

SignalViewpoints

How a Seaside surfer deterred a shark

Michael Skogg is one lucky surfer. He survived a potential attack by a great white shark, he reports, and he owes his survival to a device known as “Sharkbanz.”

Skogg, 51, is a fitness authority and strength coach. “I run workshops all over the world,” he told me from his Portland fitness studio. “I’m the guy people call to get trained up. Scoggkettlebell.com.”



Q: You are a very lucky guy. Can you take your story from the beginning?

Skogg: I went to Hawaii on a surf trip in January. As I was planning my trip to Hawaii, and in my research, I noticed it was a place with a lot of tiger sharks.

I read in my research it was a species Sharkbanz was effective with.

Q: What is Sharkbanz?

Skogg: It’s like a watchband — essentially a big, thick, chunky-looking bracelet that has a magnet right in the center.

It’s rubber and has quite a few different adjustment slots.

It puts out a circle around you like a protective barrier about five or six feet. I’m told it messes with a shark’s sensory organs.

Q: You didn’t have any shark encounters in Hawaii?

Skogg: Nothing happened in Hawaii, obviously — a good trip.

But a buddy of mine I went to Hawaii with ended up getting attacked in Pacific City.

He got pulled off the back of his board, and that kind of spooked me.

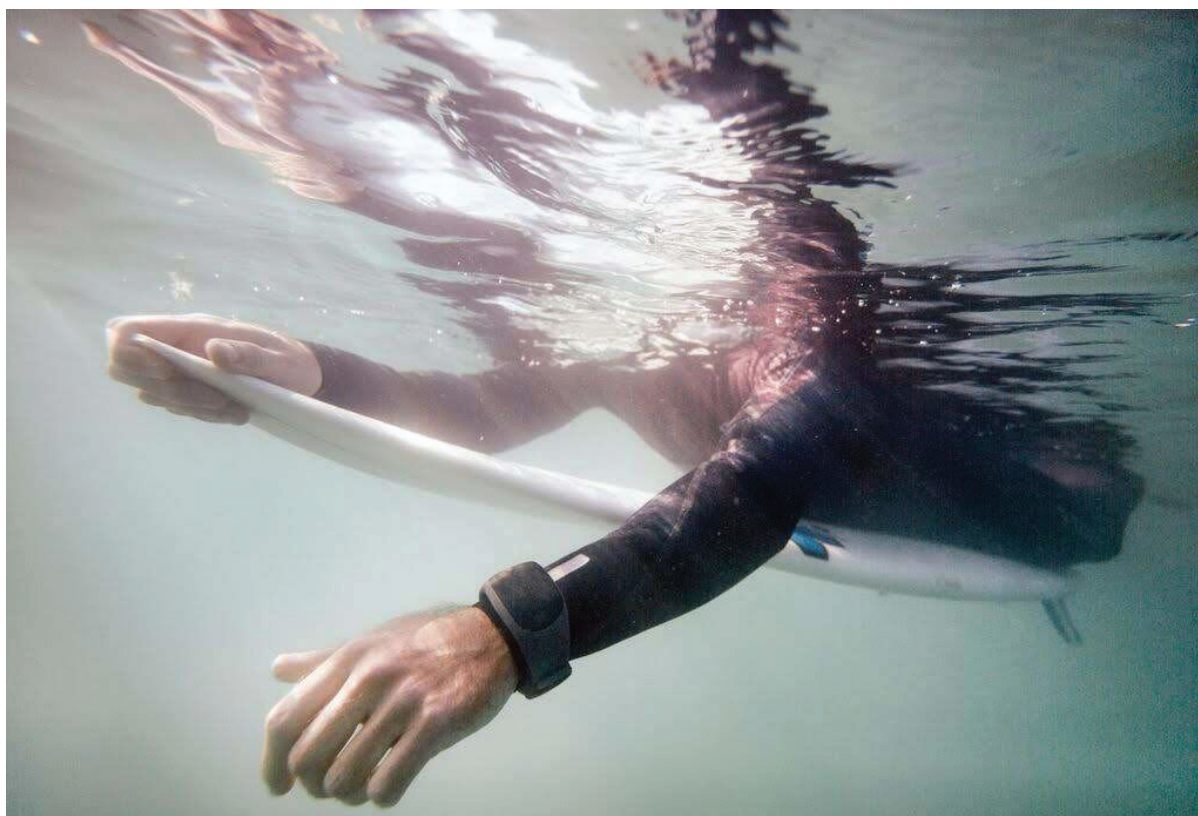
I’m the type of guy who thinks to be overinsured doesn’t exist. I bought a second one (Sharkbanz) for my wrist.

Q: Tell me about your experience in Seaside.

Skogg: I go to Seaside once a week. Have for two years. I come to recharge my battery and I’m back in Portland — it’s an easy day trip. This happened to be a Wednesday.

I was there with a buddy. It was a stormy day, but we found a sun patch right over the Cove. Maybe five of us there total.

I was quite a ways outside, a good 200 yards from shore, maybe



Sharkbanz

Surfer demonstrates Sharkbanz wrist band, designed to keep sharks at bay.



SEEN FROM SEASIDE

R.J. MARX

a little more. There were other surfers in the water, but not near me — more toward the shore and toward the Point.

As a paddle surfer, I kind of get pushed out to the left, so I’m picking up all the lefts. That’s surfer’s left. I was all by myself in my area.

I had just gotten thumped by a cleanup set and I was swimming back to my board when a dorsal fin broke between my board and me. It was a big, dark fin, and it was coming at me hard. When this thing broke, it was so fast I blinked my eyes several times thinking I was seeing things — and I wasn’t. It was coming right at me.

I put my paddleboard in front of me with my right hand and grabbed the middle of it with my left hand to brace myself.



R.J. Marx

Michael Skogg, displaying his Sharkbanz device.

I’m bobbing with my head above water, this fin standing above my head. I can’t determine how large it was, but it was much, much bigger than me.

It got within five or six feet and thrashed really hard — then suddenly made a hard left, and swam out of there.

The force of this thing, churning,

dragged me behind it — I knew it was big.

In that moment I was ready to fight. That’s where my head went: I’m going to fight this thing because I’m not going to swim away from it.

Q: Had you ever encountered a shark before this?

Skogg: Never.

Q: Were you scared?

Skogg: Oh my gosh — it was so fast! I don’t think that fear every really entered my head.

Once the whole thing had passed, I got back on my board and made it into shore.

I was driving home and I could have cracked my steering wheel in half I was gripping it so tight. Then my adrenaline wore off and I was exhausted. I had to pull over and get out and walk around.

I’ve never experienced anything like it honestly.

Q: Were there witnesses?

Skogg: When I went to shore, I loaded my board on my truck and I was standing there pacing. There’s an old-timer there, I see quite often, he has a white helmet. I’m talking

Robert Liddycoat brings history to light

You might say “A Wandering Man” got its start in the 1990s when Robert Liddycoat and his late wife, Barbara, bought a home built around 1900 on North Downing Street in Seaside.

“My wife began researching the provenance of the house in the county clerk’s archives,” Liddycoat said.

That led her to source materials, including old newspaper stories from The Astorian. Her research led Barbara Liddycoat to the Seaside Museum and Historical Society where she read a newspaper story detailing a shoot out that took place in Seaside in December 1898. “My wife studied everything they had on the incident on microfilm and then she typed everything out. That’s when I became interested.”

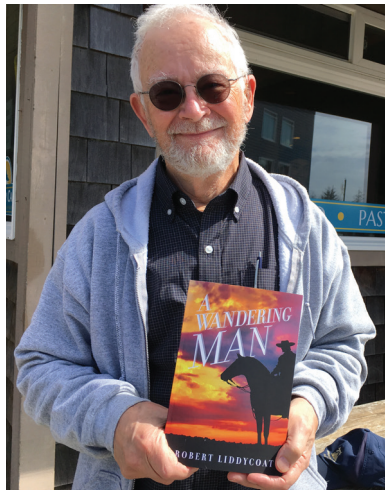
An idea for a novel based on verified information began to take form in Liddycoat’s mind. He began studying old maps, historical society archives, timber company brochures, newspaper stories about gunslingers and shoot-outs, and whatever else that seemed pertinent.

His research took him to Baker City where he read about a real life sheriff who became a character he wrote into the story. Characters based on real people from that period gradually began to come alive.

In April 2017 Barbara Liddycoat died. But her parting gift to her husband was the idea she gave him for a story, and he strongly felt her influence urging him to write it.

The result is “A Wandering Man,” published by Inkwater Press in Portland.

This story covers 13 years in the life of a young man named Jacob Scot, Liddycoat said, leading up to his role in a bloody shoot-out reported in the Astorian newspaper



Eve Marx

Robert Liddycoat debuts his novel, “A Wandering Man,” based on historical events that took place in Seaside over a century ago.

VIEW FROM THE PORCH

EVE MARX



on December 31, 1898.

Reprinted at the end of the book is the original article that ran in the Daily Astorian on December 31, 1898, headlined “Tragedy at Seaside: Three Men Killed and One Hurt in a Desperate Fight.”

The novel’s narrative traverses the Oregon locations of Baker City, Austin, Clarno and Golden. The finale takes place in the area of modern day Seaside where the Necanicum River runs towards the sea at the cove under Tillamook Head, before circling back inland to Circle Creek.

Historical settings in Seaside mentioned in the book include the Grimes Hotel, the Grimes railroad station, the H.F. Logan Saloon, Carlson’s Cottage and Lewiston’s Cottage, as well as the actual

building now known as the Bridge Tender.

“Seaside is a good place for a writer,” Liddycoat said. “You stay in the chair because of the bad winter weather and there’s nothing like looking out on the ocean for inspiration.”

Liddycoat no longer resides at the Downing Street address. He now enjoys an ocean view in Seaside.

He wasn’t always a writer. “This book started out as a hobby, but after retirement it turned into a fascinating undertaking which I couldn’t stop thinking about,” he said.

He became obsessed with his creation, Jacob Scot, a young man with no place special to go and nothing special to do. Scot learns to shoot and his skill and integrity are tested. As he wanders, the stakes get higher.

In December 1898, when Seaside was a fledgling resort city, Scot becomes reacquainted with his long lost love, and “a man who it will take more than a bullet to kill,” Liddycoat writes.

But kill him he must because the fate of the people Scot cares about hangs in the balance.

Stay tuned for local readings and book signings.

“A Wandering Man” can be purchased at Beach Books as well as Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and the Inkwater Press website at Inkwaterpress.com.

Later this summer Liddycoat’s second book is due out, a novel called “Hit + Run.”

“This second book is about small town terrorism and the effect it has on two recent retirees in Gladstone, Oregon,” Liddycoat said.

Also based on a true life event, this second book assures Liddycoat’s position as a noteworthy writer of historical fiction.

Thank you for supporting grads

Today’s edition includes a special section profiling the 2019 Seaside High School graduating class. It’s one of our most popular features, connecting families all across the community with this year’s flock of fledglings as they prepare to leave the nest. Leafing through the section is both nostalgic and hopeful — from “How can they be 18 already?!” to “Wow, that kid has got a great future plan.”

But I’ll share a little secret with you--this section is never easy to put together--it takes many hours not only for high school staffers to collect the photos and information from the students, but for our team to manually enter the information, format the pages, match and edit the bios with the photos, collect and match sponsors and prepare for print. It’s a big endeavor.

So here’s a shout out to the group that really makes it possible: local advertisers.

Without the support of the local businesses who buy ads and sponsor student photographs, this annual graduation

section would not happen. It’s their support that pays for the time, production and printing to commemorate one of the most important recognition sections we publish for this community.

FROM THE PUBLISHER

KARI BORGEN



As you leaf through the pages of the section, I know you’ll enjoy looking through the faces and bios of graduating seniors. Also pay attention to the advertising sponsors. This year, every student has a sponsor. That’s an incredible show of support for the 2019 graduating class of Seaside High School. Kids, your local business community is awesome.

Congratulations, Seaside High School class of 2019! We hope that you’ll enjoy today’s section and it’s celebration of your achievement for years to come--and thank your sponsors.

PUBLIC MEETINGS

Monday, June 10
Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

Thursday, June 13
Convention Center Commission, 5 p.m., Seaside Civic and Convention Center, 415 First Ave.

Cannon Beach Academy, 5:30 p.m., 3781 S. Hemlock St.

Gearhart Planning Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 698 Pacific Way.

Tuesday, June 18
Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District, Bob Chisholm Community Center, 5:15 p.m., 1225 Avenue A, Seaside.

Seaside School District Board of Directors, 6 p.m., 1801 S. Franklin.

Seaside Planning Commission, work session, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

Wednesday, June 19
Seaside Tourism Advisory Committee, 3 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

Thursday, June 20
Seaside Transportation Advisory Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

Monday, June 24
Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.



PUBLISHER
Kari Borgen

EDITOR
R.J. Marx

CIRCULATION MANAGER
Jeremy Feldman

ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER
Sarah Silver-Tecza

PRODUCTION MANAGER
John D. Bruijn

SYSTEMS MANAGER
Carl Earl

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Skyler Archibald
Darren Gooch
Joshua Heineman
Rain Jordan
Katherine Lacaze
Eve Marx
Cara Mico
Esther Moberg

Seaside Signal
The Seaside Signal is published every other week by EO Media Group, 1555 N. Roosevelt, Seaside, OR 97138. 503-738-5561 seasidejournal.com Copyright © 2019 Seaside Signal. Nothing can be reprinted or copied without consent of the owners.

Letter policy
The Seaside Signal welcomes letters to the editor. The deadline is noon Monday prior to publication. Letters must be 400 words or less and must be signed by the author and include a phone number for verification. We also request that submissions be limited to one letter per month. Send to 1555 N. Roosevelt Drive, Seaside, OR 97138, drop them off at 1555 N. Roosevelt Drive or fax to 503-738-9285, or email rmarx@seasidejournal.com

Subscriptions
Annually: \$40.50 in county • \$58.00 in and out of county • e-Edition: only \$30.00
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Seaside Signal, P.O. Box 210, Astoria, OR 97103. Postage Paid at Seaside, OR, 97138 and at additional mailing offices. Copyright © 2019 by the Seaside Signal. No portion of this newspaper may be reproduced without written permission. All rights reserved.