

CONTACT US
ewilson@dailyastorian.com
(971) 704-1718

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IN ONE EAR • ELLEDA WILSON

AN EXPLANATION



The catchy headline on Today.com (bit.ly/finnpants), “Embracing **päntsdrunk**, the Finnish way of drinking alone in your underwear,” practically screamed a need for further research.

One of the experts on the topic quoted is **Brianna Volk** (pictured), who was raised in Astoria, is half Finnish and speaks the language fluently. She now lives in Portland, Maine, and owns the Scandinavian-influenced Portland Hunt + Alpine Club with her husband, **Andrew**.

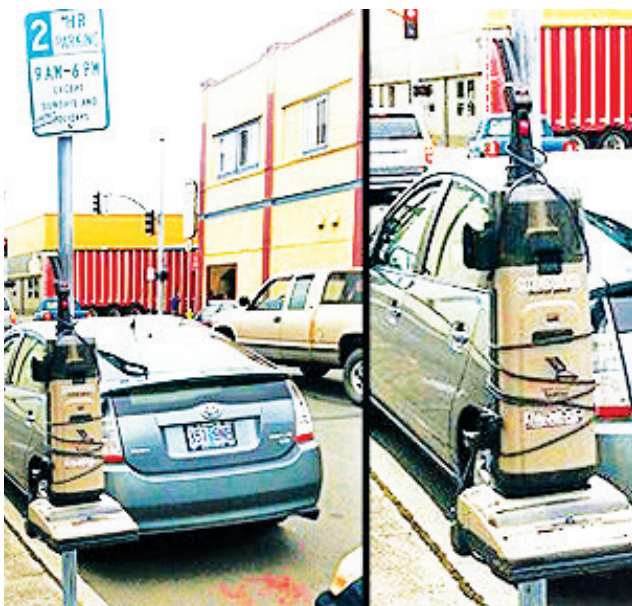
“Finns, like most Scandinavian cultures, are very good at being by themselves,” Brianna explained. “... We generally don’t say hello to one another on the street or on the bus and we’re used to enduring long, tough winters — sometimes in total darkness. For these reasons, enjoying a drink or two by yourself is a natural thing.

“If you’re drinking alone because you’re depressed or want to forget, that’s not **päntsdrunk**,” Volk said. “**Päntsdrunk** is more like having a glass of wine or beer and reading a book (in the near-nude) after you’ve just had a long week where you kicked ass.

“Now, you want to celebrate with something delicious ... I recommend a cocktail that is lower in alcohol, like a spritz or vermouth, so you’re not getting drunk, because again, that’s not the point.”

Perhaps this is why Finland is No. 1 for the World’s Happiest Countries in 2020, according to Forbes.com. So, get into the spirit of **päntsdrunk** — get into your skivvies and have a wine spritzer or two. But you’d better turn up the heat, first.

THE MEDIUM IS THE MESSAGE



Fun rerun: Sandie Kaye Dodson posted the photo shown with the caption, “I love my weird town.”

Yes, that really is an **upright vacuum cleaner** strapped by its cord to a two hour **parking sign** on the west side of **11th Street**. “Around 2 p.m., a city worker took it down,” Sandie recalled. “He didn’t look as amused as I was.”

Apparently someone called in and requested the offending appliance’s removal. Incidentally, it was the first such call in more than 30 years.

A little bird who works for the city, when asked why he thought the errant appliance was tied to a parking pole, was quick to explain. “Certainly,” he chirped. “Maybe they’re saying parking really sucks.” (*In One Ear*, 8/29/14)

A CLOSE CALL



From the Jan. 8, 1887 edition of The Daily Astorian: Pilot Neill reports that while the schooner Norway was being towed out, about nine o’clock last Thursday morning, and while the vessel and tug were abreast of the upper end of Sand Island, the **captain of the schooner fell overboard**.

The tug immediately slowed down and the crew manned a boat to rescue him; the schooner’s boat also put off. The captain was flung a hen coop, which buoyed him up till a boat got to him and took him aboard.

The schooner was then towed back about 2 miles, when the captain’s wife, who had assumed charge, said everything was all right, and to take the vessel to sea — which was done.

THE CAPTAIN DITHERED



Ever wonder how **sailors** were treated aboard merchant vessels in the late 1800s? **Pay** was often an issue, and such was the case on the British ship **Andrada**. **Liisa Penner**, archivist at the **Clatsop County Historical Society**, sent over a story that appeared in an October 1896 issue of *The Daily Morning Astorian*.

The aggrieved sailor, **William Downs**, hired onto the **Andrada** in Portland. He signed a note for a \$40 pay advance. But by the time he paid for clothes, lodging, etc., he was owed a balance of \$15. A dozen other crew members were in the same predicament.

When Downs approached **Capt. Adams**, he was told the balance owed would be settled in Astoria. But once here, the captain dithered. The British consul came aboard, offered more clothing to the men, but couldn’t help with the money issue.

After a two-day delay in port, the captain finally offered to advance the crewmen half of their pay, about \$200, which they refused. Even so, they were told they would have to go to sea anyway; and, if they refused to work, they would be “starved into subjection.”

When the ship was ready to set sail the next day, Downs and some men approached the captain, demanding to be put ashore if they weren’t going to be paid. The captain flatly refused. Six of the men gave up and went to work, the others held fast.

Downs knew that as the leader of the group, once at sea, he’d be subjected to “all manner of privations and hardships.” And, for delaying the ship’s departure over a pay dispute, he probably wouldn’t be compensated at all.

So, he slipped off his shoes, dropped over the side when **Andrada** was opposite Fort Stevens, and started to swim ashore. The steamer **Mendell** came out to get him, and he was taken back to the fort.

“We were not trying to create any disturbance by refusing to take the vessel out,” Downs asserted, “but were simply standing out for what was due us according to agreement.”

STRANGE CONNECTION



“I am researching the history of the **Forsstrom House** (theforsstromhouse.com),” owner **Lauri Krämer Serafin** reported, “trying to figure out what stories are true for our National Register of Historic Places application.” The house is pictured, courtesy of **John Goodenberger**.

“FamilySearch.org has Clatsop County deeds from 1852 to 1907, digitized and free to search ... The kicker is that you have to know the owner’s name to look it up in the index to locate it.”

“No worries, use the 1900 or 1910 census to figure that out,” she explained. But “beware of address changes ... our house has had three different addresses since constructed in 1894.

“... I was surprised how many land records were in the wife’s name only in Clatsop County during this time. It is important to look up the wife’s name in the index, or you might miss a transaction.

“I determined that the Forsstrom House was built by **Lucy ‘Lulu’ Warren** and her husband, **Henry C. Thompson**, after they purchased the property from her parents for the consideration of \$1 in October 1893. He was the Clatsop County treasurer at the time. Her parents were **D.K. and Sarah Warren** of Warrenton.”

Oregon pioneer and Warrenton founder **D.K. Warren** reclaimed 900 acres of land previously underwater through extensive diking. He built a mansion on the new acreage he created, which still stands today.

“I was curious if the Warrens were Mayflower Warrens, like my mother’s family,” Lauri continued. “No, but I found the initial ‘K’ stands for the **Knight** family. It turns out one of my ancestor’s sisters married into that Knight family in Marlboro, Vermont, and they lived next door.

“... It’s a strange connection!” Lauri noted. “**Lulu Warren** is a distant cousin by marriage. She was in the Forsstrom House for about 10 years.”

Are you humming “It’s a Small World” yet?

AMBLING ELK



‘A video of elk was taken by my daughter-in-law, **A Megan Abben**, around noon on Sunday, Jan. 3,” **Astorian Stewart Bell** wrote. A screenshot is shown; the video is here: bit.ly/SSElk

“For a while, one can hear and briefly see my grandson, **Maxwell Bell**, age almost 4, watching from a safe perch,” he explained. “Otherwise, it’s all elk, perhaps 50 of them, ambling south on Franklin Street in Seaside at about 14th Avenue.

“I wondered how they got there, because that neighborhood is a cul-de-sac between the ocean and the Nehalem River, just south of the river’s mouth. Answer: They must have swum across the river, because later my family saw them swim back!”

Megan shot another video at around 4 p.m., taken from the east shore of the Nehalem River, near the old high school, looking west and north. “It’s really lovely to watch,” Stewart noted. This video is also at the link above.

“The elk decided to return,” he added, “presumably the way they had come — **swimming** across the Nehalem, just before it turns west and empties into the ocean. Perhaps they found the 12th Avenue bridge too narrow.”

THE PRODIGAL BOAT



At last, almost 10 years later, a **fishing boat**, that swept away during the devastating **March 2011 Japanese tsunami**, has turned up off **Hachijo island**, about 400 miles south of its home town, Kesennuma, *The Guardian* reports (bit.ly/boatsback).

The 18-foot fiberglass boat, which was part of the town of Kesennuma’s fishing fleet, was identified by its registration number. Screenshots of the vessel are shown, courtesy of **ANN/Abema News**.

Because of the large amount of coral attached to the boat’s interior, one local expert speculated that it had swept across the Pacific Ocean to the West Coast of the United States, then floated to Southeast Asia on the north equatorial current, and finally headed north, home to Japan, on the Kuroshio current.

If you will recall, in 2011 and 2012, large amounts of tsunami debris arrived on the Oregon and Washington state coasts from Japan, including several similar boats, a couple of large docks and a soccer ball, among other oddities. This little boat is one of the few that turned the voyage into a round trip.

‘CHARMING SEASIDE TOWN’



Well, well, well. Astoria ranks **No. 2** in “**The 50 Best Places to Travel in 2021**,” according to *Travel + Leisure* (bit.ly/TandL50).

The review starts much as expected, mentioning “**The Goonies**” being filmed here. Yet one wonders if the writer has ever been to Astoria, when she calls the city a “charming seaside town.”

She extols the “colorful Victorian houses and treasure-filled antique shops,” but then snarks that “around these parts, freshness matters only for fish and beer.” Accordingly, the plethora of seafood eateries and craft beer joints impressed the writer, as did the **Cannery Pier Hotel & Spa**.

Yet there was no mention of the **Astoria Column**, the **Astoria Bridge**, the **Astoria Riverwalk** or even the amazing waterfront views, just to mention a few of Astoria’s wonders.

And, the accompanying photo was even more baffling: A view of **Saddle Mountain** and a lot of trees. Huh? A more Astoria-appropriate photo has been substituted here.

By the way, No. 1 was Alaska’s coast; No. 50 was Wyoming.