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IN ONE EAR • ELLEDA WILSON

ROCKING RETIREMENT



John Stuper, former Major League Baseball pitcher and World Series champion, and **coach** for the **Yale baseball team** for the last 30 years, **retired** on May 14 after coaching a doubleheader against longtime nemesis Harvard (Yale won both games).

Astorian **Dan Supple** was first contacted in 2020, when the coach originally planned to retire. Some friends wanted to give the coach one of Dan's special Supple Rockers, works of art made from baseball bats, as a retirement gift. Although Stuper's retirement was delayed by COVID interrupting the baseball seasons of 2020 and 2021, the desire to give the coach one of those chairs never waned.

On retirement day, there was a huge turnout of friends and his former players at George H. W. Bush Field in New Haven, Connecticut, to watch the games and wish coach Stuper well. "It's overwhelming, you're going to make me cry," Stuper told NBCCConnecticut.com, referring to the crowd. He looked pretty tearful when he saw that Supple Rocker, too.

"The rockers can jerk some tears out of the toughest coaches," Dan noted.

"What makes it so exciting is the smiles we put on the faces of the people at the stadium that day," he added. "My wife, Kim, and I, we are having so much fun with these rocking chairs."

SAVED BY STYROFOAM



The **rescue** of some creative crew members has been in the news recently. Here's what happened:

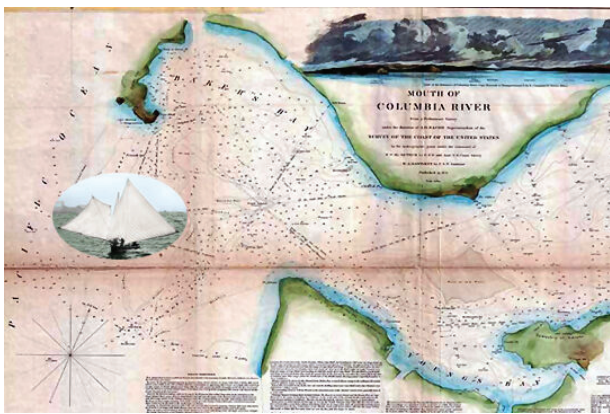
According to Maritime-Executive.com, the **Zidane Express** was sailing tandem with another ship on May 26 on an overnight trip when the other ship lost sight of the Zidane. That's because heavy seas had caused water to get into the Zidane's engine room, and the ship lost both power and radio contact.

The four crew members aboard knew the ship was probably done for, so they quickly found several styrofoam coolers, and some rope, and strung the coolers together to create a raft. When they abandoned ship, they also took along lots of bottled water and dried food — a smart move, since the ship sank.

When their companion ship reached port, and the Zidane hadn't shown up by the following morning, they reported the Zidane as missing. Search and rescue crews went out to cover a 345 square mile area in the **Bali Sea**, also asking for help from other vessels in the area.

A fishing boat found the lost crew, four days into their ordeal, styrofoam raft intact, around 60 miles from shore. All of the men were, amazingly, in good shape, and returned to shore. (Photo: SAR Banyuwangi)

DRIFTING TO SEA



One shouldn't forget how dangerous the Columbia River can be, and how many sailors have been pulled out to sea by an outgoing tide to an almost certain death.

One such tale appeared in the **June 9, 1887**, edition of **The Daily Morning Astorian**:

"Nils Hansen, of the **West Coast Packing Co.**, drifted out through the south channel last Tuesday morning, about 3 o'clock, and into the breakers, where the boat upset and the net went adrift.

"He clambered onto the capsized boat, drifting to sea, and at 3 o'clock that afternoon was picked up 20 miles out to sea, by the government steamer **McArthur**, and carried to Shoalwater Bay, from whence he arrived in safety yesterday afternoon. He bewails the loss of his boat and net, but is thankful that he escaped with his life.

"It is no unusual experience for Columbia River fishermen to thus drift out on the trackless ocean, out of sight of land or seeming hope of rescue, and it is only by the fortunate passing of a vessel that the rescue is made."

PRICELESS



Nancy Murray of Naselle, Washington, won free tickets to the "Antiques Roadshow" tour in their yearly sweepstakes. Each ticket holder can bring along two items for appraisal, so off she went to Boise, Idaho, for the May 31 event.

"Item No. 1: A set of **antique prostheses**, a hand and a hook, and the accompanying harness," she explained. "I got them last year at a thrift shop and paid \$35 for the set. I felt lucky to get **James Supp** for this appraisal, not only because he wears a handlebar mustache, has piercing blue eyes and a dastardly sense of humor, but because he knew so much about the prostheses! His area of expertise is antique tools.

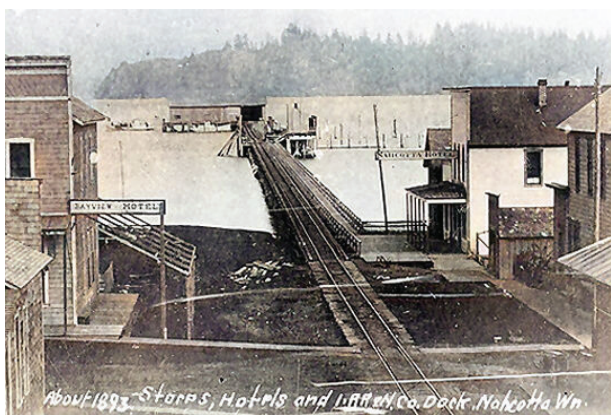
"... He took one look, and his eyes lit up. He grabbed the hand and asked, 'Can I borrow this for a minute?' I said yes, and he trotted down behind the other tables with it and snuck up behind one of the other appraisers, and tapped her on the shoulder with it. It was funny. We all got a chuckle. He returned and said, 'Sorry, it's been a long day!'"

"He said the set was probably made around 1920 to 1925. It's made of wood, brass, nickel, leather and repurposed Army surplus straps and buckles. He demonstrated how the harness was worn, and how the hand and hook could be opened and closed by a cord that ran up the arm to another section of the harness worn around the bicep, and also the lever on the hand.

"He recommended they be restored and conserved. He valued them at \$100 to \$400 each. He seemed genuinely intrigued, and spent a decent amount of time talking about them and goofing around a bit, and letting us take pictures with him.

"Item No. 2: A small, original, pen and ink **abstract expressionist drawing** that I got at Goodwill for \$2.99. The artist is unknown, because we can't make out the signature, and neither could the appraiser, but the date is 1955. The appraiser ... said it was worth maybe \$100 to \$150 at auction."

"The whole experience," she added, "was a blast, and priceless."



LAST STOP, NAHCOTTA

A little railroad history from **The Daily Morning Astorian, June 9, 1888**:

• **Joseph Kamm** bought a new locomotive at Pocatello, Idaho, for the Ilwaco, Washington Territory, railroad. **L.A. Loomis** goes to San Francisco tomorrow to buy cars and other necessary accouterments for the railroad.

Note: That was the first of six locomotives they bought for the Ilwaco Railroad Navigation Co. (aka the **Clamshell Railroad**), for \$2,500 (about \$76,000 today). Construction on the railroad had begun in Ilwaco that same year, with tracks being laid that were extended to, and finally ended at, Nahcotta (pictured), in 1889.

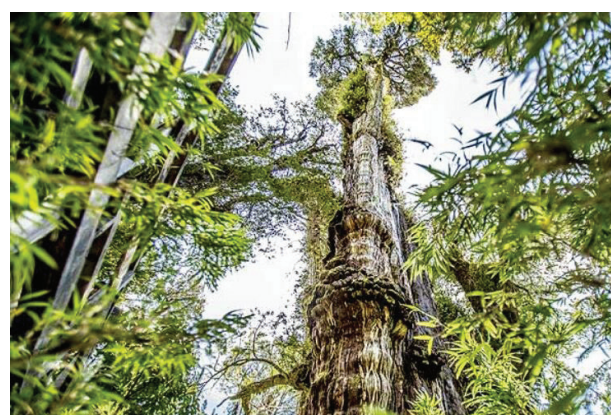
Tourists from across the Columbia River would arrive in Ilwaco to explore the burgeoning recreation possibilities on the peninsula, only to be at the whim of the tides, as the steamers could only dock at high tide.

The stops were Holman Station, Seaview, Long Beach, Tioga (also Long Beach), Breakers Station, Pacific Park, Cranberry Station, Oceanside, Loomis, Ocean Park and Nahcotta. Oysterville couldn't raise enough money to have an extension run there.

In 1900, Loomis sold his stock to the Oregon Railway and Navigation Co., and in 1908, a terminal was added at Megler, the town that used to be at the other end of the Astoria Bridge.

Eventually, the use of the cars and trucks and ferries cut into the railroad's business to such an extent it was no longer worth running. The rail line was officially abandoned in 1930.

OLDER THAN METHUSELAH



No doubt the North Coast has some old trees; some have even been around a century or two. But the latest candidate for **Oldest Tree in the World** is a Patagonian cypress named **Alerce Milenario**, or Gran Abuelo, the "great-grandfather," at **Alerce Costero National Park** in **Chile**, SmithsonianMag.com reports.

That's the belief of **Jonathan Barichivich**, a Chilean environmental scientist, anyway, who estimates the tree is 5,484 years old, which makes it more ancient than the current contender, **Methuselah**, a 4,853-year-old bristlecone pine in California.

He couldn't figure out the age the normal way, since a regular core sampler can't penetrate to the center of the 13-foot wide tree. So instead, he used a partial core sample of 2,400 growth rings, and calculated the age and growth from there using statistics.

With this new age estimation, he hopes the tree will now get federal protection, which would stop people from trampling on and damaging its roots. "To me, this tree is like a family member," Barichivich said.

By the way, he has one other estimate: Only 28% of the tree is still alive. (Photo: El Mercurio (archivo))

REMEDIES



Tidbits from **The Daily Morning Astorian, June 9, 1888**:

• Astoria No. 1's fire engine was engaged in religious duty yesterday in a holy attempt to **flush** the filthy **Main Street sewer**. Cleanliness is not only next to, but is part and parcel of godliness, and it is godly work to keep the streets from smelling so loud that people cry out for carbolic acid and the coroner as they pass quickly by.

• **Paine's Celery Compound**: Cures nervous prostration, nervous headache, neuralgia, nervous weakness, stomach and liver diseases, rheumatism dyspepsia and all affections of the kidneys. \$1 (\$30 now).

Note: People probably just forgot what was wrong with them after taking this; while some of its contents are a bit of celery and coriander seed and hydrochloric acid, the main ingredient was alcohol.

• Look out for the man who is advertising an infallible **cure for a corn**, price \$1, and money refunded if the corn does not disappear. If you send him a dollar, you will receive by return mail the following recipe: "Cut off your toe."

A TASTE OF SECURITY



The Associated Press reports that a Finnish brewery, **Olaf Brewing**, in celebration of Finland and Sweden asking to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, has produced a new lager.

"**Otan olutta**," "I'll have a beer" in Finnish, is also a play on words; the French abbreviation for NATO is "OTAN," French being one of NATO's official languages.

The blue-labeled can features a smiling, beer-drinking cartoon knight whose armor bears the NATO symbol, a compass. The beer also honors the town of **Savonlinna**, where the brewery is located, near the Russian border.

Brewery CEO **Petteri Vanttinen** noted that the beer has "a taste of security, with a hint of freedom." (Photo: Soila Puurtinen/Lehtikuvaa via AP)