

Owner of attacking chimp credits deputy with saving her daughter's life

By PHIL WRIGHT
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Tamara Brogoitti's voice on the 911 call is clear and direct.

"My pet chimpanzee has attacked my daughter," Brogoitti told a dispatcher. "She's bleeding profusely. And the animal has to be shot."

The attack occurred Sunday, June 20, at Brogoitti's home and ranch on Rieth Road, across from the entrance to the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office. Brogoitti, 68, spoke about the attack and death of Buck publicly for the first time June 22.

"There are no ... he was my son," she said. "What I do want to do, I want to thank the Umatilla County Sheriff's Office."

In particular, she thanked the deputy who pulled the trigger.

"He sent Buck to heaven and saved my daughter," she said. "It was a horrible thing that happened. For the rest of my life I will thank that man for what he did."

She said the deputy acted with professionalism in a crisis.

"My daughter was losing blood, and emergency personnel needed to get to her," she said. "There were no options."

The body cam video the sheriff's office released June 22 of the shooting shows Buck from a distance in an enclosed patio. Brogoitti is out of view, hiding in a basement with her daughter, but her voice is evident and she directs the deputy to shoot the ape.

The deputy fired once, hitting Buck in the head, killing the 200-pound chimpanzee.

"There was no pain," Brogoitti said. "My beautiful son folded forward and was with God. There wasn't a twitch. ... He just went to be with God. It was horrible, but it had to happen."

Brogoitti said she was at her daughter's side at St. Anthony Hospital, Pendleton. She did not get into what provoked the attack, but said her daughter, 50, suffered bites on her thighs and buttocks. The plan was for her daughter to leave the hospital June 23 and live for a while at Brogoitti's home, where she will undergo physical therapy.

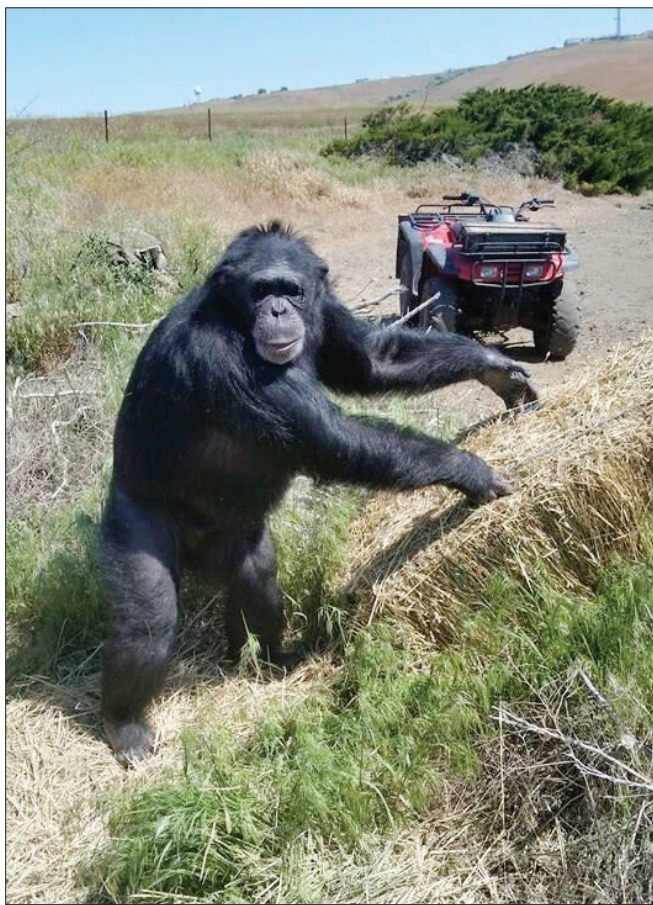
Brogoitti also complimented the medics who rushed her daughter to the hospital, and thanked the hospital staff for its "unbelievably wonderful" treatment of her daughter.

Sheriff's office flags residence

Brogoitti also did not get into details about how she and her late husband, John Brogoitti, acquired Buck as a baby 17 years ago, only to specify it was not to exploit the animal for financial gain. Buck, she said, never appeared on a TV show, for example.

Umatilla County Sheriff's Lt. Sterrin Ward said the sheriff's office is treating this as it would any other animal attack, referring its report to the county's public health department and the district attorney's office.

The sheriff's office on June 21 released two clips of the 911 call Brogoitti made after the attack took place and she was able to get into the basement with her daughter. Ward explained most of the 911 recording includes pauses



Buck Brogoitti Animal Rescue/Contributed Photo

This photo from 2015 shows Buck, the adult male chimpanzee Tamara Brogoitti cared for at her ranch near Pendleton. A Umatilla County sheriff's deputy on Sunday, June 20, 2021, shot and killed the primate after it attacked Brogoitti's adult daughter. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals in April warned the state Brogoitti allowed the ape to roam her property and therefore violated her permit to keep Buck.

with little information while emergency help arrived. The sheriff's office released the two clips, she said, because those segments were the most relevant to helping the public understand what happened.

Ward also said the sheriff's office had "flagged" the Brogoitti residence because of Buck. She said the sheriff's office uses such indicators so its staff can take proper precautions and be safe at certain locations.

PETA warns state of permit violation

Buck also pinged the radar of the nationwide nonprofit People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals. Brittany Peet, the PETA Foundation's deputy general counsel for Captive Animal Law Enforcement, issued this statement on June 21 about the attack:

"PETA warned state authorities that Tamara Brogoitti had created a ticking time bomb by engaging in direct contact with a dangerous ape, and now, he is dead and a woman has been mauled because of Brogoitti's refusal to follow experts' advice and transfer Buck to an accredited sanctuary. Since long before the chimpanzee Travis ripped a woman's face off in 2009, it has been clear that attacks are inevitable so long as people continue to treat chimpanzees like Chihuahuas."

Oregon banned possession of exotic animals in 2010, with two exceptions:

- If the U.S. Department of Agriculture licensed the owner of the animal.
- If the owner has a valid Oregon exotic animal permit obtained prior to 2010.

Brogoitti fell into the second category. But according to PETA, Brogoitti was violating state laws and rules and the terms of her permit for

keeping Buck.

PETA on April 16 sent a letter and complaint about Brogoitti to Isaak Stapleton, director of Food Safety and Animal Health, the agency under the Oregon Department of Agriculture that issues permits for exotic animals.

PETA's complaint stated the permit the agriculture department issued to Brogoitti lists Dr. Douglas Pernikoff, of Glencoe, Missouri, as the veterinarian caring for Buck. Aside from being more than 1,800 miles away from where Buck lived, Pernikoff is not licensed to practice veterinary medicine in Oregon, according to PETA.

The state agriculture department also requires cages or rooms of certain dimensions and materials to confine exotic animals. But per the complaint, social media posts show Buck would roam Brogoitti's home and other parts of the property. PETA also alleged Brogoitti misrepresented Buck's age to the agriculture department, a violation of the permit.

Debbie Metzler, associate director of PETA's Captive Animal Law Enforcement, said the organization has rescued 13 chimps from private captivity since 2013. Chimps are social animals and can be violent animals, she said. Buck, for his entire life, lacked the companionship of other chimpanzees, she said, and Brogoitti was not following the law.



Abigail Dollins/The Associated Press

Lawmakers meet in the Oregon House of Representatives during the legislative session on June 23, 2021, at the Oregon State Capitol in Salem.

Oregon Legislature calls it a session

By SARA CLINE
The Associated Press

SALEM — The Oregon Legislature adjourned Saturday, June 26, bringing to a close the 2021 session in which significant renewable energy, police reform, wildfire recovery and racial equity bills were passed.

The session was also marked by COVID-19 scares, tension between majority Democrats and Republicans and the expulsion of a lawmaker who let rowdy protesters into the Capitol.

"This session has been unlike any other in Oregon history," said House Speaker Tina Kotek, D-Portland.

The Legislature passed House Bill 2021 on June 26, which would require the state to transition 100% of its electricity generation to clean, renewable sources by 2040. Advocates say that would be the fastest such transition in the country, but opponents worry the push will lead to higher energy prices.

This session was unlike those in the past as the Capitol in Salem was closed to the public for the entire session, which began in January, because of COVID-19 restrictions. Even with precautions in place, floor sessions were canceled multiple times because of positive coronavirus tests among people who were allowed to work in the Capitol.

The session was also notable as it saw the state House expel a Republican member who let violent, far-right protesters into the Capitol on Dec. 21, 2020. On June

11 Rep. Mike Nearman was removed by a 59-1 vote, marking the first time a member has been expelled by the House in its 160-year history. The only vote against the resolution for expulsion was Nearman's own.

Nearman, who police say let protesters inside the building, has argued the Capitol should be open.

But even Republicans, who are often opposed to Democratic initiatives on climate change and some other bills, said the crowd outside the Capitol that day was not made up of constituents who wanted to peacefully engage in the democratic process.

Some were carrying guns. In the House and Senate, where Democrats hold strong majorities, the GOP used slowing tactics — refusing to suspend the full reading of proposed bills aloud before a final vote, a maneuver that added hours to the passage of even simple bipartisan legislation — to thwart legislation they didn't like.

In response, hours worth of bills were read by computer rather than clerks.

For the past two years, Republican state senators staged walkouts to deny the chamber a quorum. During the debate over measures that ban guns from the Capitol and mandate the safe storage of guns, five Republican senators did not attend. However, six did. The GOP senators that attended have since faced death threats and recall petitions from their own party.

Guns were not the

only topic that drew passionate statements from lawmakers this session — especially in a year with a deadly pandemic and racial awakening.

A package of police reform bills was passed that includes requirements that police officers assigned to crowd control during protests must be clearly identified by name or badge number; another provision requires all new police officer background checks must include a scan for membership in hate groups; and one that strengthens police misconduct reporting requirements.

Lawmakers worked to keep people housed during the pandemic.

Among the notable measures passed during the 2021 Legislature was a pause of some evictions during the pandemic for 60 days for tenants who have applied for rent assistance. Legislators also reinstated and extended the Oregon foreclosure moratorium.

In addition, lawmakers passed bills making it easier to site shelters in different neighborhoods and a bill that makes it more challenging for cities and counties to ban homeless people from sitting, sleeping and camping on public property. Several Oregon cities like Portland, Salem and Eugene have seen significant issues with homelessness and outdoor encampments.

Lawmakers allocated \$150 million to help find homes for people displaced in the September 2020 wildfires and \$75 million to support them in the short-term.

2021

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Vote online for People's Choice from 12:01 am Monday, June 21 through 11:59 pm Wednesday, June 30.

The winners will appear in the July 8th edition of Go Magazine; the top 25 will appear online.

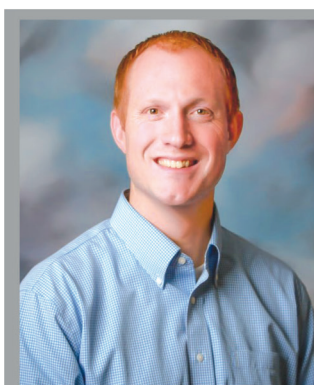
Gift cards to a restaurant of your choice will be awarded for first, second and third place.



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