

Rogue the otter at the High Desert Museum will be missed

By JOE SIESS
The (Bend) Bulletin

BEND — Rogue, a beloved North American river otter living at the High Desert Museum, Bend, was euthanized early this week at the ripe otter age of 12.

Rogue, one of three otters living at the museum, was humanely euthanized Tuesday, March 15, the museum said in a statement March 17.

Rogue struggled with osteoarthritis, and during the last few weeks his condition deteriorated rapidly and attempts to give him relief from his pain with new medications were unsuccessful, the museum said. The museum's veterinarian and caretakers decided to euthanize Rogue based on a prognosis for a poor quality of life.

Dana Whitelaw, the museum's director, said the museum community will miss Rogue dearly. She called him "an ambassador for his species."

"We are grateful for the many years of joy and charisma that he brought to our visitor experiences," Whitelaw told The Bulletin.

Rogue was named after the Rogue River, and his museum caretakers said he will be remembered as the mother hen of the otters, because of his generosity and nurturing ways toward the other otters in the habitat.

He enjoyed grooming his fellow otters, eating rainbow trout and playing in the snow.

Rogue came to the museum in 2013, and was brought there because he was unable to survive in the wild. After getting used to



Rogue, a beloved North American river otter at the High Desert Museum in Bend, was euthanized Tuesday, March 15, 2022, because of deteriorating health.

High Desert Museum/Contributed Photo

humans and his new environment at the museum, Rogue thrived in his habitat.

Rogue's personality was diverse, and while he loved his otter companions, he was selective about which humans he trusted, said Jon Nelson, the museum's curator of wildlife.

"Working with staff, he was really picky on who he'd like to work with," Nelson said. "He was a very opinionated otter, I'd say."

It generally took a long time to build up Rogue's trust. In order to get on Rogue's good side, one would have to pay their dues, Nelson said.

"He was very front and center," Nelson said of Rogue's relationship with his fans, who would gather around the otter habitat. Rogue never got nervous around the people who came to see him, he said.

Rogue also was incredibly generous, Nelson said. When Pitch, the

youngest otter was introduced into the habitat, Rogue taught him how to properly behave, Nelson said.

"Brook, the other otter, our middle aged otter, is very, very shy and a lot of days when we get busy, he gets scared, and he won't even come out of the den, and Rogue is just so generous," Nelson said. "We would throw fish into the exhibit and instead of eating the fish himself he (Rogue) would deliver it to Brook

in the den so Brook wouldn't have to come out of the den."

"He took care of the other two otters," Nelson said.

The museum's director wants to remind people in Central Oregon that baby otters soon will be out in the wild, and it is not uncommon to find them alone.

A lone baby otter does not indicate the otter has been abandoned, but that its mother likely parked it while she engaged in other activities, such as hunting, Whitelaw said. By removing the baby otter from its environment, the otter's natural care and development in the wild is disrupted, Whitelaw said.

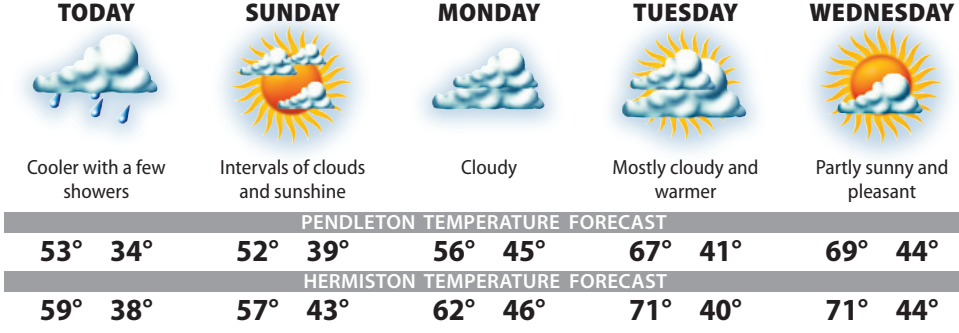
Another way residents in the region can protect otters in the wild is to keep their dogs on a leash or be mindful of unleashed dogs who might chase and kill otters in the wild.

In honor of Rogue, it is important to keep otter conservation in mind, and remember otters are highly present and accessible in river systems throughout Oregon, Whitelaw said.

"We're not actively looking for another river otter at the moment, yet the museum serves as a refuge for wildlife that can't survive in the wild," Whitelaw said. "If another otter needed care and we thought it would thrive in the habitat with the other otters, we would consider it."

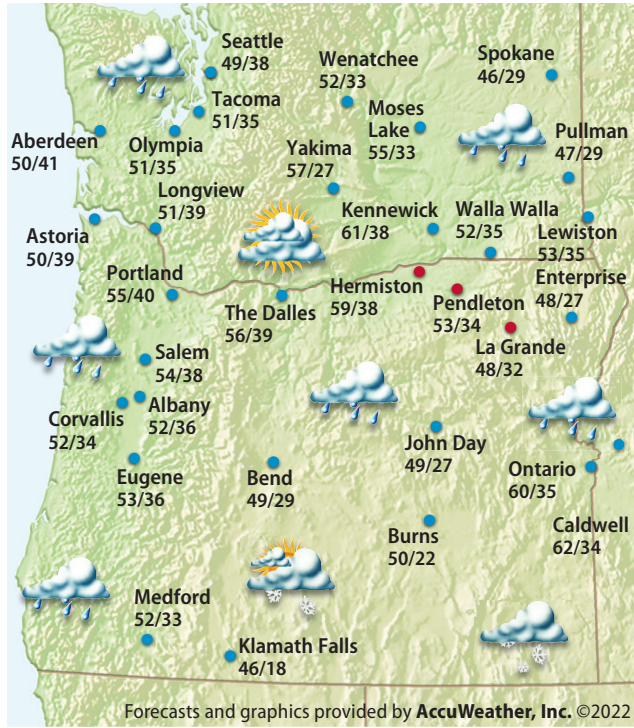
The museum cares for more than 130 animals, from otters to fish. The majority of the animals cannot survive in the wild, either due to injuries or because they are accustomed to humans and are unable to hunt or avoid predators.

Forecast for Pendleton Area



OREGON FORECAST

Shown is today's weather. Temperatures are today's highs and tonight's lows.



ALMANAC

Table with 3 columns: PENDING, HIGH, LOW. Rows include Temp, Precipitation, Winds, and Sun and Moon for both Pendleton and Hermiston.

NATIONAL EXTREMES

Yesterday's National Extremes: (for the 48 contiguous states)

High 93° in Plant City, Fla. Low -9° in Gothic, Colo.

NATIONAL WEATHER TODAY



Enterprise, Joseph to be in indie film

By BILL BRADSHAW
Wallowa County Chieftain

ENTERPRISE — Wallowa County is going to be a star. At least, several locations in Enterprise and Joseph will be in the upcoming independent film "New Life," which capitalizes on the county's resemblance to Canada.

"Today we are filming in downtown Enterprise," said Hannah Cumming on Thursday, March 17, associate producer and production coordinator for the film. "We're shooting on the sidewalk along Main Street, by the courthouse and near the city park."

She said the previous day the crew shot at a ranch near Joseph.

"It was beautiful there," Cumming said.

She said the film is about Jess Murdoch, who gets infected with a virus that is "causing serious side effects and she's being pursued by an official, Elsa, who is trying to figure out why the side effects are not affecting everyone else."

Murdoch is portrayed by Hayley Erin of Los Angeles, while Elsa Gray is portrayed by Sonya Walger of the United Kingdom.

Enterprise is doubling as a town in Alberta, Canada, near the U.S. border.

"We were trying to find a place in Oregon that looked like Canada," Cumming said. "The Wallowas definitely look like the Canadian border area."

While "New Life" is not your typical film about the "undead" — they emphasized that "We don't use the 'Z' word," Erin said, it tries to get into the genre with a more realistic approach, Cumming said.

Occasionally, there is some of the "undead"-like appearance to characters.

"There was some freaky makeup in that one," Cumming said of the scenes shot near Joseph.

The only local Cumming mentioned using during production was the Michael Ferrell, owner of the Michael's on Main Street salon.

"One of the extras wasn't here and they were filming a scene where they were walk-

ing in front of the Humane Society that they put in because of the kitties," Ferrell said. "So I got to be in the movie as a walker with a girl at my side."

Kevin Brown, another associate producer, said he's still unsure when the film will be released.

"It's an independent film and we don't have a distributor yet," he said. "We make it as best as we can and then try to sell it to a company that's going to distribute it, whether that's a streamer online or a traditional theatrical (release)."

Cumming said production should wrap up by April 2 and it should take six months to a year after that before the release date.

"It would be great if we could get it in theaters," she said.

The Portland-based cast and crew of about 25 spent the entire week in Enterprise and Joseph.

"The New Life cast and crew is really grateful to have the cooperation of Enterprise and Joseph and we're really happy to be here," Cumming said.

IN BRIEF

Eastern Oregon Car Club celebrates one-year anniversary

LA GRANDE — An Eastern Oregon club is aiming to bring together car enthusiasts of all ages.

The Eastern Oregon Car Club is celebrating its one-year anniversary, drawing in local car owners with a mutual love for cars of all kinds, with a car show at Riverside Park Sunday, March 20, from noon to 4 p.m.

"Our whole goal is to have a wide range to make everyone feel welcome," said Selena Giambitti, a co-founder of the Eastern Oregon Car Club. "Even if maybe you're not interested in cars at first, we definitely have a place for you to be there and hang out."

Giambitti and Kyle Micovich started the club after purchasing a C5 Corvette and looking to get like-minded individuals involved. The club currently has about 20 regular attendees and a Facebook group with more

than 400 car enthusiasts.

The group meets weekly, getting together for coffee and going on cruises around the area. The club has no restrictions on joining, with its members owning a variety of automobiles from sports cars to repair jobs.

In hosting gatherings centered around a passion for cars, the group's organizers noted that the age range of those involved shows that anyone can share an interest.

"One of the coolest things is seeing kids who are just starting to drive being able to relate to someone that's maybe 70 or 80," Giambitti said.

The club's car show at Riverside Park is open to the public. Cars on display will be judged in categories such as best exhaust, best sound system and best beater with a heater.

"It's something for the community to do, bringing like-minded people together to enjoy mutual interests," Giambitti said. "You don't have to have a cool car to come. We just all enjoy getting together."

—EO Media Group

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