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NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

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After losing 34% of its annual budget the Rice Museum hopes to reopen in June.

Like most museums, the Rice Museum of Hillsboro shut its doors in mid-March at the start of the coronavirus outbreak. Now, two months later, the Rice looks to reopen to the public. But when it does, it will be a different world.

"We had no idea that we would be closed this long. I was at the Museum around our normal opening time soon after we closed our doors thinking to myself, 'Two weeks. We can manage this,'" said Garret Romaine, director of the Rice Museum.

As a non-profit organization that relies on ticket sales, education program fees, gift shops sales, and donations to survive closure has had a significant impact on the operating budget. The Museum has lost nearly \$175,000 in revenue, or 34% of the total budget. There are no assurances that revenue will return to normal soon.

The Museum has taken measures to mitigate the loss of income to put the organization in the best position to be able to re-open when it is safe to do so. Some of these measures have been heartbreaking and there are no guarantees it will be enough. The Museum is calling upon the community for support and has established a COVID-19 Relief Fund.

Receiving support from our community is critical as the Museum moves toward reopening. The American Alliance of Museums estimates that as an industry museums are losing 33 million dollars per day due to closures; that 30% of museums may never reopen; and those that do will be changed institutions and are at risk of closing within two years. The Rice Museum does not want to become one of these statistics. The Museum asks the community to pull together and contribute to the Fund to keep this much needed resource alive.

26385 NW Groveland Dr.
Hillsboro, OR 97124
503-647-2418
www.ricenorthwestmuseum.org
501(c)3 NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION TAX ID #: 93-
1217856

The Rice Northwest Museum of Rocks and Minerals exists to engage, inspire, and educate generations on the splendor and complexity of our Earth.



A vital community resource for decades, the Rice first started hosting tours in the 1960's and was formally established as a museum in 1997. The Rice family gifted the Museum to the community with a vision of engaging and inspiring generations about the complexities of our Earth. Built around a world-class collection, the educational programs have grown throughout the years and often fill a critical need. Each year more than 10,000 school children tour the Museum, with each tour specially designed around curricular needs and state standards. This current Coronavirus crisis brings to light the need for evolving and relevant science education to support educators and students K-12. We can help by growing our educational programming and broadening our reach through technology, video education, and portable earth science exhibits. For the Museum to survive and thrive in the future, we plan to grow educational offerings, update exhibitions, and enhance outside spaces

As a mission-driven non-profit organization, the next chapter of the Rice will be dependent on funding levels. Leadership is making choices about what is critical and essential to preserve its educational mission and is refining its focus on fundraising, grant writing, and revenue streams. Additionally, the Museum recently surveyed its constituents about what would make them feel safe to return to the property. It is completing a reopening action plan that integrates community needs and safety of visitors and employees while at the same time being cognizant of budget constraints.

The action plan includes providing PPE for all staff and volunteers; sanitizing and cleaning; and rethinking gallery seating and interactives.

"Research is showing that there will be a significant period of time before people are comfortable going to a public gathering place again," Romaine said. "and we have to be prepared for that continued financial hit."

Donations to the Rice's COVID-19 fund can be made [online](#) or by calling the Museum at (503) 647-2418.

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The Rice Northwest Museum of Rocks and Minerals, an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, houses a world-class collection of rocks and minerals recognized as the finest in the Pacific Northwest and one of the best in the nation. The Museum is in Hillsboro, Oregon just west of Portland (exit 61 off Highway 26). Its educational programs include organized school field trips as well as ongoing educational outreach throughout the community at large. A variety of public and private events are hosted throughout the year as well. The Museum is listed on the National Registry for Historic Places for its unique architectural style and its use of natural stone and extraordinary native Oregon woodwork throughout the building.

For more information about the Rice Northwest Museum of Rocks and Minerals, call (503) 647-2418 or visit www.ricenorthwestmuseum.org or www.facebook.com/RiceNWMuseum.

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