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# COMMUNITY

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IN ONE EAR • ELLEDA WILSON

## 'I KNOW WHAT I SAW'



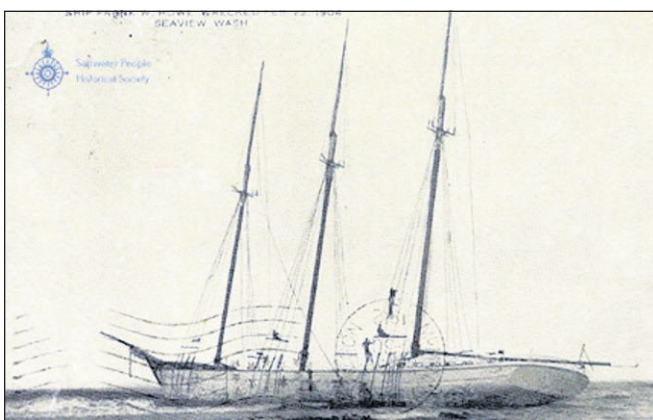
Take heart, Bigfoot believers: ABC30 reports that **Claudia Ackley** is suing the state of California because state authorities didn't believe her when she and her two daughters saw a **Bigfoot** on a remote trail near Lake Arrowhead in Southern California last year (tinyurl.com/sue4bigfoot). Ackley is pictured, courtesy of ABC30.

When she called 911 to report the sighting, she was told it was a bear. Not so, Ackley says. "I know what I saw," she declared. The Bigfoot, perched about 30 feet up a tree, weighed about 800 pounds and "looked like a Neanderthal man with a lot of hair." Two other Sasquatches were nearby. None of the creatures made any move to harm the Ackley family, but they were terrified, nonetheless.

Consequently, Ackley is bringing the lawsuit because the state and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife are refusing to recognize the Bigfoot species, and she believes it's a danger to the public not to officially acknowledge their existence. "There's a lot of people that come on this trail," she told ABC30, "and I want public safety more than anything."

The case goes to court March 19 in San Bernardino. Stay tuned.

## A TOTAL LOSS



The American schooner **Frank W. Howe**, home ported in Port Townsend, Washington, was on her way from Ballard, Washington, to San Pedro, California, with a heavy load of railroad ties, when she got caught in a gale and ran aground at Seaview, Washington, on Feb. 23, 1904. North Dakota's Bismark Tribune reported the next day. The schooner is pictured courtesy of the Saltwater People Historical Society.

The Howe was spotted flying distress signals that morning, and about an hour later spun in the breakers and grounded stern first. Even though lifesaving crews got to the area as speedily as possible, the heavy seas had already started pounding the vessel to pieces. Life lines failed to reach the foundering schooner, so the rescuers were forced to launch a boat to rescue Captain Keegan and six crew members.

Fortunately, there were only two fatalities on the Howe's last journey. A Norwegian sailor was swept from the rigging and drowned, and the cook, William Van Sant, was hit by a large wave, which threw him across the deck, "killing him instantly." The ship was a total loss.

## PIRATES AT BAY



The use of guns may be all over the news of late, but some enterprising Philippine-flagged cargo ship crew members took a more medieval approach to weaponry while fending off an attack by **pirates** in the Celebes Sea: They threw boiling water and oil on the armed attackers when they attempted to board the ship (tinyurl.com/pirateH20).

Yes, it worked. The pirates opened fire (but didn't hurt anyone), and sensibly beat a hasty retreat. The Philippines Coast Guard responded to the incident, and treated one man who had cut his hand on some glass. The vessel is pictured shortly after the attack, in a photo courtesy of Western Mindanao Command.

The ship with the clever crew, by the way, was aptly named: MV Kudos.

## DOWN ON THE FARM



The Dec. 16, 1885 issue of The Daily Morning Astorian asked for bids "for the support of the county poor for one year" and a "poor farm." In February 1886, **George Flavel** and others were tasked to consider "providing the county with a **poor farm**." What happened to this project?

**Robert Strickland** recalled talking to a woman who spoke about a poor farm being in Clatsop County. **Liisa Penner** of the Clatsop County Historical Society, says it's true, but it was not built until around 1914. A CCHS photo of the Clatsop County Hospital & Home, which was torn down in the 1940s or 1950s, is shown.

"Every time I used to mention the 'Poor Farm' to **Sylvia Mattson**," Liisa noted, "she would correct me and say the proper name was the 'County Home.' That did not sound as bad.

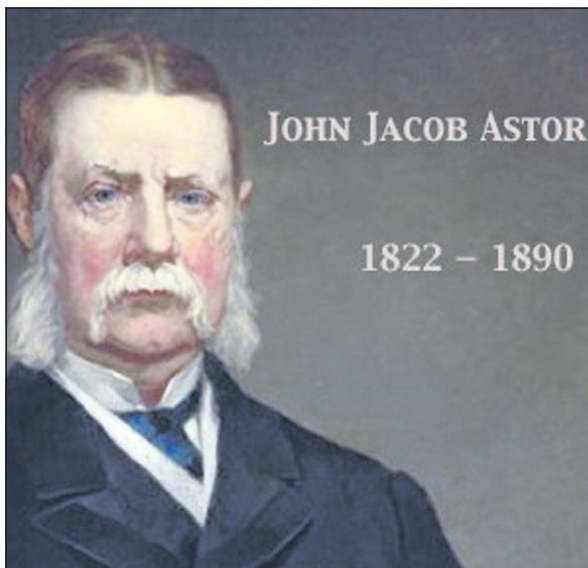
"It was located near the fairgrounds. ... The people who lived there were generally elderly people who could not survive on their own, or those who had mental impairments. I'm not sure if there were any children. But all who could work were expected to work, taking care of cows and chickens, the garden, etc.

"There are a number of stories about the place ... (such as) **Nick Johnson**, an old chicken farmer, who agreed to give his farm to his neighbor in exchange for taking care of him for the rest of his life. His neighbor died, and the neighbor's wife immediately put Nick into the Poor Farm and sold his property to her son for a dollar, and moved to Portland. Nick spent the rest of his life at the Poor Farm."

"Before (1914), the county's indigents were placed in individual homes where someone received money from the county to take care of them," Liisa noted, meaning Flavel et al must have failed in their mission. "In one case, an elderly man had been placed with a family (and) he did not realize that the family had no intention of paying him for his work, and that the agreement with the county was that his pay was a place to sleep and some clothes to wear."

Seems right out of the pages of a Charles Dickens story, doesn't it?

## COLDLY CONTEMPTUOUS



Financier **John Jacob Astor III**, 67, grandson of Astoria's founder, died Feb. 22, 1890, in New York, of heart failure. It's estimated he was worth around \$200 million at the time of his death (about \$5 billion now).

A glimpse of the man's character shows in a story in the Feb. 23, 1890, edition of The Daily Morning Astoria: "The death of the hundred-millionaire, John Jacob Astor, in New York yesterday, recalls to the writer's mind the fact that several years ago a distinguished Astoria clergyman, on a visit to New York, called upon the millionaire, told him of the city by the sea founded by his grandfather of precisely the same name as himself, and suggested (he) fund or endow an institution of learning in the city that will perpetuate the name and fame of the Astors when their scattered millions will have been forgotten.

"The millionaire looked coldly contemptuous at the reverend gentleman when he had concluded his kindly plea, and told him he would give him an order on his cashier for one hundred dollars. The Astorian disclaimed any desire to pecuniarily embarrass the munificent patron by the acceptance of so princely a sum, and bowed himself out.

"The millionaire lies dead in his marble palace this morning, and his millions lie idly in the massive vaults as cold as the clay that so lately clung to them."

## FROZEN IN TIME



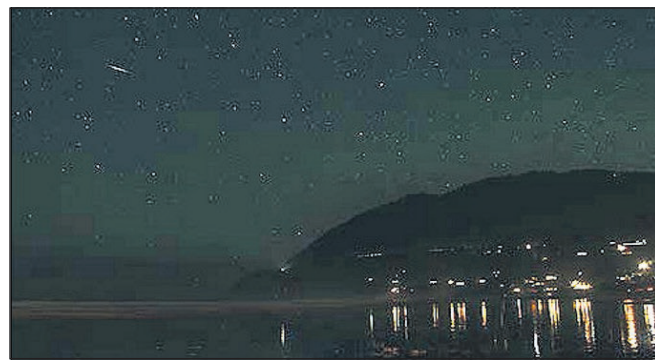
For marine biology fans: A "weird and frozen" 70-pound fish washed ashore in Chilkat Inlet, Alaska, and was found by **Harry Rietz**, the Chilkat Valley News reports (tinyurl.com/chilkfish). He and his stiff prize are shown in a photo by Brad Badger.

It's actually a **ragfish**, which is apparently a rare find. Because they are deep ocean dwellers, not much is known about them, not even what they eat. They do occasionally wash up — most often on Southeastern Alaska beaches — and are sometimes caught by commercial fishermen.

This particular fish had spawned, and Rietz found eggs about 50 feet away from it, in a seaweed bed. Unfortunately, local seagulls decided they were lunch.

Meanwhile, Rietz is keeping the ragfish on ice until he finds out if the American Bald Eagle Foundation wants to put it on exhibit.

## DID YOU SEE IT?

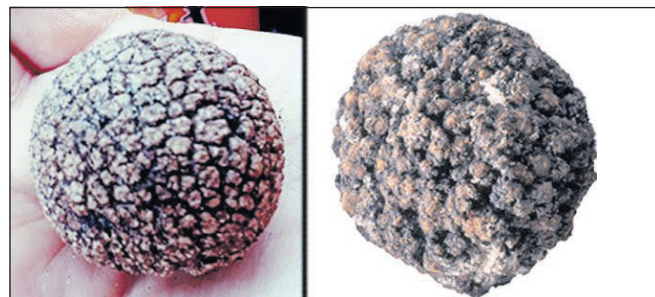


Did you see what looked like a **fireball** streak across the clear night sky around 9:20 p.m. on **Valentine's Day**? Oregon Museum of Science and Industry astronomer **Jim Todd** "checked reports from various sources" according to BeachConnection.net (tinyurl.com/ORfireball), and it was seen from Oregon and Southwest Washington, and inland Oregon, as well. Pictured, interstellar objects above the Oregon Coast courtesy of **Andre Hagedstedt**/Oregon Beach Connection.

The orange/yellow object had a trail behind it as it moved slowly from west to east, and was seen for 12 to 20 seconds. It either broke up into two pieces, or started that way. Based on speed, "in my opinion, this was a space junk," Todd said, not a fireball. "Space junk is slower than a meteor or bolide. ... Meteors are often quicker and brighter, sometimes exploding bright and low."

Apparently there were no reports from anyone on the Oregon Coast. Well, here's one: **Carol Lucas** saw the mysterious objects from Gearhart. "I saw two of them," she said. "Definitely two. They moved slower than a shooting star, but faster than a satellite — all bright, twinkly and golden." At least it was pretty space junk.

## MAYBE IT'S ...



On Jan. 26, this column featured a "what is it?" story about a **round object** (pictured left) found by **Farrah Billings** on a Long Beach (Wash.) Peninsula beach. Initial guesses included ambergris (whale barf), the inside of a golf ball or baseball, a black walnut, a seaweed pod or a tar ball. Google's reverse image lookup proclaimed it is a Christmas Rum Ball. Nope, not likely.

Other good guesses included a sweet gum tree seed pod (**Donna Byes**) and a spruce tree wood gall worm smooth by the ocean (**Josie Tripp**).

In desperation, the Ear sent Farrah's photo to the Oregon State University's Department of Botany and Plant Pathology, and was grateful to receive a reply from **Melanie Link-Perez**. She said they looked through some books about common plants and plant parts that commonly wash up, but couldn't make a match.

"A physical sample may have been able to let us discern what type of object this is," she wrote, "but the photos just are insufficient (there is so much degradation that occurs when things are floating)."

Which leaves us with **Aaron Webster's** guess as the best bet. He thinks it's a manganese nodule (pictured, right). Mr. Wikipedia says the nodules (usually 1 to 4 inches in diameter), are "rock concretions on the sea bottom formed of concentric layers of iron and manganese hydroxides around a core."

So, unless anyone has any better ideas, congratulations Mr. Webster, a manganese nodule it is.

## COMMUNITY NOTES

### SATURDAY

**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.

**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.

Astoria Fiber Arts Academy, 1296 Duane St. Bring a spinning wheel. For information, call 503-325-5598 or go to astoriafiberarts.com

**Karaoke** — 7 to 8 p.m., Seaside Lodge and International Hostel, 930 N. Holladay Drive, Seaside. Free session, all ages, for those who love to sing karaoke. Refreshments served. For information, call 503-738-7911.

### SUNDAY

**Spinning Circle** — 1 to 3 p.m.,

**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 nami.org

**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.

**Line Dancing** — 5:30 to 8 p.m., Seaside American Legion, 1315 Broadway. For information, call

### 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, crochet, 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 Dinners** — 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.

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