

Siuslaw News
P.O. Box 10
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Opinion

DEAR READERS:
Seeking letters

Have something on your mind? Let the community know by writing a letter to the editor today. —Editor

125TH ANNIVERSARY FLASHBACK

1890 | THE WEST ❖ FLORENCE TIMES ❖ THE SIUSLAW OAR ❖ THE SIUSLAW NEWS ❖ SIUSLAW NEWS | 2015

This year marks Siuslaw News' quasiquintennial, our 125th anniversary, a remarkable achievement for any business in a small community like Florence. To commemorate this milestone, throughout the year we'll feature some of the town's history as originally published in the newspaper, including historic articles and photos from more than a century ago. —Editor

AquaDart — Made in Florence

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED JUNE 19, 1969
THE SIUSLAW NEWS, VOL. 9, NO. 24

Skimming lightly over the surface of the water, Florence's newest manufactured product looks like an over-sized surfboard powered by an outboard motor. And, basically, that is what an AquaDart is, according to Al Millstead and Ron Fisher, president and vice president of Century Manufacturing Corp. of Florence.

Made of fiberglass, the one-man craft is capable of moving through the water at speeds up to 60 miles per hour with a full-grown adult riding it.

"The AquaDart is a flat-bottomed craft that is eight feet long, 40 inches wide and four to six inches deep," Millstead said. "It is capable of turning end for end in its own length at 20 or 30 miles per hour and will carry a person weighing 300 pounds or more through the water with a six to 10 horse power motor."

Millstead explained that about 500 of the craft had been manufactured in California in the early 1960s, but that the company had stopped production three years ago due to financial difficulties.

"We heard about them from a man who had seen one operate before. It sounded like a good product. We went to the company and

bought their molds and all rights to them. Then we brought them to Florence and began making them last May 15," Millstead said.

Produced in two models, the Scotchman and the Sportsman, the craft will sell for between \$189 and \$220 as standard models, less motor.

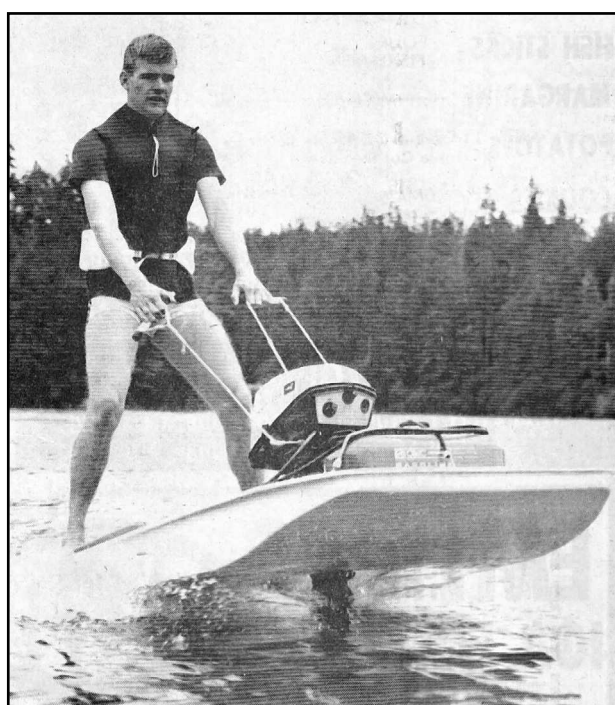
"You can have various accessories or have one custom made for extra cost," Fisher added.

"They are safe for anyone from eight years of age on up," Millstead said. "The exterior is made of fiberglass with foam flotation inside. They can't sink in normal operation. The motor mounting is made of solid mahogany and will take an outboard motor up to 25 horse power.

"They are practically impossible to turn over and if you are thrown off, the boat is designed to turn away from you and the motor is designed to either stop or go into neutral. They are engineered for complete safety."

The rider of an AquaDart stands on the craft with his feet placed on two non-slip surfaces on the deck.

Control of the motor, gas, gears and direction are provided by ropes connected to the motor and gripped by the rider.



AquaDart provides thrills and speed for the rider. The one-man craft can reach 60 miles per hour.

SIUSLAW NEWS FILE PHOTO

"The shifting of body weight is also a directional control factor," Millstead said.

Gasoline for the motor is stored in a tank mounted on the front of the craft.

Construction of an AquaDart begins with

the waxing of a mold at the company's plant on First Street. A thin coat of color agent is then sprayed on the waxed mild, followed by a 3/16 inch application of fiberglass from a "chopper gun" that mixes the fiberglass and resin in one operation.

After the fiberglass is sprayed in the mold, it is rolled out to remove all air bubbles. The excess fiberglass is then trimmed and one inch of foam flotation is added.

The section is then removed from the mold and the top and bottom sections are cemented together with fiberglass.

The transom is placed on the hull along with boards around the motor well to provide additional motor stability.

"After that, all you have to do is put a motor on and go for the ride of your life," Millstead said.

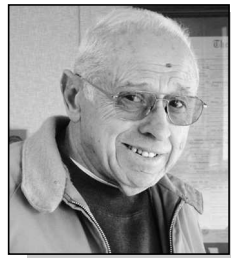
To introduce the AquaDart to the dealers that will be handling it, a dealer showing will be held in Florence the first part of July.

"We will be in full production by then," Millstead said, "and ready to take orders for immediate delivery."

At the present time, the company employs three people in its plant.

Millstead said, "Demand for the AquaDart will dictate future expansion of the company, but we hope to increase our production and staff in the near future." ❖

NEIGHBORS



A dog named Mocha

BOB JACKSON
NEIGHBORHOOD CORRESPONDENT
For the Siuslaw News

Once had a fleeting "love affair" with a big yellow Labrador, but I suspect she, like in the song, pretty much "called everybody darling" — although I always liked to think that perhaps she liked me best.

Mocha seemed like a strange name for a dog. Her owner, Debra Glenzer, confused me even more by explaining: "All my friends loved to have a mocha drink, but I hated coffee, and because this beautiful yellow lab would be loved by all, I gave her the name Mocha."

Whelped Sept. 18, 2002, she was registered with AKC on Dec. 27, listing her parents as Sir Cian McGregor and Lady Helen of Pit N Shell. (I don't pretend to understand any of this, I only repeat what I am told.)

Her proud owners, Deb and Sheldon Glenzer, stated that Mocha graduated from Valley View Canine All Breed Training with a diploma in obedience, also receiving a beautiful maroon ribbon for "Most Improved." She was spayed in December 2003 and never had any litters.

Growing up on a small acreage on

the Sandy River, near Boring, Ore., she must have loved being in the country. Roaming free and unfettered, she could disappear down to the Sandy River 300 feet below her property.

There were the "not too unusual" trips to the vet, like the time she got a big marrow bone wedged into her jaw area. A hacksaw was used to no avail, but with anesthesia she was relaxed enough for the vet to remove the bone. While in the veterinarian's waiting room, she yawned and revealed something they were able to dislodge themselves, thus evading another expensive visit.

It was decided that she needed a companion, so a trip to the pound resulted in adoption of a purebred Brittany Spaniel that had been rescued from a puppy mill. Her new brother was named Dallas because that was where he was rescued. And because Mocha had been "fixed," the two dogs' loving relationship was purely platonic.

Deb and Sheldon decided to make a move to the Oregon coast, to a place they called "beautiful Florence," settling right on the Siuslaw River in a gated adult community of something like 550 homes

named Green Trees. They purchased a riverfront home very near our own, and soon, several times every day I was to see them happily walking by with these two magnificent animals tugging on their leashes.

One day I was out by the street as they passed, then in a magical moment the big yellow lab jerked free from the leash and with a wildly wagging tail bounded towards me. Whining and panting she passed back and forth between my bowlegs, leaving a coating of dog hair as she went. This was almost a daily occurrence, even from half a block away,

she would break away and come running. Nearly bowling me over, she would always go through the same "through the legs" routine, and then eagerly enjoy a lot of petting and ear scratching.

Eventually, Dallas the spaniel, crippled by age, was "put to sleep;" however, Mocha was able to spend several more years swimming in the river and taking long walks with Deb and Sheldon. Inevitably, Mocha was to join Dallas in that big Valhalla dog park in the sky, and we mere humans, well, we were left with a lot of pleasant memories.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor concerning issues affecting the Florence area and Lane County.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters should be limited to about 300 words and must include the writer's full name, address and phone number for verification. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity.

Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received. Libelous and anonymous letters as well as poetry will not be published.

All submissions become the property of Siuslaw News and will not be returned.

Write to: Editor@TheSiuslawNews.com

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