

Oregon Zoo set to celebrate 9th annual World Animal Festival

Many people may not realize how animals inspire reverence or fear in cultures throughout the world. During the Oregon Zoo's ninth annual World Animal Festival, presented by Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation, visitors discover how animals influence different cultures, beliefs, and customs. World Animal Festival is slated September 30-October 1 and October 7-8, from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., daily.

The multi-cultural festival features local cultural groups

presenting their versions of animal folklore, arts and crafts, African and Native American storytelling, performance art, and live music on the zoo's concert stage and in the entry plaza.

Activity areas found throughout the zoo feature games, educational activities and take-home crafts such as Ukrainian egg decorating (first weekend only), Middle Eastern mosaics, Native American bracelet beading, and animal mask making.

Visitors watch as sea otters,

cougars, warty pigs, ocelots, and African birds receive enrichment treats, and learn about what is threatening the animals' survival.

"World Animal Festival showcases animals and the cultures they influence," says Krista Swan, Oregon Zoo event coordinator.

For several Pacific Northwest Native American tribes, the sea otter represents loyal friendship, while the salmon is seen as a provider, according to Swan. For the San Bushmen of southern Africa, they revere giraffes and hippos as "rain an-

imals." In India, the Asian elephant appears in the Hindu incarnation of the four-armed god Ganesh, lord of wisdom, intelligence, and education.

Weyerhaeuser Company Foundation has supported World Animal Festival since its inception in 1998.

"We're longtime supporters of the festival because it fits well with our vision and our commitment to conservation, sustainability and diversity," said Nancy Arend, vice president for Weyerhaeuser's hardwoods and industrial products business and member of the

Oregon Zoo Foundation board of trustees. "World Animal Festival celebrates wildlife and different cultures, which is something we strive for."

World Animal Festival is free with general zoo admission.

In conjunction with World Animal Festival the zoo is celebrating Sea Otter Awareness Week, which highlights the plight of sea otters and the zoo's hope to bring sea otters back to Oregon. Sea Otter Awareness Week features marine life displays as well as animal and keeper talks.

The zoo opens at 9 a.m. daily and is located just off Highway 26. The zoo is also accessible by MAX light rail line. Additional information is available at www.oregonzoo.org or by calling 503-226-1561.

Human Rights Council starting up

Vision Action Network (VAN) has announced organization of a new Human Rights Council of Washington County. The first meeting of the all-volunteer Council will be in mid-October.

Carlos Perez, deputy superintendent for Hillsboro School District and a member of VAN's Board of Directors, will serve as the Council's first chair. Twenty community members have been invited to serve on the initial Council, which will be housed temporarily at the Vision Action Network. Members will determine the scope of work, nominate new members, and search for funding and a permanent home.

Over the past decade,

Washington County has seen unprecedented growth and change, both in population and diversity. The Human Rights Council is the result of two years' work by the Vision Action Network and its community partners to respond to the needs of the growing community.

The non-profit Vision Action Network is an innovative organization dedicated to community-based problem solving in Washington County. It was created in 2002 based on the premise that there are untapped opportunities for collaborative problem-solving in the community by coming together, rather than working in isolation.



A five-foot-tall African Saddle-Billed stork flaps its wings at the Oregon Zoo. Photo by Michael Durham, courtesy of Oregon Zoo.

Public comment sought on HUD

Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) seeks public comment on the draft 2007 Action Plan relating to the use of funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Public comment will be taken through October 13.

OHSC and Oregon Economic Community and Economic Development Department (OECD) will jointly submit an action plan to HUD for a variety of housing and community development activities. Descriptions of those activities are on the draft 2007 Action Plan. A public hearing will be held at noon on October 12, at OECD, 775 Summer ST., NE, Salem, in room 201. The draft 2007 Action Plan can be viewed on the web at www.oregon.gov/OHCS/HD/HRS/CONSP/AnnualActionPlan/DraftAnnualActionPlan07.doc.

OHCS is the State's housing finance agency and community services program administrator. The Department provides financial and program support to create and preserve opportunities for quality, affordable housing for Oregonians of lower and moderate income and administers federal and state antipoverty, homeless, energy assistance and community service programs. For more information, go to www.ohcs.oregon.gov.

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