

THREE IS NOT A CROWD



The Koski family got a pre-Halloween treat several decades ago. "My sisters made Astoria history in 1946, because they were the first triplets born in Astoria, "older sister and mother hen" Diane (Koski) Schell, now living in Eugene, proclaimed to the Ear. The triplets, pictured in a 2011 photo, from left, are Carla Lyn Hansen, Cathy Lee Shoel and Carol Lou Hurd.

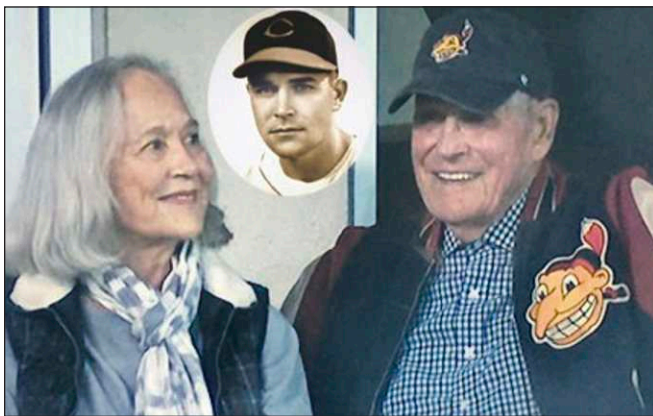
The family originally came from Finland, and the sisters are third-generation Astorians. When the X-ray taken of Doris (Osmus) Koski's baby bump at the local doctor's office showed three heads, not one, she was afraid to tell her husband, Toivo "Ed" Koski, a teller at Wells Fargo Bank. Hopefully, he had time to recover from the shock before the girls arrived Oct. 29, 1946.

The girls were a novelty in town, and everywhere else, for that matter. Triplets, conceived naturally and without fertility treatments, are a true rarity. A story in The Daily Mail proclaims that the chances are one in 8,000 to have triplets at all, but the chances that all three are identical are anywhere from one in 60,000 to one in 200 million (<http://tinyurl.com/koskitrip>). Nobody seems to know the actual figure, apparently.

On their second birthday, the Koski triplets joined triplet heifers, Anna Mae, Anna Lou and Annabelle, who were born at a farmhouse "that sits way back on Youngs Bay" for a group photo, Diane recalled. Photographers came all the way from Finland to get the shot.

The four sisters are close to this day, and Diane, still the mother hen, called recently to remind the Ear that Astoria's very own triplets just had their 70th birthday. So here you go, Diane: Happy Birthday, ladies!

NO COMPARISON



"This is the dad of my good friend and neighbor, Eddie Robinson," Astorian Dave Kinney wrote, describing his TV screen shot (shown) of the older Eddie Robinson, 95, and his wife, Bette, in the stands watching the sixth game of the World Series — Chicago Cubs vs. Cleveland Indians — on Tuesday night.

The camera panned to Robinson because the former first baseman is the last surviving member of the Cleveland Indians 1948 World Series championship team. (Slight digression: It was the first World Series televised on a nationwide network, according to Mr. Wikipedia.) He is also the oldest living New York Yankee, and was there at Yankee Stadium for Babe Ruth's farewell appearance (<http://tinyurl.com/edrobny>).

When asked if there is any comparison between this year's Indians team and his, he said there was none. "Baseball was played differently in '48," he told CBS News (<http://tinyurl.com/edrob48>), "and it's really hard to try to draw a parallel between baseball as it's played today and baseball as it was played back then."

DOTTED LINES

Astoria writer Jim Dott (www.jamesdott.com), author of "A Glossary of Memory," proclaims that his first love is poetry, so it's not surprising that he went all out and participated in the October 30/30 Project.

That meant he had to write 30 poems in 30 days and raise funds to support the efforts of the non-profit Tupelo Press, which primarily publishes poetry. Yes, he finished all 30 poems, and is grateful to his local supporters. You can read the results of his efforts at <http://tinyurl.com/dott3030>

So how did he do it? "I thought it might be a challenge to come up with a topic each day, but the change of seasons, the weather, and current and past events kept the ideas coming," Jim explained. "Being retired allowed me the time to create without too much stress. When I was running short of ideas near the end of the month, I got some help from friends who gave me some excellent suggestions."



In One Ear



by Elleda Wilson

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JAIL TALE



From The Daily Morning Astorian, Sunday, Nov. 6, 1898, about the Clatsop County Jail. Pictured, courtesy of the Oregon Judicial Department (<http://tinyurl.com/courthist>), the original wooden courthouse in Astoria, (pictured circa 1893). The current one was built at the same location in 1904. The old jail, torn down in 1913, is at left. Here's the story:

... There is an air of repose discernable among all of Jailer Binder's boarders, and the interior of the building is scrupulously clean. The most interesting spot, perhaps, inside the old building is the room on the left as one enters the outer hall. Hanging on the wall is a manila rope which swung Hansen into eternity.

Hansen was hanged in the courthouse yard about five years ago for the murder of his wife, near Bear Creek. The leaden weights used on Hansen's feet and the electric button which gave the signal that launched him into the great unknown hang beside it. In this room are stowed away the effects of several unfortunates that are now confined or have died in the state insane asylum.

Among the four prisoners is ... Wm. Henry, who is serving a sentence of six months for petty larceny (and) employs his time in making fancy baskets. This is the principal occupation of the prisoners confined in the jail for any length of time. Zulovich, who was taken to the penitentiary to serve a year's sentence for manslaughter, taught Henry the art, Zulovich himself being taught by a prisoner whose sentence expired some time before.

... (Prisoner) Jones served a sentence previously for (petty) larceny, and on the day he was liberated, stole an overcoat and a pair of shoes from two different parties ... He is a desperate crook and no chances are taken with him by Jailer Binder.

RIDING THE KATY TRAIL



"We like to think of Clatsop County as the center of the Lewis and Clark journey on the Columbia River, but there is another part of their river trail that is surprisingly easy to access," Astoria cyclist Peter Marsh (pictured, inset) told the Ear after the completion of his recent 1,100 mile ride from Virginia to Kansas City.

"On the last leg across Missouri, I followed the Katy Trail State Park — a rail to trail conversion on a line that runs 237 miles west from St. Louis along the bank of the Missouri River," he explained, noting that "the Lewis and Clark Museum and Boathouse in St. Charles, a suburb of St. Louis, is a treasure trove of information and activities, and the base of the official re-enactors and their replica boats.

"For over 100 miles west to Boonville, the line has been designated as an official segment of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. The story of their epic journey is well told with informational signs marking every single night they camped on the arduous outward journey, and large maps at the new station/rest areas." His photo of a railroad bridge on the trail is shown.

"Looking down on the swiftly-running river," he recalled, "it's hard to imagine how anyone could navigate a heavily-loaded 55-foot keelboat upstream among the sandbars using only oars, poles and towropes that led to the muddy bank."

Well, riding a bicycle 1,100 miles is no small feat, either.

FRAZILED



The Internet has been afire with reports of a Loch Ness-type sea monster in Fairbanks, Alaska, all because of a video taken on the Chena River by Craig McCaa of an icy object that was moving back and forth in the current.

With over 900,000 views of the video on the Bureau of Land Management - Alaska Facebook page (a screen shot is shown), speculation ran wild. Monster? Greenland shark? What?

A rather prosaic answer was provided to the Alaska Dispatch News by Alaska Department of Fish and Game Tanana River Management Biologist Klaus Wuttig (<http://tinyurl.com/icebeast>). He said it was probably just a rope, stuck to the pier, that had become covered with frazil ice (slush that forms in water), causing it to come to the surface and float. Whatever it was, a thaw made it disappear. No more monster.

'PACKED POWDER'



Blind Pilot's new video, "Packed Powder" (from the new album "And Then Like Lions") popped up in a strange place on Halloween Day — in the Wall Street Journal's In Speakeasy/New Music blog section (<http://tinyurl.com/BP-wsjblog>), which is now behind a paywall. But never fear, you can also see it on Blind Pilot's Facebook page, or at <http://tinyurl.com/BP-powder>

In the video, lead singer Israel Nebeker has a romp around Astoria, with scenes shot inside Deja Vu and the Astoria Market. Even the Glam Tram gets a nod, as does the Oysterville (Washington) Church, and let's not forget the fireworks. The band even plays and sings on a small boat on the Columbia River, surrounded by synchronized swimmers. (A screen shot from the video is shown to prove it.)

"The song idea came from my teenage years," Israel told WSJ, "when my friends and I would take apart fireworks and repack them to make them more exciting."

ON THE BALL



What could be more appropriate for World Tsunami Awareness Day on Saturday than an update on Julian Sharpe's life-saving device, the Survival Capsule, aka the tsunami ball? After six years the Mukilteo, Washington-based engineer's invention is ready for production, according to a recent KIRO7 report (<http://tinyurl.com/capready>).

The Survival Capsule can be tethered to the ground so it can rise and fall on the wave's surface, or it can be put on top of a building to float off if the water comes up that high. Designed to deal with heavy impacts and fire, the capsule comes in several models that can accommodate 2, 4, 6, 8 or 10 occupants.

"We hope to start selling officially in Japan in the first half of next year," Sharpe told KIRO7. "As far as the domestic market is concerned, we have decided to launch the two-person capsule next month officially." And where will the very first U.S. Survival Capsule be installed? Long Beach, Washington.

Thinking of buying one? You can pre-order at <http://survival-capsule.com>, but they aren't cheap. A two-person model (pictured, from Sharpe's website) is between \$13,000 and \$15,000, depending on how many extra features and amenities you want.




"It's not anywhere near as expensive as building vertical evacuation tower facilities on the ocean, which are fixed solutions," Sharpe explained. "And let's face it, fixed solutions can be over-run (with water)."



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