

Celebrate the ‘Maine Event’ at Seaside Aquarium

SEASIDE AQUARIUM
TIFFANY BOOTHE

Come visit the Seaside Aquarium on Sunday, Feb. 27, and take part in celebrating the local legacy of Neal and his late wife, Karen Maine.

The aquarium introduced The Maine Event last year as a way to honor the Maines—who spearheaded marine awareness and conservation along the northern Oregon Coast and beyond—and fundraise for causes close to their heart. The Maines have inspired countless educational programs, such as Sea Week and the Beach and Estuary Discovery Program. Most notably, Karen was responsible for what is now the Haystack Rock Awareness Program, while Neal is credited for co-founding North Coast Land Conservancy.

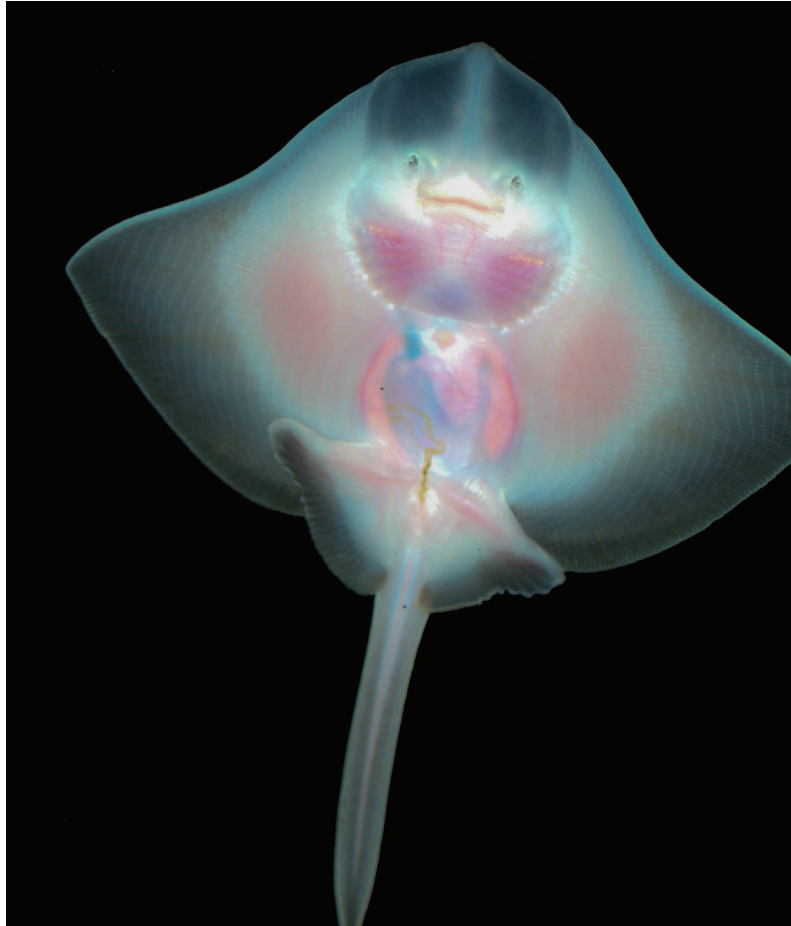
All funds raised from admissions to the aquarium during The Maine Event will be split and donated to NCLC and Friends of Haystack Rock

Creating HRAP to protect marine life

It all started with a camera and an aquarium. Neal, an avid photographer and former Seaside High School teacher, was photographing intertidal animals found in the tide pools surrounding Haystack Rock in Cannon Beach. Karen noticed how interested people were in what Neal was doing and the marine life involved. It was then that Karen had a thought, “Wouldn’t it be nice if there were volunteers down at the beach introducing and educating people about marine life?”

With that thought, the Puffin Club was formed. This volunteer group would go down to Haystack Rock during the lowest tides of the year to educate and show off the abundant marine life surrounding the site, including the visiting seabirds, which return every year to nest and raise their young.

While the Puffin Club loved interacting and educating the public, visitation to Cannon Beach continued to increase, taking a toll on the small, fragile marine environment that happened to be right in the heart of Cannon Beach. Haystack Rock was being “loved to death” and it was clear that this highly trafficked area



Seaside Aquarium

A skate, one of the many attractions at the Seaside Aquarium.

needed some protection.

In 1968, Haystack Rock became part of the Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge. This prohibited all public entry to the area above the high-tide line, but it did nothing to help preserve and protect the intertidal life surrounding Haystack Rock. The success and influence of the Puffin Club inspired the city of Cannon Beach to create the Haystack Rock Awareness Program, and in 1991, Haystack Rock was designated as one of seven protected Oregon Marine Gardens on the Oregon Coast.

To this day, not only does the intertidal life surrounding Haystack Rock continue to thrive, but the program also has inspired generations of marine scientists and conservationists, along with inspiring countless other marine educational and conservation programs.

Establishing a local land trust

1991 was a big year for the Maines. Karen’s vision came into being, and Neal’s was just beginning to. North Coast Land Conservancy was created in 1986, centered on the concept of approaching conservation cooperatively rather than confrontationally. The idea was to engage the whole community to do what

was best for people, plants and wildlife. In 1991, the land conservancy completed a successful land swap that conserved a 15-acre parcel of private timberland adjacent to Saddle Mountain State Park, a park known for its rare plant species.

This was the first biodiversity-based conservation proposal that state and federal agencies involved in the negotiations had ever seen.

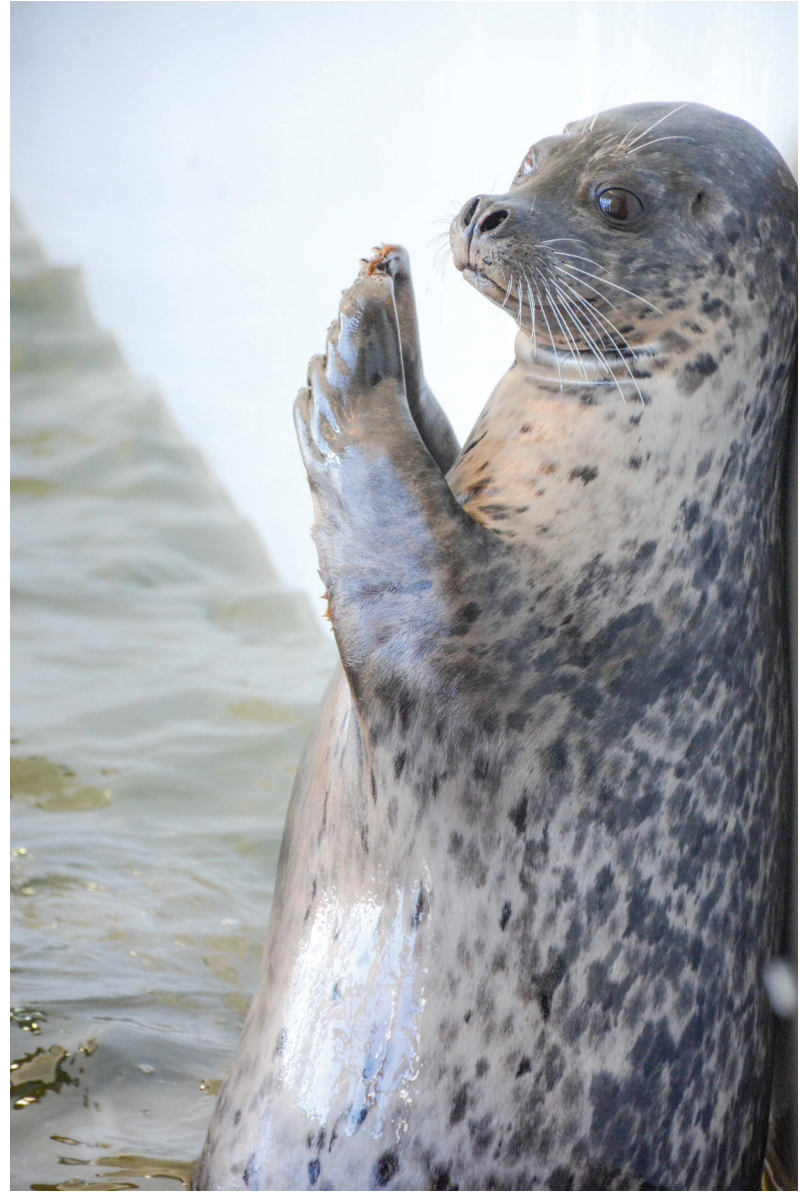
Since then, NCLC has conserved thousands of acres of land in Clatsop, Tillamook and Lincoln counties, mainly by acquiring land outright or by acquiring conservation easements on private land. They also have helped transfer hundreds of acres of land to public ownership.

Taking care of wildlife

So, what does this have to do with the Seaside Aquarium?

As many of you may know, the Seaside Aquarium has a long, rich history. Established in 1937, many people have participated in the aquarium’s success over the years, but few have dedicated as much time, energy and love as Neal Maine. Neal’s dedication to the Seaside Aquarium, the community and nature is inspirational.

He was involved with the aquarium for many years when he decided to join the board of direc-



Seaside Aquarium

Pinni invites the community to “The Maine Event” fundraiser.

tors in 1995. He joined the board in hopes of helping the aquarium expand their educational outreach and get more involved in both the community and the scientific world.

Neal spearheaded the beginning of what is now the Northern Oregon/Southern Washington Marine Mammal Stranding Network, a successful partnership with National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Portland State University and the Seaside Aquarium. In 1995, he brought an idea to the board asking them to participate in what he called the Seaside Beach and Necanicum Estuary Discovery Program.

This program was designed to be a free tool for both locals and visitors to discover and learn about the local beach and estuary environments. The goal was to get people to view their recreational sites in a slightly different way: as a living breathing ecosystem. While the program has evolved over the years, the mission is still the same.

After 25 years of dedication, Neal thought it was time for someone else to take the reins, and he resigned from the board of directors in early 2020. His time on the board will never be forgotten and he will be missed greatly.

So how do you thank a guy who means the world to you? And what do you give a man who gives back so much to the community? You do the same. The Seaside Aquarium has decided to do a yearly fundraiser, “The Maine Event.” All the admissions collected on the last Sunday in February will go to an organization or organizations of Maine’s choosing.

Help us celebrate these two amazing beings and show your support for the programs they started. We hope to see you all at our “Maine Event.”

Not able to attend but still want to support? Simply send a check made out to the Seaside Aquarium with a note indicating that it is for the Maine Event. Seaside Aquarium, 200 N. Prom Seaside, Oregon 97138.

BRIEFS

Elks celebrate their 154th anniversary

Local Elks lodges throughout the United States, Guam, Puerto Rico, the Philippines, and the Panama Canal will be celebrating 154 years of community service on Feb. 16.

Annually, the Elks award college scholarships across the nation totaling more than \$4.5 million.

The Elks community investment program will award nearly \$47 million towards enriching local communities.

To learn more or to join in service, visit www.elks.org. For membership information visit Join.Elks.Org.

Caffe Latte benefits downtown beautification

The “Feed the Starfish” fundraiser is back for its 20th year. The Seaside Downtown Development Association has worked hard to beautify the streets of downtown Seaside in the fall and winter months decorated in beautiful starfish lights.

On Thursday, Feb. 17, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., half of all crafted beverages at Caffe Latte will be donated in support of downtown winter lighting, with additional prizes and drawings.

Caffe Latte is located inside the Seaside Carousel Mall.

Assistance League to donate books to new teachers

The Assistance League of the Columbia Pacific has helped to provide resources to students across Clatsop County.

At the end of February, they have plans for a new deed.

Local members of the Assistance League, a nationwide nonprofit that seeks to strengthen the community through philanthropic programs, will purchase books from local bookstores and donate them to two dozen new kindergarten-through-fifth grade teachers.

The donations will help teachers build their personal libraries in class-



Beach Books, along with Lucy’s Books in Astoria, are one of two bookstores to participate in the Assistance League program.

rooms while they juggle the other costs and challenges associated with being new teachers.

The group will buy books from Lucy’s Books, in Astoria, and Beach Books, in Seaside.

After communicating with teachers to figure out what books they are interested in, they will post the lists inside the bookstores to seek additional donations from people in the community. Mary Davies, the president of the Assistance League, hopes to see several hundred books donated.

The donations will take place during the last week in February, also known as Action Week, which is a time for each chapter of the Assistance League to develop a new program to benefit the community.

The Assistance League of the Columbia Pacific has six major community-focused programs. Local members have especially made their mark with Operation School Bell, a program that clothes hundreds of students from the five school districts each year.

Other outreach includes scholarship opportunities for students of exiting high school, the donation of sports and athletic gear to athletic programs and resource contributions for foster children.

In addition to assisting teachers, the book donation program also aligns with another mission of the group — improving literacy among students.

Blodgett named to dean’s list at George Fox University

Niquilla Blodgett of Seaside was among those who earned dean’s list recognition at George Fox University for the fall 2021 semester.

Traditional undergraduate students must earn a 3.5 grade point average or above on 12 or more hours of graded work to earn a spot on the dean’s list. Blodgett is a senior majoring in elementary education.

More than 4,000 students attend classes on the university’s campus in Newberg and at teaching centers in Portland, Salem and Redmond.

Volunteers needed for Seaside Kids Inc.

Seaside Kids Inc., a volunteer organization that has helped kids to be involved with different sports, needs volunteers as softball and baseball programs are getting ready to start up soon.

Seaside Kids needs coaches, umpires, concession stand volunteers and field maintenance.

No special talents or skills are necessary, just a willing heart and caring for kids.

To volunteer call 503-758-4827. When working with kids, a background check is required.

City manager input wanted

Seaside invites community members to share the attributes and experience they hope to see in the next city manager at a facilitated virtual meeting. The session will be conducted online via Zoom by recruitment representatives starting at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 16.

To register for the meeting, go to cityofseaside.us and click on the link.

The city would like input on what skills, experience, and other attributes you feel are important for the successful candidate. Opinions will provide an important perspective to develop the position profile and the recruitment materials. Deadline for the online survey is Feb. 21.

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