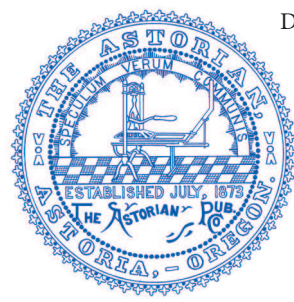


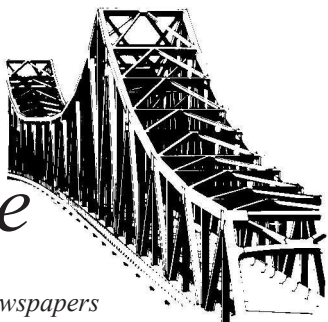
# THE DAILY ASTORIAN

Founded in 1873



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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

Radar and GPS locators have replaced whale-oil lamps, but the Cape Disappointment Lighthouse still shines its red-and-white beacon across the mouth of the Columbia River.

About 90 people braved Sunday's blustery weather to enjoy a rare opportunity to tour inside the coastal landmark, part of a weekend-long celebration at Cape Disappointment State Park commemorating the lighthouse's 150th anniversary.

The milestone came as the famous sentinel is about to change hands from the U.S. Coast Guard to the park.

They line the port side balconies, leaning on the rails as longshoremen secure the Celebrity's cruise ship, the Mercury, to Pier 1 in Astoria Monday.

They wait as U.S. immigration officers secure the doors, the captain lowers a ramp to the dock and the bar pilot disembarks.

Then, they're here. For one day only, the 1,870 cruise passengers, plus about 900 crew members, pile into the river-front trolley and shuttle buses and crowd into shops, museums, restaurants and beaches on the North Coast.

Clatsop County officials announced Wednesday they are negotiating with Costco for the purchase of property in Warrenton on U.S. Highway 101.

The proposed deal, the source of rumors for the past several months, involves 75 acres in the county's North Coast Business Park, which the company is seeking for the construction of a new, bigger store.

Northern Star natural Gas Co. delivered the news by way of a 200-page public document. Its proposed liquefied natural gas terminal at Bradwood Landing is "likely to adversely affect" endangered species of chinook, chum and steelhead salmon, and their habitat.

### 50 years ago — 1966

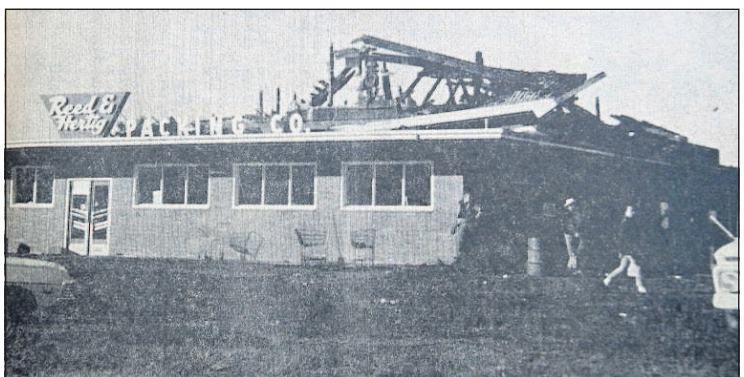
Workers returned to the construction project at the Crown-Zellerbach's Wauna mill Monday morning after not reporting for work the last three days of last week.

Pipefitters and sympathizing electricians stayed off the job because of what they termed improper discharge.

**NEWPORT** — A rash of unidentified flying object reports in this area during the past several months had both believers and skeptics today.

The reports, as recent as three days ago, included unexplained sightings ranging from spaceship-like craft to doughnut-shaped pulsating lights.

Fire destroyed the Reed and Hertig Meat Packing company plant on Clatsop Plains Friday night in what police called a robbery-arson case. Owners Robert Reed and Carl Hertig told police about \$5,000 in checks and cash was missing from a tin box in the cold-storage vault.



Almost the entire center of Reed and Hertig Packing plant on Clatsop Plains was destroyed by fire. Only part not burned can be seen above.

Construction of the Astoria Bridge is very close to being finished, project engineer Robert Cunningham of Oregon Highway department reported Wednesday.

When the bridge was opened to traffic more than two months ago, considerable finishing-up work remained to be done.

### 75 years ago — 1941

Tourist travel still has its assured place in the national picture despite the defense emergency and the Oregon coast country should reap its share of this business during the whole emergency period, Governor Charles Sprague told 150 members and guests of the Oregon Coast Highway association at a convention banquet Monday night.

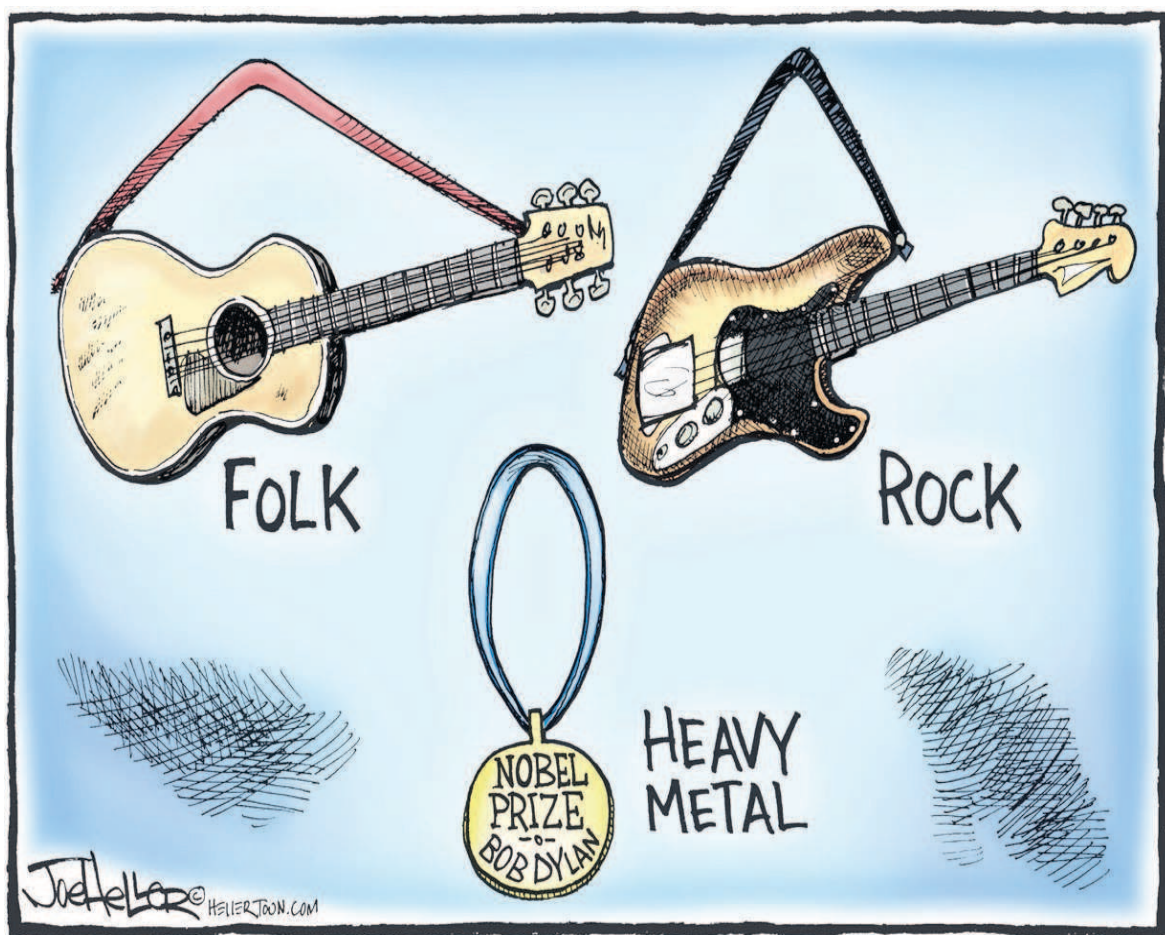
"There is no priority on scenery," the governor said. "The coast highway is here and it will be maintained. You folks here on the coast will still be able to attract people to your matchless scenery."

Clatsop County's production goals for the 1942 farm defense program, calling chiefly for increase in dairy and poultry products, were established and approved by the county USDA agricultural defense board at an all-day meeting Tuesday.

A mysterious and unfragrant aroma pervaded much of western Clatsop County Wednesday night and Thursday, but no one seemed to know what caused it.

Reports of the strange smell, which smellers thought came from all sorts of sources — from "something dead," to the pilchard reduction plants on the Columbia River — ranged from Cannon Beach to Fort Stevens.

The odor seemed to come from the sea, as reports told of diminishing strength going inland.



### SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

## Cuddler's tsunami survival tips include getting a good, long hug

By R.J. MARX  
*The Daily Astorian*

**SEASIDE** — Where do you start, with the tsunami or with the cuddling?

Seaside native Cameron McKirdy is dedicated to the welfare of his fellow human beings. He's the founder of a quirky survival website. Now he's cuddling strangers. My thought is that he wisely realizes after a catastrophe we're going to need all the emotional support we can get.

McKirdy, 32, lives in his Chevy G20 Van — something you can observe on YouTube, where the "vandwelling experience" is one of 281 videos on his channel. He's so successful at drawing web traffic that YouTube sends him checks.

"YouTube is where it's at," McKirdy said. "I have about 6,000 YouTube subscribers on the Survival Bros. channel. It's not really anything to brag about right now, but it should be a source of income in the future."

McKirdy's creative roots began in Seaside. As an eighth-grader at Broadway Middle School, McKirdy and classmate Kevin Irish co-wrote a column, "Shark Bytes," for the Seaside Signal. His father Kelly McKirdy taught history in the Seaside School District and mom Brooke worked for the hospital and as a wedding coordinator. Younger brother Andrew works for an adventure travel company in Seattle and still teams with Cam on special projects, like hot-dog eating contests. The McKirdy brothers were the only siblings on Major League Eating's "Top 50 gurgitators rankings."

"My parents think it's pretty crazy," he said. "Everybody wants me to jump back in line in society and get a job."

#### Ready for anything

Along with survival and prepping tips, McKirdy's Survival Bros. YouTube channel offers advice on how to get free dog food for your pet or locate treasures at the Goodwill store — a technique he calls "extreme thrifting." In one video, he noshes on 26 sample items at Costco.

If you're tired of standard cable fare, consider McKirdy's "Trying fresh elk jerky meat at the beach in Seaside, Oregon," "Using Altoids survival tins for emergency preparedness" and "Breaking car windows with the Gerber LMF II-Knife."

"I'm trying to help people get prepared," McKirdy said.

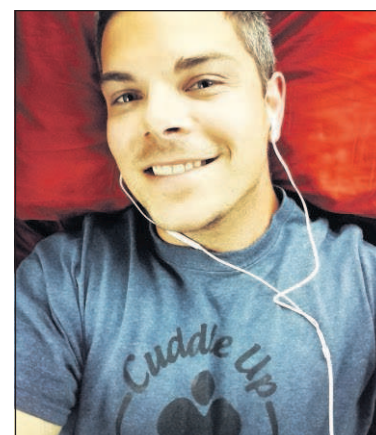
Saving people is all in the preparation, he said. "Tsunami preparation and awareness now — that's how we can save people when it happens."

McKirdy considers the 2011 Japanese tsunami a precursor of what could happen here. "We've only got a couple days to get it together," McKirdy said. "Then people will be charging \$50 for a gallon of water and trading and bartering and wheeling and dealing. If you don't get prepared, then it's going to be hell."

McKirdy offers tips on building tarp shelters and using UV-light



R.J. Marx gets a hug from Cam McKirdy in the Seaside Signal office.



Submitted Photo  
 Cameron McKirdy, aka "Cam the Cuddler."



Submitted photo  
 Rick McCrank of ViceTV gets a hug from cuddler Cameron McKirdy.

purifiers to provide potable drinking water. "It takes 90 seconds to purify it with a wand," he said. "I even have a hand-crank UV-light purifier."

The single most important item in an environmental catastrophe, McKirdy said, is a stainless-steel water bottle for holding water and cooking. "Stainless steel is top on the list."

If the ground started to shake "right this minute," he said, his bug-out bike is ready to roll. "I'd be going straight up 12th. Hit the road and take off."

#### Cuddle Up to Me

There's another side to McKirdy as "Cam the Cuddler," who may be found offering hugs on the Prom for a suggested \$5 gratuity. His cuddling career took a giant step when he earned "certified cuddler" accreditation at the world-renowned Cuddle Up to Me in Portland. He's been cuddling for the last year.

"I'm trying to get my face out there," McKirdy said. "The cuddling is paying a little bit of the bills. I like it. It's a blast."

McKirdy works for Samantha Hess, founder of Cuddle Up to Me. He's the only male in the house, offering, according to the website, "a kind and gentle soul with an open ear and an embrace that will melt your troubles away. Your session will surely cure what ails you."

Here is an interesting hook:

You can play video games while cuddling with Cameron.

"We do free consultations first, and we make sure they know there's nothing sexual about it," he said. "I want everyone to know they are appreciated, and worthy of touch."

McKirdy called the experience "touch positive." Among his clients are introverts, extroverts, people with disabilities and health care professionals, he said. "You really have to tailor a cuddling session based on the individual," he said.

"I did overnight cuddling with a lady who was in an abusive relationship," McKirdy said. "I helped her start dating again after two years. There are others who haven't been touched by a man for over 25 years. I get them used to that concept again and they know I'm a safe person."

Clients become members of his "chosen family." Cost is \$1 a minute.

Considering the crazy, insecure and perilous world in which we live, McKirdy aka Cam the Cuddler may be on the right track. He has his eye on Mother Nature and an embrace for his fellow man.

There could be a day when we need all those hugs. And the hand-cranked water purifiers could come in handy, too.

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