

Shelter:

Continued from Page A1

received a flyer in the mail about the tournament.

“We have never done this before,” she said. “We get invited to lots of things, but we’re a small rescue shelter ... we don’t have any full time employees. So some fundraisers are just way too big for us. But this looked fun, and I thought sure, we’ll do it.”

She brought it to the board, which agreed with her to jump in and at least try.

The tournament began March 1 with 64 shelters across the United States. Pendleton in Round 1 faced off against the Humane Society of El Paso in El Paso, Texas.

“To be honest, I freaked out when I saw we were against El Paso,” Beers said, because the city has a population of almost 700,000. Pendleton’s is about 17,100.

Beers said she even contacted the tournament organizers to make sure the matchup was correct. She said she found out a computer selects the competitors at random. But she also said organizers assured her size does not always matter. Last year’s winner was a small no-kill cat shelter.

“So that was really crazy,” Beers said. “We totally knew we were the underdog, so we used that in our social media.”

It worked. When the round closed March 3, El Paso reported raising \$4,222.69. Pendleton won with \$4,728.12

“I was just thrilled,” Beers said. “I did not think we could beat El Paso, they are just so big.”

And Pendleton has continued knocking off the competition.

In Round 2: Thrilling 32, Pendleton faced off against the Floyd County Humane Society in Floyd, Virginia. This time, Pendleton was the big dog against little Floyd, population about 725.

Still, the small town gave a doggone good showing, raising \$1,431.44, just not enough to oust Pendleton, which brought in \$1,699.81

Pendleton in Round 3: Snuggly 16, took down the Animal Friends Humane Society of Hamilton, Ohio, \$2,019.47 to \$1,701.16.

And in Round 4: Excellent 8, Pendleton again took down a bigger player, but with its smallest dollar amount so far.

The Gulf Coast Humane Society in Corpus Christi, Texas — population about 326,000 — raised \$836.83, while Pendleton raised \$931.48.

Now Pendleton takes on Hermitage No-Kill Cat Shelter and Sanctuary in Tucson, Arizona, in the Furry 4 beginning Thursday, March 17, and ending two days later.

Hermitage looks to be Pendleton’s toughest opponent yet.

In Round 1, Hermitage faced Stray Rescue of St. Louis in St. Louis, Missouri. Stray Rescue raised \$22,054.21 — more than what PAWS has raised through the tournament so far. But Hermitage raised \$24,885.81.

While Hermitage has continued to trounce its opponents, its fundraising also dropped to an average of \$4,551.48 across the last three rounds.

Still, Beers said, Hermitage appears to have donors with deep pockets.

Spreading the word To generate interest in supporting PAWS, Beers, who handles most of the social media for the organization and shelter, has been posting on Twitter and Facebook about animals the shelter has rescued.

“We’ve had great stories,” she said, including about Astrid and Butch and their five puppies.

PAWS received tips about

MARCH MUTTNESS

The Pioneer Humane Society and Pendleton Animal Welfare Shelter have made it to the Furry 4 in the March Muttness Tournament, in which 64 animal shelters nationwide compete to out fundraise one another until there is a champion.

Rounds last 60 hours each, from 8 a.m. the day they open to 8 p.m. the night they close two days later.

Round 1: All Tails In! 64

March 1 to March 3

Round 2: Thrilling 32

March 5 to March 7

Round 3: Snuggly 16

March 9 to March 11

Round 4: Excellent 8

March 13 to March 15

Round 5: Furry 4 March 17 to March 19

Round 6: Championship

March 21 to March 23

As of Wednesday, March 16, the participating shelters raised more than \$207,000.

For more information and to support PAWS in the tournament, visit MarchMuttness.org.

people feeding a female dog with puppies that lived in a junk yard behind the Pendleton Walmart.

“There’s a junk yard there,” Beers said, “and this gentleman had the mother dog, father dog and five puppies under his RV.”

The man agreed to let PAWS rescue the whole lot, and the shelter took them in Feb. 21, when overnight temperatures were again dipping into single digits.

“He surrendered them, so we’re really grateful for that,” she said.

PAWS has worked to find homes for the dogs, and the father dog, Butch, was a bit of a worry. He is old, Beers said, and blind, and perhaps even hard of hearing. But a family took him in March 15, with the goal of rehoming him.

“We’re really hoping it works out with him because they have another blind dog, and they know how to work with special needs dogs,” she said.

She also shared the story of Grunter, who needed surgery for a torn ACL.

The estimate for the surgery was \$1,000-\$1,300, Beers said, and a donor gave an even \$1,000.

Kennedy Veterinary Services, Milton-Freewater, did the surgery, and Beers and her husband and son picked up Grunter on March 15 and brought him to his foster home.

Beers said PAWS is grateful for the donation, and she stressed every donation matters, no matter the size.

And sharing content from PAWS on social media also helps.

“If people share our social media posts, it makes a huge difference — not just in donations, but getting lost animals home, getting pets adopted, etc.”

The stories help connect people to the animals and the work of PAWS and that attracts donations. Beers further explained PAWS has to rely on social media for promotions because the operation is so small it does not even have an executive director, let alone someone to head up media relations.

“We have around five part-time employees and lots of volunteers,” Beers said.

As of March 16, the participating shelters nationwide raised more than \$207,000. To support PAWS, visit hssaz.org/marchmuttiness-2022 and click on the PAWS logo. The Furry 4 round runs 8 a.m. March 17 to 8 p.m. March 19.

If Pioneer Humane Society/Pendleton Animal Welfare Shelter prevail, it moves to the championship starting at 8 a.m. March 21 and concluding 8 p.m. March 23.

Tourism:

Continued from Page A1

Oregon toward interested individuals from out of town looking for an extended visit.

Sizer and his team of four focus on guiding the trips throughout treasured spots in Eastern Oregon. The crew helps the clients have the most ideal outdoor experience, by providing services such as transporting equipment, teaching fishing lessons and serving high-end campfire meals.

The business often helps beginners or inexperienced campers submerge themselves in a full-on backpacking experience that otherwise might be out of their comfort zone. Sizer noted that many car campers look to Go Wild: American Adventures for a more immersive camping and hiking experience.

“My thinking is that if I can provide a really fun, comfortable experience for folks if it’s their first time sleeping in the wilderness, then those people have a greater understanding and appreciation for the outdoors,” Sizer said. “Ultimately, I think they become



Go Wild: American Adventures/Contributed Photo

Go Wild: American Adventures owner Dan Sizer, top right, and lead guide Kaleb Lay, bottom right, former reporter for The Observer, lead a private tour in the Eagle Cap Wilderness. The Baker City-based business curates outdoor experiences in Eastern Oregon.

better caretakers of nature.”

Environmental education is an important aspect of Go Wild, showing clients how to make the most out of an outdoor experience while appreciating the land.

“That component I think is a big part of the narrative,” Sizer said. “We talk about growing up on this land and how we use it, how important it is to use it in a certain way so that we protect this

resource for generations to come. In Eastern Oregon, you’re connected to the value of the land.”

Pat Vaughan joined Sizer in 2017 with the primary focus of crafting a gourmet food experience for travelers. Vaughan has since moved on to nursing school, but the culinary services he introduced carry on in the company. Go Wild: American Adventures partners

with local businesses, such as Glacier 45 Distillery, Terminal Gravity, Copper Belt Wines and other area restaurants and businesses.

“What I think makes a memorable trip is the people you meet, the food you eat and the experiences that push the boundaries,” Sizer said. “We’ve tried to instill really cool things that you might not do by yourself.”

Sizer and his crew have a slate of summer events already planned, while custom trips can be scheduled on the Go Wild: American Adventures website, www.gowildusa.com. According to Sizer, the business is planning to partner with a mule packer this summer, elevating the potential for high-end food experience as well as helping with accessibility for those who may not be able to carry a backpack well.

On top of showcasing the natural treasures of Eastern Oregon, Sizer noted that Go Wild: American Adventures has helped create lasting connections among participants and crew members.

“I think one of the coolest things,” Sizer said, “is the community it fosters within people.”

Taxi:

Continued from Page A1

use taxis ordinarily, meaning the two sides might not compete with one another for customers.

“We’re talking about two different markets here,” she said.

Councilor Linda Neuman asked how the city would track the results

of the pilot program. City Manager Robb Corbett said one of the only ways the city could determine the financial impact of the program was for Elite to open its books at the end of the period.

The council didn’t seem to reach a consensus by the time Mayor John Turner ended discussion for the night. The next step is for staff to draft an ordinance based on the proposal,

and Turner said the council could decide whether to move forward with the pilot during discussions on the ordinance.

Unlike most other ordinances, which usually require two meetings before being passed, the staff’s plan calls for the council to unanimously vote to waive that requirement, hold a public hearing and then vote on the ordinance. Should it pass, the

council would also declare an emergency so that it could take effect immediately.

Staff anticipated the council voting on the ordinance at its April 5 meeting. While the Reynens and Johlkes were the only people allowed to talk at the podium on Tuesday, the upcoming public hearing will allow anyone to state their thoughts for or against the ordinance.

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