

RESCUED HARBOR SEAL TURNS 40

Aquarium of Niagara to offer weekend of celebrations

The Aquarium of Niagara is planning a weekend-long celebration for one of its rescued harbor seals in honor of her 40th birthday.

"Sandy" was rescued off the coast of Washington state in 1980 as an abandoned pup. Abandoned harbor seal pups do not have the skills necessary to survive in their natural environment, so Sandy was deemed non-releasable and brought to the Aquarium of Niagara.

Sandy became famous in 1987 when she became the first harbor seal in the world to undergo a successful cataract removal surgery. Cataracts are common among pinnipeds like seals and sea lions, and the successful surgery restored vision to Sandy's right eye and alleviated any discomfort caused by the cataract.

The groundbreaking surgery

was performed right at the Aquarium of Niagara. This procedure is now widely practiced at zoos and aquariums around the world.

The average lifespan of a harbor seal is 20-25 years, which means Sandy has lived double the amount of time she would be expected to survive in her natural environment. She is checked weekly by the aquarium's veterinarians, and receives daily husbandry care like vitamins and medications, tooth brushing and nail clippings.

"Sandy's 40th birthday is truly a testament to the high level of care provided at the Aquarium of Niagara," Executive Director Gary Siddall said. "Sandy has been an in-



Celebrate Sandy this weekend. (Photo courtesy of the Aquarium of Niagara)

tegral part of the aquarium for four decades, and we are thankful for the opportunity to help her celebrate her golden years

in comfort and good health."

Sandy's birthday celebrations will take place on Saturday and Sunday. Celebrations will in-

clude the presentation of an elaborate ice cake at noon on both days. Aquarium visitors will have the opportunity to purchase themed cookies, a Sandy-themed "Aquaparent" adoption package, and a commemorative Sandy plush.

The venue is open 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday at 701 Whirlpool St., Niagara Falls. Due to COVID-19-related capacity restrictions, visitors are strongly encouraged to purchase admission tickets online ahead of their visit.

The Aquarium of Niagara is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that is home to more than 120 different species, including 10 rescued and non-releasable marine mammals. For more information, visit www.aquariumofniagara.org.

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Historical Association of Lewiston nixes Tour of Homes, but adds fundraising opportunities

By the Historical Association of Lewiston

Over the last 15 years, the major fundraiser for the Historical Association of Lewiston has been the annual Tour of Homes run concurrently with the Lewiston Christmas Walk in December. This year, that tradition regrettably is suspended.

We love the fact that many tour visitors came from near and far to faithfully visit and enjoy the decorations and place settings and to see some of the area's finest homes in all their Christmas glory. This tour requires many person-hours of volunteer effort and substantial planning and implementation, but was always our stalwart fundraiser. Now, due to planning considerations of COVID-19 requirements, we cannot risk all that preparation and expense with such a distinct prospect of last-minute cancellation. We are sorry to disappoint you all.

On top of that, our spring fundraisers, the murder mystery dinner and "Historical Jeopardy," have also been postponed and as yet we cannot confidently reschedule them.



The expenses of the Historical Association go on, however, so we are implementing several new ideas that we can accomplish.

Our president, Ken Slaughenhoupt, is hosting history hikes telling the story of the original lower landing within Artpark. These began last year and continue now with two successful ventures completed this season – and more to follow through the

fall. The next date is Aug. 15. The tour is two to three hours in length with some moderate hiking so bring water, sunscreen and bug spray.

Donations to the Lewiston Museum are gratefully received, but if that is not possible, please join us anyway and learn about 12,000 years of history in a very compact space. Contact Ken directly at K_Slaughenhoupt@Reagan.com to save a place. Tours are limited to 15 at a time, and we practice social distancing.

The museum will participate in the 10 Mile Garage & Sidewalk Sale on the weekend of Aug. 21-22 with assorted goodies available at 469 Plain St.

Further, we are selling raffle tickets for cash prizes to be drawn weekly over 11 weeks. They will be available from any HAL board member and will be on sale at the garage sale weekend and through Patti Mahony at the museum.

We are also working on new ideas for fun and education. Keep in touch through our website at www.historiclewiston.org.

We are striving to meet these various challenges presented by the pandemic issues. We always need volunteers to help at the museum, sit on our board of directors and help in any way possible. For opportunities, contact Patti at 754-4214.

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Old Fort Niagara's complete safety plan is detailed at www.oldfortniagara.org/visitor-information

www.oldfortniagara.org
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