

Dead whale attracts big crowds at Crescent City

By JOE KRAUSS
For IVN

A 40-foot sperm whale washed ashore on the south end of Crescent beach the evening of Thursday, Jan. 31. Hundreds of onlookers crowded along Hwy. 101, which caused a traffic jam..

The whale had apparently been dead for some time, as it was in an advanced state of decomposition, and its stench filled the air. According to Christopher Calahan, a representative of the vertebrate mu-

seum from Humboldt State University, the whale was an approximately 20-year old male.

The carcass was being guarded from onlookers while Calahan removed the whale’s jaw to prevent theft of the its ivory teeth.

Sperm whales are endangered species, and the mutilation or theft of any part of the animal carries a \$10,000 fine. Calahan stated that what would become of the remains of the whale had not yet been determined.

Hot topic HR training at Fire Mountain on Feb. 28

A “not-to-be-missed educational training for all HR professionals, supervisors, team leaders and managers” has been created by the Society of Human Resource Managers (SHRM) with its sponsor, Fire Mountain Gems and Beads.

The “soft skills training will enhance leadership and interpersonal” proficiencies. Skills to be taught are how to become a better leader through effective communication, self-management, motivation, delegation and conflict management along with understanding and complying with legal requirements in the work environment.

The meeting will begin at 7:30 a.m. with networking and announcements, and the presentation will be held from

8 to 10 a.m. Thursday, Feb. 28 at One Fire Mountain Way in Grants Pass. The presenter will be Anne Donovan, who holds a Senior Professional Human Resources (SPHR) certificate. She is vice president of Xenium Resources.

Attendees will be eligible for two CEU credits.

“Space is filling up fast,” she said, “so those interested in attending or who want additional information, should contact Patricia Forde, SPHR, Human Resources manager at Hakatai Enterprises Inc.

Phone (541) 552-0855, Ext. 11; fax (541) 552-0861; or plf@hakatai.com no later than Friday, Feb. 15. The cost is \$5 for SHRM members (nonmembers or SHRM-members’ guests are free if first-time attendees.)

Glaucoma controllable; if diagnosed, treated

Finding time to implement well-intentioned resolutions is hard. But don’t underestimate the importance of medical visits -- specifically, visits to your eye doctor.

A quick trip to your optometrist may save your sight from glaucoma. Many may not know how quickly it can take away eyesight.

Glaucoma affects more than three million Americans, but more than half of them don’t know that they have it, according to Prevent Blindness America.

Glaucoma begins by attacking peripheral vision, typically causing objects to appear less clear. At first, people may compensate by squinting or turning their head to focus better. These changes may seem minor, but glaucoma can accelerate quickly, causing eyesight to rapidly and irreversibly deteriorate.

Like many diseases, some factors -- including age, race, and genetics -- can increase the risk of developing glaucoma. It usually affects one in 200 people under age 50, but by age 80, as many as one in 10 people are diagnosed with glaucoma.

What’s really alarming is that nearly 20 percent of

adults have never been to an eye doctor, and more than 60 percent of respondents thought that glaucoma was preventable, according to the American Optometric Association’s (AOA) American Eye-Q(tm) survey.

Glaucoma cannot be prevented, but if diagnosed and treated early, it can be controlled.

This reinforces what the Oregon Optometric Physicians Association (OOPA) recommends: Adults need regular, comprehensive eye exams. Medicare covers annual glaucoma screenings for people considered at heightened risk of developing glaucoma. This includes individuals with diabetes, those with a family history of glaucoma, African Americans 50 and older, and Hispanic Americans 65 and older.

OOPA, in conjunction with its parent organization, AOA, provides a Glaucoma Hotline that matches Medicare patients with participating optometrists in their area: (800) 262-3947.

(Editor’s Note: The preceding article was written by Dr. Kenneth Loftus, Oregon Optometric Physicians Association, Ashland.)



The rotting carcass of a sperm whale at South Beach near Crescent City, Calif. was surrounded by onlookers, some of

whom had removed some of the whale’s teeth before officials arrived. (Photo by Paul Bodeving)

Even though you can’t see sun, cancer a possibility

By Dr. MEL KOHN
State Epidemiologist,
Oregon Dept. of
Human Services
Public Health Division

Oregon, known for rainy and gray days, also has the nation’s fifth-highest rate of sun-caused melanoma, the most deadly type of skin cancer.

Consider these facts:
*Since 1996 Oregon’s melanoma cases and melanoma deaths have been steadily increasing.

*During 2002, the most recent year for which comparable data are available, Oregon ranked ninth among states in melanoma deaths.

*During 2004, 977 Oregonians were diagnosed with melanoma and 120 died of it.

While the exact cause of all melanomas isn’t known, it’s clear that heavy exposure to the sun’s ultraviolet rays increases the risk. With bright days, protecting skin from the sun -- something many Oregonians don’t think about -- is even more important. Here are some tips:

*Avoid direct sun, especially from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

*Wear a light-weight long-sleeved shirt and long pants if you’ll be spending a lot of time outdoors.

*Use sunscreen when you go outside. Sunscreens with a sun protective factor of 15 or higher and both UVA and UVB protection work best.

*Wear a hat that shades your face, scalp, ears and neck. If you wear a hat that doesn’t cover your ears or neck, such as a baseball cap, make sure to protect the exposed area with sunscreen.

*Don’t assume that clouds will shield you from the sun. At best they only block 50 to 60 percent of the ultraviolet rays likely to cause melanoma and other skin cancers.

Children are a special concern, because the heaviest exposure to the sun often occurs in childhood. Just a few serious sunburns increase the risk of skin cancer later in life. Cumulative exposure also is a factor.

Melanoma is the most deadly form of skin cancer, but most cases are highly curable if detected early. If you see changes in the size, shape or color of an existing mole, contact your health-care provider. If you get a new mole with an irregular shape or without a clear border or the color is uneven, or

if it’s bigger than 6 millimeters -- about the width of a pencil eraser -- have your health-care provider examine it.

The general risk factors for melanoma include:

- *Prior melanoma.
- *A family history with one or more relatives who had melanoma.
- *Large moles.
- *Sun-sensitive skin, which is more common in

people with natural blond or red hair color.

*History of excessive sun exposure and sunburns in childhood.

*Exposure to tanning booths.

Most of us enjoy being outdoors when the weather is warm. Just be sure to protect your skin when you go outside to enjoy yourself.

To contact Kohn, visit Melvin.A.Kohn@state.or.us.

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Heaven have mercy on us all, Presbyterians and Pagans alike, for we are all somehow dreadfully cracked about the head, and sadly need mending.

- Herman Melville -



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Certificates can be purchased at the following locations: Pet Country, Medford and Ashland Grange CO-OPS, all Medford Mini Pet Marts, and Grants Pass Mini Pet Mart (on 6th), and Jackson County Animal Shelter.

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