

Pendleton bird rehab center hopes \$45,000 gift will set up future

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian



A newly constructed educational facility at Blue Mountain Wildlife in Pendleton is among director Lynn Tompkins' plans to help expand the educational abilities of the organization.

for years to come.

Tompkins said she's recommending these moves with the future in mind.

"My goal is to make it sustainable past me," she said.

For more than 30 years, Blue Mountain Wildlife has cared for wild animals, primarily birds of prey, who are seriously injured, often after coming into contact with humans. Each year, Blue Mountain Wildlife takes in more than 1,000 birds that get stuck in buildings, get shot by hunters or mistakenly ingest lead ammunition they find in carrion. During this year's sweltering heat wave, the rehabilitation center took in dozens of chicks that threw themselves out of their nests to escape the blazing sun.

Beyond rehabilitating birds and returning them back to their habitats, Blue Mountain Wildlife has an educational component. For years, Tompkins would transport her rehabilitation center's permanent avian residents to schools around the region to give students lessons about conservation.



Lynn Tompkins, the co-founder and director of Blue Mountain Wildlife, pauses alongside a pen Wednesday, Dec. 1, 2021, at the rehabilitation center's Pendleton headquarters. The organization recently received a \$45,000 gift from a trust.

But COVID-19 halted her trips to schools, and with her husband and co-founder, Bob, dying in March, Tompkins doesn't have the same appetite for travel.

"I'm at a point where I'm not going to drive all over the countryside," she said.

That doesn't mean Blue Mountain Wildlife is leaving behind the educational part of its mission.

The group recently built a new educational facility

at its property, so visitors can view the birds the center uses for educational purposes away from the rehabbing animals. Tompkins said she would like to start granting money to schools to cover the costs of field trips to Blue Mountain Wildlife.

Tompkins also said she is also hoping the \$45,000 gift will aid Blue Mountain Wildlife's efforts to build a new wildlife hospital on site.

Omicron is coming: What will Oregon do?

By AIMEE GREEN
The Oregonian

SALEM — The arrival of the highly worrisome omicron variant in the U.S. — and soon, Oregon — has prompted weighty questions about the state's future: Will Oregon need to bring back old COVID-19 restrictions? Will lives and the economy be crippled? Will the pandemic slog on, when so many are so ready for it to end?

Five experts in the fields of epidemiology, public health and data science were asked about measures Oregon should employ this winter. Four anticipate a surge in winter cases from delta, if not omicron. Although the variant first identified in southern Africa last month had not yet been detected in Oregon as of Tuesday, it has been found in 19 states, including Washington.

All five experts said Oregon needs to maintain its indoor public mask mandate for the time-being — something that will put the state in a better position than it was in the summer, when it lifted its mandate just as the delta variant hit.

All five also said how Oregon chooses to react depends largely on information about omicron's characteristics that won't be known for another week, maybe two. Before deciding Oregon's response, officials need more data about whether omicron is more transmissible than delta, if it causes more severe disease and to what extent it might evade the effectiveness of current vaccines.

State epidemiologist Dr. Dean Sidelinger said very early data this week that omicron might not cause more severe disease "is encouraging." He's "cautiously optimistic" that current efforts — mask usage and encouraging vaccinations and boosters — will be enough to blunt omicron.

But Sidelinger said it's too early to rule out

restoring past COVID-19 restrictions or instituting new ones, should they be determined necessary, and that includes closing indoor dining at restaurants and bars, shuttering gyms, limiting gathering sizes or requiring vaccinations to visit public indoor spaces.

"I'm never going to say never," Sidelinger said. "If things get much worse and hospital capacity is constrained, we'll probably be talking about more limitations."

Sidelinger doesn't have a specific number of hospitalized patients in mind that could trigger new restrictions.

Oregon did not restore measures other than mask mandates this summer even as delta led to nearly 1,200 hospitalizations — double the previous high.

Charles Boyle, a spokesperson for Gov. Kate Brown, said the governor's office is closely monitoring the variant and isn't considering any new restrictions. However, they know that could change.

"We have learned throughout the pandemic to be prepared for the unexpected with this virus, and as we continue to navigate Delta and Omicron and any other future variants COVID-19 brings, all options are on the table," Boyle said in an email.

European countries with higher vaccination rates than Oregon or the U.S. are tightening rules amid a delta surge and worries omicron will worsen the situation, with Austria implementing a lockdown in late November as well as a vaccination mandate for all adults by February. President Biden has said there will not be a nationwide lockdown, and, domestically, many local governments are holding off on enacting restrictions for now. But New York City's mayor Monday announced a vaccination requirement at all private places of employment, regardless of size.

COVID-19 Vaccine

Other vaccine events offered in December:

Location: Center for Human Development

Time: 10:00 am to 2:00 pm every Friday with the exception of New Year's Eve in addition to Christmas Eve.

Additional options: Scheduled appointments available throughout the week.

Vaccines offered: 1st dose, 2nd dose, 3rd doses and booster vaccines. All Covid vaccine configurations will be available including pediatric vaccination. Other pediatric and adult immunizations also available at CHD.

CDC General Vaccine Info:

COVID-19 vaccines are effective

COVID-19 vaccines are effective and can reduce the risk of getting and spreading the virus that causes COVID-19. Learn more about the different COVID-19 vaccines.

COVID-19 vaccines also help children and adults from getting seriously ill even if they do get COVID-19.

While COVID-19 tends to be milder in children than adults, it can make children very sick, require hospitalization, and some children have even died. Children with underlying medical conditions are more at risk for severe illness compared to children without underlying medical conditions.

Getting children ages 5 years and older vaccinated can help protect them from serious short- and long-term complications.

Getting everyone ages 5 years and older vaccinated can protect families and communities, including friends and family who are not eligible for vaccination and people at increased risk for severe illness from COVID-19.

Booster Information from CDC:

Fast Facts Everyone age 18 and older is eligible for a COVID-19 vaccine booster beginning Nov. 20, 2021. Some people are strongly advised get a booster dose to protect themselves and others. You can choose which vaccine to get. The COVID-19 vaccines are extraordinarily effective at preventing serious illness, hospitalization and death. That said, we are seeing immunity drop over time, especially in people over age 50 and those with compromised immune systems who are more likely to experience severe disease, hospitalization and death. For these people, another dose boosts their immunity, sometimes greater than what was achieved after the primary, two-dose series. Health experts strongly recommend people over age 50, people over 18 who live in long-term care facilities, and anyone who received one dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine get a booster dose. Younger, healthy people may also get a booster dose to protect themselves and others. A booster will re-build neutralizing antibodies that strengthen the body's ability to fight getting a breakthrough case. Even if you're not at high risk, you could be infected and then pass it on to others, such as children too young to be vaccinated, the elderly, or people who are immunocompromised. Booster doses help people maintain strong immunity to disease longer. The first vaccine series built up the immune system to make the antibodies needed to fight the disease. Over time, the immune response weakens. A booster dose stimulates the initial response and tends to result in higher antibody levels that help people maintain their immunity longer. Boosters take about two weeks to bring up the immune response. This continues to be studied, but we can reliably say it takes two weeks to bring the immune response up to or better than that after the primary series.

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NOTICE



To the residence of Union County. This notice is meant only to teach, inform, and educated purpose only.

Did you know that the State of Oregon has no laws to protect your animals on your property. Your dogs and cats have no rights on their property. Even the owners of dogs and cats have no help from the state.

Our neighbors (renters) 30 feet away from my dogs decided upon themselves to place many frequency devices next to our home. They stop the dogs barking and keep them away from their yard. The whole surrounding area is affected. All of our neighbors who have one or more dogs are affected by these devices.

It is probably not known by many that these frequency devices cause a great deal of pain, illness and stress. Our dogs would cry and mourn for hours before we knew what was happening. Because of our dog's pain they just added more devices. Keep in mind that our neighbors recorded our dogs (3) on 3 separate occasions. Union County Animal Control advised us there was nothing they could do. Our dogs were not considered nuisance barkers on any of the 3 recordings. If they were nuisance barkers the fine is 150.00 dollars. Union County Sheriff's office also advised us there was nothing they could do. Both officials advised us to hire an attorney and let them know the outcome.

We said we will do just that.

We hired an attorney. His name is Geordie Duckler. He can be reached at 503-546-8052.

If anyone has any problems with neighbors hurting their animals this is the best person to hire.

He is very knowledgeable and very helpful.

If there is any attorney that would be interested in taking on this company that sells and builds these devices let me know. They express how they don't hurt animals, that is a false statement in my opinion. Just ask my dogs, they will show you because they are smart. I have recordings and documents freely given if someone desires to protect our animals.

My address: PO BOX 2995, La Grande OR 97850.

Teresa McLucas
Cove OR.