



Volunteer Melissa Hart works with Archimedes, a snowy owl

PET PARTICIPATION

If you can't have one, help one WORDS AND PHOTO BY CALI BAGBY

“You want me to get the great horned owl?” I ask my shift mate Peggy McConnell, who is a five-year veteran at the Cascades Raptor Center. I, on the other hand, am just reaching my seven-month mark, and sharp talons still make me nervous. I slide on gloves and reach into the incubator to retrieve the owl. As I hold the owl's legs and it rests against my chest, McConnell administers its medication for the night. The owl is impressive, with large yellow-orange eyes and brown feathers spotted with little patches of white. For a moment the owl closes his feathered eyelids and as

he produces a deep and haunting hoo-hoo hooooo, shivers descend our spines.

Volunteering with birds or other critters can be beneficial for people like me who love animals but don't have our own pets. Making a connection with a feathered or furry friend can make dark days a little brighter.

During my four-hour shift, there are chores such as cleaning cages, defrosting mice for the owls' dinner and sweeping floors, but every task sustains the birds. There are moments of splendor, like when I deliver dinner to Gandalf the great grey owl and he does not fly anxiously about but

sits majestically as I walk in front of him.

The Raptor Center is almost entirely run by volunteers who dedicate their time to the 60 resident birds, which include hawks, owls and eagles. The center rescues up to 200 orphaned sick and injured raptors every year in the hopes of rehabilitating and releasing these birds back into their natural habitat.

If winged creatures do not appeal to your senses, you may want to check out S.A.R.A.'s Treasures to get your feline fix. S.A.R.A.'s Treasures is a thrift store which donates all proceeds to the homeless cats for which it provides a safe sanctuary.

You too can become a beloved volunteer at these organizations, just contact:

Cascades Raptor Center

www.eraptors.org
(541) 485-1320

S.A.R.A.'s Treasures

www.sarasavesanimals.org
(541) 741-7253

Greenhill Humane Society

www.green-hill.org
(541) 689-1503

LCAS

www.lanecounty.org/animals/
(541) 682-3645

For other volunteering opportunities check out:

Rideable, an organization that helps people with special needs enjoy the benefits of horseback riding.

www.rideable.org
(541) 684-4623

Save the Pets educates the community on the importance of spaying and neutering, while also finding animals homes.

www.savethepets.net
(541) 683-PETS

Pro-Bone-O provides veterinary services to the homeless community.

www.proboneo.org
(541) 607-8089

Luv-a-Bull rescues and cares for homeless pit bulls while locating new families for these orphaned pups.

www.luv-a-bull.org
(541) 345-7511

For a longer list of great places to volunteer: go to Animal Welfare Network Lane County at awnlc.net



Summer Conservation Corps

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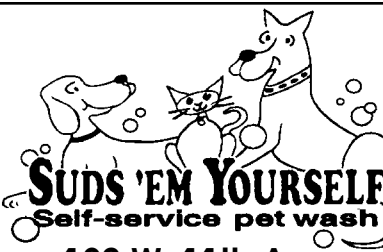
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