

Wildlife Center plays critical role in spring season



The frogs are croaking and birds are singing as native wildlife on the Oregon Coast prepare for the changing seasons. Spring is the time for young animals that are freshly born or newly hatched and is also the busiest season for the local Wildlife Center of the North Coast.

Since opening in 1997, the center has been rehabilitating native birds and mammals. The center is the only seabird specialty facility in Oregon and the only wildlife rehabilitation center on the Oregon Coast.

“We will rehabilitate native wildlife, seabirds and take hummingbirds to bald eagles and everything in between,” explained Joshua Saranpaa, executive director at the wildlife center. “We also take mammals such as bats, bobcats, squirrels and beavers. We have received four beavers already this season.”

Through the hard work of 30 to 40 volunteers per week and a dedicated yet small staff, the wildlife center is able to rehabilitate over 1,000 animals per year.

In addition to their committed volunteers, strong partnership with the Seaside Aquarium has enabled the center’s success. For nearly the entire 23 years the center has been open, the aquarium has assisted with wildlife recovery and remains a drop-off site for injured animals for transport to the wildlife center.

Once at the facility, animals are assessed in a fully functioning exam room. Animals are able to receive sutures, anesthe-



TOP Murre chick found on the beach after falling out of its nest.
LEFT A western grebe, a seabird only found onshore if injured.
RIGHT Keith Chandler and Brandon Blacksten of the Seaside Aquarium recovered this beaver on the Seaside beach and brought it in for recovery to the rehab center.

sia, antibiotics, wraps, bloodwork and any medications or care they need. Volunteers and staff try to be as “hands-off” as possible when treating the bird or mammal in order to limit potential complications from being in captivity.

If the animal requires daily care it remains in an indoor enclosure, otherwise the animal is placed in a protected outdoor area as soon as possible.

According to Saranpaa, spring and early summer is the busiest time of year as it coincides with baby wildlife and their visibility to humans, “We are always looking for volunteers.”

When baby animals are in the facility they may require feeding every 20 minutes. Volunteers at the wildlife center typically work a minimum of a single four-hour shift per week to ensure the animals receive care all day long. Individuals willing to transport animals to the facility are also essential, the wildlife center is able to accept animals from Long Beach to Newport but can extend that area if there is volunteer support.

While the wildlife center is not open to public drop-ins at this time, private tours are available upon request. Every year they host the spring open house where folks can enjoy games, a full tour of the facility and learn more about the center. Staff also conduct classroom conservation education and hold multiple day-camps for grade-school children throughout the summer.

If you see an injured small mammal, bird or seabird be sure to call the injured wildlife hotline at 503-338-0331. Any injured or beached marine mammals should be reported to the Seaside Aquarium Marine Mammal Stranding Network Program at 503-738-6211.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SEPRD continues to serve community

Today marks the one-month anniversary that SEPRD announced that it would be closing its doors to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus, or COVID-19.

The ongoing pandemic has significantly altered our operations and ability to provide the services that you’ve all come to rely on us for.

While we do not have the ability to say when we will be back, we do assure you that we will be back.

We hope that you are all doing well, staying healthy and taking precautions to ensure that our community can get back to a more normal existence. We pledge to you that we will work to provide all the programs and facilities that you need, just as soon as it is safe and feasible to do so.

For those of you that work in an emergency responding capacity and for those of you that work in providing care to the sick, we thank you and we appreciate you.

It’s been amazing to see the resilience of so many individuals and our community at large as we fight this disease and the world it has created. It is that resilience that will be necessary to get us back to normal.

While we aren’t there yet, we are happy to provide some rays of sunshine during this storm of COVID-19. The District continues to operate the Senior Mealsite Program, Monday through Friday. Last Friday, we distributed 6,000 eggs into our community for families to do a “home egg hunt” since we weren’t able to host our community egg hunt, as planned.

And last week we reopened the Seaside Youth Center and offering emergency childcare to first responders and emergency/medical personnel so that those individuals can continue providing the great service and work that our community needs to combat this disease.

We hope to provide an update that shares our plans for a successful reopening soon. Please stay safe and take care of yourselves!

Skyler Archibald
Executive Director, Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District

John Toyooka the right person for right now

On May 19, we face a critical decision in our District 2 County Commission race. We face dire economic conditions that require strength, experience, acumen and leadership to protect our businesses and families. John Toyooka, Clatsop College Foundation Board member, Lum’s Auto Center manager, and US Naval Academy graduate, possesses all of these attributes. He is uniquely positioned in our community to be ready on Day 1 to help us recover.

Sarah Nebeker cannot make these claims. A review of each candidate’s statement in the online Voter’s Pamphlet contrasts John’s real world skills to Nebeker’s platitudes that “lead from behind.”

Find the online pamphlet on the County Elections page, May 19 Primary tab.

Note John’s substantive community endorsements. Nebeker has none.

Don’t be fooled by the line items that Nebeker piled into her resume. Her most effective role seems to be that of a “Portland placeholder.”

Our county cannot recover if a leader’s loyalty lies with an outside Portland agenda.

John’s philosophies align with Betsy Johnson’s record.

Nebeker supports cap-and-trade that threatens our largest county revenues and compounds family suffering. She refused a \$200 million timber settlement, per her ‘principles’. How can she look anyone in the eye who has just lost their job or their business?

Municipal Workers: remember that your paychecks depend on local tax revenues.

No matter how you have voted in the past, this time, vote like

your paycheck depends on it because it does.

John Toyooka is the right person for right now.

Cynthia Malkowski
Seaside

Time to weigh in on clean beaches

As we approach these milestone dates since the BP Gulf disaster, the Santa Barbara oil spill and Earth Day, we ask that the Seaside Signal weigh in on the folly of lax federal environmental regulations and permitting, the continued promotion of the fossil fuel industry, including the proposed LNG pipeline and export terminal at Coos Bay and the federal offshore drilling proposal, all of which could hamper efforts to successfully build a thriving and sustainable post-COVID economy for Oregon.

The stay-at-home orders and business closures resulting from the pandemic show two things: 1) how much Oregonians value nature, like our world-class coast, and 2) the post-COVID economic recovery and rebound of businesses from seafood restaurants to tourist hotels, is also intrinsically linked — and always has been — to clean beaches and a healthy ocean.

While our nation is focused on the pandemic, the Trump administration continues its push to undermine environmental protection rules that have long safeguarded Oregon’s public health, natural resources and our jobs that depend on a healthy environment. The EPA is allowing polluting industries to self-regulate and the White House recently wrapped up a controversial public comment process to roll back key provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). While our country hurls towards an economic recession, with thousands and thousands of Oregonians having lost their jobs in the last several weeks and worrying about food and rent, the Trump Administration is offering to cut royalty rates for the oil and gas companies, one of the wealthiest industries on the planet. The very same businesses on Ore-

gon’s coast that have been hit especially hard by the COVID-19 pandemic — Oregon’s fishing, tourism, recreation, and restaurant industries have all spoken out many times over the last couple of years about their fear of devastating losses, for example, if reckless policies like offshore drilling led to a major oil spill occurring on our coast or disregard for Oregon’s objection to Jordan Cove LNG led to another New Carissa catastrophe in Coos Bay.

If you do not have time or space to editorialize next week, we would welcome the opportunity to submit an op-ed speaking to our concerns for Oregonians, coastal businesses and fisheries as we mark Earth Day’s 50th anniversary and the BP Gulf spill 10 year memorial, and our vision for a healthy and sustainable post-COVID Oregon economy that includes stronger, not weaker protections for the environment that support coastal jobs, cultures and livelihoods, and a healthy ocean.

Charlie Plybon
Policy Manager, Surfrider Foundation Oregon

SDDA forgoes grant, thanks community

The Seaside Downtown Development Association learned this week of the opening of a relief grant offered by the city of Seaside to Seaside businesses and nonprofits. This opportunity allows organizations/businesses that meet the criteria to apply for funding up to \$4,000.

The SDDA board of directors chose to not apply for this grant. We unanimously agreed that the grant would be better used to help local businesses. SDDA will continue to be here to help in any way we can. SDDA appreciates the city of Seaside and the Visitors Bureau for all their efforts they have put forth in this unprecedented time. SDDA acknowledges your commitment to all of us and say thank you.

Laurie Mespelt
Executive Director, Seaside Downtown Development Association

PUBLIC MEETINGS

All Seaside committee, commission and board meetings have been canceled for the month of April. Contact local agencies for latest meeting information and attendance guidelines.

Monday, April 27
Seaside City Council, 7 p.m., electronic meeting, 989 Broadway.

Tuesday, May 5
Seaside Library Board, 5:30 p.m., 1131 Broadway.

Sunset Empire Park and Recreation District, board workshop, 5:15 p.m., Bob Chisholm Community Center, 1225 Avenue A, Seaside.

Seaside Planning Commission, 6 p.m., City Hall, 989 Broadway.

OSU names local students to winter term honor roll

Seaside’s Parker R. Conrad, a freshman majoring in general engineering with a straight-A average, was among local students named to the Oregon State University winter term honor roll.

Seaside residents Andrea B. Harris, a sophomore majoring in human development and family science; Gage E. Mergel, a freshman music major; Rachel M. Stahly, a senior majoring in speech communication; Joshua M. Strozzi, a senior, majoring in computer science; and Brittany A. West, a senior, majoring in forestry, were named to the honor roll with a grade point average of 3.5 or better.

Cannon Beach residents William R. Benefield, a senior majoring in mechanical engineering and Annuka A. Brown, a senior majoring in human development and family science, earned honors with a grade point average of 3.5 or better, as did Gearhart’s Dante M. Leffler, a senior majoring in environmental sciences, and Hunter L. Thompson, a junior majoring in forest engineering.