

Falling in love with Lucy the Christmas pup

We haven't had a lot of dogs over the years. Never more than two at a time.

Our last Christmas dog was Rinaldo.

It is our wont to go Christmas week to the shelter to give our donation. But there's no such thing as "just a trip" to the shelter. Every visit can be heart-wrenching.

We weren't prepared at the time to take in Rinaldo. We knew we couldn't get a big dog that would intimidate our old, crippled Lhasa Apso Basil, who was most likely over-bred and as a result has a curved front leg that makes veterinarians take snapshots for their files. We knew we couldn't get a dog that would scare off our two cats. But we hadn't expected this sad-eyed old man.

The shelter had placed him in the cat area because he was so small, an older Chihuahua, shivering even in his light blue wrap in the cold of New York winter. He looked up hopefully with dark eyes, knowing that his second chances were perhaps coming to an end. We heard his story: he had been rescued from a "kill" shelter in Brooklyn, N.Y., the meanest of the mean streets. Who turns in a 6-pound Chihuahua to be euthanized? He was about five or six pounds, almost toothless, about 8, though some vets thought he was already a bit older.

We asked to see him out of the crate. We walked around the shelter property, the sound of other dogs barking and pleading. He quickly peed on the ground and then looked up at us hopefully.

He curled up in our arms as we held him that cold post-Christmas day. There was no way we were go-

SCENE FROM SEASIDE

R.J. MARX



R.J. MARX PHOTO/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Lucy awaits instructions from her older brother, Rinaldo.

ing to walk out of there without him.

In the weeks and months to come we speculated how he could have ended up with this fate. Like any Chihuahua, he was fearful and didn't like to be poked or disturbed. He growled while wagging his tail and licking your hand.

Rinaldo and Basil settled in together, two "Odd Couple" rescues, neither quite the romping dog on the beach or the puppy you envision in the pet food commercials. But when we came west last spring, they rode shotgun across I-90, Rinaldo in his wool doggy sweatshirts and Basil, his long coat of hair keeping him warm on a perch on a pile of duffel bags on the back seat.

Since coming to the North Coast, we've fallen in love with the Clatsop County Animal Shelter. Volunteers from throughout



R.J. MARX PHOTO/SEASIDE SIGNAL

Was it Lucy's sad eyes that drew us to her?

the county spend countless hours supporting the care and feeding of these pets, including Clatsop Animal Assistance, Susie's Senior Dogs and the thrift shop, beneficiary of the Seaside Rotary Club's largesse this fall.

We've scanned their ads and vowed we would take in another older dog. After all they do make the best pets: they are well-trained and loving, smart and oh so appreciative of all that we can give them. Our plan was to nurture Basil and Rinaldo in their senior years, and then to pay a visit to the shelter. At adoption day in Cannon Beach earlier this year we fell in love La-La, an adult Chihuahua who had both the right amount of sympathy and spunk to fit into our house. Three dogs, though? How could we?

So there we were out for a Sunday drive, back from a stroll in

Cannon Beach and an Americano at Sleepy Monk, pulling out of Seven Dees trying to find the perfect holiday tree. As we drove north on Highway 101 back to Gearhart, we saw the tiny small hand-lettered sign along the road side: Min pin puppies. We drove past and Eve gulped. "A Chihuahua on steroids," is how one miniature pinscher owner had once described his dog to us.

As former New Yorkers, that fit our personalities to a "T."

We passed the entrance and then doubled back around. "Let's stop. Let's just take a look."

The pups were frolicking in an outbuilding behind the main house. They were handsome, healthy dogs. The owner has been breeding for decades.

We got down to the floor and began to play. Of course the strongest were busy wrestling with their

brothers and sisters.

A larger 4-month old min pin was herding the group and playing, greeting guests and visitors. But the littlest one was holding back, sitting to the side. The runt of the litter. Sweet, sad eyes, with wrinkly ruffled skin. So tiny you could hold her in your hand, practically a bird.

You guessed it. We brought her home and she is now a proud resident of Gearhart. We spent 24 hours just thinking of a name: Greta, Gretl, Gerte, Athena, Aphrodite, Lola, Lila ... Lucy.

Today Lucy hops around our upstairs with energy and gusto, scrambling to great heights onto a pillow and sometimes missing. She pokes around cabinets and into closets. Right now she is nibbling at my feet.

Basil is kind but shy with her.

As for Rinaldo, it's an amazing transition. This little feisty, toothless street-dog still snarls a bit when Lucy pokes and nibbles at him. He shrugs her off when she skips at his heels. But for an old dog so blind he stands in front of the wrong door to get in the house, he has got a lot of spunk. He is paternal with her. He shows her where to go for the food. And the water. She wants to eat out of Rinaldo's bowl and he is willing to share. At night he wraps his legs around her in the bed. They sleep side by side, spooning. He tells her when to worry, and when everything is all right. He shows her the wee-wee pads and how to use them. She is a brilliant student. She follows him everywhere. The old dog and the new.

An old dog will teach you what you need to know. A puppy will keep you young forever.

After some tough times, Seaside gives itself a library

Typically, the month of December means a time for thinking about the ending of an old year and looking forward to a new year ahead. It can also be a time for memories and reminiscing, so I am taking the time this December to dig deep into the archives of the Seaside Public Library. The roots of the Seaside Library started back in 1913, when Seaside was only a hundred or so houses. The roads were often "corduroy" roads or logs put down over mud to be driven over. The start of Seaside began with Ben Holladay's "Seaside House" in the 1870s. Of course the area was settled long before that by the Quatat village that was in the Seaside area. It puts things in perspective to realize that only 30 years before this time, during the 1880s, Portland was referred to as having a population roughly the size of Astoria today (approximately 10,000 people).

Seaside was incorporated as a city in 1899 so the start of the first lending library in 1913 was after the city had been well established. The city had just recently gone through some very tough times. Jobs were scarce, and the saw mill had gone bankrupt in 1912. There was also a very large fire in 1912, in which 54 businesses, homes, and the Catholic Church were all destroyed.

The year 1913 seems to have been a time for rebuilding. In 1913

BETWEEN THE COVERS

ESTHER MOBERG



the Seaside Library opened for business as a reading room in the Dresser building as part of the assigned duties of the matron who ran the public bathrooms. She assisted people with borrowing books and oversaw the "reading room." No pun intended. George E. Shaver is noted as the original founder or "librarian" of the library (although the bathroom matron did the actual work), as well as the current Seaside civic improvement club president. Apparently in the beginning the library was open to civic club members only. This group of civic-minded people saw an opportunity with the opening of the public bathrooms to create a space for people to also share books. I believe the public restrooms were opened to assist people who took the railroad from Portland and Astoria. The round-trip price was \$1 from Portland. Many people arrived in Astoria off boats either from Portland or the ocean and would take the railroad to explore the south county area. This seems to be a precursor to the cruise ships of today that load people on buses and bring them into the south county area.

Mr. Shaver, the original librarian, seems to have been a well-

known local society person and his death in 1923 made the front page of the Seaside Signal. In addition to helping start the library, he and his wife, Lena, were very active in society. Mr. Shaver was a member of the Seaside Civic Improvement club, the Episcopal Church, Eastern Star, Knights of Pythias, Knight Templars and a Shriner. In one society blurb, Mrs. Shaver was reported in July 1910 in the Morning Oregonian to have attended a wedding near Vernonia and "cut ices" for the guests. She was known as an artist and Mr. Shaver's occupation was that of a painter.

George E. Shaver and his wife seem to have been committed to their civic duties. We can thank them, at least in part, for starting the Seaside Library. From humble beginnings, the Library was born in the little reading room off the public bathrooms. The very first library in Seaside was located in the old Dresser building on Holladay where McKeown's restaurant stands today.

Historical information courtesy of the Seaside Museum and Historical Society and Seaside Signal.



TOP: In 1913 the Seaside Library opened for business as a reading room in the Dresser building.



BOTTOM: In the beginning the library was open to civic club members only.

SUBMITTED PHOTOS/SEASIDE SIGNAL

A hummingbird remains indifferent to the wind and rain

We read in the paper, a while back, about a carnival on the Washington side. It's been years since we had one, though in my teen years it happened every summer. Don't you think it's about time to invite one again? It might help to allay some of our fears about the future.

The Methodist Church is starting Sunday school again. There aren't many kids to take advantage of it but we're hoping that will change. I think fondly of my Sunday school years, especially the songs and the stories. Kids learn things about the Bible and acceptable behavior that they often are not taught anywhere else. Some refurbishment has been done in the basement so it's a nicer

SCENE & HEARD

CLAIRE LOVELL



atmosphere. We hope to see some of your little ones there and we'll get to know each other better.

The recently proposed (and failed) panhandling ordinance in Seaside was a poser. One of my favorite authors says what's the use if a man is destitute for daily food and you suggest that he go in peace and be warmed and filled without giving him what he needs? Sure, there may be those among them who want rather than need the money. It's how they make their

living. If we do have something extra, it behooves us to share. Certainly, no homeless person could ever pay \$50 for a license.

In an earlier storm on a Thursday, I saw a hummingbird extracting nectar from a fuchsia bush outside the window, indifferent to rain and wind. Where did he come from? Where did he go? There were few of those birds at my house in the summer, but to have one still around in the fall seems topsy-turvy.

In response to one letter to the editor, I can't recall when Gearhart was "relatively unknown." Rather, I remember it as a small town full of familiar families. One to someone in Massachusetts, perhaps has to learn, but on the West Coast,

certainly not. Many important people had summer homes, regular residences or relatives in Gearhart — names like Holmstrom, McCall, Brougher or Honeyman, etc.

During Thanksgiving week when we tooled around Astoria, one trip took us up Coxcomb Hill to the newly repainted Astoria Column. We just watched my son and grandson approach the entrance to the monument and in about three minutes they were waving at us from the top. In about the same interval, there they were coming out. It sure helps to have good legs. David was eager to get out because he felt a little sway at the viewpoint.

The seniors would like to say a big "wrapped-in-red-ribbon" thank you for their Christmas

dinner at the Seaside Convention Center on Dec. 13. It was an anticipated pleasure. This annual event, in which volunteers from the Seaside Service Council put on their Santa caps and serve their elders, is very popular. City manager Mark Winstanley was much in evidence doing his bit. The Barkers (Cheryle and Doug) were scooting around as well as Santa and others. It was great.

Laugh line:

Conversation in a French restaurant:

Waiter: We're serving escargot today.

Patron: I don't like snails!

Waiter: Why is that?

Patron: I prefer fast food.

SEASIDE
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