



Tiffany Boothe/Seaside Aquarium

Beachcombers find pyrosomes at tide line

SEASIDE AQUARIUM

WENDI AGALZOFF



with the seasons, beachcombers have been finding an abundance of pyrosomes along the high-tide line.

Pyrosoma atlanticum is the most observed species found along Oregon beaches are a rigid, bumpy, pinkish-gray tube about the size of a finger.

Throughout the world pyrosomes can range in size from a few centimeters to over 30 feet long, but the common *Pyrosoma atlanticum* reaches a maximum length of two feet. These totally tubular critters are actu-

ally known as a colonial tunicate, a mass of thousands of smaller organisms with a rigid notochord — a simplistic backbone.

Pyrosomes are actually colonies of multicelled animals called zooids. Thousands of cloned zooids create the cylinder-shaped, tube-like body and are connected by tissue that enable communication and coordinated behavior. To swim and feed, pyrosomes move their cilia (hair-like structures) together to draw in water and filter-feed on plankton.

After the plankton is caught on mucus the zooids expel the water in coordination to propel their tube-body through the sea.

Similar to other pelagic creatures (animals that live in the open ocean) pyrosomes migrate vertically and are capable of swimming a vertical distance of 2500 feet in one day.

Their scientific name *pyrosoma* roughly translates into a Greek word for “firebody” which references their ability to exhibit bioluminescence while alive. In general, the lifecycle and role of

the pyrosome in the ocean food web remains a mystery, but some scientists have theorized that the bioluminescence is to attract plankton to eat.

Other observations have been made that pyrosomes seem to be successful when ocean conditions promote plankton blooms. Known predators include bony fish, dolphins and whales. While it is generally understood that pyrosomes do not pose a threat to humans, local experts suggest not letting pets eat pyrosomes when found on the beach!

Moving forward together with expectations set for accountability

TUNNEL ECHOES

LIANNE THOMPSON



My friend Al called the other day. When I told him I wrote articles for local publications, he was interested. “What do you write about?” Good question. “Mostly church-lady politician stuff about being nice to one another and doing good together,” I told him.

Writing to you readers helps me define more clearly how I see things and in return helps you tell me what you want. That’s communication in service of public good.

I started out as a commissioner writing about “ACE.” That’s accountability, used as a tool, not as a weapon. That’s communication done with respect and affection. That’s also empowerment, based on appropriate rules, roles, and responsibilities.

That was my starting point, just over six years ago. Now I’m the senior member of the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners and its vice chair. For all that time, people have guided and shaped me to be a better leader because they want good public servants, good servant leaders.

Where are we now? I think we’re in a period that calls for greater self-aware-

ness and more mutual accountability. What does that mean, as far as county government goes?

We are blessed to have many volunteers appointed to serve on various committees and commissions to do the public’s work. I’ve started talking to my colleagues about developing an oath of office for our county volunteers to support and guide them. Clearer expectations would enhance the required accountability and transparency.

What it boils down to is an oath of office. Here’s what it might look like, individualized for each body:

1. Mission, scope of authority, and chain of

command. What does the body exist to accomplish? What is within its power and where does that power stop? To whom or to what is the body accountable, its boss?

2. Behavioral expectations and prohibitions. Things like showing up on time for every meeting (or be excused for a good reason), prepared and ready to discuss and act constructively. Also, no bullying or other forms of harassment.

3. Monitoring. Who tracks compliance with the oath, and what consequences will be applied for lack of compliance?

4. Signature. Everyone serving as an appointed committee or commission member of a group operat-

ing under County authority will read and sign to demonstrate understanding of and agreement to the oath.

As you look at all this, what do you think? It seems reasonable to me, but I’m interested in your response. After all, your taxpayer dollars are what makes county government happen. Do you think it makes sense to set expectations like this, be mutually accountable, as we do the public’s business?

It’s always and for-

ever people who get things done. In groups or alone, people do it. An oath only makes a difference if people believe and trust in it. Organizations only make a difference if there is respect, affection, trust, and a sense of agreement on the rules of engagement and performance. Let’s continue to learn and grow, rejoicing in our good work together. Ooops. There’s that church-lady-politician again.

Lianne Thompson is District 5 County Commissioner.

BRIEFS



Necanicum Watershed Council

Osprey lays an egg

Viewers of the popular live osprey nest camera in Broadway Park, which is operated by the Necanicum Watershed Council, awoke to the first egg on the season on Sunday.

Osprey lay one to four eggs per brood and only have one brood per season, the Necanicum Watershed Council said, so more eggs are expected over the coming days. Eggs incubate for 36 to 42 days before they hatch, so the first chick could hatch as early as Memorial Day.

View the live feed at www.seasideosprey.org or at www.necanicumwatershed.org.

Action team offers in-home programs

Community Action Team/Early Head Start

offers a visiting education program for families in Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook counties. The program is available to low-income children or those with disabilities and their families and provides services to pregnant women, infants and toddlers to age 3.

Early Head Start offers intensive, comprehensive child development learning opportunities in the home geared to families’ interests. Visitors come to the home once per week at a time that is convenient for the family and provide resources that strengthen parents in their role as their child’s primary teacher.

To register or apply to be a home visitor, contact Jeannie McGinley at 503-556-3736 or visit nworheadstart.org.

Clatsop County distributes \$30,000 in grants

The Clatsop County Board of Commissioners on Wednesday awarded \$30,000 in grant funding to nine social and human services agencies.

The Human Services Advisory Council subcommittee reviewed applications for funding. The subcommittee recommended funding organizations that provide services county-wide, demonstrate a return

on investment and meet the social and economic needs of residents.

Assistance League of the Columbia Pacific will receive \$5,000; Astoria Lions Sight & Hearing Foundation will receive \$5,000; Camp Kiwanilong will receive \$2,000; Clatsop Community Action will receive \$2,500; Grace Food Pantry will receive \$750; the Healing Circle will receive \$2,000; Helping Hands Outreach Center will receive \$5,000; Lower Columbia Q Center will receive \$2,750; and Restoration House will receive \$5,000.

Town hall on downtown parking

Seaside city councilors Randy Frank and present a town hall meeting on Tuesday, May 4 at 6 p.m. to gather input and concerns regarding parking in the downtown core area. All interested parties are encouraged to attend; Seaside Civic and Convention Center, 415 First Ave.

Carter wins Elks scholarship

Westin Carter, a senior at Seaside High School, was awarded an Elks National Foundation scholarship of \$4,000 over

four years.

Carter won previous awards of \$3,000 as the male winner of the Oregon State Elks Association “Most Valuable Student” competition, \$1,800 as OSEA Northwest District winner and \$1,000 as Seaside Elks Lodge #1748 winner.



Westin Carter

National Day of Prayer on May 6

A gathering for the annual National Day of Prayer is being held at 6:30 p.m. May 6 on the Clatsop County Courthouse steps, 749 Commercial St. in Astoria.

In case of rain, the location is Calvary Assembly of God, 1365 S. Main Ave. in Warrenton.

For information, call Coral Rose Shipley at 571-330-2335.

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