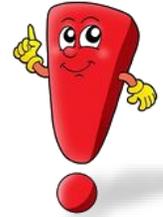




The Tolopka Tattler

2015 Punctuated Equilibrium Edition
"All the News It Gives Us Fits to Print"



ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT (Well, almost...)

It's a quiet, rainy Valentine's Day here in Portland – the perfect day to pen the 2015 *Tattler*. In a salute to National Punctuation Day,¹ we'll ensure that every heading gets some punctuation, whether it needs it or not. And who know's, its possible we might even misplace an a'p'ostrophe or two just to entertain ourselves'.

That's Irrational! (No, It's Transcendental!)
Billy Preston once asked, "[Will it go round in circles?](#)" Well, on Pi Day of the Century you bet



Time for pie on Pi Day of the Century

your sweet bippy² it will! We specially augmented our wardrobes and headed down to Shari's for a slice of pie to properly celebrate March 14, 2015 at 9:26:53 with our favorite mathematical constant.³ It was apparently

a pretty popular idea – about half the choices were gone by the time we stopped for our treat!

*** Feel the Power ***

Voracious readers of the [2013 Tolopka Tattler](#) will recall our trip to the Calgary Stampede with TBGO. At the time, we reported that "breakfasts are a big tradition at the Stampede ... and TBGO had the honor of being asked to perform at the Premier's Breakfast." Little did we know that the mere proximity of Janet's mojo at that breakfast would be a game-changer for a certain Canadian.



BEFORE: Janet lends her star power to Justin Trudeau ...

Above: Justin Trudeau being photographed with Janet. **Below:** A mere two years after being photographed with Janet, newly-elected Canadian Premier Justin Trudeau hangin' with Barack Obama and UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon. Way to go, Janet: Now *that* is star power!



AFTER: And now he's Prime Minister hangin' with the big boys.

Romancing the 'Bones: V-Day Edition

What could be more romantic than being serenaded on Valentine's Day by a marching band?⁴ Last February one client decided it would be perfect and unforgettable⁵ to surprise his sweetheart with flowers, candy, and The Beat Goes On Marching Band (TBGO). Imagine popping out

¹ Okay, we know that National Punctuation Day isn't until September 24. But it's so doggone thrilling!!!

² Get this reference? Then you're showing your age (and probably primed to buy a used walnetto).

³ Don't cry, *e* – we're just saying that 'cause it's π 's big year.

⁴ Well, maybe a lot.

⁵ Emphasis on the latter.

of a day spa after a relaxing massage and being greeted by your sweetie, an armload of flowers, and a 30-piece band rocking out in the middle of NW 23rd Avenue. This is how we roll in the Pacific Northwest!

/ There's No Master Like a Bandmaster \

In March, the [Oregon Symphonic Band](#) was invited to perform in Reno at the annual convention of the [American Bandmasters Association](#), a prestigious organization founded in 1929 to recognize outstanding achievement by concert band conductors and composers.⁶ Since neither of us is a member of OSB, this news would not normally grace the *Tattler*. But thanks to his musicianship,⁷ Steve was invited to sub in on the trip, including the world premiere performance of Ralph Ford's *She Flies With Her Own Wings*.⁸ It was a fun but challenging experience playing tough music for an elite audience, with each piece directed by a different well-known ABA conductor or composer. As an added bonus, Steve added a new life skill: he can now tie a bowtie from scratch.⁹

Music, Music ... Music!

Can't get enough of it! We invented and then participated in the first annual Spring Showcase, which included two groups we perform with (TBGO and Portland Community Wind Band) plus Tualatin Valley Community Band and the host band from Tigard High School. We hope it helped show the high school kids that there's lots of music available as they become adults, and it was fun watching the bands show off for each other. A great afternoon of music – we hope the first of many more!



You must admit, this explains a lot!

The Apple of My Eye!

This year, The Beat Goes On stayed closer to home. Of course, just about everything is closer to home when last year's travels included San Francisco, Rhode Island, and China. Our out-of-town trip this year found us in Wenatchee, Washington in May for the 96th edition of the [Washington State Apple Blossom Festival](#). It's a fun festival – beautiful setting, enthusiastic

crowds, and we even won a First Place award!

The trip included a sentence, er, performance in Leavenworth. Leavenworth is a lovely little Bavarian-themed town where all the buildings are [decorated like gingerbread houses](#) and Swiss chalets. While we didn't sport dirndls and lederhosen,¹⁰ we did manage to eat vast quantities of German food and enjoyed bringing the band's high-energy show to the Main Street gazebo.

Flash in the Pan!

Every year, [Store to Door](#) makes over 7,000 deliveries of groceries and other necessities to seniors and disabled folks in the Portland area who have a hard time getting out to shop. To help celebrate Older Americans Month, TBGO surprised Store to Door's volunteers with a Flash Band during one of their massive weekly shopping expeditions at the Hollywood Fred Meyer. Huh, what are those tubas doing in Home Appliances ... [click here to watch!](#)¹¹



Urging the band to greater heights at Fred Meyer

Hon, Do You Remember Where I Left My Heart?

In June, we headed south to San Francisco for a few days of vacation. Shockingly, we didn't go with a hundred of our closest band buddies – it was just the two of us. We decided it would be a hoot to take Amtrak, so we booked sleepers going to and from SF. The food was great, seeing the country from a different perspective was fun, but sleeping? Let's say it left something to be desired. The upper berth was about 3 inches from the ceiling¹² and the mattress (a generous word for it) was thin. And to ensure that you don't fall out, there are straps that hook to the ceiling. Since there was no way in H-E-Double-Hockeysticks¹³ Steve could fit in that space, Janet got to crawl up and wedge herself in.

⁶ John Philip Sousa is the Honorary Life President. And apparently they're willing to overlook the "life" qualifier.

⁷ And the inability of OSB's regular bari sax player to make the trip ... and the important fact that Steve owns a bari sax.

⁸ The Oregon State Motto. Yeah, I know

⁹ Or at least he could last March.

¹⁰ Trust us. NOBODY wants to see the band in those!

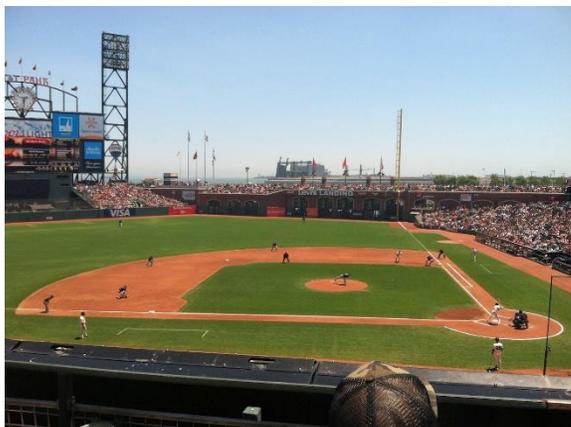
¹¹ <https://vimeo.com/130263012>.

¹² Ok, it's more like a couple of feet, but enough to make you feel a little closed in.

¹³ Can we say hockeysticks in a family newsletter?

While in SF we did enjoy wandering the art galleries, schlepping up and down many hills,

dinner in Chinatown, and bopping over to Sausalito on the ferry for an afternoon. We also snagged tickets to a couple of Giants



Beautiful afternoon at the ballpark

games. It's always fun to take in ball games at a park we haven't visited yet.¹⁴

A Break ::: in the Action!

For reasons we can't fully explain, we still play recreational co-ed softball. Almost two years to the day that it happened before, Janet broke her arm again. Same arm, but this time she broke the other end (wrist). She was running after a fly ball, lost her balance, and broke her fall with her left hand. She knew right away it was broken because her arm was doing the wave ... she told her teammates not to look because it was 'hideous'. After a special ER visit to set the arm,¹⁵ surgery ensued a few days later with a plate and seven screws. Ahhh ... the joys of physical therapy—again!

The Rest of the Story!

In May we hopped over to Florida for a few days to cheer on nephew Kristopher as he graduated from high school. Darn kids keep making us feel old ... ☺ We partially reclaimed our lost youth with waaaaay too many games on brother Ken's new pinball table.

Naturally we participated in the usual band events, which means roughly 30 marching band gigs, 10 jazz band shows, a half dozen rock 'n' roll



Mt. Adams seen from the start of the Hood River Parade

shows, and a handful of wind band concerts (whew!). This year we headed up the Columbia River Gorge to Hood River for their Fourth of July Parade, joined by a group of Chinese pilot trainees who decided this American parade thing was a blast. Wow, it was hot (both the parade and the weather!). Hood River became another mini-vacation as we decided to spend the night and take in the great fireworks display over the Columbia River that evening. We also marched in two Veterans Day Parades, the holiday tree arrival parade for downtown Portland, and the Macy's Holiday Parade in downtown Portland to name a few. And in another brush with fame, our rock 'n' roll band (Treble in River City) "opened" for Johnny Limbo & the Lugnuts at the Sandy Oktoberfest.¹⁶



View from inside the band at TBGO's annual performance on Broadway

Our softball team had its best record in years. Despite ugly rumors to the contrary, it's not because Janet was out for half the season but because the team recruited a couple of new players who aren't older than dirt. Even made the playoffs.

Janet is still bowling—even though the rest of her team quit in the span of two weeks. She got matched up with another team and they haven't quit yet. Well, one person quit, but they never met. Janet had her highest game ever—192!!! Just one more lousy spare would have put her over 200. Since that game, she's back to her normal average in the 120s.

We hope you had a great year and wish you health and happiness for 2016!

The Beat Goes On,

Steve & Janet

¹⁴ Steve proudly notes that his bobblehead doll collection is now up to 15.

¹⁵ Say "yes!!" to drugs!!!

¹⁶ Ok, we were done about four hours before they performed, BUT they used pretty much that entire four-hour break to set up for their gig.