

THE

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Water

under

the bridge



Compiled by Bob Duke

From the pages of Astoria's daily newspapers

10 years ago this week — 2006

Georgia-Pacific’s Wauna mill has been picked as the site of a new paper machine that will add dozens of new jobs to the facility, bringing some welcome news following the recent announcement of widespread layoffs.

Wauna won out against four other western Georgia-Pacific mills for the machine, which will produce paper towels for the company’s high-end brand lines such as Brawny.

As a visiting family peers in among the half-finished rooms of the new Fort Clatsop replica, Sean Johnson, clad in buckskin breeches and linen shirt like the original Corps of Discovery members he portrays, fetches some kid-sized Lewis and Clark clothes for the children to try on.

Many staff members at Lewis and Clark National Historical Park have years of experience at the local landmark. But Johnson can truthfully say his has been a lifelong “job.”

As the son of Curt Johnson, the park’s former chief interpreter, and Rosemary Johnson, a longtime park volunteer, Sean Johnson first greeted visitors as an infant, swaddled up American Indian-style like Jean Baptiste Charbonneau, the Corps of Discovery’s youngest member.

Next month, Johnson leaves the park and Clatsop County for a new adventure as a United States soldier. In two weeks, he trades the buckskin for olive drab as he enters basic training at Fort Knox, Ky.

“I’m definitely going to miss this place,” he said.

A pair of threatened western snowy plover chicks found in abandoned nests have been released back into the wild after the Oregon Coast Aquarium raised them to adulthood.

One was turned loose on the beach in Oregon near Florence, where it came from, and the other near Leadbetter Point in Washington, said aquarium spokeswoman Cindy Hanson.

50 years ago — 1966



Mayor Harry Steinbock and a Daily Astorian representative rode in the first clown car that followed the pilot car across the bridge. Behind the clown cars, the first private vehicle in line was a Washington-licensed car driven by Bill Campbell, Raymond Wash., with Mrs. Campbell.

Last chance for a ferry ride brought thousands of people to the area during the week preceding the bridge opening, July 24-28. Thursday, the final day for ferry runs, the ferries carried 952 vehicles and 5,596 passengers across the river, and the M.R. Chessman on its final trip was close to capacity with 445 passengers. Most of them rode across and back again, for a sentimental farewell journey.

“It was a busy day but there was no difficulty, although a lot of tears were shed,” one veteran ferryman commented.

Tourist I made its maiden run in May, 1921, carrying 14 automobiles. Capt. Fritz Elfving’s 25 years of Columbia River ferry business began with that trip.

**Build a bridge for \$6 million?**  
They could have done it in 1934, when Astorians first began to talk seriously about building the trans-Columbia bridge.

**But the bridge idea didn’t sell for a long time. Attempts at bridge planning were conducted in 1934, 1941 and 1944, but it wasn’t until 1953 that the ball really started rolling.**

Gov. Mark Hatfield today called President L.B. Johnson, informing him Russians had been seen in possession of salmon inside the 12-mile limit Saturday and urging him to seek “prompt remedial action.”

75 years ago — 1941

A lost battalion of hungry, cold, wet California infantry, members of the Blue defense army, made its way out of the Pacific County wilderness Tuesday after being lost since Sunday, third army headquarters announced.


The troopers trailed out of the deep timber, just as Major Gen. Joseph W. Stilwell, third army corps commander, had organized civilians and soldiers into a huge searching party to look for the missing men.

The men went into the woods Sunday with only two rations and were suffering from cold and exposure, aggravated by hunger when they escaped from the woods. The country in which they were lost lies on the headwaters of Deep River, and area is virtually untouched by loggers and known only to a few veteran woodsmen.


Justice William O. Douglas of the United States supreme court is the No. 1 entry in the Astoria Salmon Derby this year just as he was last year. He and his family are at present at Seaview as guests at the home of Emory Neil with whom the distinguished jurist went to college at Whitman.

OREGON FAIRY TALES

"...OUR ONLY HOPE AGAINST THE RAVAGING EVIL CORPORATIONS..."



"...OR ELSE THE WICKED LABOR UNIONS WOULD DESTROY ALL THAT IS HOLY..."



SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

On the Oregon road to California

By R.J. MARX  
The Daily Astorian

Summer vacation is something of an anomaly when you live in a vacation town. You are working in the community when everyone else is coming here for fun. It is a real-life Bizarro world and if you follow the logic, when you are on vacation, you should go someplace where everybody else is working.

But that wouldn’t be very much fun.

So that’s why we took a vacation to other places where people go to vacation.

Traveling with a dog — Lucy the min-pin — adds another layer. One hotel we stayed at made us sign a \$300 wee-wee clause. When you’re a dog owner you’ll sign anything.

First stop was Eugene, where we ate braised lamb and pita sandwiches at Albee’s NY Gyros and walked Lucy for hours before she emptied her bladder.

We lunched in Grants Pass, with its “caveman” motif (I still don’t know what that’s about) and main street banner reading “It’s the Climate,” hung in 1920, conceived and paid for by local road contractor John Hampshire.

We first visited Ashland in 1991 when it was a sleepy little village. It’s changed — today it is a mini-metropolis filled with beautiful homes, streets, stores, scenery, along with high fire risk and heat. No, we didn’t see a show. We worked to train Lucy to be a cafe dog, and she performed admirably, cozying under our feet as we sipped Americanos and read the Ashland Daily Tidings.

Cruising I-5

In Oregon you learn that if you’re going to travel I-5 to Cali, do it in the early morning or late afternoon when the heat moderates.

Oregonians warned us: “Vacationing to the state of California is known to cause cancer and birth defects or other reproductive harm.” But hey, there is life after Tom McCall. While we thought we might wilt along I-5 through Weed, Redding and Chico for Highway 20 to Mendocino.

Mendocino is a Sunset Magazine destination known far and wide for its sturdy headlands, swirling ocean waters and Andrew Wyeth homes. A getaway from urban life? Not always. A quarter-century later, we didn’t see any film trucks but every restaurant and cafe was packed, reservations mandatory. A cabin for rent in the center of town was the perfect place to bivouac, as Lucy enjoyed a private courtyard and we soaked in the hot tub.

Goodwill

Lucy was our goodwill ambassador wherever we went, though we kept a close hold on her leash as we strolled those daunting and dangerous cliffs with swirling waters hundreds of feet below, creating a dizzying Hitchcockian whirlpool missing only the Bernard Herrmann score.



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian

The imposing whirlpool of Mendocino’s coast.



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian  
Sculpture in Grants Pass celebrates Oregon tradition.

Mendocino is a portrait of a vacation town, replete with an international clientele, including two visitors from our old stomping grounds of New York City. They seemed baffled we had no itinerary — theirs was a winery visit, a garden tour and every potter along the coast.

We had been warned about the long distances from California to Oregon along Highway 101, but it was something we had to experience. We spent a tiring but glorious day trundling up the coast, bypassing Eureka, Crescent City and Trinidad as we headed north. Bandon, Coos Bay, Pacific City, Bay City — all went by faster than you can say “beach bill.”

By end of day we pulled into the Best Western and signed our promises to keep Lucy well behaved or else. Florence is a wonderful small city with boats and bars and a Bay Depot — we were advised to make reservations months ago, and we did — and returned back to the hotel to either watch the tail end of the Democratic convention or “The Real Housewives of Melbourne,” I’m not sure which.

Back home

My takeaway was a perspective on where we live — the South County, Seaside, Cannon Beach and Gearhart.



R.J. Marx/The Daily Astorian  
What you do when traveling with a dog in Florence.

On my return, standing in a long line at the Pacific Way, I didn’t think, “I wish this line would hurry up, grrr, c’mon.” Instead I waited patiently. Another peculiar local experience I’ve come to enjoy: stopping the car in the middle of the road and chatting with pedestrians through the window. I think they call that “tarrying.”

My wife considered it the ultimate victory when I returned to Gearhart and accidentally left my cellphone at home.

I understand why some people would go on vacation when all the others come to town. And maybe it does make sense to go into the city when it’s a hot weekend and everybody else is at the beach. You might be able to elbow some of those out-of-towners in Portland off the line at some of the city’s trendier restaurants. You might be able to have a quiet night without firecrackers, surreys and surging crowds.

With Hood to Coast around the corner, we’ll just blend in with a nod and a wink. We’re getting our summer vacation right where we live, Fido by our side.

R.J. Marx is The Daily Astorian’s South County reporter and editor of the Seaside Signal and Cannon Beach Gazette.