

# Focus on Animals

THE FOUNDATION FOR ANIMALS ANNUAL REPORT NEWSLETTER ▲ 2009 - 2010 EDITION



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## BEARS, BIRDS AND OTTER AT THE WILDLIFE CENTER

Orphaned and injured animals at the Montana wildlife rehabilitation center this season included black bears (in various shades of black, brown and cinnamon), an otter, a variety of birds of prey, and several reptiles. The goal of Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks is to successfully rehabilitate and release as many animals as possible, and to try to place in permanent education facilities those that are not releasable.

Four of this years 12 cubs were ear-tagged with radio transmitters and released.

Donors who have generously supported the Foundation for Animals' fundraising efforts for the rehab center will be excited to know about new programs there. Raptors are now spreading their wings after successful rehabilitation. Lisa Rhodin, wildlife rehabilitator and new manager of the center, set free two falcons and hawks during the summer



*Orphaned black bear cubs at the rehabilitation center enjoy a day in the sun climbing tree stumps and learning to forage for food – skills they will need when released to the wild.*

Photo courtesy of Montana Dept of Fish Wildlife & Parks, Jase Vennard, photo@jase.com

months. Housing for ambassador birds will soon serve as an outdoor extension between the rehab facility and the new education facility, where visitors will be greeted by those ambassadors. Long-term plans include a 100-foot flight cage for birds as large as Golden Eagles and as small as Pygmy Owls. (see story on page 2). 🐾

Michelle Lechberg, DVM/Dr. Sindoo



*"Missouri Rose" was the first rescue pet whose photo and story were submitted to FFA's calendar selection committee. "Rose" is now living happily ever after with the family who found her along a Montana highway and saw past her matted fur, arthritic legs and deafness to the beautiful dog she is.*

## NEW 2012 CALENDAR WILL HIGHLIGHT RESCUE PETS

A 16-month wall calendar for 2012 is in the works and will feature rescue pets – their photos and their stories. The new calendar, a departure from the previous desk calendar, promises to be just as popular.

If you have a rescue pet you'd like to see in the new calendar, email your pet's story and a picture to [mkfa@mt.net](mailto:mkfa@mt.net) or mail to FFA, PO Box 389, Helena MT 59624. Any animal is eligible for entry, as long as it is considered a pet. Pets selected will then be photographed by a professional photographer. The calendar will be for sale at Helena area stores and through the Foundation for Animals by fall of 2011. 🐾

## CONSERVATION EDUCATION WILL JOIN THE WILDLIFE CENTER

The long-awaited conservation education building adjacent to the Montana wildlife rehabilitation center is expected to open to the public by January 2011. Stabilization of the historic stone building has been completed, and the building's interior is nearing completion. This will include a classroom, auditorium, conservation and wildlife exhibits, living stream, gift shop and office space.

The education center will be an outdoor learning center, and the wildlife center will continue to focus on rehabilitating orphaned and injured wildlife. For information about programs at the outdoor learning center, call Laurie Evarts at 444-1229. To learn about the wildlife rehab center, visit [www.fwp.mt.gov](http://www.fwp.mt.gov). 

### Wildlife Center Wish List

To donate, first call 449-1312

Straw, towels and old blankets, and tarps

Hard-sided pet carriers, all sizes

Esbilac or Milk Matrix milk replacer

Subcompact bucket tractor

Construction materials

Oxygen system (\$250), pulse oximeter (\$150)



Photo courtesy of MT Fish Wildlife & Parks. Photographer, Dianne Nickman.

*An orphaned baby River Otter is bottle-fed by wildlife rehabilitator and new manager of the rehab center, Lisa Rhodin, shortly after it was found in Yellowstone Park in June. The center worked with Park biologists to rehabilitate the little otter, nicknamed "Squeak." In early October, "Squeak" was returned to the wild in Yellowstone Park.*

*Laurie Evarts, education program manager at the Montana Outdoor Discovery Center, works with environmental educators across the state to bring a variety of new programs to the center.*



Photo courtesy of MT Fish Wildlife & Parks. Photographer, Lisa Rhodin.

*"Shredder," a Great Horned Owl, cannot be returned to the wild because of injuries, but serves as an ambassador animal at the Montana Outdoor Discovery Center.*

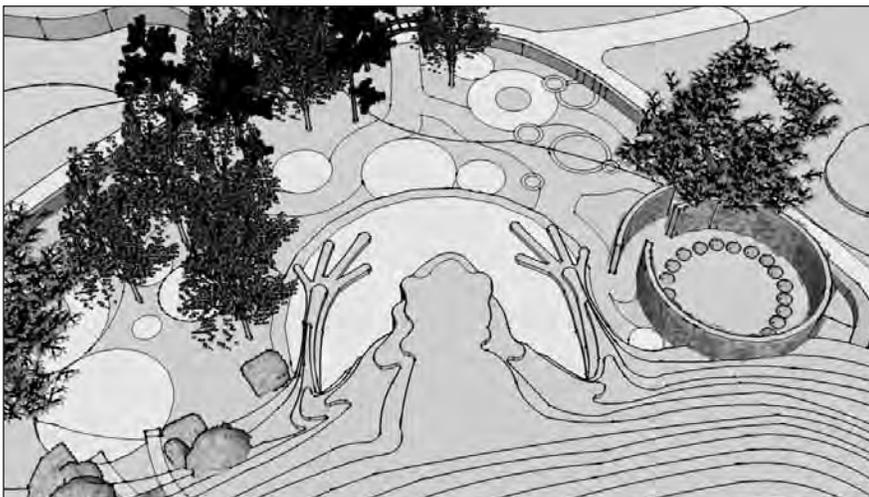


Photo courtesy of MT Fish Wildlife & Parks. Photographer, Dianne Nickman.

### WILDLIFE WEBCAM IS COMING

The Foundation for Animals has awarded \$10,000 from encumbered funds for use in the Montana Wildlife Rehabilitation Center's webcam project. Phase I of the project will supply infrastructure required to provide a high quality, web-based video experience for the public from the bear enclosures and from the raptors' perching garden. 

### PHASE II, A LOOK TO THE FUTURE



*A landscape architect's drawing shows the youth discovery area, which is included in Phase II of the long-term plan for the center. This area is a special place designed to stimulate curiosity and imagination about the natural world. The central feature will be a large landscaped frog protruding from the hillside, meandering past recycled blue glass to give the illusion of water flowing between lily pads.*

*On the hillside above, ponds with otter slides will provide a place for youth to burn off energy. An outdoor classroom will provide a quiet spot for groups to gather and learn.*



*Middle school students Matt Turnbow and William Reichert worked at the Montana Wildlife Rehabilitation Center with volunteer Gerry Ryan to flatten cardboard boxes for recycling in June. Boys and girls participated in a variety of tasks at the center during the one-day project in Helena School District's summer program, "You Got Served." Through positive experiences gained in service, students learn how they can be effective in their community.*

## SPAY and NEUTER: IT'S THE RIGHT THING TO DO FOR PETS

To address the problem of pet overpopulation, the Foundation issues certificates to individual pet owners who need financial assistance to alter their pets. Since 1992, FFA has dedicated over \$98,000 to spay-neuter efforts in Montana. Since our last newsletter, the certificate program provided nearly \$1,200 in assistance to alter 43 cats and dogs. Another \$1,400 supported spay/neuter clinics in Montana.

FFA's certificate program remains an important tool in reducing pet overpopulation, making assistance available when a pet requires surgery at a time or place outside of scheduled public clinics. 



Gina W'Frat

*This curious kitty was tucked in a comfy shoulder bag while awaiting surgery at Spay Montana's public clinic in Browning MT.*

### Ongoing Spay-Neuter Clinics in Helena

The Spay Montana program of Lewis & Clark Humane Society has performed 4,000 surgeries this year, thus preventing 20,000 potential births of unwanted kittens and puppies!

The group offers low-cost spay-neuter clinics in Helena every 6 to 8 weeks for pet owners who are not normally able to visit a private veterinary office. Costs are \$25 per cat and \$35 per dog. Rabies vaccinations are \$5 per shot yearly for cats or dogs.

For an appointment or information, call Spay Montana at 422-8224, or the Humane Society at 442-1660. 

## SPAY-NEUTER ASSISTANCE IN LINCOLN / AUGUSTA AREA

Helena Area Friends of Pets (HAFoP) is reaching out to help pet owners in Lincoln and Augusta MT, as well as Helena. Localized spay-neuter services are provided to low-income residents. For information, call 465-0009. 

## EMERGENCY FUNDS PROGRAM BENEFITS ANIMALS, LARGE AND SMALL

This program was designed by the Foundation to help animals and people. A beloved pet is often considered a family member, and sometimes a pet is the only family a person has. The program helps low or fixed income pet owners meet emergency veterinary expenses.

Since our last newsletter, FFA has provided over \$1,500 in assistance. Since 1992, FFA has dedicated over \$61,000 to helping animals in critical need. 



*Dianne Nickman*

*"Pumpkin" was helped through FFA's emergency funds program when he suffered broken and damaged toes and a laceration. As a kitten, Pumpkin was found in a shoebox, abandoned along a roadside. A loving cat, he now welcomes other orphans lucky enough to find a home with his family.*



Dianne Nickman

*Veterinarian Lucas Thomi performs a follow-up exam on a friendly Golden Retriever that received treatment with help from the Foundation's Emergency Funds program.*

## SMALL GRANTS BENEFIT DOMESTIC AND WILD ANIMALS

This program provides financial assistance for worthy projects that benefit both domestic and wild animals.

- **Helena Area Friends of Pets (HAFoP)** received \$400 to help the organization meet expenses related to Helena area spay/neuter events for low-income pet owners. Since 2004, more than 5,000 animals have been altered through their spay/neuter events.
- **Wind River Bear Institute** in Florence MT received \$100 to be used in their Partners-in-Life Program which works to reduce human-wildlife conflict and related wildlife mortality in key areas across the state.
- **Spay Montana**, Helena MT, received \$1,000 in designated donations to help fund community spay/neuter clinics at Browning MT on the Blackfeet reservation. 

Visit our website:  
www.FoundationForAnimals.org



## Focus on Animals

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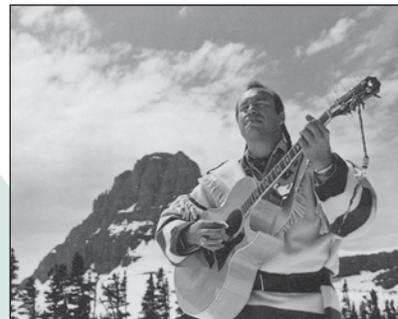
Special thanks to the staff and  
volunteers at the Montana  
Wildlife Center.

## ADOPT-A-SPECIES PROGRAM 2009-2010

The "Adopt-A-Species" theme for the elementary school year was "Celebrating Wildlife Through Native Culture." Incorporating an Indian theme helped students learn about early conservation of wildlife and habitat, and how tribal peoples depended on wild animals for food, clothing, shelter and tools.

Kick-off assemblies at 19 participating Helena area schools included Native American poet-singer Jack Gladstone as guest speaker/entertainer. Over the school year, students learned about the role their adopted species played in the life and culture of Native Americans.

Guest classroom speakers included Carla Wambach for *Feather Fest* (birds and feathers in tribal culture); Samsara Chapman for Montana Discovery Foundation's *Snowshoe and Wildlife in Winter* (migration and hibernation of adopted species); Louise Ogemahgeshig Fischer for Indian games and animal spirit stories; Kurt Cunningham for Montana Dept of Fish Wildlife & Parks' *Hides, Furs & Facts*, and Arian Randall for Helena National Forest's *Pictographs & Rock Art*. 🐾



*Native American poet-singer Jack Gladstone from the Blackfeet Indian Nation of Montana visited elementary schools that participated in the Adopt-A-Species program. Students were introduced to Native American culture as Gladstone entertained with songs about Blackfeet animal legends.*

*In April, students' winning art and essays appeared in an Earth Day supplement published in the Independent Record newspaper.*

