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IN ONE EAR • ELLEDA WILSON

## 'I'M JUST STOKED'



Yet another peculiarly fascinating competition took place in Finland last weekend: The **Air Guitar World Championships**, held in the little town of Oulu, where the event has been held for the last 24 years, Yle.fi reports ([bit.ly/Ouluplay](http://bit.ly/Ouluplay)).

The winner was voice-over actor **Rob "The Marquis" Messel** ([robmessel.com](http://robmessel.com)), reportedly from Portland. "I'm honored, and I'm just stoked," he told Yle. He is pictured, courtesy of Eeva Riihela/Lehtikuva via Yle.fi, and inset, from the AGWC video ([bit.ly/AGWC2019](http://bit.ly/AGWC2019)).

But wait: Rob Messel's website and Twitter feed ([twitter.com/robmessel](https://twitter.com/robmessel)) both say he's from Vancouver, Washington. Well, the Ear couldn't resist writing to him to offer congratulations ... and to ask him where he's really from, and what the competition means to him.

"I do, in fact, live in Vancouver, Washington," he clarified, "but developed the habit of saying Portland when I travel, so as to not be confused for a Canadian :)."

"The purpose of the air guitar world championships is to unite people from all countries in the spirit of world peace," the new champion explained. "If you're holding an air guitar, then you cannot hold a gun at the same time."

"It's an art form, and it's a fun spectacle, but this message of peace is what means the most to me," he added, "and what I want to share with the world, especially being a veteran of the war in Afghanistan."

## ONE PIECE AT A TIME

Feeling frustrated and disgusted about the estimated 18 billion pounds of plastic that enters the ocean each year? Aside from not using plastic bags, etc., there is one painless, easy little thing you can do every day to help clean up the mess one piece at a time: Go to [freetheocean.com](http://freetheocean.com)

"Simply answer the daily trivia question, and we'll remove a piece of plastic," the website says. You can even set it up to receive a daily email reminder to play.

Here's how it works: Money generated from advertising on the site is used to pay Free the Ocean's partner, **Sustainable Coastlines, Hawaii**, a nonprofit, to remove plastic debris.

"All of our small actions," Free the Ocean founder **Mimi Ausland** (pictured, inset) noted, "when put together, will create big impact."

## BE IN A MOVIE!



**Extras are needed** for a feature action/comedy/sci-fi film, **"Vireality"** ([bit.ly/IMDBvirealty](http://bit.ly/IMDBvirealty)), produced, directed and edited by Astoria High School grad **James Strecker**.

The call time is 6:30 p.m. Wednesday at the Performing Arts Center, 588 16th St.; filming is from approximately 7 to 8 p.m. Pictured, James Strecker (left) and **Joe Scott** in a photo by **Brian Mancely**.

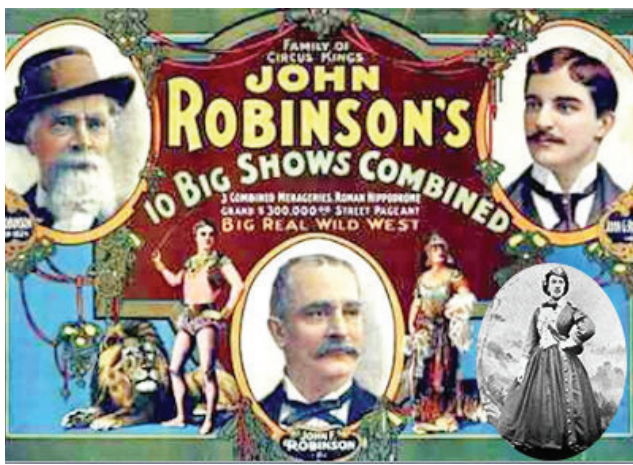
"Astoria friends, or anyone, really ... I need extras!" James wrote. "Come be in a staged studio audience (for a fake talk show scene). Applaud, laugh, boo ... there may be a line of dialogue in it for you."

Those age 16 or older are preferred, wearing clothing with no logos. Bring your friends, too.

"Snacks and water will be provided afterward," he added, "and anyone who shows will get their name in the movie credits and online on IMDb. See you there!"

Questions? Call 503-791-1605.

## LOCAL BREVITIES



From the Saturday, Aug. 29, 1885 edition of *The Daily Morning Astorian*:

• **Clara Louise Kellogg** is said to have refused more offers of marriage than any other woman in America.

**Note:** Ms. Kellogg (1842-1916) — described by Encyclopedia.com as an "American (high) soprano, impresario ... who worked to bring opera to the American stage" — was coming to Astoria with her troupe in the near future, so the publicity machine was already winding up. She is pictured, inset.

The woman had endurance, and was a true workhorse; for example, during the 1874-1875 season, she sang for 125 opera performances. It was quite a coup for Astoria to attract this internationally renowned diva. But, by the time of her 1885 appearance in Astoria, she was winding down.

She married her former manager's nephew, **Carl Strakosch**, in 1887, and retired from the stage. You can read her autobiography, "Memoirs of an American Prima Donna" at [bit.ly/CLKbio](http://bit.ly/CLKbio)

• Coming to Astoria: The Largest! The Grandest! The Greatest! **Old John Robinson's 10 Big Shows Combined!**

**Note:** Aside from the unfortunate (and large) menagerie, and the Museum of Living Wonders, the extravaganza featured Occupational Safety and Health Administration nightmare acts such as: **Zenobia** ("hurled 200 feet through space by ancient Rome's terrific war engine, the catapult!); **Aida** ("who dives, head foremost, from the dome of the canvas into a net 100 feet below); **Mademoiselle Ella Zola** ("high wire queen, walks blindfolded with feet encased in baskets"); **Mademoiselle Zerate** ("ceiling walker"); **Tuila Family** (unicycle riders and skaters on stilts); **Viola** (the Hindoo snake charmer); plus so much more.

And, "don't fail to be on time to witness the \$300,000 **Free Street Pageant**," with 31 chariots, bagpipers, four steam musical wagons, mounted trumpeters, 100 mounted knights, a calliope, steam organs, opera singers. ... It must have been a helluva sight.

• Apropos of nothing: East Portland has passed an ordinance prohibiting cows from running at large ...

**Note:** Positively sensible, compared to other Rose City rules, which also prohibit whistling underwater (is this even possible?), roller skating into bathrooms and walking down the street with your shoes untied. ([bit.ly/oddrse](http://bit.ly/oddrse))

## WHERE IS IT?



Since 2014, the Ear has been trying to find the answer to a genuine Astoria history mystery: What happened to the **Tapiola Park fighter jet**? Yes, in the early 1960s, there really was a genuine fighter jet there for kids to play on.

Here's what we know so far, courtesy of **Jonah Dart-McLean**, Astoria Parks Maintenance supervisor, who directed the Ear to the 2016 **Astoria Parks Master Plan** ([bit.ly/APRDplan](http://bit.ly/APRDplan), page 516), which provided the photo shown, and says the following:

"At some time in the late 1950s and early 1960s, a U.S. Air Force **F86-E Sabre jet** was on display at Tapiola. The jet was placed there by **Mayor Harry Steinbock**. It was at the site prior to 1960, and was eventually removed due to damage from years of children playing on the plane.

"At one point, volunteers built a pedestal on which the plane was mounted. The jet was marked with the Serial No. 13042 (actually, it's 13024) which was stationed at Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada in 1950s for training with the 3595th Fighter Group, 3598th Fighter Squadron. It was destroyed in a mid-air collision near Las Vegas Nevada on Jan. 8, 1953.

"The date of collision and the dates of location at Tapiola raise questions as to whether the crashed plane was restored or the serial number was representative and not the actual plane number."

So ... not only is the final disposition of the jet unknown, we're not even sure which jet it actually was.

So far, the **Clatsop County Historical Society, Astoria Parks and Recreation** and **Rosemary Johnson** (former city planner and Astoria historian) have said they don't know what happened to it. Do you?

If so, please contact the Ear at 971-704-1718 or [ewilson@dailyastorian.com](mailto:ewilson@dailyastorian.com). Inquiring minds really want to know.

## NAME THAT CETACEAN



"Rarest sighting ever, nearshore, of a beaked whale," marine biologist **Carrie Newell**, CEO of **Whale Research Eco Excursions** in Depoe Bay, posted Aug. 17 on the WREE Facebook page.

"Yesterday on the 10 a.m. and noon trips my captain, **Joe**, radioed me and asked what weird whale are we looking at?" she explained. "I saw this copper-colored, bulbous-headed, around 15-foot whale, and was baffled. I went through my 37 years of whale knowledge in my head, and just could not figure out for sure what weird cetacean it was." A photo from the WREE post is shown.

She called friend and whale expert **John Calambokidis**, who thought it might be a Cuvier's beaked whale, but he asked a beaked whale expert to chime in, as well.

Beaked whales are usually in deep water, she noted. This one was in only 27 feet of water, just 100 feet offshore. They "also only eat squid," so she checked a fish cleaning station, and "sure enough the lingcod were packed with squid in their stomachs."

As it turned out, "the expert thinks it is a Baird's beaked whale ([bit.ly/bairdbeak](http://bit.ly/bairdbeak))," the marine biologist reported, which are around 35 feet long. "But the beak is still a little too short," she added, "and the whale must be young, since it is only around 15 feet long. Incredible sighting!"

## WELCOME HOME



## SHANGHAIED IN ASTORIA

"Well, look what made its way back to the **Astor Street Opry Company Playhouse!**" **Judith Niland** (pictured inset) wrote in an email.

"A few weeks ago, **Hank and Kristina Sohler** of Astoria attended a performance of the 35th season of 'Shanghaied in Astoria' bearing gifts. That night, they presented to the company on stage two hand-built shadow boxes filled with little brightly painted clay versions of all 26 characters of 'Shanghaied' they found at a garage sale in Hammond a few years back.

"Unbeknownst to the Sohlers, these little 4-inch dolls were created by me — a 'Shanghaied' veteran and local artist — back in 1997 for the very first raffle baskets given away to raise funds for the long-running nonprofit.

"It was a little exciting to see my art from over 20 years ago. You never know where it goes until it comes back. I really appreciate the Sohlers' generosity to bring them home. And, I will always wonder who took the time to create the beautiful shadow boxes to house these little guys — another mystery, I guess."

"These one-of-a-kind originals now have a permanent place at the ASOC Playhouse, and will be on display for all to enjoy," Judith added. "Stop in and see for yourself! The 35th season of 'Shanghaied in Astoria' runs until Sept. 14."

## DR. WISTAR'S BALSAM



Seen in the Aug. 29, 1883 edition of *The Daily Astorian*: "Have **Dr. Wistar's Balsam of Wild Cherry** always at hand. It cures coughs, colds, bronchitis, whooping cough, croup, influenza, consumption (tuberculosis) and all throat and lung complaints. 50 cents and \$1 (\$25 now) a bottle."

This extremely popular bit of addictive feel-good quackery was made from "cherry bark, alcohol and opiates" ([bit.ly/wistarcherry](http://bit.ly/wistarcherry)). Concocted around 1840 by **Henry Wister** (or **Wistar**) — who may or may not have been a doctor — this particular nostrum was on the market for over 100 years.