



# OPINION

## Offbeat Oregon History

The ones that got away: Almost-shipwrecks on the Columbia Bar

BY FINN J.D. JOHN  
For the Sentinel

The merciless waters of the Columbia River Bar are not known for easily giving up their prey once they've trapped a ship on their sandy shoals. But over the years, it has happened now and again — and the stories of these survivors are always interesting.

### The Queen of the Pacific

There was no hint of irony in mind when the passenger liner Queen of the Pacific was launched in Philadelphia in 1882. The Pacific Coast Steamship Company of San Francisco had spared no expense. Competition on the San Francisco-Portland line was at its peak, and the Queen's owners intended to have the very finest steamer on the route.

And so they did. The 2,727-ton floating palace arrived at the Golden Gate late that year and was greeted with cheering crowds. Under the command of Captain Ezekiel Alexander, she immediately started making money easily and rapidly.

That's probably why, when word arrived in the San Francisco offices that the Queen had run aground on Clatsop Spit just a year after she went into service, the word that went back was something along the lines of a blank check.

The stranding had been a straightforward one, and no one had been hurt. The weather had been mild, but very foggy, and the vessel had drifted out of the channel and stuck fast in the sandy bottom on the Oregon side. Of course, the instant the hull touched, the engineer put her into full reverse, but it was too late.

The situation was made more embarrassing by the fact that the passenger list included some very prominent Californians, coming to Portland to witness the driving of the last golden spike to mark the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad.

So the Pacific Coast Steamship Company sent the word along: Save our ship, no matter what the cost.

Accordingly, the next day when the tide was looking good, the biggest collection of salvage tugs ever seen on the bar appeared to lend a hand — knowing doing so would give them a great chance to collect. Soon five powerful salvage tugs — the C.J. Brenham, Astoria, Columbia, Pioneer and General Miles — had massive hawsers on the stranded liner and were joining their forces with that of the Queen of the Pacific's engines.

The huge hawsers stretched tight, strained, occasionally snapped; but the big tugboats were patient, and no sooner was one broken than another was being slipped on the Queen.

Finally, at the apex of high tide, the stranded liner started to creep slowly backward into deeper water. By the time the tide was starting to ebb again, the liner was free, and all six ships celebrated the victory with blast after blast on their whistles.

Had the Queen of the Pacific known what was coming, her captain might not have been so happy. After all the negotiation and litigation that followed, the Pacific Coast Steamship Company's blank check ended up being worth \$65,000 — which comes to roughly \$1.5 million in modern money.

Not bad for one afternoon's work.

The Queen was worth the ransom, though. She went on to have a long and lucrative career before finally being bought for scrap metal by Imperial Japan in 1938.

### The Sidi

The list of people who know what it's like to total one's car while the new-car smell is still lingering in the air is a short one, and none of us would ever want to be on it.

But if you, by some mischance, are on that list, you will be able to relate to the predicament of Captain J. Hill of the French brig Sidi.

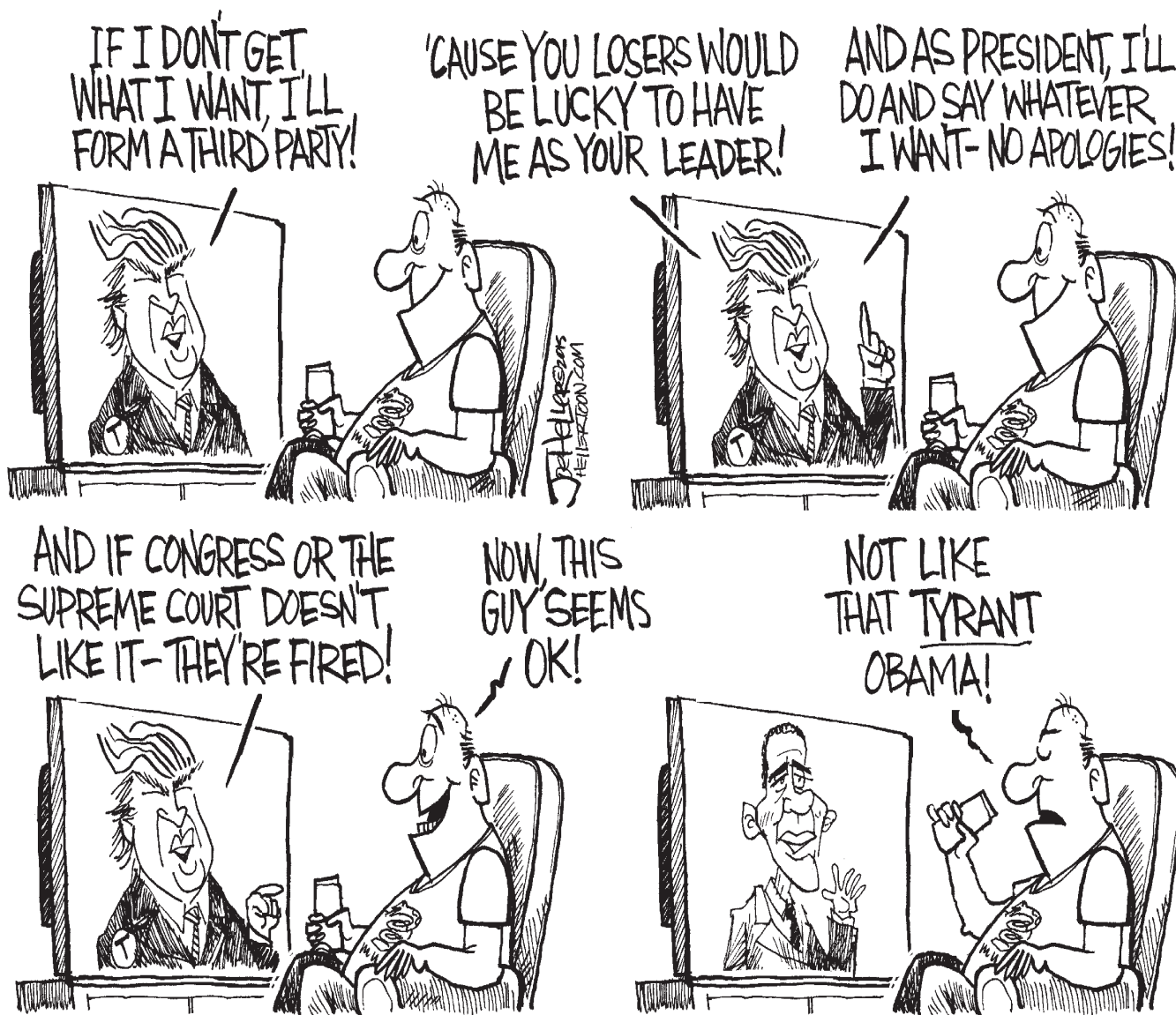
The Sidi was eight months out of her natal shipyard and crossing the bar on Valentine's Day of 1874 when she suffered the fate that so many other sailing ships have, before and since: the wind died at just the wrong moment.

The skipper, of course, dropped both anchors. As usual, this only slowed the ship down. The four-knot current was more than enough to pull the Sidi along, dragging both anchors through the clean sand beneath. Onto the sandy shore of Sand Island she stuck. And it was high tide: a few hours later, the stout little brig was perched there on a shelf of damp sand. The crew, of course, took the opportunity to clamber down and walk ashore, without even getting their feet wet.

The next day, salvors were on the scene. They immediately saw that it would be a tough job and a lot of work, but it could be done. And the brand-new ship was insured for \$50,000.

A few weeks later, at a spring tide's flood, they triumphantly floated their prize free of the

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## Are you ready for Back-to-School 2015?

Some health insurance plans offer free preventive care measures

BY SUSAN JOHNSON  
For the Sentinel

The days are getting shorter and summer activities are winding down. School supply lists are appearing in stores and your in-boxes. Kids are (hopefully) finishing their summer reading lists. Back-to-School time is just around the corner, though it may feel like Memorial Day was just a couple of weeks ago.

As you prepare your kids to return to school this year, you should be aware that some states have enacted tougher immunization laws in the wake of the recurrence of "childhood diseases" that were previously eliminated in this country.

Recommended vaccines are among the free preventive health services offered by qualified health plans, Medicaid and CHIP as a result of the Affordable Care Act. Other preventive health services for children include: hearing and other screening tests for newborns; behavioral assessments; developmental screening for children under age three; oral health risk assessment for young children; depression screening for adolescents; alcohol and drug use assessments for adolescents; obesity screening and counseling and vision screening for all children. Adults and women also have access to preventive health services.

Not currently enrolled in health insurance?

You can enroll in Medicaid and CHIP at any time. You may be able to enroll in a qualified health plan through the federal marketplace or your state exchange if you have a Qualifying Life Event (QLE) such as a change in your family composition; loss of health insurance; moving into an area where your previous plan doesn't provide coverage; gaining status in a federally recognized tribe; certain income changes; change in immigration status or are a victim of domestic abuse or spousal abandonment. These events trigger a 60-day Special Enrollment Period (SEP) during which you can enroll. If you haven't had a QLE and are not eligible for Medicaid, then you may enroll during the next Open Enrollment Period, which begins on Nov. 1, 2015, and ends on Jan. 31, 2016. Visit [HealthCare.gov](http://HealthCare.gov) for information on enrollment and SEPs.

We hope people will use their new health coverage and we're offering assistance. From Coverage to Care (C2C) explains how to use coverage, including choosing a doctor, where to go for care, how to read your insurance card and your Explanation of Benefits, suggestions for the first appointment and other critical information. C2C resources are available in eight languages plus a tribal version.

The "Healthy Self" initiative, which encourages people to take control of their health and their healthcare, is a current focus. Eating healthy foods, getting plenty of exercise and sleep, taking care of mental health, getting preventive tests and knowing risk factors are all ways consumers can help take control of their health. Commonsense suggestions

like: if you smoke, try to cut down or stop; limiting your alcohol intake; and if you're prescribed narcotics or opioids, use them for the shortest time possible also fall within this initiative.

Creating a healthier America will take all of us working together. If you're a parent, you manage your kids' health. Your health care provider is an advisor, but you're the one who oversees their daily life. Make sure your children start each day and the school year with the healthiest start possible—take them for their yearly exams, make sure they get their immunizations, help move them away from the screens and get them outside and active, and offer healthy balanced meals which can include traditional foods. If you are concerned about your child's or your own mental health, contact your provider. Take care of yourself so your kids will see how to live as a healthy adult. We're encouraging everyone to post a #HealthySelfie on social media. It could include you and your family actively enjoying the outdoors, sharing a healthy family meal or visiting the doctor.

Back to School time is a busy time, but make sure the doctor's visit is on the top of your checklist. Knowing your kids are healthy and protected from "childhood diseases" will help you sleep better at night and move you and your family toward your own "Healthy Self" goals.

Susan Johnson is the Director of Region 10 of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

## Vitamin D during pregnancy affects mother and child health

BY JOEL FUHRMAN, MD  
For the Sentinel

In recent years, we have learned that sufficient blood levels of this vitamin are crucial to our health, and also that a

significant proportion of the population, including pregnant women, is deficient. Vitamin D is an immune-supporting nutrient and during pregnancy — especially during the third trimester — it is a key factor in growth of the baby's skeleton. It is estimated that up to 50 percent of pregnant women and breastfed infants are deficient in vitamin D, and deficiency is associated with pregnancy complications. For pregnant and nursing women, vitamin D deficiency or insufficiency has been associated with increased risk of preeclampsia, gestational diabetes, infections



and low birthweight. Vitamin D insufficiency during pregnancy is also associated with impaired growth during infancy, greater body fat mass and greater risk of low bone mass and autoimmune diseases during childhood.

The American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology and Institute of Medicine both recommend that pregnant women take 600 IU/day supplemental vitamin D, and most prenatal vitamins, similar to other conventional multivitamins, contain 400 IU vitamin D. However, scientists have voiced concerns that these amounts are inadequate for most people to maintain blood 25(OH)D in the 30-45 ng/ml range, considered a sufficient vitamin D level.

Clinical trials investigating vitamin D during pregnancy have reported that supplementa-

tion with either 2000 IU or 4000 IU doses of vitamin D improved maternal, cord blood and neonatal 25(OH)D. Also, pregnancy complications such as hypertension, infection and pre-term birth, were less common in the women who achieved higher 25(OH)D. Importantly, women with higher 25(OH)D gave birth to babies with higher 25(OH)D, confirming that the supplementation helped to insure that babies were born with sufficient vitamin D levels.

As part of the nutritional plan for a healthy pregnancy and a healthy start for the baby, pregnant women should supplement to achieve 25(OH)D levels in the 30-45 ng/ml range. The amount of supplementation necessary for individuals to reach optimal serum 25(OH)D levels may vary; vitamin D needs should be

assessed by blood test and supplementation adjusted accordingly. For some women that may be 1000-2000 IU, but others may require more or less.

Dr. Fuhrman is a #1 New York Times best-selling author and a board certified family physician specializing in lifestyle and nutritional medicine. His newest book, *The End of Dieting*, debunks the fake "science" of popular fad diets and offers an alternative to dieting that leads to permanent weight loss and excellent health. Visit his informative website at [DrFuhrman.com](http://DrFuhrman.com). Submit your questions and comments about this column directly to [newsquestions@drfuhrman.com](mailto:newsquestions@drfuhrman.com)

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Subscription Mail Rates in Lane and Portions of Douglas Counties:  
Ten Weeks.....\$9.10  
One Year.....\$36.15  
e-Edition year.....\$36.00

Rates in all other areas of United States: Ten Weeks \$11.70; one year, \$46.35, e-Edition \$43.00.

In foreign countries, postage extra.

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Periodicals postage paid at Cottage Grove, Oregon.

Postmaster: Send address changes to P.O. Box 35, Cottage Grove, OR 97424.

**Local Mail Service:**

If you don't receive your Cottage Grove Sentinel on the Wednesday of publication, please let us know. Call 942-3325 between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.

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Personal attacks and name calling in response to letters are uncalled for and unnecessary.

If you would like to submit an opinion piece, Another View must be no longer than 600 words.

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