



INSIDE

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS GLOW IN WINTERS NIGHT IN GO!



Randy Severe's sons Ryan Severe, left, and Jarad Severe look up as they lift their father's casket atop a horse-drawn carriage Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2021, following his funeral service at the Pendleton Convention Center.



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian
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.

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

By ANTONIO SIERRA
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — Blue Mountain Wildlife's weekly newsletter ran through the normal humdrum of the nonprofit's work before making a significant reveal: The bird rehabilitation center was brought a screech owl that had been trapped in a chimney, a rescued Cooper's hawk died before reaching the group's facility south of Pendleton, and the organization just received a \$45,000 check from a trust.

The latter item is big news for Blue Mountain Wildlife, which has been rehabilitating wild birds from across Eastern Oregon since 1990. Compared against the nonprofit's \$200,000 annual budget, the \$45,000 gift will provide a significant boost to the rehabilitation center. According to Lynn Tompkins, the co-founder and director of Blue Mountain Wildlife, all of this happened without her meeting the surprise benefactor.

The \$45,000 is being provided by the Leona B. Ambrose Living Trust, an entity created to carry out the will of the late Ambrose. While Blue Mountain Wildlife may not have connected with her during her lifetime, Ambrose decided to donate significant amounts of money to the organization and to other bird sanctuaries in Oregon.

Tompkins said Blue Mountain Wildlife's annual budget should be higher, but she isn't planning on using Ambrose's money for operational expenses. Instead, she expects Blue Mountain Wildlife to work with the Blue Mountain Community Foundation to use the gift as seed money for an endowment she hopes her organization can grow and withdraw from 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.

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REMEMBERING MR. ROUND-UP

'When people thought of the Round-Up, they thought of Randy Severe'

By BRYCE DOLE
East Oregonian

PENDLETON — The two sons of Randy Severe led the pallbearers as they loaded their father into the back of a horse-drawn carriage for the procession through Pendleton. Atop his casket, adorned by flowers, rested Severe's favorite black cowboy hat.

It was an overcast Tuesday, Nov. 30, outside the Pendleton Convention Center, where at least 500 mourners gathered for the funeral service of the 70-year-old saddlemaker and former president of the Pendleton Round-Up Board of Directors.

Severe contracted COVID-19 shortly after attending the Pendleton Round-Up. His family does not wish to disclose whether he was vaccinated, daughter Darla Phillips said. He spent nearly two months on a ventilator at a Portland hospital before succumbing to the disease Nov. 21.

"He was so loved and cherished by all," Phillips said. "He knew so many people and touched so many lives. And this shows the respect that he gained. There's so much love for him."



Ben Lonergan/East Oregonian
The cortege for the funeral of Randy Severe proceeds up Southgate on Tuesday, Nov. 30, 2021, en route to Olney Cemetery in Pendleton. Severe, 70, died Nov. 21 following a monthlong battle with COVID-19.

Mourners gathered at the service to comfort one another and share their memories of Severe. Many of the men wore cowboy hats, which they tilted

low as somber country music filled the room. They told stories of Severe's kindness, selflessness and how he made you feel like you were the most important person

in the world. Nearly everybody remarked on his infectious laugh and smile.

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Levy proposes \$1 million for wolf-livestock compensation

State has confirmed wolves injured or killed 87 animals so far in 2021

By GEORGE PLAVERN
Capital Press

SALEM — An Eastern Oregon legislator wants to significantly increase state funding to reimburse ranchers for dead and missing livestock caused by wolves.

State Rep. Bobby Levy, R-Echo, plans to introduce a bill in the 2022 Legislature that would provide \$1 million during the next biennium for the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Wolf Depredation Compensation

and Financial Assistance grant program.

The bill comes on behalf of the Oregon Cattlemen's Association, Oregon Farm Bureau, Oregon Sheep Growers Association and Oregon Hunters Association. "Producers didn't ask for these wolves to be brought in," Levy said. "It's a very emotional thing, and it's getting more costly by the day."

The Wolf Depredation Compensation and Financial Assistance program was created by the Legislature



Levy

in 2011, and provides grants to counties where wolves are present. Grants may be awarded to cover the losses of dead, injured or missing livestock, as well as non-lethal prevention.

Ranchers, however, argue the program is underfunded. For 2020, ODA awarded \$130,164 split among 12 counties, covering just 37% of all grant requests. In 2019, counties were awarded \$251,529, or 58% of all requests.

State Sen. Bill Hansell, R-Athena, requested \$800,000 for the program in the 2021 legislature. Lawmakers instead approved a one-time allocation of \$400,000, on top of what already is provided in ODA's budget.



Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife/Contributed Photo
A trail cam photo from May 30, 2021, of one of the two yearling wolves in the Lookout Mountain Pack in Baker County. State Rep. Bobby Levy, R-Echo, plans to introduce a bill in the 2022 Legislature to increase state funding to reimburse ranchers for livestock losses that wolves cause.

Jonathan Sandau, a special assistant to ODA Director Alexis Taylor, said the agency anticipates having a little more than \$800,000 total to compensate producers for

wolf-livestock conflicts during the biennium, including federal grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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