

CHARLIE SAVES THE DAY



First ran Jan. 10, 2014: “A heavenly gift for Christmas” is what Jim Culp Sr. of Warrenton says his dog, Charlie, gave him this holiday season.

“Around 4:30 a.m. on Christmas Eve,” Jim recalled, “I was awakened by the lack of being able to breathe. Even though I had my oxygen machine on, I still could not breathe. I thought I was going to suffocate.

“Suddenly my miniature long-haired Dachshund, who is a little over 1 year old and very rare cream color, jumped up on my chest and put his nose right on mine. After a second or two he started to cough, and jumped down on the floor and coughed up a small wad of phlegm. Instantly I could breathe again.”

“That was one of the weirdest things I’ve ever seen in my whole life,” Jim’s wife, Elsie, declared. “If I hadn’t seen it with my own eyes, I wouldn’t have believed it.”

“I truly believe he was a gift from God to look after me,” Jim observed, and with good reason. After the incident, Charlie, who sleeps at the foot of the bed, now comes up to Jim’s face every morning to be sure he’s awake and OK.

“I also thank the Lord for another day,” Jim added. “I had a wonderful Christmas with my hero. I believe he saved my life. What a miracle.”

1905 SEASON’S MUSINGS



Little morsels from *The Morning Astorian*, Sunday, Dec. 24, 1905:

- Celebrated stoves and ranges — The Zenith and The Star. Every one guaranteed. Will let you stand or sit on the oven door if you wish. — W. J. Scully, 470-472 Commercial St.

- The only way the stricken Clatsop turkey can work his reprisals at this season of the year is to set up a good, hard case of indigestion.

- To be sued, held up, divorced, maimed, arrested, swindled, whipped, defeated, outclassed and rejected on Christmas Day comes easier than any time. It lends a sanctity to adversity and makes it more “com’fy” like.

- Never mind that green neck-wear with the amber spots on it your wife will give you tomorrow. You can pass it up to the hired man the first time she goes away on a trip. And as for those cigars, just quietly slip them down to the quarantine station, where they will take high rank among the disinfectants.

- Keep perfectly quiet. The sun may shine tomorrow.

DOUBT NO MORE



Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. And now, for the doubting Thomas and Thomasina in your household, there is a video, “The Science of Santa: Scientific Proof That Santa Exists” (<http://tinyurl.com/yupsanta>) that might make them believers.

For example: Santa is computer/Internet savvy, creates rips in time and space to go that 175 million miles Christmas Eve, and carries a nano-toymaking sack that creates toys out of chimney carbon to avoid lugging over 600 million pounds of toys. The Ear is uncertain how all these wonders coordinate with NORAD tracking, but will leave that mystery for greater minds to ponder.

In the meantime, the Ear is really quite relieved just to know Santa exists. Aren’t you?

In One Ear



by Elleda Wilson

ewilson@dailyastorian.com (503) 325-3211, ext. 257

SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN

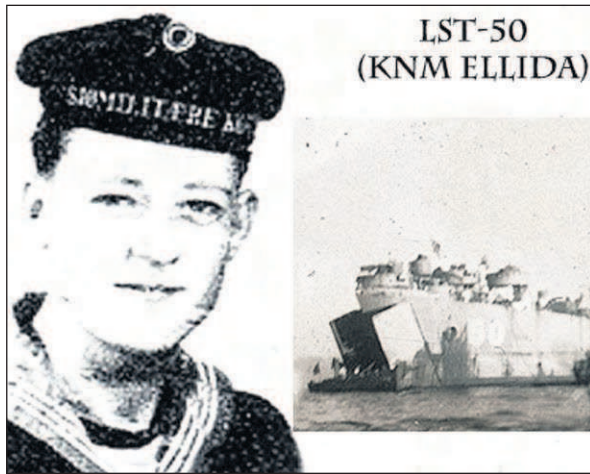


Where’s Santa? The North American Air Defense Command (NORAD) knows, and you can track him tomorrow night, too, on their website, www.noradsanta.org (which also has Christmas music performed by the U.S. Air Force Academy Band, videos and other goodies).

Ever wonder how NORAD got involved with Santa tracking? From the website: “The tradition began in 1955 after a Colorado Springs-based Sears Roebuck & Co. advertisement misprinted the telephone number for children to call Santa. Instead of reaching Santa, the phone number put kids through to the CONAD Commander-in-Chief’s operations ‘hotline.’ The director of operations at the time, Col. Harry Shoup, had his staff check the radar for indications of Santa making his way south from the North Pole. Children who called were given updates on his location, and a tradition was born.”

So, how does NORAD track Santa (and yes, there’s an app for that)? Rudolph’s bright red nose gives off an infra-red signature, which allows NORAD satellites to detect the location of Santa’s sleigh. Now you know.

DO YOU REMEMBER SVERRE?



LST-50
(KNM ELLIDA)

The Ear is going to be on Santa’s naughty list for this gaffe: More than year ago, Norwegian Sverre Holth sent in a letter, which somehow got buried in a pile on the Ear’s desk. Heavy sigh.

“In the year of 1952, I was one of the crew who was set to sail the warship *Ellida* to Norway,” Sverre wrote. He was a petty officer in the Kongelig Norske Marine (Royal Norwegian Navy) at the time. “We took over the ship in Bremerton about November 1952, and departed for San Diego in December, due in the time before Christmas.” But they ran into trouble off Astoria in high seas and a storm, and were taking on water, so they headed to Astoria for help.

“We had a very good time in your town, and we made a lot of friends,” he continued. “Sverre J. Halsan was one of the friends, and we were invited by his wife to come to their home for Christmas Eve. It was great!” The Halsans lived on 15th Street at the time.

Sverre (who is pictured, as he looked then) wonders if anyone in Astoria remembers their visit, so many years ago. If so, please contact the Ear at 503-325-3211, ext. 257, or ewilson@dailyastorian.com

For you naval history fans, according to NavSource.org (<http://tinyurl.com/KNMellida>), the KNM *Ellida* started out as the USS *LST-50*, which earned three battle stars during World War II (one of her assignments being the Invasion of Normandy). After the war and occupation service, the ship was decommissioned, used for shipping, and renamed; then redesignated again as ARB-13 in November 1952, and transferred to Norway — at which point she became the KNM *Ellida*.

In 1960, the *Ellida* was returned to the U.S., then transferred to Greece the same year and renamed HNS *Sakipis*. As a sad final note, the source states: “Final disposition, fate unknown.”

On a happier note, hopefully someone remembers Sverre Holth.

BESSIE’S CHRISTMAS WISH

Last year, a little too late for Christmas, Tony Johnson of the Chinook Tribal Nation sent the Ear a story about 6-year-old Bessie George’s first Christmas at the Cushman Indian Boarding School in Tacoma, Washington, in 1906. The story first appeared in a 2003 edition of the *Tilixam*, the tribal newsletter.



Bessie, who had recently lost her mother, also dearly missed her father, relatives and friends in the Chinook village of Bay Center, Washington. She’d had a tough year, and adjusting to the new school had been difficult — especially since when she arrived the only English words she knew were “neh” and “yeh” — so she was excited that Christmas was coming.

“Bessie listened, entranced, as older children talked about the large decorated tree they would have, its branches weighed down with the presents now arriving for everyone,” the story goes. “Well, almost everyone. There were ugly whispers that some children received only one gift, a gift from the school: a ribbon for the girls, a handkerchief for the boys. But Bessie’s haunting doubt was changed to happy anticipation at the sight of the glorious tree with gifts enough, surely, for every child.

“There were so many dolls and bright, interesting toys. Her eyes took in the dolls of all sizes. Each was so pretty; which one would be hers? Did she dare dream it would be the one in red velvet? That dream turned to dust for lonely Bessie when she was presented the dreaded gift of a hair ribbon. Sensing Bessie’s agony, another girl placed one of her own dolls in Bessie’s empty arms. She then invited little Bessie to help carry her other gifts to their room.

“Disappointment and loss leave lesser people bitter, and full of self-pity. Fine people become more aware of the feelings of others, and so it was with Bessie George Pickernell. Her pleasure, for the rest of her days, was to provide dolls and toys for small children.”

HE KNOWS WHO’S NAUGHTY

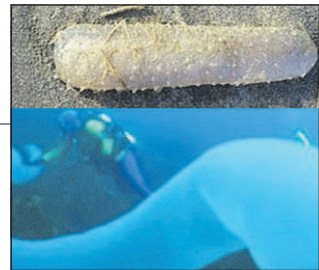


The Ear is very glad that as a child nobody mentioned **Krampus**, as he would have scared the twizzlers out of her. In case you don’t know, half-man half-beast Krampus is rather like Santa’s (St. Nicholas) demonic alter ego. The two travel together from house to house, and while kindly Santa rewards children who are nice, devil Krampus attends to the naughty ones — we aren’t talking about coal in the Christmas stocking, here — and it ain’t pretty. Pictured, Krampus frolicking with some children. This may not end well.

Mr. Wikipedia says Krampus is from the folklore of the Alpine countries, and is sometimes thought to be the son of Hel in Norse mythology (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Krampus>). Whoever he is, now that we know about him, it behooves us to behave. Or else.

FLASHY VISITORS

The ocean has been offering up a unique holiday gift in the form of rare critters (for this neck of the woods) that have been washing up on local beaches since November: **Pyrosomes**. **Janelle Hux**’s photo of one she found on Benson Beach this week is shown. The “finger” is actually a colony of hundreds, or thousands, of tiny individuals called zooids.



According to the Marine Education Society of Australasia (<http://tinyurl.com/pyrocritter>), the colonies range in size from less than a half inch to several yards in length. “Each zooid draws in water from the outside to its internal filtering mesh, extracting the microscopic plankton, and then expels the filtered water to the inside of the cylinder of the colony.” Their movement is largely controlled by tides, waves and currents.

Tiffany Boothe, of the **Seaside Aquarium**, noted that pyrosomes are usually found in temperate waters below 800 feet, and are “known for bright displays of bioluminescences,” flashing a highly visible pale blue-green light — hence their name, pyro (fire) and soma (body).

The little guys we are finding here are in the same family as the **Giant Pyrosome** (pictured courtesy of www.eaglehawk-dive.com.au), which is downright creepy looking and can reach lengths of 60 feet or more — and will hopefully stay where it belongs, near Australia.

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.

Spinning Circle — 1 to 3 p.m., Astoria Fiber Arts Academy, 1296 Duane St. Bring a spinning wheel. For information, call 503-325-5598 or go to <http://astoriafiberarts.com>

SUNDAY — CHRISTMAS DAY
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 — No lunch is being served today.

Columbia Senior Dinners — No lunch is being served today.

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.

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.

Senior Lunch — 11:30 a.m., Bob Chisholm Senior Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside. Suggested donation of \$3 for those older than 60; \$6.75 for those younger than 60. For information, call Michelle Lewis at 503-861-4200.

Columbia Senior Dinners — 11:30 a.m., 1111 Exchange St. The cost is \$6. 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.

Astoria-Warrenton Duplicate Bridge Club — 12:30 to 4 p.m., Astoria Senior Center, 1111 Exchange St. Anyone may play if they have a partner; to request a bridge partner, call 503-325-0029.

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

North Coast Chorale Practice — 6:45 to 9 p.m., Performing Arts Center, 588 16th St. New members welcome. For information, call 503-791-5681 or 503-338-8403.

Authentic Spiritual Conversations — 7 to 8:30 p.m., 2021 Marine Drive. Exploring spiritual questions, doubts, practices, longings. Group supports participants in sharing their own understanding and putting their spiritual values into practice. All faiths, including “spiritual but not religious” welcome. For information, email info@cgifellowship.org or call 916-307-9790.

WEDNESDAY
Chair Exercises for Seniors

— 9 to 9:45 a.m., Astoria Senior Center, 1111 Exchange St. For information, call 503-325-3231.

Help Ending Abusive Relationship Tendencies — 10 to 11:30 a.m., The Harbor, 1361 Duane St. HEART covers subjects related to the effects of domestic violence on children, parents and other family members, dynamics of power and control, and how to recognize red flags. For anyone in an abusive relationship, or who knows someone who is. Call Juli Hol to reserve a spot at 503-325-3426, ext. 103.

Open Sewing Gathering — 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Homespun Quilts, 108 10th St. For information,

See NOTES, Page 2B