

Habitat for Humanity



Columbia Gorge Habitat for Humanity recently broke ground on their 31st home. Future homeowner Joni Long, and her two boys, turned over the ceremonial first shovels of dirt along with Habitat Executive Director Chad Krause and Board President Don Wanzenek. CGHH provides decent and affordable homes in Hood River, Wasco and Klickitat counties. Volunteers are invited and help build this home, no experience needed: a licensed crew will teach you how to build. For more information, contact Director@ColumbiaGorgeHabitat.org. Contributed photo

New prepaid card improves access

The launch of the new and improved ABLÉ Visa Prepaid Card by the Oregon ABLÉ Savings Plan and the ABLÉ for ALL Savings Plan has been met with enthusiasm from the disability community. Starting in December, ABLÉ program savers were given the opportunity to sign up for the enhanced card, with nearly 150 account holders and their families opting to gain access to their ABLÉ funds on the go.

“Three years after the launch of the Oregon ABLÉ and national ABLÉ for ALL Savings Plans, thousands of Oregonians experiencing disabilities are now on the path to financial security,” said Treasurer Tobias Read. “The launch of the new ABLÉ Prepaid Card is the latest step to improving the services Oregon State Treasury offers to the disability community and a key part of our efforts to ensure that all Oregonians have access to a simple and secure means to save for their future.”

The new ABLÉ Visa Prepaid Card enables

cardholders to easily control their spending by loading the card with as little or as much as they’d like to spend, up to \$20,000. The expense tracking process has been simplified, allowing cardholders to easily sort, filter and categorize their expenditures. Just like ABLÉ accounts, prepaid card funds do not impact benefits eligibility.

True Link Financial, Inc., the new card provider, is a California-based financial services company offering custom debit cards. An innovator in the investment space, True Link has developed fraud-detection algorithms that prevent common types of financial abuse. Cardholders now have access to custom features, including the ability to set up SMS alerts and restrictions on certain spending categories.

“We’re proud to be able to offer our account holders improved flexibility and greater control over how and where they spend their ABLÉ funds,” said Michael Parker, executive director for the Oregon

Treasury Savings Network.

“ABLE accounts give savers the independence to take control of their financial future, and with the convenience of the new prepaid card they can also enjoy peace of mind knowing that their money is protected.”

Oregon ABLÉ is a state-sponsored savings program that allows people with disabilities and their families to save money for day-to-day expenses and future needs without disqualifying them from critical state and federal benefits. Learn more at www.oregonABLEsavings.com.

Cougar killed in TD

Livestock losses spurred removal

A landowner shot and killed a cougar that had killed several goats March 2 in a neighborhood on the southern edge of The Dalles, according to a press release from Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The cougar killed five goats in close proximity to houses in two separate incidents (Feb. 26 and March 1) at neighboring residences. The cougar was also seen multiple times in the area in the days before it was killed.

The animal had been shot at by one of the landowners who lost goats, but returned another night before being killed on March 2.

Cougar sightings and activity sometimes occur in this part of The Dalles due to its location near forested habitat. However, the multiple sightings and livestock killings near residences caused concern for local wildlife managers, who also made attempts to

locate the cougar.

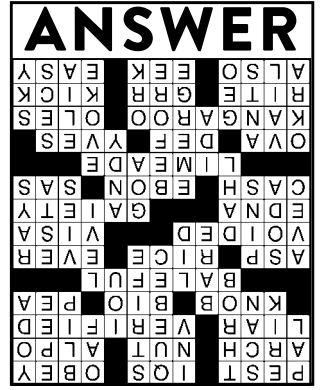
The cougar killed was an adult female in good body condition.

The landowner who shot the cougar coordinated with ODFW and the Wasco County Sheriff’s Office. The shooting occurred just outside city limits, as only law enforcement can discharge a firearm within city limits.

Under state law, landowners may kill cougars causing livestock damage without a permit, but ODFW must be notified. The cougar’s carcass must also be checked in to an ODFW office within 10 days so biologists can take samples to determine its sex and age for population modeling

efforts.

Oregon is home to more than 6,000 cougars of all age classes. For more information on cougars in Oregon, visit www.dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/living_with_cougars.asp.



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