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IN ONE EAR • ELLEDA WILSON

'IT WAS MY HOME'



Remember that **van and trailer** that got **stuck** in the tide on **Rdel Rey Beach** last week? They belonged to traveling musician **Rick Langel** of Damascus (pictured, from his Facebook page), and it was a devastating loss. All of his household and personal effects, family photos, years' worth of notebooks full of songs and lyrics, musical instruments and sound equipment just vanished into the ocean, he told The Oregonian.

"It was my home," he said, "that made it possible for me to travel around playing music as a singer-songwriter. It has been an attempt to live my dream. It is not been easy, but it has been rewarding."

"Last year I was forced to rebuild when thieves in Tillamook County stole my entire trailer, taking all of the contents and pushing it off the side of a mountain. I rebuilt, exhausting all I am."

If you would like to help him rebuild once again, you can donate to his "Restoration Project" fundraiser at bit.ly/RKLhome

"There remains living on the streets — as many are doing — or rebuilding again, and go forward," he added. "I'm a 62-year-old veteran with health issues that will limit the time left for dreaming, and I'm in a place that can go from bad to worse quickly, so I need help, and ask that you consider what you can do."

A HEAP OF CALAMARI



The **Aplin brothers, Daniel, Jack and Matthew**, were taking a drive along the **Wellington, New Zealand** coast, looking for a place to dive, and didn't quite believe their eyes when they spotted a massive **squid** lying on the beach, the **New Zealand Herald** reports.

They took a dive, then came back for a closer look and to measure their find, which turned out to be 4.2 meters (13.8 feet) long; in comparison, the largest giant squid found so far was 43 feet long. Everything you never wanted to know on the topic is at bit.ly/bigbigsquid

"It was pretty clean, nothing major on it," Daniel observed. Jack, left, and Matthew, right, are pictured with the critter, in photos they posted to the **Ocean Hunter Spearfishing & Freediving Specialists Facebook** page, where they elicited over 2,100 comments. "That's a whole heap of calamari," one said, while another opined, "This is why we don't belong in the sea!"

Not knowing what to do with the body, the brothers called the **New Zealand National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research**, who arranged to have it collected for study.

TITANIC TIMEPIECE SOLD



The **pocket watch** owned by **Titanic victim Sinai Kantor**, expected to fetch \$20,000, sold for \$57,500, **TimesOfIsrael.com** reports. It is shown, courtesy of **Heritage Auctions**.

The buyer is **John Miottel**, who operates the **Miottel Museum** in Berkeley, California, and collects Titanic timepieces, among other things. Kantor's watch will join those of **John Jacob Astor IV**, great-grandson of Astoria's namesake, who also died in the disaster; **Oscar Woody**, the **Titanic's** postal clerk; and **Harold Thomas Cottam**, **RMS Carpathia's** wireless operator, the first to receive **Titanic's SOS** call.

FINDING BENNY



Benny, a 10-month-old rescue hound mix puppy, was recently adopted by Vancouver, Washington, residents **Cindy and Ray White** (pictured), **Susan Packer**, a rescuer based in Silicon Valley, California, wrote. "On Sunday, Aug. 26, the Whites were visiting Cannon Beach, when Benny was spooked and took off running, dragging his leash. ... The Whites tried to follow Benny, but lost him."

They were devastated. Cindy has inclusion body myositis, a progressive neuromuscular autoimmune disease, and is becoming increasingly disabled. Benny was her constant companion, and learning to pick up objects, and alert Ray if Cindy needed help.

Ray came back to Cannon Beach every day to search for Benny, then went home at night to take care of Cindy. Susan and fellow rescuer **Mike Noon**, also of California, shared their advice with Ray on search and rescue tips, and gave him hope. **Portlander Jenny Julian** and her partner, **Dave**, also offered to help. **Emmas Lindsay**, owner of **Dogs Allowed Cannon Beach**, kept a supply of lost dog flyers for people to post, which wound up saving the day. "People are really kind and compassionate in this special town," Ray said. "I am really overwhelmed."

On Wednesday, Ray received the call he hoped for. A Cannon Beach local, **Kristen Steinke**, had heard a dog barking for a few days, but thought it was a neighbor's. Then, when she and her husband, **Shane**, were walking their dog, they noticed a woman who was looking for something. Having seen the lost dog flyer, Kirsten asked her if she was looking for Benny.

Then Kristen suddenly had a gut feeling. She immediately sent her husband to check out the barking dog in the neighbor's yard, and sure enough, it was Benny. He was stuck, his leash all tangled up in the brush. Kirsten got the phone number from the flyer and called Ray, who rushed to the rescue.

"It was truly a miracle," Ray reflected. Benny is remarkably healthy, and after a vet check, they went home to Cindy. "There are not enough words to thank the wonderful people of Cannon Beach," he added. "Benny is alive, and for that I am grateful."

PEN PALS



"The story of **Wendy Cumming** from New Zealand and I began 60 years ago, as we became pen pals, writing about growing up, getting married, having children and the times of our lives," Astorian **LaRee Johnson** wrote. The pair are pictured; LaRee is at left.

"Recently, Wendy arrived in Astoria to visit me for a few days (her fourth visit). ... We had a 'girl's vacation' with sightseeing, shopping, dining out at all the favorite places in Astoria. And plenty of talk.

"When we first began writing, we discovered we were born on the same day, same month and year. We did not meet in person for 25 years, and it made the front page of the local New Zealand paper in 1982 (Christchurch Press, shown), as we recognized each other at the airport."

"After 60 years of writing, there have been lots of fun stories," she recalled, including Wendy and her husband visiting for Christmas 2008, hoping for snow. In a be-careful-what-you-wish-for scenario, a big snowstorm blew in.

Undaunted, they drove to Walla Walla, Washington, and kept going even after a big truck bashed in the back of the van. "We voted 3-1 to proceed," LaRee recalled. "The one 'no' vote was my husband, the driver."

Over the years, the pen pals have also involved their children. "Wendy's daughter, **Sheryn**, was able to enroll in Seaside High School for six months," LaRee explained, "and two years later **Rhett**, my son, was off the attend Takaka High on the South Island of New Zealand for six months." Now their children email each other. "No snail mail, these days," LaRee noted.

"Wendy and I had our first grandchildren the same year, the same month and only three days apart, and both are girls, **Olivia and Alana**," LaRee added. "The story continues to unfold in the third generation, with many happy surprises!"

RELUCTANT TRAVELER



Have an update on **S/V Boat-A-Lahti**, the **miniboat** built by the **Hilda Lahti Elementary School** third-graders last year, **Nate Sandel** wrote.

Initially launched Feb. 11 by the **Coast Guard Cutter Alert** off the coast of California, and hopefully heading for Asia, the miniboat soon washed ashore in San Diego. Relunched 5 miles offshore Feb. 14, the reluctant traveler washed up again, Feb. 23, on a remote beach in Baja, California, Mexico. Recovered from the beach in March, the miniboat was brought to the captain of the port's office in Guerrero Negro, Baja.

Now, **Boat-A-Lahti** is being delivered to the captain of the port on the **Isla de Cedros**. He will coordinate getting it onto a salt exporters' ship for relaunch at sea, once again.

Where will the miniboat wind up next? Follow **Boat-A-Lahti's** travels at tinyurl.com/tinylahti

GOOD NEWS/BAD NEWS



Regarding Astoria in particular, and the state of Oregon generally, it's a good news/bad news time.

The good news is that **HouseMethod.com**, a home and garden site with more than 5 million readers, did research to find the **"Most Underrated Town in Every State,"** and in Oregon, it's **Astoria**. The Astoria blurb mentions our city's unique history as the first settlement west of the Rockies and its "points of interest," the **Columbia River Maritime Museum**, the **Astoria Riverfront Trolley** and the **Astoria Column**.

The bad news is that **MoneyWise.com** says **Oregon** is the **23rd worst state** (out of 25) to retire because of housing costs, constant rain and forest fires. "And let's not forget that Oregon is long overdue for the big one: a massive earthquake."

It's Louisiana that's the No. 1 worst state for retirees, what with the hurricanes, heat and high sales tax and crime rate. And, let's not forget the alligators.

QUEEN OF THE PACIFIC



The anniversary of the grounding of **Pacific Coast Steamship Company's Queen of the Pacific** (pictured) on **Clatsop Spit** on **Sept. 5, 1883**, is coming up.

The iron hulled steamer/brig, built in 1882 in Philadelphia, was 330 feet long with a beam of 38 feet. When she hit the sandbar, she was heading for Portland with 232 passengers (many of whom were on their way to witness the last spike being driven on the **Northern Pacific Railroad**) and 90 in crew aboard.

Capt. Ezekiel Alexander was in command of the vessel at the time, and neither he, nor pilot **A. D. Wass** were blamed for the incident, said to be caused by heavy fog and smoke. The next day, four tugs took all the passengers off so the **Queen** was light enough to refloat. Some reports online say there were between 40 and 42 deaths, but apparently not. There was no damage to the ship, either.

Once afloat, tug captain **J. H. D. Gray** (said to be the first male white child born west of the Rocky Mountains), was one of the leaders of the salvage effort, which wound up costing around \$65,000 — \$1.6 million now — and she kept on sailing for several more decades. The **Queen's** unfortunate demise came in 1935, when she was scrapped in Japan (bit.ly/QPac01 bit.ly/QPac02 bit.ly/QPac03).

COMMUNITY NOTES

SATURDAY

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

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

Columbia Northwestern Mod-

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 astoriafiberarts.com

SUNDAY

Seniors Breakfast — 9 a.m. to noon, **Astoria Moose Lodge**, 420

17th St. Cooked to order from menu, includes coffee. Cost is \$5 for seniors 62 and older, \$7.50 for those younger than 62. Breakfasts are open to the public. Proceeds after expenses help support local and other charities.

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 — LABOR DAY

Senior Lunch — No lunch is served today.

Columbia Senior Diners — No lunch is served today.

Warrenton Senior Lunch Program — No lunch is served today.

TUESDAY

Warbirds — 8 a.m., **Labor Temple Diner**, 934 Duane St. All air crew members and maintainers welcome.

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 **Suzanne Bjaranson** at 503-861-4202.

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

See **NOTES, Page 4B**