

Focus on Animals

THE MIKAL KELLNER FOUNDATION FOR ANIMALS NEWSLETTER ▲ FALL 2003 - SPRING 2004



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ORPHANED BEAR CUBS RETURN TO THE WILD

Thanks to the many donors who contributed to the wildlife rehabilitation center through MKFA, many of Montana's orphaned bear cubs have a second chance to grow up in the wild. The story of two cubs successfully released to the wild in Montana was told in a March 2004 AP news story from Kalispell, Montana.

Each yearling cub weighed about 70 pounds when judged ready to leave the wildlife center for Northwest Montana

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Photo By Brandon Day

A few of this year's orphaned bear cubs hang out at the new wildlife center.

2004 PET CALENDAR BENEFITS DOMESTIC ANIMALS 2005 Calendar can make your pet a star!

The MKFA 2004 pet calendar and daybook raised over \$10,000 to benefit animals through MKFA programs. The calendar was such a success that the Foundation decided to make it an annual fundraiser.

Photo pages, sold in the spring, include a free studio photo of the participant's pets (or pets with their people) by Helena



Newton Photography

The 2004 Pet Calendar was a popular fund-raiser for the Foundation's Emergency Funds and Spay/Neuter Certificate programs.

photographer, Sandy Newton. Candid photos may also be submitted. Calendars for 2005 will be ready for sale in the fall of 2004. Photo page participants are invited to a special preview party in October.

The 7" x 8" week-at-a-glance calendar and daybook with spiral binding is a perfect size to keep appointments in order. Over 100 photo pages of pets and pet owners are included in the book. For more information about where to purchase the 2005 pet calendar, or to participate in the 2006 pet calendar, call MKFA at 406 443-6532 now. The calendar is also a perfect way to combine your gift giving with supporting important programs for animals. Please remember to purchase early – last year's calendars were sold out by Christmas. 🐾

ANNUAL REPORT TO DONORS

Kelly Kuntz, Chair

Cindy Utterback, Vice Chair

How fast a year goes! In last year's annual newsletter, we reported on the ceremony turning over the Wildlife Center to the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP). A director for the facility was hired and the center was officially open.

Then in early fall, a major fire swept through one of the historic buildings adjacent to the new wildlife rehabilitation facility. Fortunately, the new construction was not affected and none of the animals in the wildlife rehabilitation area were harmed. Cause of the fire has not been determined.

The Foundation continues to raise funds for improvements at the wildlife rehabilitation facility. We are also working with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Foundation to raise funds for the planned visitor and education center. In addition to wildlife conservation exhibits, the visitor center will feature programs and live video viewing of wildlife at the center.

Thanks to all of you who purchased photo pages in the MKFA 2004 Pet Calendar. The project was a tremendous success and everyone is looking forward to the next issue! This project enabled the Foundation to increase the distribution of spay/neuter assistance certificates and meet many emergency veterinary care needs.


As you will see in this newsletter, our Adopt-A-Species conservation studies program, in partnership with the Helena National Forest and Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, continues to be an effective educational component of Helena area elementary schools. Over the years, thousands of school children have learned about Montana wildlife by "adopting" a species to study during the school year. MKFA is proud to be a sponsor of special events, guest speakers and study materials for the classroom.

Thank you for supporting MKFA through your generous donations. Special thanks go to those donors who have included us in estate planning. Through your gifts, future generations will become better stewards of animals, both domestic and wild, and will become aware of the importance of preserving habitat through conservation. 

SPAY/NEUTER CERTIFICATES HELP REDUCE SHELTER POPULATIONS

It was a record year for MKFA's spay/neuter assistance program. In 2003, the program provided nearly \$7,000 to pet owners who requested help in meeting expenses related to altering 263 animals (185 cats and 78 dogs). Of 11 veterinary clinics that participated in the program, most were from the Helena area; other clinics were located in Hardin, Bozeman, Cascade, and Butte.

Early indications are that 2004 will be an even bigger year. Between January and June, over \$4,000 was committed to spay/neuter certificates.

The program, established in 1992, has paid out a total of more than \$50,000 to ensure that nearly 2,000 cats and dogs won't add to the pet overpopulation problem. Every dollar spent to help solve that problem is a good investment. For information about the spay/neuter program, call MKFA at 443-6532. 



You'd never guess these contented cats once ran wild on a farm in the Helena Valley. With financial help from MKFA's spay/neuter certificate program, the farm's new owners trapped the cats and had them altered. These days, they're happy, healthy cats. Each has a name, and their new owners have arranged for them to be featured in the 2005 pet calendar.

SPRING MEADOW LAKE CARDBOARD CUP REGATTA FUND-RAISER

The Annual Spring Meadow Lake Cardboard Cup Regatta in July has been a fun family event and a unique fund-raiser for the wildlife center building campaign. Now that the wildlife rehabilitation facility is built, MKFA is looking at new fund-raising projects for the second phase of the building campaign.



If you know of an organization that would like to continue the Spring Meadow Lake Cardboard Cup Regatta next year, please call MKFA at 406-443-6532 or the state park regional office at 406-495-3270. An easy step-by-step event manual is available for your organization to review, along with samples of the race registration brochures and event race materials.

A special thanks to the volunteers at the registration desk and boat inspection stations, and the timers, judges, set-up and take-down crews and the many scuba club members who worked




Volunteer regulars: MKFA Advisory Council members Cindy Utterback, Judy Browning, Carol Ferguson, and Dianne Nickman sold raffle tickets and banded out prizes every year at the Regatta.

on the event. Helena businesses also supported the event with cash and merchandise prizes that made the event fun for everyone.



SMALL GRANTS PROVIDE BIG BENEFITS

Three organizations received small grants this past year. The program provides financial assistance for worthy projects that benefit both domestic and wild animals.

- Flyaway Rehabilitation Center (Helena MT) received \$1,000 to be used for feed for a variety of birds. The Center's biggest success story this year is of a Trumpeter swan that "graduated" from Flyaway and was accepted into a breeding program in Wyoming. The mission of the program is to re-establish populations of the species. We hope to have a follow up story on the swan sometime in the future.
- Helena's C R Anderson Middle School received \$300 to fund the Wild Sentry, Northern Rockies Ambassador Wolf program presented at the school in May 2004. "Koani", a 100-pound wolf, helps educate students in the natural history and behavior of wolves. The program separates fact from fiction about wolves and the role they play in our environment.
- Lewis & Clark Humane Society (Helena MT) was awarded \$500. The money will go toward repair or replacement of doors, windows and walls in the main adoption kennel area at the Society's animal shelter. 

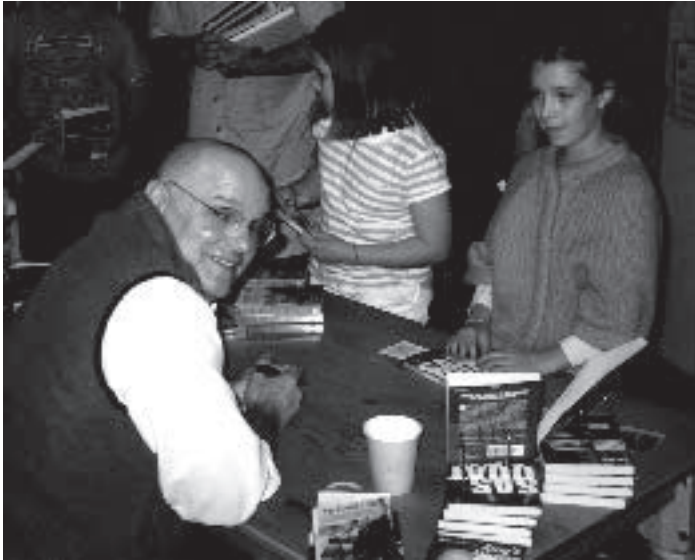
This trumpeter swan was rehabilitated at Helena's Flyaway Rehabilitation Center at the request of MT Fish Wildlife & Parks and the federal government. Because of its broken wing, the bird will never be able to fly again, but sometimes when one door closes, another opens. Flyaway cared for the swan until medical issues were resolved and it was safe to transport it to a facility near Jackson, Wyoming that manages a trumpeter swan breeding program.



EVERY SPECIES COUNTS!

ADOPT-A-SPECIES PROGRAM GOING STRONG IN ITS 8TH YEAR

Wildlife author Roland Smith was a big hit with elementary school students in the Helena area. Smith conducted assemblies in the schools as part of September events that kicked off the Adopt-A-Species' eighth year.




Wildlife author Roland Smith chats with a young reader who enjoyed his presentation at a Helena area elementary school.

BEAR CUBS

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to hibernate in man-made dens. Later, when the bears awaken in the wilderness, they squeeze through an opening in the den and begin foraging for natural food. Radio transmitter ear tags monitor the cubs' progress in the wild.

According to Erik Wenum, wildlife conflict specialist with Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, the vast majority of cubs transplanted eventually figure out how to grub for natural food, starting with succulent grasses and lilies in the spring. Of 54 cubs he has worked with over the past few years, 6 were orphaned by vehicles and 19 by hunters. Wenum thinks most of the other 29 were abandoned. "I think the females got food-stressed, and if there's only so much food, the bigger bear will get it," said Wenum.

The new wildlife center in Helena has already received several orphaned cubs this year. MKFA-funded improvements at the center that make it more "cub-friendly" include installation of trees for climbing, a natural activity for young bears. 

In the program, each school adopts a Montana species to study throughout the school year. The theme this year was "Every Species Counts." The program helps elementary school children gain an increased awareness and greater understanding of Montana wildlife and habitat stewardship.

Next year's theme is *Lewis & Clark: Habitat Then and Now*. Guest speakers, field trips and special assemblies will kick off the program this fall. As a part of the project, participating students will do research on the Lewis & Clark expedition regarding wildlife and habitat and add various items and information to the educational trunks that the schools exchange.

Special thanks go to the Helena Independent Record for publishing the Adopt-A-Species column this year. Each week, the column highlighted selected writings and art from participating schools. 

Kids of all ages stopped by the Adopt-A-Species exhibit to learn about Montana wildlife at Helena High's Science Circus in March 2004. Wildlife films were shown that explored the intriguing world of species that students studied in the program. Traveling educational trunks on display offered hands-on learning.



EMERGENCY FUNDS PROGRAM OFFERS ASSISTANCE


Emergencies involving pets may force owners to choose between paying unexpected veterinary bills or their own grocery or doctor bills. MKFA's emergency funds program provides financial assistance to help pet owners cope with unexpected pet expenses.

In 2003 a variety of animals, mostly dogs and cats, directly benefited from \$2,000 in emergency funds. In the first half of 2004, almost \$4,000 in assistance was provided.

The following was published as a letter to the editor in the Helena Independent Record in November 2003: "This letter is to thank Dr. Newman and the staff at the Animal Center. With the caring and compassion of this doctor, he saved the life of my cat, Nola. She has been a blessing to my life ever since good friends found her

freezing in their barn last year. She swallowed a piece of string, which got caught in her intestine. They didn't think she was going to make it, but they thought she was such a wonderful cat she was worth saving. With (funding) from the Mikal Kellner Foundation for Animals, they did save her and she's doing wonderful. I will never be able to thank all of these people enough."

MKFA is pleased that assistance from the Foundation made it possible for "Nola" to receive the

medical attention she needed in a life-threatening emergency. 



The loss of one eye due to glaucoma hasn't slowed down "Spike," who is shown here with Trevor and Jaron, the kids in his family. MKFA financial assistance made Spike's surgery possible.

THE NEW WILDLIFE CENTER

May to September are the busiest months for the new Montana Wildlife Center. An interview with the center's new director, Stella Capoccia, focused on what's happening at the center now, plans for the future, and how you can help.

What can a visitor see or do at the wildlife center? Although recovering animals at the center cannot be viewed close up, a video viewing station will allow visitors to observe some animals in outdoor enclosures. The center also features weekly education talks. To make the most of your visit, call the center at 406 449-1312 ahead of time to find out when programs and video viewing are scheduled.

What about future plans? A nature center will become part of the complex in 2005. One of the

historic Stedman Foundry buildings adjacent to the wildlife rehabilitation facility will be renovated to include interpretive exhibits, classroom and auditorium space. For information regarding donations to the wildlife center building campaign, call the MT Fish, Wildlife & Parks Foundation at 406 444-6759 or MKFA at 406 443-6532.

Can I become a volunteer who works with the animals?

While the prospect of working with animals is appealing, the task of keeping wildlife wild is paramount. The center is a temporary home for orphaned wildlife headed toward recovery and release, so it's important that human contact with the animals is minimal. Nonetheless, dedicated, hard-working volunteers are an important part of the center's



A young elk calf at the Wildlife Center recovers from injuries.

operation, from ensuring a safe, clean environment for the wild residents to speaking to groups. Application forms for volunteering are available at the center.

WILDLIFE CENTER WISH LIST:

If you are pruning trees, the wildlife center could use the

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PAW PRINTS AT THE WILDLIFE CENTER

You can help the wildlife center building campaign by purchasing a paw print stone at the wildlife center.



A variety of paving stones engraved with paw and hoof prints of Montana wildlife line the donor walk at the wildlife center. Proceeds from the paw print stones go to the wildlife center building campaign.

The stones may be purchased for \$100 (approximately 8x10"), \$200 (approximately 10x12") or \$300 (approximately 12x14").

The stones are installed during the summer months. Your name, or that of a friend or loved one, can be engraved on the stone along with a paw or hoof print of a Montana wild animal.

For an order form and the selection of wildlife paw

prints, call the Mikal Kellner Foundation for Animals at 443-6532. 🐾

WILDLIFE CENTER continued from page 5

branches. Cleaning out your garden or trying to deal with an over productive apple tree? The center has lots of hungry mouths to feed. The center will accept wild meat (no domestic meat). Other needed items at the center include medical, farm, kitchen and garden supplies. Gift certificates from discount, hardware and feed stores are always appreciated. 🐾

Visit our web site: <http://www.MontanaWildlife.org>



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