

WATER UNDER THE BRIDGE

COMPILED BY BOB DUKE
From the pages of Astoria's daily newspapers

*10 years ago
this week — 2011*

“Come out on the floor and dance with me. Come, it will be fun,” said Alia Kirilyuk, 13. She dragged her friend, Sydney Phillips, out onto the dance floor at the Astor Street Opry Company on Bond Street as more than two dozen young people, plus parents and other adults, came to the opry company to celebrate the ringing in of the New Year on Friday night. The theme of the party was a sane and sober celebration.

The former Safeway block in downtown Astoria — now a cavernous hole in the ground — will likely be left as it is, after a little tidying up. That was the direction the City Council gave to Public Works Director Ken Cook Monday night when asked what avenues to pursue. No decisions have been made, but Cook can now begin narrowing down the options on whether to clean, fill or fix the hole. However, members of the City Council learned that none of those option are cheap.

LONG BEACH, Wash. — Efforts to preserve land on the Long Beach Peninsula for wildlife and for its natural attractions have been boosted this month. Columbia Land Trust has purchased 60 additional acres to increase the area being preserved around Island Lake and Loomis Lake. They are part of a chain of freshwater lakes running from Long Beach to the northern tip of Leadbetter Point State Park. North of Long Beach, the conservation area consists of forested land on Island Lake and a number of smaller, inaccessible lakes and extensive wetlands. More than 1,000 acres are conserved for wildlife and people. “The special coastal wetlands around Island and Loomis lakes provide vital habitat for countless wildlife species while providing important water resources and recreational opportunities for local people and visitors,” said Nadia Gardner, with the Columbia Land Trust.

50 years ago — 1971

Icy roads made the entrance a bit slippery on Thursday in Clatsop County, but no injuries were reported as several cars slid into trees and poles. The temperature was 32 degrees at 9 a.m.

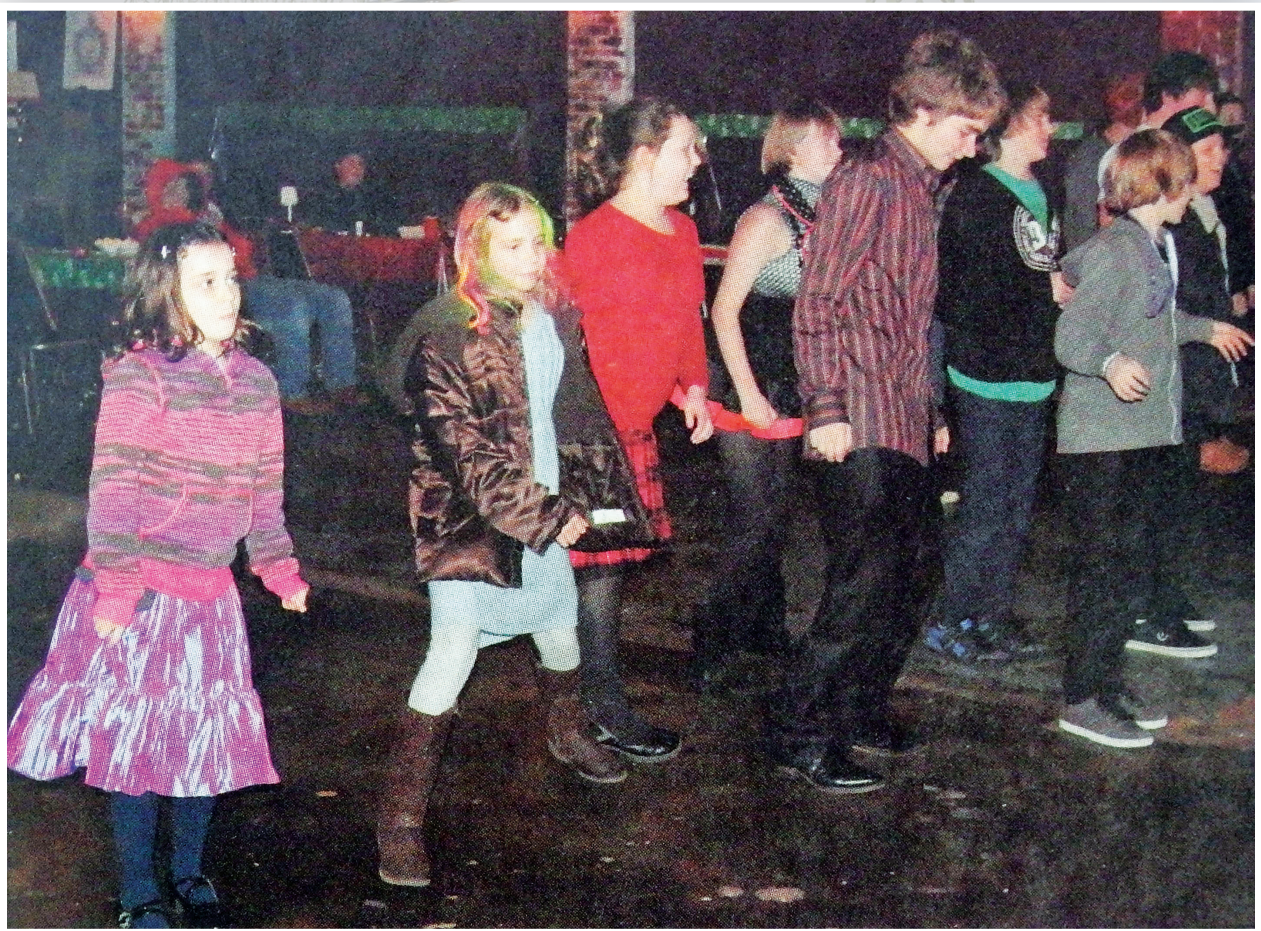
The new year was brought in with firecrackers, shouts and horn honking near downtown Astoria. Those out celebrating had to drive carefully to negotiate their way home. As of 10 a.m., Clatsop County had no 1971 babies.

SEASIDE — A genuine Christmas seal found north of Gearhart is now a pampered guest at the Seaside Aquarium. The 30 pound Alaska fur seal was named “Eve” by Murial Megrath, 26, of Gearhart, and Dennis Spivey, 27, of Seaside, who discovered her New Year’s Eve, bobbing in the surf while entangled in fish netting. Unable to free the seal from her nylon trap, Megrath and Spivey took the bundle to the Seaside Aquarium, where owner Jack O’Brien removed the 6-month-old furl seal by cutting the ropes that held her captive. O’Brien said the young seal would have soon died had she not been freed from the fish netting, which he said often entraps seal and other sealife when it settles on the bottom of the ocean.

SEASIDE — An oil slick, classified as a “moderate spill,” spread across 2 miles of beach at Seaside on Monday and is being investigated today by an oil pollution team from the U.S. Coast Guard, according to a spokesman at the Coast Guard Air Station Astoria. The oil, which the Coast Guard said is not presently believed to be of any danger to wildlife, has spread from the Cove in Seaside north. The heaviest concentration is the general area of the Seaside Inn in downtown Seaside. An oil pollution expert and a photographer investigated the spill for three hours on Monday and made an aerial survey of the area from a helicopter this morning. The Environmental Protection Agency, which has been studying samples of the brownish ooze, said the brackish substance is not oil. Preliminary studies have identified the bubbly substance as a mixture of chlorophyll, the green coloring matter of plants, and fats. Though the substance looked like oil and was at first identified as such, it lacked the characteristic odor of oil and did not adhere significantly to the sands. Coast Guard personnel inspected the deposits and took samples to Portland for chemical analysis by the federal water quality administration. A Coast Guard spokesman said today it will be a number of days before the matter is fully analyzed and positively identified.

75 years ago — 1946

PORT TOWNSEND, Wash. — Commander of the Japanese submarine which shelled the Fort Stevens area



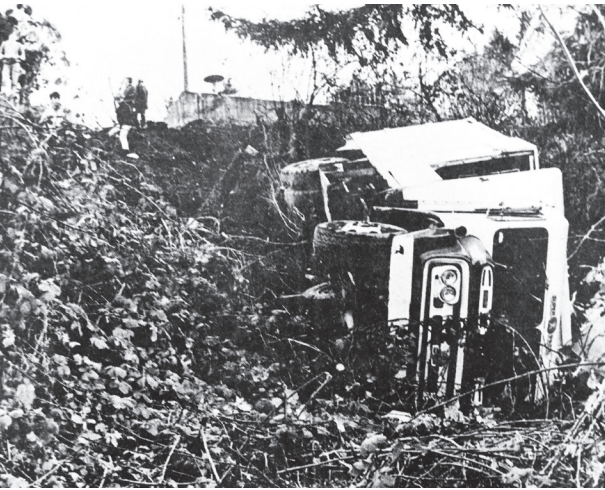
The Astor Street Opry Company gave children and parents a sane and sober place to celebrate New Year’s Eve in 2010.



People clam at sundown on New Year's Day as lights from two fishing boats shine in the distance in 2011.



Roger Thompson welcomes ‘Eve,’ an Alaska fur seal, at the Seaside Aquarium in 1971.



Two men bailed out of this truck near Grand Avenue and 39th Street in Astoria in 1971 after the brakes failed.

on the Columbia River on June 21, 1942, escaped American counter-fire because he “apparently knew the range of our coastal guns,” said Brig. Gen. James H. Cunningham, newly-retired commander of harbor defenses for Puget Sound. The submarine lobbed at least nine 5-inch shells into a virtually deserted beach area in a 15 minute barrage from a distance of several miles offshore. Cunningham said that despite 15 to 20 reports of submarines in the Strait of Juan De Fuca and Puget Sound, he believed that no enemy underseas craft actually entered those waters during the war. “No hostile shots were fired during the war by Puget Sound defenses,” Cunningham said, reviewing activities of his command which extended from north of Whidbey Island to Bremerton and west to Cape Flattery. Canadian coastal batteries, with whom the Americans joined in joint practice firing in Juan De Fuca straits, fired at the what they believed was a submarine on at least one occasion, Cunningham said, but American reports did not confirm presence of any enemy craft.



Looking east beyond a pair of ridge lines are the slopes of Mount Hood, seen through clear skies from the summit of Saddle Mountain in 2011.

SOUTH BEND, Wash. — Development of a new oyster dredge, which can operate in deep water, has resulted in staking claims in waters of Willapa Harbor where oysters are known to exist. Prior to the new deep water dredge such oyster beds could not be worked by any methods. About 30 oyster bed “discovery claims” have been filed in the office of Pacific County Auditor L.W. Homan. The filings are made under a law passed in 1915, and, apparently, “heretofore undiscovered” by harbor oystermen.

The U.S. Navy has assigned 250 beds in the Astoria naval hospital to the veterans’ administration, according to word just received by the Astoria Chamber of Commerce from U.S. Sen. Guy Cordon. Previously, 50 beds had been assigned for veterans’ use.

“Fishing on the Columbia,” a short moving picture feature emphasizing sport fishing on the river, is showing today and tomorrow at the Liberty Theater. It is being circulated throughout the nation’s moving picture theaters. The picture shows sport fishing from boats, and in addition shows some commercial fishing feature, including salmon spearing by Indians at Celilo Falls and salmon seining with horses in Astoria.

Six freighters with ammunition cargoes from the South Pacific are in the lower Columbia River today, three of them being unloaded at the Beaver ammunition point near Clatskanie. A fourth freighter may also be moored at the depot or nearby. The Dudley Fields reached the Tongue Point moorage today, waiting for her turn at the depot where she will discharge ammunition. Anchored off Tongue Point with the same cargo since Dec. 27 is the ship Edward Paine. The Dudley Fields lay over a full month in the Marshalls before departing with her cargo to the Columbia. One estimate was that she would wait three weeks for her turn at Beaver.



Many people went to Rockaway Beach on New Year’s Eve in 2010 to see the uncovered remains of the Emily G. Reed, a sailing ship that went aground in 1908.