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# COMMUNITY

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IN ONE EAR • ELLEDA WILSON

## HELP IS ON THE WAY



There are so many stories in the news about unresponsive civic leaders, but this isn't one of them. Quite the contrary, in fact. Several times a week, the Ear has occasion to traverse the very steep and narrow **12th Street stairs** that connect upper and lower Grand Avenue. Neighbors old and young, tourists and school children also take their chances on the stairway from hell every day.

One morning last week the steps — there are 15 of them, comprised of decomposing railroad ties — were particularly squishy and dangerous. Visions of broken heads and hips danced through the Ear's head. In desperation, an email was sent to **Mayor Arline LaMear**, pointing out the hazard.

Her response was speedy. She said she'd look into it. Eight days later, the old stairs are gone, and construction is under way. Thank you, Mayor LaMear and Astoria Public Works!

## ON THE ROAD AGAIN

Astorian **Peter Marsh** has hit the road once again with his trusty bicycle, resuming his **Trans America Trail bike ride** where he stopped last October, in Kansas City, arriving the day after Labor Day.



"I sent my bike ahead to the house of **Daniel Kidwell**, who was featured in the Ear column this summer," Peter explained. Daniel left Astoria in July to ride across the country to raise funds and awareness for a genetic disorder.

"I met him at Bikes & Beyond in Astoria, when he was beginning his big trip. He agreed to help me in Kansas City and met me at the airport. My bike box was already sitting in his garage when we arrived at his house. It was great to have a friendly house to get the bike ready."

For the first few days, Peter followed the Pony Express route, riding alongside the Missouri River. In Atchison, Kansas, he sat on the porch at the **Amelia Earhart House** for a while to cool off in the afternoon heat. "I rode about 60 miles every day, with the afternoons off to avoid the heat," he recalled.

"I'm happy to say I have managed to find a campsite almost every night since, at no cost in a city park or by a lake — a tradition here. On Day 11, I reached Fort Collins, Colorado, at 5,000 feet. Happily it only got to 85 degrees. (Then) I set off over the Rockies and arrived in Walden, Colorado (8,000 feet), after a grueling two-day ride over 10,000-foot Chapman Pass from Fort Collins. Free camping in the park again." The Ear is exhausted, and needs a nap just reading that paragraph.

"I don't expect to ride all the way to Astoria this year," Peter added, "but I have been warned twice that it will snow soon, which will mean the end of the trip. And then, how to get out? We shall see ..."

## MARATHON HELL



You might want to think twice about running a marathon in Denmark. The Local ("Denmark's news in English") reports that a recent **half-marathon in Copenhagen** started out just fine, with a lovely day when literally, out of the blue, the runners were pelted with heavy rain and hail (<http://tinyurl.com/wetrun>). The photo shown is courtesy of Mette Kristiansen and The Local. Sound familiar, Astorians?

The onslaught kept up for half an hour, and the several inches of water dumped from the sky caused chaos along the race route. Adding insult to injury, three people — a runner, a photographer and a race volunteer — were hit by lightning, two of them hurt badly enough to be taken to the hospital.

Happily, most of the runners had already slogged across the finish line before the officials stopped the race.

## A RARE FIND



A rare **King-of-the-Salmon** fish was found washed ashore on Vancouver Island Sept. 21 by Ben Baker while he was walking his dog along the beach, the CBC News reports (<http://tinyurl.com/kingsal>). It was about 6.5 feet long, possibly the largest discovered so far.

"It just stood out to me as something I'd never seen before," he told CBC News, "and I've been walking these beaches most of my life." A photo of Baker with the fish is shown, courtesy of Mike McArthur/CBC.

The discovery isn't actually a salmon at all, but a type of ribbonfish. To have one wash ashore is a remarkable event. "They can be found down as far as 1,600 feet from Alaska to Baja, and along the Coast of Chile ... " **Tiffany Boothe** of the **Seaside Aquarium** told Salem-News.com when one was found at Sunset Beach in 2006 (<http://tinyurl.com/kingsal1>). "The name, King-of-the-Salmon, originated from an Indian legend which describes this fish as the 'king' who leads the salmon back to the rivers to spawn. They are rarely seen ..."

Baker was advised to take the prize find home and freeze it, so it can be studied. "I'm happy to give it to any researcher who wants to take a look," he told CBC Radio West. "If not, I guess it'll go back in the ocean where it came from. It's a real treat and privilege to have found it."

## LOCAL BREVITIES



News tidbits from the Monday, Sept. 29, 1890 edition of The Daily Morning Astorian (pictured, Stengele's view of Astoria, 1890):

- Only one more night and the **incandescent system** will be in operation. If the light continues as good as on the trial night, it will soon be used in most of the houses, offices and stores in the central part of the city.

- **Note:** By 1880, **Thomas Edison** and his team had created an incandescent bulb with a bamboo filament that lasted 1,200 hours; the previous version only lasted 14.5 hours. (<http://tinyurl.com/Edbulb>)

- **Fine Table Wine:** Delivered at 60 cents a gallon (about \$15 now), to any part of the city. A fine line of pure California wines at low prices at **A. W. Utzinger's** Cosmopolitan Saloon.

- **Note:** This saloon was open from 1889 to 1896 (<http://tinyurl.com/AWUtzing1>). Mr. Utzinger was a man of many talents; Scientific American reported that he patented a music rack holder for wind instruments in 1888 (<http://tinyurl.com/AWUtzing2>).

- Yesterday morning there arrived on the steam schooner **Augusta** from the Nehalem river, **Wm. Edward**, a resident of that section, bringing with him **250 pounds of beeswax** which he had picked up with the assistance of his daughter, **Minnie Garitse**, on the coast near the Nehalem.

It is said the beeswax was part of a cargo of a vessel that was wrecked on the coast near the Nehalem river, but the oldest inhabitant of that section does not remember of hearing of a wreck. But Indians living in that part of the county say it was wrecked over a hundred years ago.

- **Note:** Chunks of beeswax from the "**Beeswax Wreck**" have appeared in the sand near Nehalem over the last 200 years. The date and location of the wreck are still a mystery, but the **Maritime Archaeological Society** is working on finding the answers (<http://tinyurl.com/MASbeeswax>).

This much they know: It was a Spanish galleon of the Manila trade. Both Nehalem Indian stories and early trader journals mention the ship, suggesting it wrecked before Europeans explored or settled in the Pacific Northwest. In case you don't recall, Astoria, the oldest settlement, was founded in 1811.

## COUCH POTATO ALERT: 'MOVIN' ON'



Remember the NBC TV show "**Movin' On**"? It aired from 1974 to 1976 — two seasons, 44 episodes — and was about two truckers, played by the late **Claude Akins** (left) and now 79-year-old **Frank Converse** (right), who traveled around the country in a big rig having adventures. The actors are pictured in a screen shot from the show.

The first episode, "**The Time of His Life**," was filmed on the North Coast in 1974. It's about a young man, played by **Michael J. Pollard**, who has terminal cancer. The episode starts with the pair driving across the Astoria Bridge, but most of it was filmed in **Seaside** and **Gearhart** (including the bowling alley scene).

You can watch it on YouTube at <http://tinyurl.com/movinSS>, and have fun catching some nostalgic local scenery as the actors walk up Broadway in Seaside. You'll see the Bridge Tender bar, an old amusement park with bumper cars, etc. Keep a sharp eye out for things in the background, as well.

Last Friday, Astorian **Jeff Nelson** told the Ear, "**Movin' On**" has finally been released on two DVDs. Unfortunately, the original pilot is not included. The DVDs are only available at one site, **MovieZyng**. Season 1 is at <http://tinyurl.com/movinone>; and Season 2 is at <http://tinyurl.com/movintwo>. Go ahead, indulge your nostalgic inner couch potato.

## WAVERUNNING TO CANADA



On Tuesday, Sept. 21, **Ben Olson** of Seaside, **Dave Larson** of Warrenton, co-owner of High Life Adventures, and **Kevin James** of Olympia, Washington, set out on quite an adventure. They completed a journey from **Astoria to Canada on the Columbia River** using Waverunner jet skis. One of Dave's photos taken along the way is shown.

"The trip took five days and we traveled over 700 miles, averaging approximately 140 miles per day," Dave said. "We cruised at 40 miles per hour, stopping occasionally to enjoy the scenery. Kevin was the mastermind behind the trip, and it took a year's worth of planning."

It wasn't all fun and games, however, Kevin noted, as it involved portaging their watercraft around all 11 dams on the U.S. portion of the Columbia River.

"Personally, I was humbled by the immense size and power of the Columbia River," Dave added, "and feel fortunate to be able to live near it. As a native Astorian, I'm honored to enjoy the beauty and power of the river."

## XBOX MARKS THE SPOT



Here's one for the maritime history books: The U.S. Navy is going to start using the **Xbox 360 controller** to maneuver the **digital periscopes** on the Virginia class submarine, Extreme-Tech.com reports (<http://tinyurl.com/USNxbbox>). One of the subs is pictured, courtesy of Christina Shaw/US Navy.

Each vessel costs a hefty \$2.6 billion, and the original periscope controller, which was bulky, heavy and difficult to use, costs \$38,000 and requires several hours of training. The Xbox 360 controller costs about \$40, and sailors who have gaming experience — and most of them do — already know how to use it.

Thrifty: A concept not applied often enough in government expenditures.

## COMMUNITY NOTES

### SATURDAY

**Angora Hiking Club** — 9 a.m., Sixth Street parking lot. Neahkahnie Mountain hike. For information, call KJan Coughlin at 503-791-3521.

**Sit & Stitch** — 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Homespun Quilts & Yarn, 108 10th St. Bring knitting, crochet or other needlework projects to this community stitching time. All skill levels welcome.

**el 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

**Lower Columbia River Chapter, Military Officers Association**

**of America** — 5 p.m., Dooger's Seafood & Grill, 103 U.S. Highway 101, Warrenton. Speaker is Sen. Betsy Johnson. All officers and former officers of the U.S. Armed Forces, active, reserve, retired and warrant officers, and U.S. Public Health and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration corps are invited to attend. For information, contact Capt. R. Stevens (U.S. Coast Guard, retired) at 503-861-9832.

**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.

**Seekers Group** — 6 to 7:30 p.m., Pioneer Presbyterian Church, 33324 Patriot Way, Warrenton. Group discusses issues facing religious faith in the modern secular world. All are welcome. For information, call 503-861-2421.

### 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.

**Grace and Encouragement for Moms** — 10 to 11:30 a.m., Crossroads Community Church, 40618 Old Highway 30, Svensen. GEMS group is a time for moms to relax and enjoy each others' company. Free child care is provided. For information, call Rachael Biddlecome at 503-458-6103.

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

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