

Helmi L. Romppanen-Netzel

Astoria

Dec. 27, 1921 — May 2, 2019

Helmi L. Romppanen Netzel, a lifetime Clatsop County resident, passed away Thursday, May 2, 2019 in Seaside, Oregon, at the age of 97.

Born to Franz Oskar Winters and Anna Lydia Niskakangas on Dec. 27, 1921, she was raised on the family dairy farm in the Youngs River area. She was the youngest of four children.

Helmi attended Battle Creek grade school. She was very proud of the essay she wrote in the eighth grade vowing never to use tobacco in any form. It was entered in the county essay contest where she took first place. Helmi was a graduate of Astoria High School. After graduation in 1939, she attended Astoria Business College. Helmi worked as a bookkeeper at a local dairy co-op. On weekends, she could be found playing her accordion at Saturday night dances at the Olney Grange or Suomi Hall.

In 1942, Helmi married Veikko Romppanen. Together they developed a successful fishing business. She was an avid outdoor person. She loved to have her hands in the dirt planting flowers and vegetables. She was a member of the Seaside Sou' Wester Garden Club where she won best in show and best in horticulture for her beautiful pink cactus dahlia.



Romppanen-Netzel

Helmi loved all animals and enjoyed seeing all the wildlife of the area. She never met an animal she did not like. She loved to bowl and golf and was a member of the Astoria Golf & Country Club. Helmi was an avid clam digger and an excellent cook. She had a genuine affection for "her kids." If you are between 70 and 80 years old and grew up in Astoria, you probably were one of "her kids."

Helmi was preceded in death by her siblings, Ina Heino, Uno Winters and Wayne Winters; and her husbands, Veikko Romppanen and, later, George Netzel. She is survived by her children, Sally Laine (John) and Dave Romppanen (Susie). Her grandchildren, Katharine Demeter (Victor), Christopher Shell, Kirsten Baker (Chad), Lisa O'Connell (Chris) and eight great grandchildren.

A celebration of life will be held Friday, May 10, 2019 at 11:00 a.m. at Caldwell's Luce-Layton Mortuary, 1165 Franklin Ave., Astoria, Oregon. Reception to follow at Suomi Hall in Astoria.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Finnish Brotherhood Building Fund in Astoria or the Clatsop County Animal Shelter.

Please sign our online guest book at: caldwellsmortuary.com.

Elk: Herds face a different landscape

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"The point is to create solutions that either don't exist or are tailored to the nature of the problem locally," Balensifer said.

With Oregon Solutions' help, "I think it will be a more diverse discussion which will allow for more creative solutions," he added.

Elk herds historically roamed the Clatsop Plains, but face a very different landscape now.

Elk pose public safety hazards when they cross major roadways like U.S. Highway 101. Visitors often stop on the sides of roads to gawk at the animals and sometimes walk up to them to take pictures. People have reported run-ins with protective mother elk while walking beach trails in Gearhart, as well as property damage.

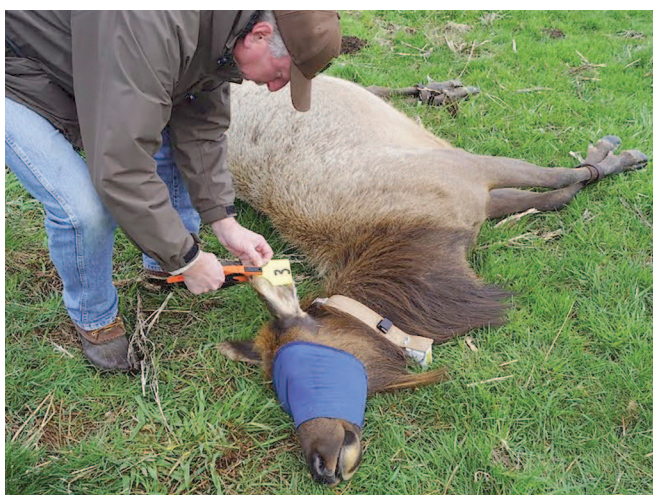
Both Warrenton and Gearhart have bans against feeding wildlife to try to curb unsafe elk-human interactions.

Any solutions the Clatsop Plains Elk Collaborative lands on could have state-wide implications, especially in other communities where, like the Clatsop Plains, there is little public land and state agencies are limited in what they can do to regulate herds.

"Whatever we create or decide out of this will have more significance state-wide," Balensifer said, adding, "Whatever we do will be a template."

Oregon Solutions is still reaching out to stakeholders and plans to hold a meeting soon, though the date has not been set.

Meanwhile, other groups are already trying to get a better handle on how elk move



Lewis and Clark National Historical Park
Herman Biederbeck, wildlife biologist with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, fixes an ear tag onto an elk that has been fitted with a GPS collar to track its movements around Lewis and Clark National Historical Park near Warrenton.

through the lands around Warrenton.

Lewis and Clark National Historical Park secured funding to fit up to six elk with GPS collars this year. With assistance from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, they have tagged four elk so far, according to Chris Clatterback, the park's chief of resource management.

The work is on hold for the calving season, but the elk collared include two cows from a herd that roams park and pastureland north of Fort Clatsop and two from a herd at Camp Rilea.

The focus is on elk that use the national park. Elk were an important source of food and materials for native tribes, as well as for the park's namesakes, the explorers Meriwether Lewis and William Clark.

"Unfortunately, we won't learn much about the Gearhart herd," Clatterback said.

"What we will learn is if elk that are using the park are also getting into human-elk

conflicts in (Warrenton's) urban areas."

Collaring only began several weeks ago, but Clatterback hopes to build up more extensive data over time. The collars last for up to three years and ping the locations of elk back to the park every 13 hours.

There are already signs that the elk may not appreciate this probing into their private wanderings, however.

Park staff set two collars out on posts on a hillside above South Clatsop Slough to test network signals and make sure the collars would work in the field.

The next morning, they found the collars had been knocked to the ground. They were covered in elk hair and surrounded by fresh elk droppings and hoof prints.

"So we know it was the elk kind of nosing about," Clatterback said. "It would have been nice if they'd put the collars on themselves at the time, but that was too much to ask."

Port: 'We must face reality, seek ... help'

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Walt Postlewait, the executive vice president of nonprofit lender Craft3, read the final recommendations, blaming the Port's condition on multiple eras of mismanagement and neglect of infrastructure.

"The current outlook is dire," Postlewait said. "We must face reality, seek expert help and chart a path forward. This is what the (Port Commission) was elected to do, what the Port manager was hired to do and what stakeholders of the Port expect."

The committee's recommendations focus on a more timely, proactive review of the Port's finances, leases with customers that account for maintenance costs, and better communication between staff and the public and Port Commission.

The committee has pushed the Port to analyze which of its properties are profitable, and which

should be sold to help with deferred maintenance. The Port is already preparing to have the Astoria Riverwalk Inn, Chinook Building commercial complex and former Seafare Restaurant building appraised for likely sale.

But while the committee's recommendations will help the Port financially, the agency will need local, state and federal investment in the long run, Postlewait said.

Jim Knight, the Port's executive director, bristled at some of the language in the recommendations that he said implied the Port had a bad relationship with the state. He argued that the Port has improved its relationships with the state departments that oversee environmental quality and aviation, along with federal agencies and legislators.

"The relationship with Business Oregon, that's in trouble," Knight said. "But that's not the state. That's one agency."

Business Oregon, the

state's economic development agency, has loaned the Port nearly \$20 million for infrastructure improvements. But it has vowed not to lend any more money until the agency finishes an update of its strategic plan from 2010.

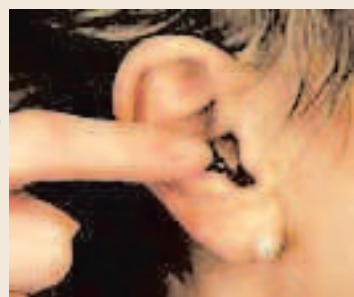
The Port contracted Mary McArthur, executive director of the Columbia-Pacific Economic Development District, who has been working on the strategic plan since late 2016. She is nearing completion and will incorporate the committee's recommendations.

While some on the committee recognized that descriptions of the Port's situation were harsh, they largely saw the tone of the recommendations as an appropriate call to action. Local officials and business leaders agree there has been a slippage between reality and the Port's proposals, said John Lansing, a retired banker who served on the committee.

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