

Tube man waves bye-bye to wolves in southern Oregon

A clever tactic against predators

By **GEORGE PLAVERN**
Capital Press

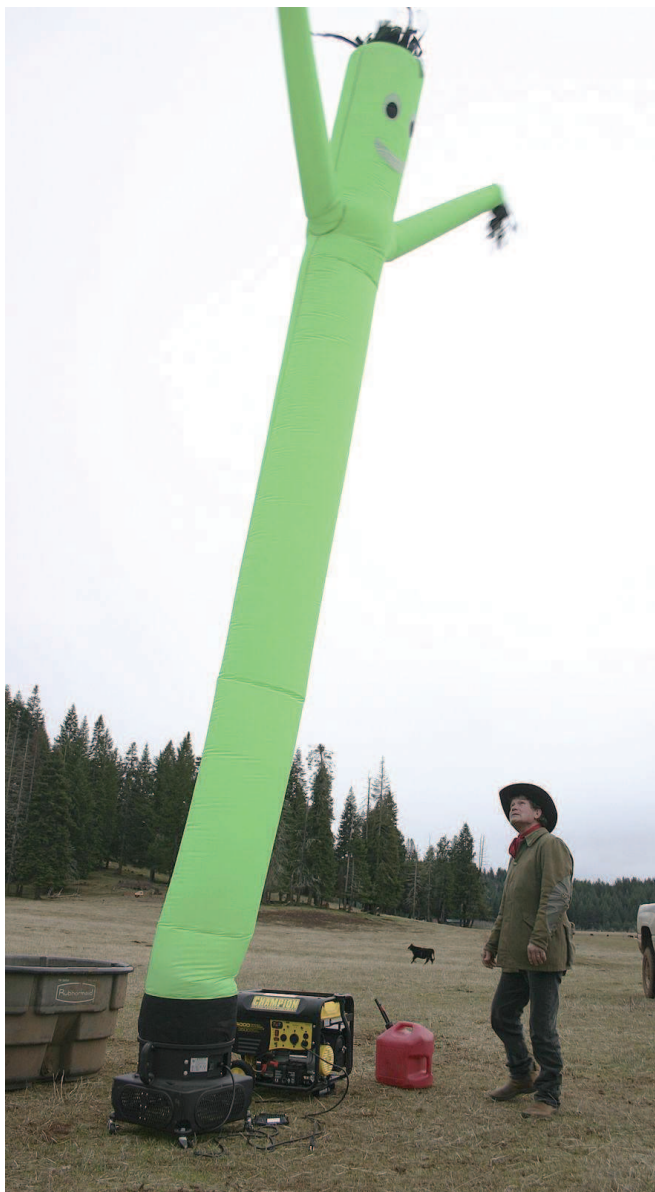
BUTTE FALLS — The display is almost hypnotic, watching the inflatable tube man twist and wave at Ted Birdseye's ranch bordering the Rogue River-Siskiyou National Forest in southern Oregon.

His kids say it looks like a neon green alien dancing at night. His wife's co-worker jokes about the ranch turning into a used car lot. But so far, Birdseye said he is sleeping sound at night with the tube man standing guard against wolves that have repeatedly attacked his cattle.

Wolves from the nearby Rogue pack have killed or injured at least seven calves and one guard dog in the last year at the Mill-Mar Ranch in Jackson County, frustrating Birdseye and wildlife managers trying feverishly to keep the predators at bay.

Following the most recent confirmed depredation on Jan. 18, Birdseye received two inflatable tube men — one green, one yellow — on loan from the environmental group Defenders of Wildlife, which is assisting ranchers across the state with hazing wolves using nonlethal deterrents.

Wolves remain a federally protected species in Oregon west of highways 395, 78 and 95. Over the months,



George Plaven/Capital Press

Southern Oregon rancher Ted Birdseye fires up an inflatable dancing tube man, loaned by the environmental group Defenders of Wildlife, used to scare wolves away from the pasture where he grazes cattle.

Birdseye has tried installing bright flashing lights and hanging fladry along fences at the 276-acre ranch. John

Stephenson, Oregon wolf coordinator for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, has even camped overnight to

maintain a human presence in the pasture.

Still, the wolves would eventually return, jolting Birdseye out of bed whenever he heard the guard dogs bark at night.

"Most people don't realize the amount of stress and anxiety," Birdseye said. "You don't go back to sleep."

Suzanne Stone, of Defenders of Wildlife, said the group has been interested for years in using inflatable tube men — also known as air dancers — as a tool to prevent conflicts between wolves and livestock.

Stone said they set up an inflatable tube man for the first time last year at a farm near La Grande, where wolves had killed several of the landowner's pet llamas. Since then, she said the landowner has had no more problems with wolves on the property.

"It's always struck me as something wolves would be particularly skittish of," Stone said of the 20-foot-tall, undulating tube man. "It's unpredictable, and very foreign to them."

The strategy has been similarly effective for Birdseye at the Mill-Mar Ranch. Every evening around 8:30 or 9 p.m., he drives out to the pasture and fires up the gas generator that sets the tube man waving. He also shines a spotlight from the ground to give the tube man its eerie, alien-like glow.

"If I was a wolf and saw something like that, I'd take off running in the other direction," Birdseye said.

Ranchers should not expect tube men to work in all circumstances, Stone said. They are mostly effective in a smaller pastures, placed within view of the livestock. As always, she said the most important thing producers can do is to make sure bone piles and carcasses are cleaned up to avoid attracting wolves in the first place.

In Birdseye's case, Stone said the tube men are a temporary fix until they can find

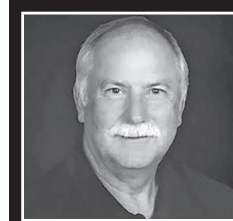
money to install a permanent electric fence at the ranch.

"This thing is pretty terrifying," she said.

For now, Birdseye said he is finally sleeping through the night, though the jury is still out on whether the tube men will continue to protect his herd. Though it is outside the box, he expects more local ranchers to begin showing an interest.

"They may be facing the same issues here shortly," Birdseye said.

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Improvements for 13th Street Alley fully funded

By **KATIE FRANKOWICZ**
The Daily Astorian

One of Astoria's only alleys is on track for a makeover.

The City Council authorized City Manager Brett Estes to award a \$3,000 Oregon Heritage Commission grant to the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association on Monday. The money helps fully fund a project to install murals and permanent light fixtures in the 13th Street Alley, which runs between Duane Street and Commercial Street.

The alley has been problematic in the past. In recent years, neighboring business owners reported they have frequently had to clean up human waste, activity they blamed on a group of homeless people who had been sleeping nearby. Last summer, vandals hit the alley, scrawling a racial slur and sexually explicit messages on the walls.

Now, the downtown association plans to commission a muralist to create custom artwork for a portion of the alley walls. The walls will also be covered with a graffiti-resistant finish.

The downtown association plans to send out a request for proposals and qualifications for interested artists this winter.

A jury will choose three to five finalists to provide

more detailed information on the projects they are proposing. All the drawings and materials will go through a public comment process during a Second Saturday Art Walk.

After the jury chooses a final artist and mural design,

the downtown association will go to the city for permitting approval, said Sarah Lu Heath, the executive director for the downtown association.

The lighting part of the project will consist of cafe lights and LED bulbs. Bogh

Electric has agreed to donate time to create electrical hookups for the lights.

With the grant from the Oregon Heritage Commission, the downtown association has nearly \$11,000 to spend on the beautification work.

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About 65 animals seized

By **ROSE LUNDY**
The Daily News

LONGVIEW, Wash. — Deputies and animal control agents seized about 65 neglected animals from a Puget Island property Monday morning, according to the Wahkiakum County Sheriff's Office.

Raedyn Grasse, administrative assistant for the sheriff's office, said the agency in January received videos and photos from potential adopters who witnessed animals in poor conditions at the Angel Wings Animal Rescue.

Debra Lawson-Bean, owner of Angel Wings, could not be reached for comment Tuesday.

The prosecutor's office is involved in the ongoing investigation.

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A: The body during pregnancy is going through many hormonal changes and a common side effect is sensitive or inflamed gums. Meticulous oral hygiene and brushing is very important during this time to keep gums healthy and reduce chance of infection getting into the mothers bloodstream. Women who take proper oral hygiene measures and have a nutritious diet are more likely to avoid gum problems.



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