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IN ONE EAR • ELLEDA WILSON

'MY HEART FEELS GOOD'



Dante Williams delivered his help for Santa to the Warrenton Head Start, as they were really in need," his proud grandmother, **Brenda McKune**, wrote. She and her husband, **Lewis**, live in Warrenton.

Every year, Dante collects money so children who wouldn't otherwise have a Christmas present will not be overlooked.

His generosity started when he was 7, when he collected change for the Wishing Tree program. Children in need write gift requests on paper bell ornaments, which are hung on Christmas trees in local businesses. People pick a tag off the tree, buy the requested present and turn it in at a Wishing Tree collection center.

Dante was able to take four tags off the tree that first year, and has been helping other children each year since, following the shining example of his grandmother.

Brenda started **ScrapHunger**, an event to feed those in need, more than 10 years ago. The idea for the event came to her in her sleep, after going to bed with a "heavy heart" after realizing the Warrenton food pantry's shelves were getting bare one year.

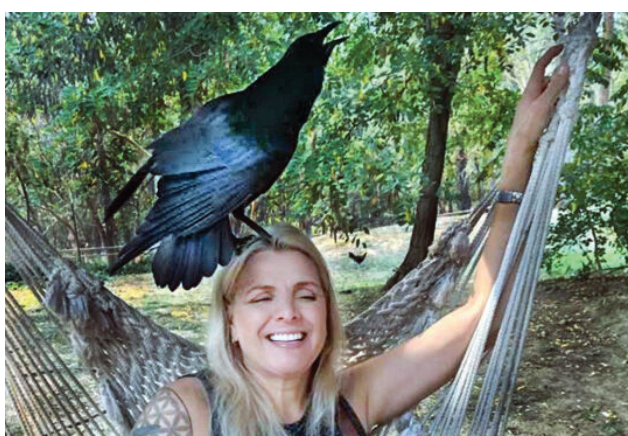
"He's already making plans for next year," Brenda noted. "He knows I'm hoping to start ScrapHunger again, so he says we can add his helping Santa, and get way more help. His ideas are running wild. But that's good."

Dante saved up **\$247** this year, and he's grateful to all who helped him. "We shopped and filled the trunk," Brenda reported.

"Grandma, there's a lot of help needed this year," Dante told Brenda recently. "Santa is way too busy. I really like doing this. My heart feels good."

"I had a hard time keeping back the tears," Brenda recalled. "He's 10 now. And he has no plan of stopping. I'm proud of him."

'HE'S LIKE A PERSON'



A friendly talking crow made the AP News circuit recently when he turned up at an elementary school in **Grants Pass** in November. He made himself right at home, pecking into classrooms and pecking on doors. He eventually managed to get into a fifth grade classroom, and noshed on some snacks.

The crow was quite taken with the children. He even landed on some people's heads, and was quite an enjoyable, chatty guest, aside from his swearing. Since the bird was not inclined to leave, a wildlife control from the Oregon State Police showed up, hoping to capture him. He had no luck.

The crow, whose name is "**Cosmo**," was actually almost 20 miles from home. He lives with wildlife rescuer **Ja'Neal Shattuck** in Williams, and is free to roam around the neighborhood and visit, which most don't mind.

But when Shattuck got back home from a Thanksgiving visit, Cosmo was gone. She was heartbroken, and posted a plea on Facebook for his return. "He's like a person," she said, "not a bird." She and Cosmo are pictured in a photo from her Facebook page.

Eventually she found out that one disgruntled neighbor had captured Cosmo and turned him over to an animal sanctuary, and that he had been released in Grants Pass. But when he was left there, he started looking for his home almost immediately, talking to people and making a fuss.

Then Cosmo spotted and followed a van belonging to one of Shattuck's friends who lived in Grants Pass, and that's how he wound up at the school, and then in the fifth grade classroom of the friend's child.

Once the child got home and told his father the story about the talkative visiting crow, dad knew it had to be Cosmo, and let Shattuck know. Her daughter, **Daphnie Colpron**, arrived, and was able to capture the bird with patience and sardine offerings.

Now Cosmo is happily back at home, well in time for Christmas. However, being a sensible crow, he no longer visits the nasty neighbors who had him shanghaied. And, hopefully, they'll all live happily ever after.

DEAR SANTA



Children were writing **Dear Santa** letters to newspapers by at least 1874, the Oregon Digital Newspaper Program says, certain Santa could not possibly miss a letter that had been published in a newspaper. Here are two samples:

From the **Rogue News** in Ashland, Dec. 19, 1956: "Dear Santa, I have not been a very good boy this year, but I would like something. I would like some Tinkertoys. Please bring my mommie a mink coat and my daddy a Cad(illac). Please bring my sister a teddy bear. Bring my neighbor **Elvis Presley**. (It does not have to be gift wrapped). Bring my dog a bone, my cat a mouse and my squirrel a nut. **Robert Wasner**. P.S. Please don't forget my Tinkertoys."

And, it would be hard to top this whopper from **The Sunday Oregonian**, dated Dec. 21, 1919: "Dear Santa Clause. I've been waiting for you a long time. I am nine months old. I want a trunk full of silk dresses and a necklace with my Mother's picture and a ring, with a ruby. I've been a awful good girl. **Arvilla**."

GO GOONIES



Even "The Goonies" fans get a Christmas treat this year. According Variety.com, **Warner Bros.** didn't give up on a Goonies-inspired TV show, and kept shopping it around, even after the project was dumped by Fox for being "skewed too young."

The "Untitled Film Re-Enactment Project" revolves around the story of a teacher and a group of high schoolers who recreate the original iconic movie shot by shot. Many months after the Fox deal fail, and the COVID-19 shutdowns, and being renamed "**Our Time**," the show is a go, and now has a home at **Disney+**, where it is being redeveloped. The original movie cast is shown, courtesy of Warner Bros.

The Donners' Company, owned by "The Goonies" late director **Richard Donner**, and his wife, **Lauren Shuler Donner**, and **Amblin Entertainment**, whose chairman is **Steven Spielberg**, producer of the movie, are still involved. Now it's all a wait-and-see.

IF YOU'RE NAUGHTY, BEWARE



The Ear is very glad that as an earlet nobody mentioned **Krampus**, as he would have scared the twizzlers out of her. In case you don't know, half-man, half-beast Krampus is rather like **St. Nicholas**' (aka Santa Claus) alter-ego.

The two travel together from house to house, and while kindly Santa rewards the nice children with goodies to eat and presents, devil Krampus attends to the naughty ones — we aren't talking about coal in the Christmas stocking, here — and it ain't pretty. Pictured, St. Nick and Krampus visit a family. This may not end well.

Mr. Wikipedia says Krampus is from the folklore of the Alpine countries, and is sometimes thought to be the son of **Hel** in Norse mythology.

Whoever he is, now that we know about him, it behooves us to behave. Or else.



LET THERE BE LIGHT

The **Daily Astorian**, Dec. 25, 1885, reported a Christmas Eve surprise for the city:

"Nine years ago on the ninth of this month, **J. C. Trullinger** (pictured) lit the first street lamp in Astoria: it was an oil concern such as has dimly dotted the streets during the past year to the exclusion of the Astoria Gaslight company's better system, but it was a light, and beat no light all to pieces. Last night Mr. Trullinger lit the **first electric light in Astoria**.

"... At twenty minutes to seven last evening, for the first time in the history of our city, the electric light streamed out from a glass globe strung on wires stretched from The Astorian building, making all other lights look dim and attracting hundreds of spectators who, hurrying home with Christmas presents for wife and children, stopped to see the great luminous ball that shone like a sun lighting up the streets that it intersected.

"... Another light had been put up between Mr. Trullinger's office and his residence, lighting up that portion of the city, and plainly visible at Fort Stevens. The other eight lamps, only 10 having so far arrived, were burning brightly at the mill, and will be distributed at various points throughout the city today if possible.

"... The light last night was calculated to be 300 candle power more than any of the lights now in operation in Portland, a fact which is of interest to Astorians, who naturally like to have the best as long as it is going."

Note: Trullinger was the operator of Astoria's first electric plant, and owed a large tract of land for logging, along with WestShore sawmills and a 320-acre farm. He also had seven patented inventions, including the duplex axe.

ORA JOLABJOR



Thanks to maritime writer Peter Marsh for this tip: France 24 did a story about a special **Iceland Christmas beer**, **RVK Brewing's Ora Jolabjor**, made of ... peas and marinated red cabbage (mainstays in the nation's Yuletide dinner).

Master brewer **Valgeir Valgeirsson** (pictured) invented the concoction. "It's a 5.2% amber ale ..." he noted. "The beans and cabbage, they work more or less in the background. There's tons of it in the beer, but it is not the main profile. So yes, it is very enjoyable by itself." His previous Yuletide beers have been made out of algae, Christmas tree trunks and dried fish (which, he admitted, "was strange").

Note: The first batch of Ora Jolabjor sold out "within hours." (Still shots courtesy of France 24)

PLEASE DON'T SING



Fun rerun: A Christmas song was created by **artificial intelligence**, Smithsonian.com reports. **Hang Chu**, a Ph.D. student, trained a neural network using 100 hours of digital music, footage from the video game "Just Dance," 50 hours of song lyrics, and images with captions.

After the network digested all that, he fed it a generic photo of a Christmas tree and let 'er rip. Researchers dubbed the result "neural karaoke." They were being polite.

With a piano tinkling in the background, the monotone femaleish voice intones about: "lots and lots and lots of flowers," and "I swear it's Christmas Eve. I hope that is what you say ... I've always been there for the rest of our lives. A hundred and a half hour ago. I'm glad to meet you."

"White Christmas" it ain't. (*In One Ear*, 12/21/2018)