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IN ONE EAR • ELLEDA WILSON

A HOME FOR HADDIE



At last: A lobster story with a happy, not boiling, ending.

“This is **Haddie!**” **Get Maine Lobster** posted on their Facebook page on Nov. 9. “She is a **cotton candy lobster** who was caught over the weekend by Maine lobsterman **Bill Coppersmith** ...” The critter was found in Casco Bay on Nov. 5, and is pictured, courtesy of Get-MaineLobster.com.

FoxNews.com reported that as soon as the fisherman saw Haddie (named for his granddaughter), he let the CEO of Get Maine Lobster, **Mark Murrell**, know about his amazingly rare find.

“This is the first cotton candy we have discovered,” Murrell said. “Finding one like this is a true gift. It shows Mother Nature’s true artistry.”

True gift, indeed. “The odds of a cotton candy lobster being caught is **1 in 100 million!**” the Facebook post noted. “Because of this, we want to preserve her.”

The lobstering company left her in a tank on the wharf, and put out feelers for a permanent home. “We want to make sure she lives the rest of her life in safety and comfort, since rare colored lobsters have a harder time surviving in the wild.”

Near the end of November, she was officially adopted by the Seacoast Science Center in Rye, New Hampshire, where she will safely spend the rest of her days — which may be a while, since lobsters can live to be 100.

A FIRST



The world’s **first zero-emission, no-crew all-electric container ship**, **Yara Birkeland**, completed her maiden voyage from **Horten to Oslo, Norway**, via fjord, in mid-November, **MarineLog** reports.

Upon her arrival, she was greeted by **Prime Minister Jonas Store** and several other notables, including **Svein Holsether**, CEO of Yara International, the fertilizer company that owns the 120 TEU (20-foot equivalent) vessel, which is pictured, courtesy of Yara.

The Birkeland will not be ocean-going. Instead, she will be used to transport mineral fertilizer between the Norwegian cities of Porsgrunn and Brevik, around 8 miles. Using this ship will replace 40,000 trips by diesel trucks per year, which is expected to eliminate about 1,100 tons of carbon dioxide emissions.

Yara Birkeland now starts a two-year testing period. If all goes as expected, she’ll be officially certified as an autonomous, all-electric container ship. Which is good for the environment, indeed; but a not-so-great harbinger for future mariners.

A TRUE ASTORIAN



An interesting tidbit: An old blog posting from 2008 titled, “A true Astorian ... Oregon, that is,” written by **Matt Crichton**, who goes on to enumerate 60 identifying “true Astorian” factors including:

“You know what a hill rat is ... you know what **sea lions** sound like ... you’ve thrown popcorn at Sneak (not Snake) at ‘**Shanghaied in Astoria**’ ... you occasionally slip up and say ‘uff-da!’ ... you really have to walk uphill both ways to get somewhere ... you remember when there was no roundabout ... you’ve been sledding on **Eighth Street** ...

“You know at least five different words for ‘rain’ ... you know the difference between a **banana slug** and a regular slug ... (and) you always said you couldn’t wait to get out of Astoria, but you still live there, or go back often.”

ASTORIA’S MAGIC



“In 2017, my wife **Alexandra** and I were living in **London**, and quite happy,” **Portlander Pete Harrington** wrote in an email, “when all of a sudden we received the news that the visa that Alexandra had applied for, after being head-hunted for a job in the U.S., had finally come through.

“... However, due to the vagaries of the U.S. immigration system, despite having a job offer, she still had to join the visa lottery system and sit tight. That process took two years!

“... And why **Portland** you might ask? Well, one of Alexandra’s sisters lives in Portland, and Alexandra had applied for a job here to be closer to her and her young family. I had just started a new company, and could work from anywhere (how pandemic of me), so all in all, it felt like a good opportunity for adventure.

“Visa wrangles aside, we had visited Portland in fall, 2016, to get a feel for the place, and someone suggested we visit Astoria. So we did! And it was wonderful, and whimsical, and romantic and everything else that you, of course, already know.

“Not that we had a thought to having a **child** then, but when we started trying for a family in 2019, and began the names quest, it started and stopped with **Astoria!** I guess we wanted to somehow impart a bit of that magic to our daughter — presuming it was a girl, and it was!

The most beautiful thing about the name is whenever someone asks what the name is (after invariably mistaking her for a boy), they light up and, to a person, recount their own Astoria story. ‘Oh, my mum lives there now, she loves it!’ or, ‘I grew up there!’ or, ‘I want to live there!’ Things to that effect.”

“So,” he added, “it seems her name is a catalyst for sharing stories, so perhaps the magic we had hoped to impart has begun to gravitate out.”

HERO OF THE HOUR



The **Spokane Daily Chronicle**, on **Jan. 1, 1901**, described the heroic actions of one of their own, **Frank M. Miles**, who had recently moved from Spokane to Woods, an unincorporated area just north of Pacific City.

On the afternoon of **Dec. 23, 1900**, Miles was taking a windy walk on Woods Beach with some small boys when he spotted the schooner **Pioneer**, carrying 500,000 feet of lumber, drifting aimlessly in the rough seas, distress signals flying. Miles sent the boys to a nearby settlement for help and, most importantly, ropes.

The schooner finally ran aground about 300 yards from shore, just as it was getting dark. The heavy seas compelled the sailors to climb the rigging, where they stayed; the Pioneer was being battered apart beneath them.

By then, Miles was ready. He threw off his clothes, tied a rope around his waist, gave the other end of the rope to the people who had arrived on the beach, and ran into the water. Incredibly, he made it to the vessel in the pitch dark, and called for one of the sailors to jump in and join him in the water.

As soon as the man was nearby, Miles grabbed him, tugged on the rope, and the two men were hauled ashore. Miles kept on with his grueling mission until he had rescued all nine men, which took until 5 a.m. There was no sign of the unfortunate captain.

Without Miles’ help, the men would have eventually been forced off the rigging and drowned. Or, if the ship had broken apart before they went into the water, they would have been battered to death by floating lumber.

“Mr. Miles,” the newspaper proclaimed, “... was the hero of the hour.”

GIMME SHELTER



Fun rerun: **Alice Nelson** spotted what she called a “**tsunami escape ball**” for sale recently at **The Planter Box**, in Long Beach, Washington. She posted her photo of it (pictured) on a local Facebook group, noting that the price was \$6,900.

Her post caused quite a stir of interest among the local group members, who wondered if it was the same tsunami rescue pod that **Jeanne (Johnson) Brooks**, of Ocean Park, Washington, bought last year. She was the first U.S. consumer to obtain one.

Nope, different company, although both are in Washington. The item at the nursery was a **Rescue Pod**, made by **Reliable Emergency Shelters** (tsunamipods.com) of Vancouver, Washington.

“I still have my original two-person **Survival Capsule** in my garage,” Jeanne noted. “I am trading it in for a four-person to accommodate for guests, in the event of emergency, as soon as **Julian Sharpe**, president of Survival-Capsule.com (in Mukilteo) has the four-person U.S. version available.” (In One Ear, 4/6/2018)

VEGED



The editor of **The Daily Morning Astorian** was far too vexed over an article about Astoria in **The Northwest Monthly Illustrated Magazine**’s December 1885 edition to entertain any holiday spirit during his tirade on Dec. 16, 1885.

A blistering review of the writer was followed by calling the story a “journalistic abortion.” All of this venom led up to a rave review of an in-depth article about Astoria in the June 1883 edition of **West Shore** magazine — ironically *not* considered outdated, in the editor’s opinion.

The Astoria story, which includes several illustrations, sits in a prime spot, and runs first in the periodical, which can be read at bit.ly/WSM1883. All in all, it’s a fascinating view of what Astoria was like in that era.

West Shore extolled Astoria’s many virtues, among them the port, the booming fishing and canning industries, the timber industry and the resulting saw mills, ship-building and, of course, Astoria’s tourist attractions and proximity to sought-after coastal beach locations in Washington and Oregon.

“In conclusion, we will say to him who has capital to invest, or who is possessed of sufficient industry, pluck and energy,” West Shore summarized, “Astoria and the surrounding country offer splendid inducements.” One can almost see the editor contentedly smile after reading those words.

HABITAT HITCHHIKERS



The **Great Pacific Garbage Patch**, a 610,000 square mile area containing 79,000 metric tons of trash, swirls around in the Pacific Ocean.

A recent study, **NewAtlas.com** reports, has shown that **land creatures** that normally live on the coast are **hitchhiking** a ride on debris and traveling through the open ocean to colonize the garbage patch, and are competing with open-ocean organisms already in residence.

Surprisingly, the runaway critters are not only surviving, but thriving in their new habitat, but no one is sure how. Scientists guess the travelers drift into “hot spots” in the gyre where they can find food, or perhaps the floating plastic acts like a reef that attracts sources of food.

“The open ocean has not been habitable for coastal organisms until now,” scientist **Greg Ruiz** said. “Partly because of habitat limitation — there wasn’t plastic there in the past — and partly, we thought, because it was a food desert.”

Will these vagabonds manage to reach new coasts to colonize? Just how this change in the garbage patch’s marine environment will evolve remains to be seen. (Photo courtesy of The Ocean Cleanup)