

April 1, 2012

Westport Wave

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It May Be April, But We're Not Foolin'

Steve Brigham, Editor

I was standing in line at Safeway the other day, and I noticed that *The Sun* had a very interesting story about Mitt Romney's secret twin (complete with photos!) What a scoop – maybe I could do that! Since our next *Wave* publication date was April 1st, I gave serious thought to finally publishing Ed Rottweiler's amazing Westport Alien article (which has never been printed before, and has photos, too!) There's precedent for this in the 20-year history of this venerable publication, since (as reported in past April editions of *The Wave*) extraterrestrials did visit Westport twice in the 1990's alone (funny how it always seems to happen in April!)

Well, sorry, but since I'm new to this job, I don't want to scare anybody (maybe next year). So this issue is totally legit, as always. And a good thing it is, since our lead story on the plans to save Westport Union Landing State Park is one of the biggest topics here in recent years. Also in this issue, there's plenty of community news and announcements, plus columns from Thad on Westport History, Liza on the new Westport Art Show at the Westport Hotel, and Donna on Mother Nature.

As always, the views I express in this opening editorial each month are strictly my own, as Joe Citizen. And I just happen to think that this State Park thing is mighty important for all of us. The Westport Union Landing State Park is a major revenue source for our few community businesses. Without it, they might not survive. Many small communities in California are going through exactly what we're going through right now with their own state parks. We'll keep you informed on this

developing story in every issue of *The Wave*. In the meantime, think seriously about donating to this worthy (and maybe essential) cause!

Westport Union Landing State Park

Thad Van Bueren & Bill Knapp

The Westport Village Society continues to explore options for taking over the operation of this park to prevent closure at the end of June. Negotiations with State Parks are progressing well and the main roadblock is the need for funding to address startup costs and the predicted annual operating shortfall. Collectively, they amount to about \$50,000. That is clearly a large chunk of change. However, the consequences of park closure for our community make it imperative to raise the money.

It is possible to reach that goal, and WVS needs to do so by the middle of May. The best approach is through a combination of donations, fundraising, and grants. Direct donations and fundraising will help us attract grant money, so we'd like to first urge you to **send donations to WVS at P.O. Box 446, Westport CA 95488 and mark your checks "for W-UL."** WVS is actively working with local tribes who use the park, and they have indicated a willingness to help us with fundraising and possible grant assistance. Lastly, WVS will apply for a grant from the State Park Foundation, and SPF will announce grant awards by May 15.

A meeting was held at the park March 23 with representatives from the offices of Assemblyman Wes Chesbro and State Senator Noreen Evans. The Westport Village Society organized the event which was attended by John De Luca of State Parks, five tribal representatives (Cahto, Round Valley, and Sherwood), Advocate News reporter Theresa Schumaker, and several members of the local community. Three pieces of legislation are making their way through the Assembly and State Senate, but

the approval process is lengthy and will not be resolved in time to prevent the planned closure of our local park. Still, we encourage you to support AB 1579, SB 974, and SB 1078 which you can learn about on the websites for Assemblyman Wes Chesbro and Senator Noreen Evans.

WMAC Meeting

The Westport Municipal Advisory Council will meet April 3 at 7:00 PM at the Church. Caltrans Traffic Engineer Darron Hill will present the latest speed zone study for the town of Westport, which recommends a limit of 35 MPH in both directions. This means a 30 MPH limit in the southbound direction will be upgraded to 35 MPH. Supervisor Kendall Smith also plans to attend. Agendas and other information are posted on the WMAC web site at: <http://www.westportmac.org/> and you can get on the email notification list if desired.

Water Board News

The Westport County Water District is pleased to report that our budget process is nearly complete. In the coming weeks, we will be notifying our customers of our proposed rate increase beginning this year, and the date and time for a public meeting to discuss this proposed increase. In the meantime, you can check our bulletin board at the Community Store for any updates.

The Bookmobile Is Back!

Our excellent traveling library, the Mendocino County Bookmobile, is back in Westport! Well, twice a month, anyway, for a half hour on each visit. In April, they'll be here on Thursday, April 5th and Thursday, April 19th, from 9AM to 9:30AM both days. The massive Bookmobile roams the entire county throughout the month, and is quite an operation. So please visit them when they're here, and let them know how much we appreciate what they do! You'll love taking advantage of this excellent service, and they'll be happy to talk books with you, as well!



The 22nd Annual Great Rubber Ducky Race!

Lois Senger

The 22nd Annual Great Mother's Day Rubber Ducky Race will be held this year on Sunday, May 13th. We really appreciate the Westport Beach KOA once again welcoming us to hold the event at the mouth of Wages Creek Beach on their campground. Such a beautiful setting for our family focused ducky race and BBQ. People have been calling Lois (961-0178) to volunteer, which we really appreciate. If you haven't gotten your call to request your help and want to participate, please call Lois. If you can't help out before the event, or even the day of the event, we can sure use donations for the bake sale. You can bake a cake, a pie, brownies, cookies, bars, or any of your favorite desserts. Bring it whole and we can portion it, if you like. Start thinking of ways to decorate your duck if you want to enter the beauty or original duck contest – this is always a big hit! There will be of course prizes for the races and the contests. There will be live music, decorative ducky banners, and a BBQ, the quality that cannot be matched anywhere! Don't forget the chance to win the annual Quilt which is made by our local talented quilters. This year there will also be information regarding the Westport Village Societies efforts to keep the Westport Union Landing open for the public use. There will be ways you can participate and/or donate to this worthy endeavor.

REMEMBER TO SAVE MAY 13TH AND BRING YOUR MOM, CHILDREN, DUCKS AND ASSORTED FRIENDS FOR A FUN FILLED DAY!!

The Time Traveler

Thad Van Bueren

My contribution this month will be brief, as I remain hard at work writing a new Westport history book. Before I say anything else, I want to offer a correction to my article from last month. Darwin Thompson mentioned that the local airplane shown on the right in the last issue was owned jointly by Bob and Calvin Shannon. Bob had a pilot's license, while Calvin was just learning. Their plane is the one in front of the hangar shown in the image taken on the Thompson's Dehaven farm. One day they went up when a storm was coming in with high winds and 20 foot waves. Calvin was at the controls. He tried to land and clipped a telephone pole, with the result the plane went over the edge of the cliff out toward Abalone Point. They made it out onto the wing and entered the water to swim ashore, but only Bob made it to safety. Attempts to rescue Calvin were unsuccessful, and his body was later recovered much to the regret of the community.

Like many of you, I was saddened by the recent passing of Raymond (Dobbie) Bowen, mentioned in the last newsletter. I've known Dobbie since I arrived here in the early 1990s. He was active in community causes and that was how I first met him. We often talked after that and he openly shared memories of his experiences as a local Native American. His family roots go deeper than most because they included grandparents of the Usal, Sherwood Pomo, and Wintun tribes. For interested in Dobbie's life you can access an oral history at: http://thepublicpress.com/books/VaDSp04/Voices & Dreams_2004.pdf. Be aware the file is 11mb—so it may take some time:

Recycled Oddz 'n Endz

(random jots from Donna's outpost at the Westport Recycle Center)

Donna Brigham

I'm never bored out here at the Recycle Center. I can watch whales to the west, migrating and resident birds here at the water district ponds, and who knows what might surprise me looking east to the hills and forest. This is all plenty to keep me happy – but then there are also all of you, my customers, sharing their own nature stories as we work together to keep our planet

a little “greener”. Your stories and deep appreciation of our natural environment are fantastic!

When visiting the Recycle Center, everyone enjoys seeing our herd of hard-working water district goats, who keep the fields tidy and manicured. But it's not always easy being a goat. While we humans are tucked into our warm homes, riding out a rugged winter storm, these guys are hunkered down in the cold wind and rain, praying for a sunny day. Fear not, my furry friends, for it looks like help is on the way! Thanks to donations from Harvey Hochstetter, Lee Tepper and Dorine Real, and Heather and Brian Hawes, we are putting together plans for a goat shelter on the water district field to protect them from the elements. Cliff Fisher has volunteered to draw up a construction plan with an estimated cost. Any of you who would like to donate money, time, or materials to this project can contact me here at the Recycle Center. Any donation, no matter how small, is welcome!

Now, time for Bird Notes, starting with our first swallow, who arrived here on February 24th for a brief visit. Predictably, the big swallow crowd should be arriving within the next couple of weeks. My mated pair of ravens is back, gathering grass for their nest, waiting patiently for the kibble they know I have stashed in my office, and displaying their raven affection for each other in surprisingly gentle ways. These ravens are all-year residents here, and have brought their children here to meet me for two years in a row. Yes, they all have names – but the problem is that at my age, I forget them on a weekly basis. It's still a little difficult for me to speak raven, anyway.

On Saturday, March 3rd, we had a very special visitor here. When I arrived at work, a brilliant flash over the pond caught my eye. A bird, but a very BIG bird. There was no mistaking that this was a Bald Eagle! With the help of my binoculars, I had an up-close-and-personal experience with this majestic creature that lasted for four hours! And it was soon obvious as to why this eagle chose Westport on that day. Ever since we've had a large flock of American coots (known as mudhens to many) at the ponds here, this Westport buffet has been heavily attended, with many species of hawks doing the catching, and vultures and ravens gleaning the leftovers. Our bald eagle was hungry, but although mature, was a little slow in

getting his food. After 3 hours and 18 sweeps over the water, one unlucky coot became lunch. The Demos' eucalyptus grove provided a scenic picnic spot for that lunch – and then, the eagle was up, up, and away for parts unknown. Thank you for the visit, my friend!

A quick note here about recycling...we do take all unwanted small electronic devices, including computers, monitors, televisions (but no large screens, please), and dead batteries of any sort (including car batteries) – and there is no charge for this service. Just think of how good your garage will look when you get rid of this old stuff, and how good you'll feel that you remembered to recycle them!

Well, that's it for this month's column. There's always something new to discover about the natural world around us, and I love to hear your nature stories when you visit. The Westport Recycling Center is located on Highway 1, just north of town (phone 962-9250). We are open from 10AM to 2PM Thursdays and Fridays, and from 10AM to 2PM on Saturdays. See you there, and Thanks for Recycling!

WATER SHIP DOWN @ Gallery This!

Liza Saenz-Bernard

The goal of this column is to bring readers different links to the outside world. The art scene can be quite wearing, so I must delve deeper into the WORLD WIDE WEB, and offer here some links! Hopefully most Westportians have the Internet and are able to open these very informative and mostly fun links. For those without access to high-speed Internet, let's work on bringing BROADBAND to our town. Google Broadband Alliance of Mendocino County and see all the grants available!

GALLERY THIS! @ THE WESTPORT HOTEL now has the new WATER SHOW up in the dining room. This array of art is just like old times, because some of our own Westport artists have submitted their work. Come see Toby Hickman's copper underwater scene (www.calsmith.org), Kathryn LeMieux's ocean painting, underwater photos of mine, paintings by Jacquelyn & John Hewitt, Lee Tepper's huge 6ft waterfall photo, and a surprise piece from Logan Smith (www.jlogansmith.com). This show will evolve into Heritage Days for May and stay up for 2 months. I'm still looking for ships off the coast of

Westport or in the Mighty Blue somewhere. Wish I could paint a big ship pulling up to a pier in Westport.

Did you know that there is another college in our area



that teaches art? It is called Pacific Union College Art Retreat, in Albion. There are little cabins and a common kitchen and studios to paint in. Most of the students fly in from other places but it is available to us locals. There is a July 8-20 class coming up. John Hewitt has been teaching there for 15 years. See www.johnhewittart.com for information if you are interested in painting with other artists and improving your skills.

Heritage Days in May is a global event. Having Westport be part of something global sounded fun, so I went to talk with Sue at the Kelly House Museum. The research from the Internet and sitting at the Kelly House, going through books and documents, brought great joy, because I was able to come home with a large amount of facts about some sunken ships off of Westport. There were stories about 4 shipwrecks off our coast. These are the names of the ships that went down off the shores of Westport: C. H. Merithew (June 24, 1887), Emily Franssen (Sept. 1884), H. H. Briggs (Oct. 6, 1887), and H. H. Knapp. And here's a story about a ship called the FROLIC, which wrecked just north of Pt. Cabrillo in the summer of 1850:

On Sunday, December 8, 1844 the Frolic cast off from Corner's wharf in Baltimore. She was a new vessel, with a deck cluttered with two yawls, a longboat, and a barnyard of caged animals. She was piloted safely out of the Patapsco River and down Chesapeake Bay. Several years later she would be moored off Cumsingmoon, China

to deliver a cargo of opium to the Heards' receiving vessel Lady Hayes. The ship Don Juan, under Captain Harding, was one of the main drug smuggling ships that was able to travel to far-flung coastal locations where smaller lots of drugs could be sold for hard currency. A letter from Harding, "There are few purchasers from Chappu, so we are headed for the Northern Coast of the Americas." (from The Voyage of the Frolic by Thomas Layton 1997)

There is a story about the Don Juan meeting up with the H.H. Knapp, which crashed off of Westport. Come to story telling night at the Westport Hotel on April 15th for more of this story!

Paintings of a ship off of Westport are wanted! There is an awesome photo of the Tall Ship Lynx off Point Cabrillo. Go to www.pointcabrilloighthouse.org for slideshows and a wonderful detailed history of their great finds. On a calm, flat day anyone with an underwater disposable camera, a weight belt, and a buddy, may still attempt to go out and capture small remnants of the Frolic. There is a dream team in Fort Bragg working on a way to build a reef off the shore of the mill site, by sinking a boat/ship or barge. Jenny Robly, Pt. Cabrillo's docent/writer, helped build a reef off the coast of Florida, by sinking a plane. Some environmentalist just freak at the thought! Planes, barges or vessels can be cleaned up for these purposes and help the oceans grow more reefs for more sea creatures to live! Underwater photography!

I was bestowed a barge from my uncle, Frank Donavan, who had an urchin /salvage business in San Pedro. He salvaged a barge that sank in the harbor and then became the owner. Frank had a salvage boat called the Roughneck which he and my brothers set pilings in Marina Del Rey, using hard hats, a tender and whatever else it takes for these jobs. This equipment, the roughneck & the barge have been donated to the diving team waiting to salvage what's left of the H.H. Knapp.

Before I moved to Westport I was an avid scuba diver with a passion for sunken ships, Spanish Galleons in particular. The Frolic was in the back of my mind for years, and I'd fantasize about finding treasures or artifacts. Last month, my dream/bubble was popped. There was an expedition in 2006 that dove for months off of Point Cabrillo. Dreams do come true – find

yours! One more link for you lovers of the ocean, surfing, or giant waves: google youtube; Chris Bryan "Biggest Teahupoo Ever". This is truly incredible! Any questions regarding my stories? (*Editor's Note: well, maybe*) Email me at saenzphoto@yahoo.com.

April At the Westport Hotel and Old Abalone Pub

Come by the Old Abalone Pub and meet and greet the new faces that have joined us. Shannon Nadeau is now our General Manager. David Shiffman is up to full speed as our newest server. Cecily Kishbaugh our innkeeper is here early in the mornings to get our inn guests sconed upon arising. We also extend a big welcome to Korrynne Simeral, who will work Sunday brunch with David. We are all excited to have these great new folks as part of our community!

Story Night is on April 15 at 7:00 pm. The theme will be water and the sea. There will be a pirate story and information on Westport's old water systems. Come tell your story, poem or tall tale or just come as a listener. Sip hot chocolate and be soothed, swayed or scared -- you never know where a story can take you.

Alejandro Yanez continues to provide Spanish guitar music in the pub on Friday nights until April 6. If you haven't had a chance to sit and enjoy a glass of wine and take in the sounds of his music this will be your last chance for a while.

Easter Sunday, April 8 will be a great day to come out for brunch at the Old Abalone Pub. Our already fabulous menu will have some extra special scrumptious additions by Chef Daniel Martin. We have also created a bit more formal setting in the parlor area, so reserve early if you want to enjoy the sunny parlor on Easter.

We will pay tribute to Earth Day on April 22 with a special "green" brunch dish.

The theme of the new art show now being hung is "Water and Sea". Check it out on Story Night April 15th, or come to the Last Saturday reception on April 28th.

The Fire Department's St. Patrick's Day party was great fun. The music had everyone dancing in their seats, and the Irish coffee was delicious. Hurrah for community parties!

The Westport Wave

You are reading the Westport Wave, a free monthly Community Newsletter that is published on the first day of every month by the Westport Village Society, a non-profit organization that serves the Greater Westport Region of the North Coast of California.

Your annual membership dues to the WVS are what pays for this newsletter, which is mostly distributed by e-mail, but with hard copies available at the Westport Community Store for residents and visitors.

Contributions for our May 1, 2012 edition of the Westport Wave are due by April 27th, and should be sent to editor Steve Brigham at westportwave@aol.com, or PO Box 237, Westport, CA 95488. Electronic subscription requests can be sent to thadvanbueren@directv.net

April 2012 Westport Calendar

April 3rd – Westport MAC meeting, 7PM @ Church

April 5th – Bookmobile here, Westport Community Store, 9:00 to 9:30AM

April 6th – Full Moon, 12:19PM

April 6th – Good Friday; Passover Begins

April 8th – Easter Sunday

April 15th – Story Night, Westport Hotel, 7PM

April 19th – Bookmobile here, Westport Community Store, 9:00 to 9:30AM

April 19th – Westport Village Society Quarterly Meeting, 7PM at the Westport Church

April 21st – New Moon, 12:18AM

April 22nd – Earth Day

April 27th – National Arbor Day

April 28th – Last Saturday Art Show Reception, 5:30PM to 7:00 PM at the Westport Hotel