

Focus on Animals

THE FOUNDATION FOR ANIMALS ANNUAL REPORT NEWSLETTER ▲ 2014 EDITION



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1989 - 2014 TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF SERVICE TO ANIMALS

The 25th anniversary of the Foundation for Animals (FFA) celebrates our ongoing mission to assist well-managed projects that promote animal welfare, prevent animal suffering, and provide needed improvements for animals. We are grateful for your loyal support and will continue to work hard by ensuring that your donations are wisely used to achieve the greatest good for animals.

FFA is a conduit for action. The interconnection between humans, animals (both domestic and wild) and our shared environment is vital. When we work together for improvement, we all benefit. Nowhere is that more evident than in results achieved in public/private partnerships, such as the Montana Wildlife Rehabilitation Center and Montana WILD campus. While our largest project to date involves wildlife, we continue to give high priority to domestic animals, primarily through education and through our spay/neuter and emergency funds programs.

This annual report newsletter outlines what your continued support has already accomplished, and other critical needs the Foundation has recognized. 🐾

MONTANA ORPHANED COUGAR KITTENS FIND NEW HOME IN COLUMBUS OHIO ZOO

In August, two tiny male cougar kittens were rescued from under a burning log by a fire crew fighting a blaze in the mountains near Florence MT. Volunteers quickly transported the orphaned kittens to the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks' Rehabilitation Center in Helena.

Only two weeks old, the kittens were healthy but had to be bottle fed. They doubled in size but, now habituated to humans, they were not candidates for release back to the wild. Lisa Rhodin, Wildlife Rehabilitation Coordinator, contacted the Columbus Zoo and Aquarium, which provides wildlife enrichment programs and was eager to start with the kittens as soon as possible. They are now in their new home, and the zoo plans to include them in its conservation education program.

The kittens enjoyed a moment of fame when they appeared on the David Letterman TV show with Jack Hanna, Director Emeritus of the Columbus Zoo and a resident of Montana. 🐾



Eliza Wilts, Photographer, Independent Kanaid

Wildlife photos courtesy of Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks



DONATIONS AND GRANTS IMPROVE BEAR CUB ENCLOSURES AT WILDLIFE CENTER

Recent improvements to the bear enclosures are making life easier for handlers and the animals transported to and from the facility. A newly configured “alley” at the off-loading point will allow more direct release into the compounds. The renovation project, which also included additional gates and security fencing, was made possible through individual donations and grants to FFA from the Cadeau Foundation and the Lee and Donna Metcalf Charitable Trust. 🐾

RAPTOR FLIGHT PEN TO OPEN IN 2015

Many hands, together with donated time and money, will complete the 104-foot flight pen in spring 2015.



The new flight pen will allow raptors greater freedom in rehabilitation, increasing their chances for return to the wild.

Robert Peccia deserves special recognition for facilitating the final permitting process. Other generous support came from Peccia & Associates who gave extensive time and expertise and Helena Sand & Gravel who donated ground preparation, materials and labor to raise the pre-fab building.

In addition to receiving donations from individuals, FFA was awarded grants for this project from Last Chance Audubon, Montana Fish Wildlife & Parks Outdoor Legacy Foundation, Treacy Foundation, NorthWestern Energy, Plum Creek Foundation and Burlington Northern Santa Fe Foundation. Soon eagles, hawks, owls and other raptors will stretch their wings in a greatly improved rehabilitation environment at the wildlife center. 🐾

WEGGENMAN’S “FLYAWAY” CENTER Gratitude at the End of an Era

For almost 40 years, Marvel and Mark Weggenman of Helena dedicated a major part of their lives to rehabilitating orphaned and injured song birds and small mammals and, when possible, returning them to the wild. Along the way, they established Flyaway Rehabilitation Center to better serve feathered friends in need. Due to health issues, the Weggenmans retired in September 2014. Our thanks go to Marvel and Mark for their many years of outstanding commitment and service. 🐾

REMEMBERING KELLY KUNTZ Animal Advocate, Leader and Friend

Kelly Kuntz served as the Foundation’s board chair from 1989 until his passing in 2014. A native Montanan, he was passionate about animals, both domestic and wild. His love for, and commitment to helping animals was matched by his compassion and concern for people. That combination helped FFA accomplish projects of every kind and size.



Photo courtesy of D&A Dickinson

Kelly’s vision and business expertise were invaluable, especially during long-range planning for wildlife rehabilitation. His unwavering commitment enabled the Foundation to secure a loan to purchase land on which the Montana Wildlife Rehabilitation Center and Montana WILD would later be built.

Pets were just as close to his heart. When the desperate plight of Browning area dogs became known, Kelly immediately began raising money through FFA for urgent needs and spay/neuter efforts. He collected numerous dog shelters (often picking them up in donors’ back yards), and donated funds to purchase additional shelters. He personally delivered 200 dog houses to the Browning area. Kelly and his wife, veterinarian Julie Kappes, worked side by side on the project – and adopted several of the dogs into their family.

Kelly’s 25 years of work through the Foundation benefited countless animals and the people who love them. Donations received in his memory will be used to benefit many more. 🐾

Photos by Dianne Nickerson



Kelly and Julie Kuntz, on right, with Cindy and Jim Utterback in 2005. Cindy, a long-time FFA board member and co-chair, was recently elected Foundation chair.

In 2011, Kelly presented a \$10,000 check to Lisa Rhodin, Coordinator of the Montana Wildlife Center, and Thomas Baumeister, Executive Director of Montana WILD. The donation went toward improvements to the Wildlife Center.



'BUCKS 4 BRAVEHEART' Fundraiser Helps Therapy Horse

"Braveheart" is a little horse with a big job helping kids with emotional and social problems in equine-assisted psychotherapy. Although young, by January 2014 she had a severe, debilitating knee condition and needed help right away. FFA, working in partnership with Paula VanderJagt and Van's Thriftway in Helena, more than met the original goal of raising an estimated \$4,000 for required veterinary care.

Braveheart's story touched hundreds of people eager to help. She soon received extensive veterinary treatment at Montana Equine Center in Three Forks, and Double Diamond Veterinary Hospital in Bozeman, followed by at-home physical therapy. She is now back with the kids she loves.

Many thanks go to Paula and Van's Thriftway crew for wholeheartedly promoting the fundraiser, donating \$500 in groceries as a raffle prize, and providing FFA in-store space during the benefit. Sincere thanks to all who supported this cause. By helping a mini-horse in desperate need of specialized veterinary care, we also helped children with special needs. 🐾



Left: FFA volunteer Mikal Kellner with a mom and daughter stepping up to help 'Braveheart'. Right: 'Braveheart' with Liam at Fresh Steps EAP. What a change from January when the little horse couldn't walk, wouldn't eat, and her head hung low!



Photo by Dianne Nickerson.

'PAWS PARK' FIRST PHASE IS A HIT! Second Phase Coming Up!

It's fun and games for dogs and their owners at 'Paws Park' in Helena. There's room to run in separate areas for large and small dogs, and Mutt Mitt stations to encourage owners to clean up after pets.

FFA, along with other organizations, facilitated donations to match City of Helena funds for installation of fencing and amenities for the first phase. Now we're helping to raise funds for the second phase that includes expanded ground cover and shade structures.

To support this community project, please send your check to FFA, PO Box 389, Helena MT 59624, and note that your donation is to be dedicated to the dog park.

To sponsor a Mutt Mitt station, go to the Helena Dog Park page on Facebook. Sponsor names are acknowledged at each Mutt Mitt station. 🐾



Photo by Dianne Nickerson.

Rex Walsh, FFA board member and a member of the dog park committee, visits the park often with Cloe and Heidi. The Foundation is a sponsor of a Mutt Mitt station at the park.

HELPING PETS AND PEOPLE Spay/Neuter and Emergency Funds Programs

Spay/Neuter. Since 1992, FFA has dedicated \$110, 200 to spay/neuter efforts in Montana through our own certificate program and through grants to organizations that offer free or low-cost clinics to pet owners who otherwise could not afford to have their pets altered. Since our last newsletter, FFA contributed \$5,900 to spay/neuter efforts: \$400 directly through individual FFA certificates and \$5,500 through a grant to Spay Montana to fund their free June 2014 clinic in Helena.

For information on FFA's certificate program, call 406-443-6532.

Emergency Funds. This program helps low- or fixed-income pet owners to meet unexpected expenses of emergency veterinary care. Since 1992, FFA has dedicated over \$77,700 to benefit animals through this program. 🐾



Photo by Dianne Nickerson.

A Montana veteran and his granddaughter comfort the family dog who was neutered at a Spay Montana clinic in Helena.

FFA SMALL GRANTS

- Spay Montana received \$5,500 to fund their free spay/neuter clinic in Helena in June 2014. Over 200 dogs and cats were altered at the two-day event offered to pet owners who most needed assistance.
- Helena's Wetland Conservation Committee (WCC) was awarded \$2,000 toward the purchase of 2 acres of wetland

near Lewis & Clark County fairgrounds. Development would destroy habitat used by over 100 bird species identified there by Audubon. WCC is close to raising all needed funds. In the past, a \$4,000 FFA grant helped purchase adjacent wetland property that later became the Charles VanHook Wetland Park. 🐾

Visit our website:
www.FoundationForAnimals.org



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and volunteers at the
Montana Wildlife Center.

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ADOPT-A-SPECIES PROGRAM Wild Things Need Wild Places

The Adopt-A-Species program was developed to educate Helena-area elementary school students about Montana's diverse wildlife and habitat. This year's theme is "Wild Things Need Wild Places." Fall kick-off assemblies in schools unveiled the species each will study this year. A spring art contest will ask students K-5 to create artwork of their species in its wild habitat. Writing done by grades 3-5 will focus on the importance of wild places for all wildlife. Winning entries will appear in an Independent Record newspaper supplement on Earth Day.

Now in its 17th year, the program is sponsored by the Helena Forest Service, Discovery Foundation, the Foundation for Animals and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks. 🐾

MONTANA WILDLIFE REHABILITATION CENTER

Orphaned bear cubs were received this year, as well as two cougar cubs rescued from a wildfire. Bird species, from humming birds to golden eagles, were also cared for with the help of volunteers who logged almost 7500 hours. 🐾

MONTANA WILD EDUCATION CENTER

The education center, adjacent to the wildlife rehab facility, has become well established since opening in 2010. In 2014 visitors numbered 17,499, including 3,287 school program participants from 106 schools, and 1691 participants in 52 Montana WILD events. Volunteers contributed 845 hours to help keep things running smoothly. For more information, call Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks at 406-444-9944. 🐾