

Focus on Animals

THE FOUNDATION FOR ANIMALS NEWSLETTER ▲ 2005 - 2006 EDITION



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FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES NEW NAME

You will see from the masthead above that our name, *The Mikal Kellner Foundation for Animals* has been shortened to *The Foundation for Animals (FFA)*. The change was made at the request of Mikal, who feels that our name should focus solely on animals.

Although our official name has changed, our mission remains the same. We continue to provide assistance to worthy, well-managed projects that promote animal welfare, prevent animal suffering and provide needed improvements for animals.

We are pleased that Mikal continues her work as a member of our board. See inside page for a message from Mikal and a tribute to this remarkable advocate for animals. 🐾



Photos by Danielle Perrine



Several orphaned bear cubs at the wildlife center's rehabilitation facility wait their turn to be released back to the wild.

EXCITING THINGS HAPPENING AT THE MONTANA WILDLIFE CENTER

Renovation is in full swing

Bulldozers and construction workers are busy at the Montana Wildlife Center this summer. Stabilization work has begun on one of the historic foundry buildings as part of a major renovation project. The building will eventually become an education and exhibit facility open to the public year round. For now, due to construction safety regulations, the entire complex must be closed to visitors. Meantime, rehabilitation of orphaned bear cubs continues in another area at the facility.

Bear cub rehabilitation is currently the primary focus of the Center, which is owned and operated by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks. FFA continues to raise funds for facility improvements and started fundraising this year for additional outdoor wildlife enclosures. 🐾



Dianne Nickman

Construction is underway on the education building at the Montana Wildlife Center near Spring Meadow Lake State Park.

BEAR PROGRAM A SUCCESS

The Wildlife Center has recovered over 100 orphaned bear cubs for rehabilitation, denning and release since the facility opened in 2002. Although most cubs can be returned to the wild, some can't be released.

Goldie, a young male grizzly, was captured along with his sister when their mother developed a fondness for junk food and taught them to forage for food among humans. Small and sociable, Goldie adapted easily to life at the Center during his 8 months there.

After it was determined that he was too habituated to humans to be released to the wild, a home was found for him at North Dakota's Roosevelt Park Zoo, where he shares habitat with two female Alaskan Brown bears.

Usually male bears in captivity are neutered, but veterinarian Dr. Don Perrine of Helena determined that a vasectomy instead would allow Goldie to reach maximum size and strength, which would help the bear hold his own with the two larger brown bears. We're happy to report Goldie is doing well in his new home. 

Danielle Perrine



Orphaned grizzlies, "Goldie" and "Willow," enjoy the pool in a bear enclosure at the wildlife center.

ADOPT-A-SPECIES PROGRAM ENTERS ITS 10TH YEAR

Kids love learning in the Adopt-A-Species elementary school program. The theme for this year was "Montana Wildlife-Conserving Our Backyard."

Last fall, thanks to a generous donor, we were able to bring Walkin' Jim Stoltz, folk singer and environmental activist, back to Helena to entertain at the kick-off assemblies. During National Earth Week, students created art and essays for publication in the Helena Independent Record to show what they learned about their schools' species and habitat. Classrooms were provided educational trunks, books, videos and posters, and expert speakers.

Next fall, the theme of the Adopt-A-Species program will be "Discovering Montana's Wild Web of Life." Students will study how their adopted wildlife species fits into the ecosystem.

Program sponsors include FFA; Helena National Forest; Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks; Montana Discovery Foundation; and Montana Wildlife Federation. A \$1000 grant was awarded to the program this year by NorthWestern Energy. 



Award winners in this year's Adopt-A-Species art contest: Alyssa Steward, 3rd grader at Kessler School, with her picture of otters; Kaitlin Martin, 4th grader at Montana City School, with her drawing of bears; and Meg Giddings, 5th grader at Broadwater School, holds her artwork depicting busy beavers.

FAIRGROUND DUCK POND IMPROVEMENTS

The Foundation and individuals have supported ongoing improvements at the Lewis & Clark Fairgrounds duck pond since 1990. In recent years, the pond has suffered from vandalism and water quality maintenance problems. Conditions deteriorated so badly that Mikal Kellner and pond neighbor Ruth Swenson brought their concerns to the County Commission. The Commissioners assigned a committee to draft a pond management plan. This plan will be reviewed by the Fairground Board and returned to the Commissioners with final recommendations. We hope the decisions made by the Commissioners will ensure a better future for the pond. 



The tranquility of the Fairgrounds duck pond appeals to birds, small mammals, and visitors, young and old alike.

Mikal Kellner

A TRIBUTE TO MIKAL KELLNER

A True Friend to Animals

Mikal Kellner, for whom the foundation was originally named in 1989, is a force to be reckoned with, especially when it comes to improving the lives of animals. Her passion for this work was sparked 35 years ago when she witnessed ongoing cruelty to homeless pets. Committing her time, resources and extraordinary energy to making a significant and lasting difference for the benefit of animals - domestic and wild, furred and feathered - she has worked to bring about important changes in policy, services, education, and facilities. Her work has fostered a more compassionate attitude toward animals, and fueled an awareness of their needs and the important place they hold in our lives. Her example has inspired others.

Through it all, her motto seemed to be: There is much to be done, so let's get started. She continues to live by that credo.

Recently, Mikal requested that the Foundation's name be shortened to "Foundation For Animals" so the focus would be solely on animals. That name became effective in January 2006. We are grateful that Mikal continues to serve on the board of the foundation. 



NINETEEN PHOTOGRAPHY



DIONNE NICHOLSON

Mikal Kellner with "Grizz" and "Tauni" in the 2006 Foundation For Animals pet calendar.

Mikal Kellner and Judy Palmquist pose with a toy bear at a benefit for the wildlife center. Judy

organized the 2-day event that was sponsored by the Trolley Block merchants in Helena.

We asked Mikal to share reflections on her remarkable career as an animal advocate:

I have never regretted my life as an advocate for animals, although I "fell into" the career in 1975. I was 26 years old and had just moved back to Helena when I lost my little poodle to the old city dog pound. After investigating the sordid conditions existing at the pound, I reported the problems to the Helena City Commission and asked to take over its operation. They agreed, and that was the beginning of my career working for the welfare of animals.

Along with several dedicated volunteers, we built Helena's first Humane Society Animal Shelter. In addition to better care for lost and homeless pets, we realized no real change could happen unless people were taught to care. So for the next 15 years we focused our efforts on education, cruelty investigations, and spay/neuter programs to reduce the over-population of pets.

When I left as director of the Humane Society in 1990, there remained a great need to help the public with financial assistance for spay/neuter and emergency cases. To meet this need, a group of caring volunteers created a tax-deductible foundation to fund worthy projects for animals. They honored me by naming it the Mikal Kellner Foundation for Animals.

The Foundation at first helped fund programs for domestic animals but soon branched out to help wild animals. The largest project to date is the Montana Wildlife Center at Spring Meadow Lake in Helena, now operated by the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks.

Other noteworthy projects funded by the foundation include a pre-release exercise enclosure for injured raptors in the Swan Valley; turning a small pond at the Lewis & Clark County Fairgrounds into an urban wildlife wetland park that attracts many varieties of birds and wildlife; and creation of an elementary school program called "Adopt-A-Species." The motto of the Adopt-A-Species program is "All our efforts to conserve are for naught if we fail to sow the seeds of an environmental ethic in the next generation" (Annie Berkowitz).

I am proud to look back at the lasting accomplishments of both the Humane Society and the Foundation. Organizations that are advocates for animals help raise the bar for compassionate treatment of animals within a community.

- Mikal Kellner 

SMALL GRANTS AWARDED

Seven non-profit organizations and a disaster relief effort to help animals impacted by Hurricane Katrina benefited from funding through the Foundation's small grants program since our last newsletter. The program provides financial assistance for worthy projects that benefit both domestic and wild animals.

SNIP (Spay and Neuter Improves Pets) clinics, sponsored by the Spay-Neuter Task Force of Montana and coordinated by Lewis & Clark Humane Society of Helena, received \$2,700 toward expenses associated with three free clinics (May 2006, Sept 2005, and Oct 2004). Over 2,200 animals were altered at the clinics which are made possible through the efforts of hundreds of volunteers. An additional \$500 was dedicated to SNIP events through FFA's emergency funds program.

PHOTOS BY DIONNE NICKMAN



Responsible pet owners brought their pets to the spay-neuter SNIP clinic in October 2005, one of three held in Helena over the past 2 1/2 years.

Hurricane Katrina emergency response, coordinated by the Lewis & Clark Humane Society, was awarded \$500 to help defray travel expenses of veterinary personnel who volunteered to help animals impacted by the hurricane in Louisiana.

Loving Paws Assistance Dogs (LPAD) was awarded \$550 (June 2005) for transportation expenses associated with advanced training for "Beckie," a service dog in training with volunteer Carlene Farmer of Clancy, Montana. LPAD, a small California-based organization, provides service dogs free to severely disabled children who don't qualify for other service dog programs. "Rosie," the first dog to graduate from LPAD, has made her home with Corrine Spencer of Missoula, Montana, for several years.

Flyaway Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in Helena, Montana, received \$550 (2005 / 2004) for feed for birds and small mammals. Flyaway provides care for injured and orphaned song birds and small wildlife that are not rehabilitated at other centers in the region.

Dream A Little Dream Horse Rescue & Rehabilitation received \$500 (June 2005) for vaccinations needed for rescued horses.



CARLENE FARMER

"Beckie" is a service dog in training and will eventually be matched with a disabled child. FFA funded transportation expenses for Beckie's advanced training.

Wind River Bear Institute (WRBI) Partners in Life program received \$150 (June 2005) to go toward the cost of creating a volunteer outreach and training program. WRBI trains Karelian bear dogs for specialized use in reducing bear-human conflicts.

Animal Foundation of Great Falls received \$500 (Nov 2004) to help with expenses associated with resolution of a "puppy mill" rescue operation for 56 dogs.

Montana Audubon Society was awarded \$500 (Nov 2004) to go toward the PPLM / Winterburn management plan project in the Helena Valley, a project important to the future of wildlife in the area. 🐾

2006 PET CALENDAR PREVIEW PARTY

DIANNE NICKMAN



Board members Judy Browning (l) and Cindy Utterback (r) worked with Steve Browning at the reception desk.



MORNING EWS

Pet calendar honorary chair Renee Kowalski, pet calendar committee chair Marilyn Bartlett, and John Kowalski celebrate at the pet calendar preview party.



DIANNE NICKMAN

FFA chair Kelly Kuntz delivers pet calendars to volunteers Ken Vivrette and Jim and Susan Gordon at the pet calendar sales table. Calendars are for sale at the annual preview party, then at Helena business locations.



DIANNE NICKMAN

Pet calendar committee volunteers relaxed after the 2006 calendars were printed and ready for sale: (left to right) Kerry Sullivan-Lechner, Judy Browning, Laura Sanders, Susan Gordon, Dick Morgan, Jane Egan, Kathy Budewitz, Julie Robbins, Marilyn Bartlett, Cindy Utterback and Dianne Nickman. The committee is now in the midst of putting the 2007 calendar together.

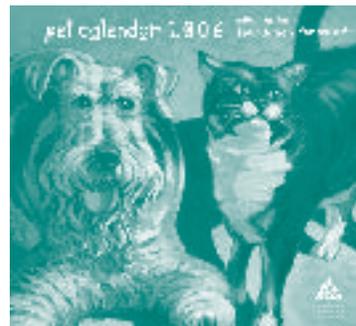
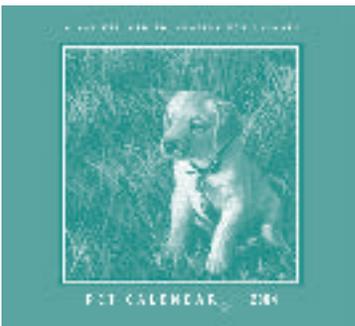
ANNUAL PET CALENDAR A BIG HIT

Your Pet's Photo Can Be in the 2007 Calendar

The Foundation published its first pet calendar three years ago. The success of the calendars exceeded all expectations. Over \$35,000 has been generated for programs that benefit animals. Approximately 300 pet owners have contributed to the calendar, proudly displaying their pets' pictures.

The Pet Calendar Committee is now working on the 2007 pet calendar. Each photo page features one or more pets and may also include pet owners or friends. Businesses may sponsor a pet page and have their business card printed in a special section. Photos are due in June. The calendar is printed in September and is available for sale at a gala preview party at Helena's Holter Museum of Art in early October. Calendars will also be for sale at Helena businesses through January 2007.

For information on how you can feature your pet in the next pet calendar, or to purchase calendars, call the FFA office at 406-443-6532 or email mkfa@mt.net. 



Sales from pet calendars have raised over \$35,000 for programs that help pets and those who love them.

HELPING PETS AND PEOPLE

Spay/Neuter and Emergency Funds Programs

Domestic animal assistance continues to be a major focus of the Foundation. For the past 14 years, much of that help has been provided through FFA's spay-neuter and emergency funds programs. Volunteer board and advisory group members manage the programs, working with veterinary clinics and limited-income pet owners who apply for assistance.

Spay/Neuter. Since 1992, the Foundation has issued spay-neuter certificates to individuals who could not otherwise afford to have their pets altered. The program also provided aid to a dog rescue service in Sidney, Montana, coordinated by volunteer Nancy Lane.

FFA gave over \$8,000 in assistance to pet owners in 2005, for a total of nearly \$69,000 since 1992 when the program began.

FFA enthusiastically supports SNIP (Spay and Neuter Improves Pets) clinics in Helena. Hundreds of animals are altered at each of the clinics, which are held over a weekend for maximum attendance (see article, "Small Grants Awarded").

Emergency Funds. A pet's medical emergency can be life-threatening and very expensive. FFA's emergency funds program can help defray veterinary expenses for people on limited incomes. Since 1992, FFA has lent a helping hand to hundreds of pet owners by providing over \$51,000 in assistance through this program. In 2005, funding totaled nearly \$9,000. 🐾



PHOTOS BY DIANNE NICKMAN

It takes nearly 100 dedicated volunteers of all ages to conduct the SNIP clinics.



A van carries equipment and supplies to spay-neuter clinics around the state. Clinics are sponsored by the Montana Spay Neuter Task Force.

Visit our website:
www.FoundationForAnimals.org



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