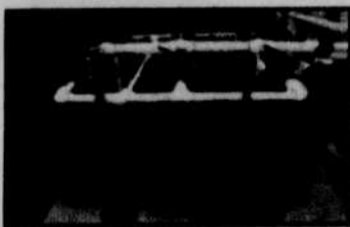




FACTS

LOCATION: South of Newport's Yaquina Bay Bridge, off Highway 101
HOURS: Oct. 16 - May 14, 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
 Closed Christmas Day
ADMISSION: \$7.35 adults, \$5.25 seniors and youth, \$3.15 children, free under four years old
MISSION: Impart to visitors a balanced, informed understanding of the resources so abundant on the Oregon Coast and just off of its shores
OPEN DATE: May 23, 1992
COST OF FACILITY: \$24 million
FIRST-YEAR ATTENDANCE: 841,000
NUMBER OF SPECIES: 171
NUMBER OF SPECIMENS: 6,650
STAFF: 69 full-time, 200 volunteers



FACILITY

Two million gallons of seawater are pumped from Yaquina Bay each day to support the aquarium's exhibits.
 By using an elaborate filtration system, the water released back to the bay is cleaner than the water originally imported from it.
 The sea otter exhibit's water runs through sophisticated high-rate sand filters and an ozone filtration system. Exhibit water is filtered at a rate of 1,800 gallons per minute or 2.6 million gallons each day.
MILES OF PIPE: 8
THICKNESS OF WINDOWS IN THE AQUARIUM'S EXHIBITS: 1.25" to 4"
MILES OF ELECTRICAL WIRING: 4

ACCENT

- 66 percent of first-year visitors came from Oregon
- 33 percent were from from the Portland-Vancouver metro area
- 12 percent came from Washington
- 6 percent came from California
- The aquarium has hosted people from all 50 states and more than 60 foreign countries since its opening



FEEDING TIME

All the animals at the Oregon Coast Aquarium live on five gallons of brine shrimp and 200 pounds of fish each day. Daily operating costs are covered by gate receipts.
 Annual feeding costs for the sea otters add up to \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year in shrimp, crab and clams.
 The birds in the Seabird Aviary alone consume 1,500 pounds of fish each month.
 Sea otters are the most voracious eaters, consuming up to 25 percent of their body weight each day.

All Rivers Sea run to the

The Oregon Coast Aquarium is a slice of Oregon's rugged coastline, reproduced on the shores of Newport's Yaquina Bay



or Cody, Sitka and Kiana, life is easy. They're fed daily without having to hunt, they don't have to avoid predators looking for a main course, and they aren't in danger of oil spills at their new home.

The trio — Alaskan sea otters at the Oregon Coast Aquarium in Newport — were rescued and rehabilitated after the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Alaska.

Rather than being watched by sharks looking for a snack, they have hundreds of people pointing, taking pictures and making cute cooing noises at them daily. They get pounds of restaurant-quality squid, rock crab, snails and clams instead of competing with fishermen for abalone.

And, comfortable in their thick, furry pelts, they play with toys introduced into the pool, such as balls and trashcan lids, as well as some that come their way accidentally, such as a bolt Cody broke off of a fixture at the bottom of their tank.

For the employees and volunteers at the aquarium, the otters' playfulness adds color to the task of tending to the thousands of creatures that represent native life on the Oregon Coast.

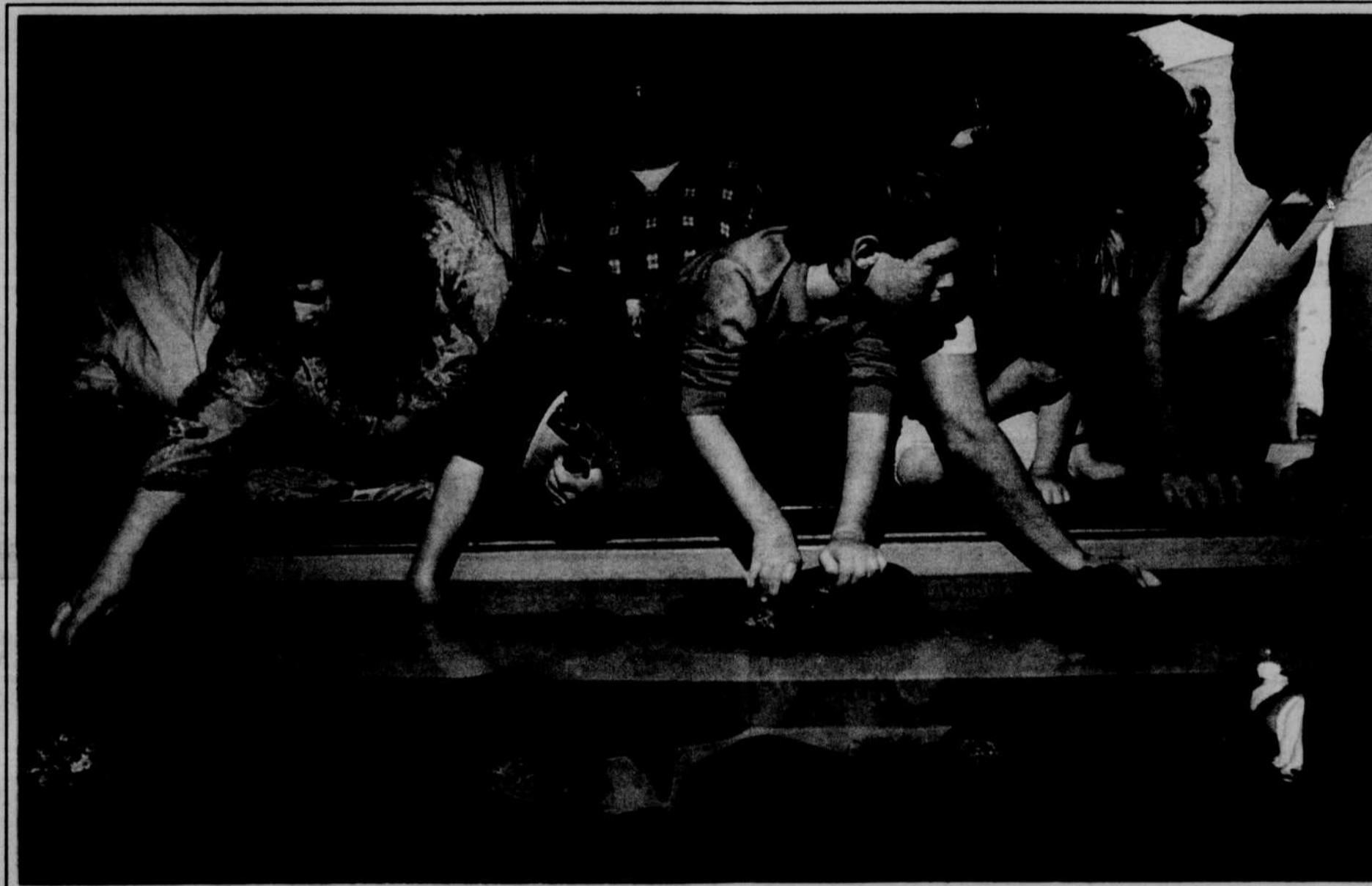
"We went beyond galleries or exhibits indoors to an outdoor area which basically represents entire ecosystems," said Diane Hammond, the aquarium's public relations officer.

"The landscaping, the native plants, the geology are just as important," she said. "Suddenly, you're beyond the scope of aquarium to a mix of aquarium and zoo."

The aquarium is designed around a distinct theme of a single raindrop falling in the coastal forests and working its way through ecosystems and estuaries until it reaches the Pacific Ocean. Instead of dark hallways with rows of neatly labeled tanks, the aquarium's indoor exhibits are divided among four galleries, each holding species representative of a certain habitat.

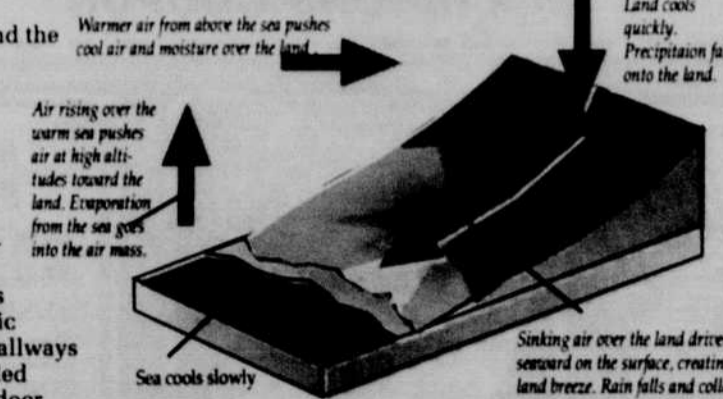
One holds the wildlife of sandy shores, sand dollars, frond-like sea pens and the denizens beneath docks and piers. Another gallery holds the life found on rocky shores and tide pools like starfish, some brittle and some soft like a wet velvet cushion.

Some of the more popular residents found in the third gallery, the coastal waters exhibit, are the jellyfish, including the moon jellyfish that drift white and ghostly in the water. Another species, the egg yolk jellyfish, are so similar to their namesake they could swim in a bowl of egg flower soup, comfortably hid-



Seven-year-old Sean Piersall (center) looks over the animals in the touch pool. Piersall was able to pick up and look at any of the creatures in the pool.

NIGHTTIME PRECIPITATION



Sinking air over the land drives air seaward on the surface, creating a land breeze. Rain falls and collects in rivers, estuaries and the soil or is evaporated.

"There's a husbandry team that dives, goes tide-pooling, goes out with fishermen," Hammond said. "We have good relations with fishermen. We put out the word, if we want a wolf eel and a fisherman catches it in his net, he'll bring it to us or call us and we'll go pick it up."

But whatever their job, the full-time employees also draw on the services of nearly 200 volunteers who greet visitors, answer questions or help work with the animals. "These volunteers have put in 28,000 hours

den from unwary diners. The final gallery shows life found in saltwater marshes, including shellfish that burrow in the mud.

Outdoor exhibits include the sea otter tank, an aviary with four kinds of sea birds, sea lions and harbor seals that were either born captive or rehabilitated.

Hammond said the aquarium employs 69 full-time workers, including three who tend the systems that provide clean water and life support for the exhibits.

Another 14 employees tend the animals and, when needed, collect new specimens for the aquarium under scientific permit.

Hammond said, "That's the equivalent of 12.5 full-time staff positions, and we need people to do what they're doing."

Clare Stash, a retired speech therapist, has volunteered at the aquarium since it opened. Stash watches children and parents gathered around the touch pool — a simulated tide pool filled with rocks, seaweed, anemones, starfish and other hardy creatures.

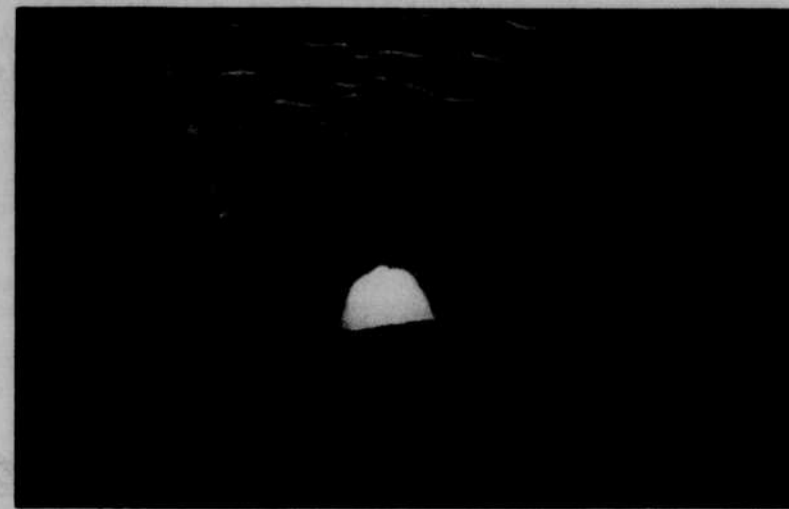
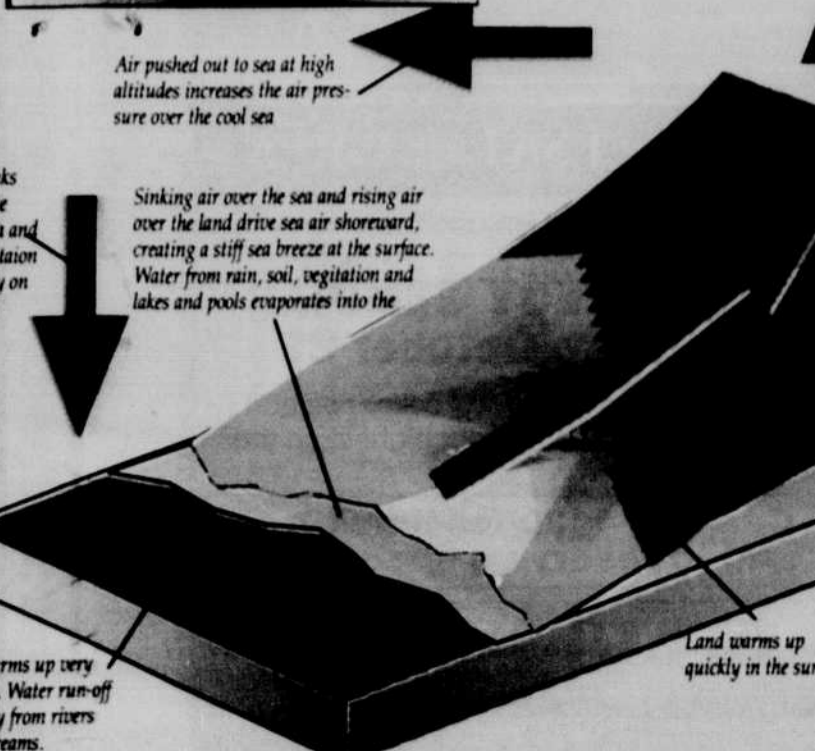
The most common things Stash hears are "Will it hurt me?" and "Oooh, it's slimy!" ... I always say, "no, it's like velvet," she said.

Stash said she decided to volunteer after seeing an ad in the Newport newspaper. "I came because I had the time and I was interested," she said. "I never had a chance to see these things."

The main reason Stash enjoys her work at the aquarium is because children visit. "They're so fascinating and some are so interested," she said. Visitors rarely see the parts of the aquarium where exhibits are built, where brine shrimp are hatched for food and where animals wait to be put on display and play their part in the raindrop's cycle.

Details more noticeable to the visitor include artificial pier pilings covered with fiberglass barnacles until real ones can grow, and "traffic fish," molded chinook salmon, who point the way to the exhibits with their noses. More exhibits are in the works, and construction will begin as soon as enough money is raised. The exhibits will be the finishing touches on a facility that was planned for more than 10 years, and most appropriately, they will complete the raindrop's cycle.

DAYTIME EVAPORATION



Story by
Meg Dedolph
 Photos by
Anthony Forney
 Graphics by
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A metridium anemone is perched on a rock as part of the Rocky Shores exhibit. Animals exhibited in the Rocky Shores exhibit include Pacific spiny lumpsuckers, wolf eels, sculpins, decorated warbonnets and a wide range of sea stars and anemones.



Tim Carmichael (above) and Valerie Lewis visit the moon jelly fish exhibit with their son Alex (left) and daughter Alizaire. A sea nettle (left) swims by in an exhibit at the Oregon Coast Aquarium.



SEABIRD AVIARY

Imagine your worst teen-age nightmare. Your legs are thin and gangly. Your beak is growing longer every day. The feathers on the top of your head just won't lay flat, and the bigger kids are picking on you.

Sound familiar? It does for six black oyster-catchers at the Oregon Coast Aquarium, too.

These young birds are not only new arrivals in the Oregon Coast Aquarium's Seabird Aviary, but also a newly featured species there.

A coastal shorebird, the species inhabits rocky tidal areas and is rarely seen on exhibit at other zoos or aquariums.



EXHIBITS

SEABIRD AVIARY: Just off of Oregon's shores live birds that spend their lives at sea, except for their annual breeding season during the summer. An open-air, walk-through aviary at the aquarium allows visitors the rare opportunity to see up close Oregon's tufted puffins, common murrelets, rhinoceros auklets and pigeon guillemots. The aviary is the largest of its kind in North America.

INDOOR EXHIBITS: Four indoor galleries exhibit coastal animals in their natural habitats: along the sandy shore, rocky shores, offshore coastal waters and salt marsh wetlands. Pacific spiny lumpsuckers, wolf eels, rattfish, pipefish and mud shrimp can be found in these habitats.

SEA OTTER EXHIBIT: Sea otters, extinct on the Oregon Coast since the early 1900s, have not returned to the state. Three Alaska sea otters rescued during the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound, Alaska, live in the aquarium's exhibit.

SEAL AND SEA LION EXHIBIT: Seals and sea lions are mainstays of Oregon's marine mammal community. Sea lions and five harbor seals currently live at the aquarium. Their diet consists exclusively of fresh-frozen food fit for human consumption, and includes squid and smelt.

