



George Vetter/For The Daily Astorian
Gary and Melodie Chenevert's home at 3285 S. Hemlock St. in Cannon Beach celebrates the Humbugs.

GUEST COLUMN

Ahhh ... Humbug!

Humbugs actually love Christmas

By MELODIE CHENEVERT
For The Daily Astorian

Ebenezer Scrooge, a miserly curmudgeon who hated Christmas, said “Bah! Humbug!” He became famous and so did that phrase. Today no one says “humbug” without “bah!”

How would that make you feel if you were a Humbug?

Sad. That’s how you’d feel because Humbugs actually love Christmas. Their favorite carol is “Oh, Hum All Ye Faithful.”

I first met the Humbugs in 1984. We lived in Kennewick, Washington, in a house built in 1908. I was trying to think of a unique way to decorate that big house when a tiny voice whispered, “Humbug.” It made me smile. The problem was I had never seen a Humbug. No one had. As I wondered what they looked like, that tiny voice said:

*“We come in colors like you do
“But brighter — red and green and blue.
“Of course we can be tickled pink
“And some have polka dots that blink.”*

Every Christmas for the next 32 years, no matter where we lived, the Humbugs visited us. From Washington state to Gaithersburg, Maryland, and finally, to Cannon Beach. Right now you can see them at 3285 S. Hemlock St.

Of course, real Humbugs are not 6-feet tall. They are so tiny that several can fit inside your inner ear. That’s where they live and work. They have a big job. They are responsible for all the humming in the universe.

Meet the Humbugs
Would you like to meet them? Here they are:
Humdinger: anything that makes you tap your toes and clap your hands.
HoHum: mostly lullabies, but also sappy love songs.
Humdrum: every catchy commercial jingle, and he wrote the theme for “Jeopardy.”
Humperdinck: opera snippets and classical outbursts.
Humphrey: a free-range hummer. He says it’s jazz, but

sometimes we think he just can’t find the melody.
Humbugs have a great sense of humor. What’s their favorite bird? The hummingbird. Favorite nursery rhyme? Humpty Dumpty. Favorite author? Ernest Hemingway. Favorite food? Hamburgers and fries. And for dessert? Humble pies (no upper crust, just pudding on graham cracker dust).

Always in rhyme
Since Humbugs know firsthand how hurtful words can be, they rarely use words. But when they do, their words always have rhythm or rhyme. Frankly, they find words very confusing.
This is just part of the list they gave me:
Like tied and tide or sale and sail.
Or right and write or pale and pail.
Like clothes and close or eight and ate.
Or ant and aunt or weight and wait.
Like flower and flour or bear and bare.
Or bowled and bold or hair and hare.

Humming along
People are always misspelling and mispronouncing words. Humbugs’ pet peeve is the word “human.” It is NOT pronounced “hue-man.” The correct pronunciation is “hum-in.”

*“We hum in you. It’s what we do.
“For us you’re merely transportation
“To every hemisphere and nation.
“From Planet Earth to outer space
“Together we hum everywhere!”*

They think the world would be a happier, healthier place if people did less talking and more humming. Hum if you agree.
If you want to see them for yourself, you’ll have to hurry. By the end of the year, they’ll disappear, but they won’t really be gone. Even though you won’t be able to see them again until next Christmas, you will still be able to hear them. And whenever you hear someone hum, they hope you will smile and say, “Ahhh ... Humbug!”
PS: On Jan. 1, the Humbug House will revert to being the home of Gary and Melodie Chenevert and the Lost Art of Nursing Museum.

Columbia-Pacific



The Astoria Column stands illuminated by strings of multi-colored lights at dusk.



Every year during the holiday season, a giant, lighted sea serpent roams downtown Long Beach, Wash.



Seaside's Christmas tree has large bulb lights that flash along with prerecorded music that plays from the base.



The Warren House at 107 N.E. Skipanon Drive in Warrenton features a large lights display that is synchronized with music broadcasting from the house. The show runs from 4:30 to 10 p.m. nightly until Jan. 1.

Wishing You and Yours a

Very Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

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