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# COMMUNITY

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IN ONE EAR • ELLEDA WILSON

## DON'T TOUCH!



**I**n Oregon, the breeding season for harbor seals begins in mid-April, which corresponds with the season's first harbor seal pups showing up on Oregon's beaches," a press release from the Seaside Aquarium says.

"The pups weigh about 25 pounds at birth, but they grow quickly, doubling their weight within the first month. The mother's milk is about 40 percent fat, so she must forage for food as often as possible to keep her energy up and provide for her pup." A pup is pictured, courtesy of SeasideAquarium/TiffanyBoothe.

The problem that arises is that while the mother is off looking for food, the pup just rests and waits for her on the beach. People walking by might think the pup has been abandoned, but really, he hasn't been, at all. Mom is probably quite close by, although likely not visible. If the pup is moved, it will not be able to reunite with its mother. So **leave those pups alone** (and that means keeping your dogs and kids away from them, too), and give them lots of room. You're not doing them any favors by interfering. If you really want to help, and you're on the North Coast, call the Seaside Aquarium at 503-738-6211 and someone will come and post signs around the pup asking people to steer clear. If you're anywhere else, call the Marine Mammal Stranding Network Hotline at 541-270-6830 instead.

## AROUND THE TOWN



**T**idbits from 117 years ago in **The Morning Astorian, Saturday, March 31, 1900:**

• In the absence of a town clock, what is the matter with the fire bell striking a signal at 6 a.m., 12 noon and 6 p.m. each day? Some public signal of the correct time at regular intervals during the day is needed in Astoria. The police furnish the correct time at night.

• The schooner **Jessie** came into port yesterday after 3 o'clock and members of her crew soon obtained brief leave to "spread their shanks" on shore. Luckily, none of **Larry Sullivan's** gang of "shanghaiers" were in sight, and the men succeeded in reaching their hammocks on board last night without molestation.

• **Peter Olsen**, a well-known character in this city, who resides in Uppertown, and who is familiarly known as the "Lone Fisherman," will be taken before a lunacy commission in the county court today for examination as to his sanity (after some bizarre behavior) ... He was shortly after turned over to **Sheriff Linville** and is now confined in the county jail.

... Olsen has resided in Astoria for several years and has generally been known for his eccentricities. He always fished during the season, but always went alone. He had a most peculiar manner of walking, and invariably adopted the most ridiculous style of clothing. He was never considered dangerous.

## GODSPEED, BOATY



**N**ever has there been such a kerfuffle about boat-naming as that of the U.K. Natural Environment Research Council's research vessel. The winning name in the council's online poll was **Boaty McBoatface**, which was deemed quite unsuitable for such a dignified vessel. The name Sir David Attenborough was used instead, much to the clamoring dismay of many, who cried foul.

However, since the Boaty name had such a huge following — who remained outraged the name wasn't used — the powers that be relented, and gave the moniker to a new type of autonomous underwater vehicle that can travel at a depth of up to 3.73 miles under sea ice.

And now, Boaty McBoatface (pictured, courtesy of the National Oceanography Centre) has a chance to shine, according to Live-Science.com (<http://tinyurl.com/goboatymb>). It has begun its first antarctic mission, exploring the Orkney Passage, from a British Antarctic Survey research ship. Bon voyage, Boaty.

## YOU ARE MY SUNSHINE



**T**he Ear can't count how many times people have mentioned that they don't get enough sun on the North Coast, and have to get their dose of sunshine in Vitamin D supplements. Germany has the same problem, but they're not worried about vitamin deficiencies, they're after renewable energy.

The German Space Center (DLR) has installed the **world's largest artificial sun** in the city of Jülich, according to a story on NewAtlas.com (<http://tinyurl.com/synsun>). The electric powered Synlight, a three-storey high solar tower, is made of 149 7-kilowatt arc lights and is being used for research, including figuring out how to use the device to create hydrogen fuel. A photo of the Synlight is shown, courtesy of DLR.

At least this "sun" is more dependable than the real one, which is off gallivanting all night. And, not to get too technical, here, the Synlight, at its maximum setting, can deliver 320 kilowatts, explained as "10,000 times the normal solar radiation experienced on Earth's surface, and temperatures of up to 5,400° F" — which is necessary to produce solar fuels like hydrogen.

At a cost of \$3.77 million, this is some very serious sunshine.

## WHALE RULES



**T**he sperm whale that washed up near the Peter Iredale shipwreck in early March has been buried by Oregon State Parks. But what happened to beached whales on the North Coast long ago?

Most Indian tribes, including the **Clatsops**, had very definite rules about how a **beached whale** carcass should be **divided**, according to the U.S. Bureau of Ethnology Bulletin No. 20, published in 1894 (<http://tinyurl.com/whale-rules>). For example, if two Clatsop men found a whale, they cut holes in the skin, and tied straps between the holes to mark their pieces. Each one tied as many straps to the whale as he had relatives. No straps, no problem — they'd use kelp, instead.

Then the rest of the tribe was notified, and they were all given a chance to get a chunk for themselves, but with one caveat: they were not to cut where straps marked someone else's claim. Stragglers arriving on the scene got access to the less desirable, lower side of the carcass.

Anyone who got a chunk of whale meat had the option to sell it, keep it for food, or barter it — for example, a large piece was worth a blanket. And, since the chunks were quite heavy, they were allowed to hire someone to carry chunks for them.

The tribe was apparently always ready for such an opportunity. "The Clatsop always carry their straps and knives, which are tied together, and their mats," the bulletin asserts. "All do thus."

But what if a whale didn't handily wash up, and the people were starving? One tribe (the account doesn't say which one) had an interesting ritual: A tribal member known to have a "supernatural helper of the sea" (Iké'tal) would sing, and sing, and sing to bring in a whale. Only old people and preadolescent boys and girls were allowed to accompany him and sing along, or the song would not work.

"The singer is covered with down," the bulletin explained. "He places a pole upright on the beach and says: 'Here a whale will drift ashore,' and, indeed, it drifts ashore there after he has sung five days."

Someone might have been expediting in January 1806, when the **Lewis and Clark** Expedition encountered a beached whale and the Clatsops, but that is another story for another day. Next Friday, actually.

## EGG WATCH



**W**ell, it's that time of year again, when you can literally get a bird's eye view of a pair of nesting eagles and their three eggs with the **Decorah (Iowa) Eagles** webcam ([www.ustream.tv/decoraheagles](http://www.ustream.tv/decoraheagles)), which puts you eye to eye with the to-be parents. A screenshot is shown.

This home invasion is brought to you by the Raptor Resource Project, "which specializes in the preservation of falcons, eagles, ospreys, hawks, and owls. We create, improve, and directly maintain over 50 nests and nest sites," their Decorah Eagles website says.

None of the eggs have hatched as yet, but it should start hatching any day now.

## A TINY HOUSE FOR A WINDY CITY



**W**ith all the talk of adding alternative housing in Astoria, Transcend Tiny Homes might have just the right solution for our windy city. The **Amsterdam 24 towable tiny house** model is capable of withstanding winds of up to 156 mph, NewAtlas.com reports (<http://tinyurl.com/tinylight24>). A photo of the Amsterdam 24 is shown, courtesy of Transcend Tiny Homes.

The little dwelling sits on a 24-foot long double axle trailer, and has 292 square feet of floorspace. The walls are made of composite fiberglass, which brings the weight down to about 4 tons — a same-sized wooden version would run about 6.6 tons — and it's pretty airtight. Hurricane testing proved the wall panels could handle up to a category 5 hurricane. You'd have to secure it to the ground of course, and there is the issue of flying debris, but its sturdiness is pretty remarkable.

And there are amenities galore, including a keyless-entry system. The bottom floor has a lounge, integrated storage, kitchenette (with sink, fridge, stove, washer and dryer) and a bathroom with sink and shower. The sleeping loft is accessible with a movable ladder.

However, even with all this lovely tininess, the price isn't. The Amsterdam 24 starts at \$69,700.

## LOOK, UP IN THE SKY!



**Y**ou probably know you can see the **International Space Station** flying by if you know when to look. Now, NASA has made it easy to find out when with their website, Spot the Station (<https://spotthestation.nasa.gov>). You can even set up alerts on the website so you'll be notified in advance of its appearance.

And no, you don't need a telescope to spot the ISS, which is pictured, courtesy of NASA. It is so bright from the sun's reflection, you can see it with your bare eyes — even though it's whipping along at 17,500 mph. It circles the earth every 90 minutes which means, if you can imagine such a thing, that the crew sees 16 sunrises and sunsets every day.

The page for current Astoria sightings is here: <http://tinyurl.com/AstoriaISS>. It shows when the ISS is flying by (usually twice a night), from tonight (at 8:13 and 9:52 p.m.) through April 9, its height above the horizon, and how long it will be visible.

No, you don't have to be in Astoria to spot it, either. It can be seen for an approximately 50-mile radius around Astoria, which covers a lot of ground.

## COMMUNITY NOTES

**SATURDAY**  
**Detachment 1228 Marine Corps League** — noon, El Compadre, 119 Main Ave., Warrenton. For information, contact Lou Neubecker at 503-717-0153.

**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**  
**Line Dancing** — 5:30 to 8 p.m., Seaside American Legion, 1315 Broadway. For information, call 503-738-5111. No cost; suggested \$5 tip to the instructor.

**MONDAY**  
**Chair Exercises for Seniors**

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

**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** — 11:30 a.m., Bob Chisholm Senior Center, 1225

Avenue A, Seaside. Suggested donation \$3 for those older than 60; \$6.75 for those younger than 60. For information, call Michelle Lewis at 503-861-4200.

**Columbia Senior Diners** — 11:30 a.m., 1111 Exchange St. Cost is \$6. For information, or to have a meal delivered, call 503-325-9693.

**Warrenton Senior Lunch Program** — noon, Warrenton Community Center, 170 S.W. Third St. Sug-

gested donation of \$5 for seniors and \$7 for those younger than 60. For information, or to volunteer, call 503-861-3502 Monday or Thursday.

**Astoria Rotary Club** — noon, second floor of the Astoria Elks Lodge, 453 11th St. Guests always welcome. For information, go to [www.AstoriaRotary.org](http://www.AstoriaRotary.org)

**Knochlers Pinochle Group** — 1 p.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside.

Cost is \$1 per regular session per person. Players with highest and second highest scores split the prize. Game is designed for players 55 and older, but all ages are welcome.

**Mahjong for Experienced Players** — 1 p.m., Astoria Senior Center, 1111 Exchange St. For information, call 503-325-3231.

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