

NOTICES

These Are No Ordinary Valentines

Sea Lion Offers a Kiss – Octopus Lends a Hand (8)!

NEWPORT, Ore. – Give your sweetheart a fishy smooch this Feb. 14, Valentine's Day, with a Sea Lion Encounter – or a many-handed hug with an Octopus Encounter!

On these special behind-the-scenes tours, you and your special someone have a chance to learn about sea lions and octopus – and connect with living creatures at the Oregon Coast Aquarium.

Sea lions are adapted for survival in near-shore waters and bays. You'll learn about these social animals and receive a fishy kiss from Lea, one of the aquarium's friendlier pinnipeds. You'll also receive a photo of this romantic encounter so you'll never forget.

A registration fee of \$15 per couple for members, \$25 for non-members, is limited to five couples per session (ages 8 and up).

If a many-handed hug suits your fancy, you might prefer an Octopus Encounter. On this special behind-the-scenes tour, you and your sweetheart will hold hands with a giant Pacific octopus, one of the aquarium's more intelligent animals.

Program Coordinator Charlie Plybon says people respond with delight and amazement to the popular encounters. "That first encounter with an octopus is an incredible experience for most people. It's like he is putting noses and taste buds on you as he explores you with his tentacles."

Under the supervision and guidance of an aquarist, participants will have an opportunity to handle an octopus and watch it eat a special treat.

The giant Pacific octopus is commonly found in rocky dens from low inter-tidal pools to depths of nearly 330 feet from British Columbia to Monterey, Calif. Feeding on crustaceans, shrimp, crabs, scallops, clams, abalone, moon snails, smaller octopuses, rockfish, and sculpins, the giant Pacific octopus often litters the entrance to its cave with empty shells and bones, creating what scientists call an "octopus' garden."

You'll receive a photo of this romantic encounter for a registration fee of \$10 per couple for members, \$15 for non-members. Registration is required for five couples per session (ages 8 and up).

To register for the either Valentine's Day events, call Leslie at 541-867-3474, ext. 5301, or log on to our Web site at www.aquarium.org.

As an American Zoo and Aquarium Association (AZA) accredited institution, the Oregon Coast Aquarium is dedicated to providing excellent care for animals, a great experience for visitors, and a better future for all living things. With more than 200 accredited members, AZA is a leader in global wildlife conservation and a link to helping animals in their native habitats. For more information, visit www.aza.org.

The Oregon Coast Aquarium is a private, non-profit aquatic and marine science educational facility offering a fun and interesting way to learn about Oregon's unique coastal ecosystem. It's dedicated to teaching marine wildlife and ocean preservation through responsible management and exhibition of marine life.

The aquarium's objectives are to develop and pursue conservation, education, and research programs of local and global significance; to foster an awareness and appreciation of Oregon's coastal environment and the interdependence of our global ecosystem; and to serve as a community resource and recreational center.

Tribal College Students Benefit from Lumina Foundation Grant

DENVER – The American Indian College Fund (AICF) will use a \$373,000 grant from the Lumina Foundation for Education to create a fund that will help Native American students achieve academic success.

AICF's Angel Fund will help financially strapped students pay for emergency expenses that sometimes prevent non-traditional students from reaching their educational goals.

"Many students at the 34 tribal colleges have said that financial problems at home and at school hinder their education," said Nicole Adams, director of foundation relations for AICF. "Problems such as transportation, health care, and child care often require extra money and attention – things our students don't always have."

Oregon's Military Personnel and Families May Qualify for Assistance

SALEM, Ore. – Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) recently announced that Oregon's military personnel may qualify for a number of community service programs that assist those in need.

OHCS funds several community service programs that help lower-income persons, the homeless, and Oregonians in economic crisis obtain services and tools that stabilize their lives and move them toward self-reliance.

These programs are delivered through local community action agencies and other public, private, or non-governmental organizations that assist low-income Oregonians with food, rental assistance, energy assistance, homelessness, and weatherization services.

OHCS food and nutrition programs provide a variety of nutritional/educational programs through the Oregon Food Bank's statewide network of 20 regional food banks. OHCS assists with the Commodity Supplemental Food, Emergency Food Assistance, and Food Distribution on Indian Reservations programs, which are operated mostly by volunteers.

The Low-Income Rental Housing Assistance Program is designed to assist very-low-income households by

providing short-term rental assistance. OHCS administers the program through local housing authorities or community action agencies.

Our HOME Tenant-Based Rental Assistance program offers rental assistance in six-month or one-year terms that can be renewed to very-low-income tenants to pay for housing costs and a refundable security deposit.

OHCS also funds a number of homeless assistance programs, including the State Homeless Assistance Program, designed to fund emergency shelter and auxiliary services directly related to emergency shelters.

Eligible activities can include nutritional assistance, personal hygiene, and referral for other services. The program is administered at the local level by community agencies that are encouraged to help participants access other services to meet longer-term needs whenever possible.

OHCS also has several energy assistance and weatherization programs for low-income households. These programs also are delivered through local community action agencies and provide assistance with home heating costs, electric utility costs, weatherization, and energy conservation services.

Members of the military and their families who may need these services should contact their local community action agency to see if they qualify. For a listing of community action agencies, contact Community Action Directors of Oregon at 503-316-3951 or visit www.cado-oregon.org/members.htm.

OHCS is the state's housing finance agency and community services program administrator. It provides financial and program support to create and preserve opportunities for quality, affordable housing for Oregonians of lower and moderate income and administers federal and state antipoverty, homeless, energy assistance, and community service programs.

The OHCS mission is to "reach out for opportunities to create partnerships that improve Oregonians' lives and the quality of our communities." For more information, visit the department's Web site at www.ohcs.oregon.gov.