Montag. That property and the neighboring Renton Houses were scorched in a fire started by children playing with matches before being subsequently demolished, Susan Calef said.



Susan Calef

The lot has been vacant since about 2000.

The new hotel would limit her to "a little peek of a view," she said, and plans for the rear of the property have not been presented. "My brother said, 'You like the front and side of the elephant, but what's the back of it look like?'"

"We have been here long enough that we think of the larger buildings to our south as anomalies in a neighborhood of smaller buildings," Dan Calef said in an email. "We think of the condominium across from us as an enormous eyesore that ruins the small beach town feel of Seaside."

Nudelman, a 60-year Beach Drive resident, said the proposed building would eliminate his natural light and "change the enjoyment of my property."

In a letter to the Planning Commission, condominium owner Maureen Huntley said the variances would "greatly reduce the number of parking spaces required for a building with 50 planned rental units."

"It's too big a project for that piece of land," Seaside resident Debbie Brooks said. "Does the Planning Commission even look at the future of Seaside and what is the occupancy year-

round for these hotels that don't have people in them all year long? Is there really a need for this big monstrosity?"

By building within 8 feet of the Prom and within 3 feet of the southern property line, the proposed development would "greatly reduce visibility of buildings to the proposed hotel's south," especially the Promenade Condominiums, Huntley said. "We strongly oppose all of these planned variances and therefore request that all of the proposed variances be denied," she said.

Planning Director Kevin Cupples said the height variance would likely be granted because of the building's sunken grade. Maximum height of a building for the resort-residential zone is 45 feet, he said. Because the property is below grade, they sought a height variance of 7 feet bringing the structure to 52 feet at the penthouse level, he said.

The side yard setback requests 3-foot setbacks on the north and south property lines on the eastern portion of the building.

A hotel in that zone is a permitted use, he added.

Cupples said the Planning Commission will finalize their decision at the July 19 commission meeting. Residents have the option to appeal to the City Council.

"We have been approached, in the past, about whether we would sell our property," Dan Calef said. "We simply don't want to sell our family house. We don't want to own a unit in a condominium or part interest in a hotel. It is a very small piece of property and the fair value is probably well below the amount we would have to pay for another house that close to the beach."

At the June Planning Commission meeting, Simmons told commissioners the hotel was "a work in progress" and, "at best," they won't begin building until October 2017.

Relay: 19 teams participated in this year's event

Continued from Page 1A

He was seen at Oregon Health & Science University and treated with Gleevec, a drug that targets the disease at a cellular level. Wanting to give back to the cause, he donated bone marrow and blood for research and became the state lead for American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network during the organization's early years.

"I want to do anything I can for others to survive," he said, adding the hope is in 50 or so years, people will view cancer the same way they now do infections, which used to result in higher mortality rates.

For Linda Yeager, as a caregiver, support from friends, family and the community was "everything, because it's just an amazing journey to go through."

A portion of the funds raised through Relay are designated for cancer research to help find a cure and develop new therapies. The funds also go to support programs, resources for patients and caregivers, education and advocacy.

A 'common bond'

Since 1994, the countywide Relay For Life has taken place every year, although it alternates between Seaside and Astoria. The co-chairs this year were Brian Cole and Laura Parvi, whose father-in-law was the late Kay Bredeau, one of the founders that got Relay started in Clatsop County.

The reason many people value Relay and support it, according to Parvi, is because cancer touches almost everyone's life in some way.

"We all have that common bond... and we all want the same thing," she said, adding Relay brings people together over the mutual goal of seeking a cure.

During the event, which mostly took place outside on the high school's track and field, team members took turns walking and monitoring their booths, from which they sold coffee and snacks, gave attendees the chance to play bra pong or hosted other smaller fundraisers.

Participants tie-dyed shirts at Columbia Memorial Hospital's booth and learned about colon

cancer from Dr. Holly Barker at Providence Seaside Hospital's large inflatable Strollin' Colon. Astoria's Poshe Salon & Spa cut hair to be donated to Locks of Love. People could get swabbed and placed on the National Marrow Donor Program's registry. Several local bands and two from Portland provided live music throughout the day.

Cancer survivors, led by Grand Marshal Jane Johnson, and caregivers took the first lap around the track. Many of the subsequent laps were given themes, such as Pajama Party, Make Some Noise, Team Pride, Cake Walk and Tutu.

In honor of ...

During the late-night Luminaria Ceremony, which Parvi described as "the heart of the Relay," hundreds of bags lit from within by candles glowed in honor of lives touched by cancer. The ceremony was held inside because of the weather, but Parvi said the atmosphere still was touching and left an impression.

Friends and family dedicated

the luminaria bags to their loved ones — mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, friends and co-workers — who lost their lives to, survived or currently are battling cancer. Although marked by grief, the ceremony also was a time to celebrate those lives and nourish hope for the future.

Organizers intended for the event to continue throughout the night, with the luminaria providing light to guide walkers through the darkness, but decided to close down after the ceremony.

"We were just concerned for safety," Parvi said. During the day, though, she said, "it was nice people didn't give up because of the storm."

Overall, 19 teams participated in this year's Relay For Life, although not all showed up the day of the event. The approximately 230 team participants raised at least \$54,000 for the American Cancer Society. Money is still being received, Parvi said, and the teams have through August to continue fundraising.

Lawsuit: 'Counties gave up assets in exchange for promises'

Continued from Page 1A

Counties acquired these forest lands by foreclosing on property tax liens during the Great Depression but turned them over to state ownership in exchange for a portion of future logging revenues.

'Greatest permanent value'

Oregon's attorneys claim that Linn County cannot sue the state to receive compensation for breach of contract, and that the county's challenge to the "greatest permanent value" rule can only be heard by the Oregon Court of Appeals, rather than in a county court.

Because the lawsuit seeks to recover damages for insufficient logging in the future, it clearly intends to alter the meaning of "greatest permanent value," said Scott Kaplan, another attorney for the state.

Either the state changes its definition or it's potentially liable for hundreds of millions of dollars, he said.

"This is absolutely a challenge of state policies of forest

management," Kaplan said.

Linn County argued that contracts between the counties and the state government are enforceable.

"The counties gave up assets in exchange for promises," said John DiLorenzo, attorney for Linn County.

Counties would not have donated vast tracts of land if they'd known the state would change the terms of the deal at will, he said.

"We believe that's precisely what the state has done in this case," DiLorenzo said. "Counties must have a way to enforce their bargains."

Oregon Public Broadcasting reported Monday that the timber industry is financing the county's lawsuit. The Oregon Forest Industries Council, Hampton Tree Farm, Stimson Lumber Company and the Sustainable Forest Fund have paid nearly \$100,000 to cover the county's legal fees in the case and the group agreed to pay up to \$125,000, according to OPB, which cited court filings.

Clatsop County involved More than 650,000 acres

in Benton, Clackamas, Clatsop, Columbia, Coos, Douglas, Josephine, Klamath, Lane, Lincoln, Linn, Marion, Polk, Tillamook, and Washington counties were given to Oregon based on "promises and assurances" on which the state government has since fallen short, the lawsuit claims.

The law that lays out Oregon's forest management obligations was written when the United States was preparing to enter World War II and must be understood in that context, DiLorenzo said.

At the time, the greatest value of the land was to produce a large amount of timber for the war effort, rather than to preserve wildlife habitat or aesthetic beauty, DiLorenzo said.

Legal precedents also indicate that Oregon was obligated to maximize revenue from those lands, he said.

Several environmental and fishing organizations claim this interpretation is erroneous.

The optimum management of state forests was bound to be contentious and so that question was left to the discretion of the

Oregon Department of Forestry, said Ralph Bloemers, an attorney representing the groups.

"It's not up to the county, or the timber industry, or the conservation community, what that should be," he said.

There's also nothing in the law stating that revenues take priority over other uses, Bloemers said. "It continues to be a huge gaping hole in their complaint."

Class action

Linn County also argues the lawsuit should be certified as a class action, which would allow other counties to participate in the litigation.

There are numerous potential plaintiffs with common legal arguments that would be more efficiently resolved as part of a single case, Linn County claims.

The issue of class certification will be heard at another hearing that's scheduled for Aug. 17 in Albany.

The Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.

Brought to you by **NORTH COAST**

PIE WALK
4:30 & 6:30 PM

THURSDAYS
3-7 PM

FOOD WEB

RIVER PEOPLE

Food Only Market

FARMERS MARKET
EST 2011
ASTORIA, OR

Located at 12th & Exchange Street
Downtown Astoria

Meet Your Farmers
Weekly \$10 SNAP Match