

Focus on Animals

THE MIKAL KELLNER FOUNDATION FOR ANIMALS NEWSLETTER ▲ FALL 2002 - SPRING 2003



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FOUNDATION PROJECTS 2002-2003 *Wildlife Center Opens*

By Kelly Kuntz, Chair, and Cindy Utterback, Vice Chair

The past year has been rewarding for the Mikal Kellner Foundation for Animals (MKFA).

A milestone was reached when the first phase of the new Montana Wildlife Rehabilitation Center was completed. In a ceremony at the center's September 2002 open house, we were joined by the Helena National Forest as we turned the key to the facility over to the Montana Department of Fish Wildlife & Parks (FWP).

We're grateful to all of you whose support helped turn the dream into reality. We couldn't have done it without you! One of our fundraising partners, the Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Foundation, contributed significantly to the phase one building campaign in the final stretch. Special thanks go to Hopie Stevens and Barbara and Eugene Croisant, for ongoing gifts to the campaign; Louisa Rothfus, whose gift in memory of her brother John Rothfus, built the first bear compound at the site; and Pauline Allen, deceased MKFA Advisory Board member, who established an annuity trust to benefit Foundation projects.

Other major contributors include Altria Group Inc., The Independent Record/Lee Foundation, Mountain West Bank, PPL Montana, Wells Fargo Bank, Treacy Company and Dick Anderson Construction. Important grants were received from the Burlington-Northern Santa Fe, Cabot-Wellington, Cinnabar, Liz Claiborne & Art Ortenberg, Kelley Family, Mott, Plum Creek, Steele-Reese, RV Taylor and Turner foundations and the Montana Community Foundation.

Early contributions and pledges to the campaign were very important. MKFA advisory council and board members, as well as the State and Federal Employee

continued on page 2



MKFA Chair Kelly Kuntz (left), presents a key to Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks Director Jeff Hagener to symbolize the Foundation's gift of the wildlife center site and first phase of construction to the agency. Joining them are Caryn Amacher, the center's director, and Tom Clifford, Forest Supervisor of the Helena National Forest, a partner in the building campaign.



Visitors register at the entrance of the wildlife center for tours of the facility at the open house last fall.



Mikal Kellner (left) thanks Louisa Rothfus at the opening of the wildlife center for the naming gift of an animal compound in memory of Louisa's brother, John Rothfus.



Two enthusiastic supporters stand by an educational bear display at the wildlife center open house.

FOUNDATION PROJECTS continued from page 1

Charitable Campaigns, The Montana Tourism Infrastructure Investment Program (TIIP), Montana State Parks and Wildlife Interpretive Association, Helena National Forest and local schools, civic groups and private donors, made it possible for the Foundation to purchase the site and start the first phase of construction.

We've come a long way, but there's more to be done. Donations are still needed for the wildlife center building campaign. MKFA is authorized to raise funds for nine additional outdoor animal enclosures. We will also work with building campaign partners and others to renovate the historic Stedman Foundry Buildings into an education and nature center.

MKFA continues to fund other important projects and programs. Through our Spay/Neuter program, thousands of unwanted litters of cats and dogs have been prevented. The Emergency Funds program has saved the lives of many animals by funding veterinary care.

The Adopt-A-Species wildlife conservation program is in its seventh year and going strong in seventeen schools. The Foundation, in partnership with the Helena Forest Service and FWP, is a proud sponsor of this school program and the special Earth Day assemblies and events.

We appreciate your interest in our programs and hope you will continue to support the Foundation and its work to benefit animals. Some of you have asked about designating gifts to the Foundation's endowment.

Gifts may be contributed to the MKFA endowment fund managed by the Montana Community Foundation, 101 N. Last Chance Gulch, Helena MT, 59601; or sent directly to MKFA, PO Box 389, Helena MT 59624. Gifts may also be designated to specific programs.

PAULINE ALLEN, A WOMAN WITH GREAT HEART AND VISION

Pauline Allen (1907-2002) joined the MKFA advisory board in 1990. She took a special interest in the wildlife center project from its beginning, and the trust she established for MKFA helped assure its success. Her gifts to many community organizations reflect her generous spirit and determination to make a difference. Helena is a better place because she lived among us. We will miss Pauli as a long-time member of the Foundation and a dear friend. 



Pauline Allen (left) at the 1995 kickoff of the wildlife center building campaign. Sharing a laugh with Pauline are Jim Fowler, noted naturalist and host of "Mutual of Omaha's Wild Kingdom," and Foundation advisory council member Mikal Kellner.



Visitors of all ages were fascinated by wildlife exhibits on loan from Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife & Parks.



A bear exhibit gets a closer look by an interested onlooker during the wildlife center open house.

Special thanks go to those who have remembered the Foundation in estate planning. Your gift to MKFA ensures a strong legacy of effective animal welfare programs for generations to come. 



Engraved paw print paving stones recognize wildlife center donors or the memory of loved ones.



NAMING GIFTS LEAVE A LEGACY

Paving stones, engraved with Montana wildlife paw prints, already make an eye catching display in the donor recognition corner at the wildlife center. The second series of stones will be installed this summer. Paw print stones may be ordered throughout the year for a donation of \$100, \$200 or \$300 (small, medium and large stones). Your name, or that of a friend or loved one, can be engraved on a stone along with a paw or hoof print of your favorite Montana wild animal. Garden benches and trees may also be purchased, and will have the donor's name engraved on a plaque. A special memorial grove of trees will be planted this summer to remember loved ones. Additional trees have been made possible through a grant from Growing Friends of Helena. 

ANNUAL CARDBOARD CUP REGATTA READY TO SAIL JULY 12, 2003



Sailors from six to sixty paddled their cardboard boats to the finish line at the 2002 Spring Meadow Lake Cardboard Cup Regatta. Mark Saturday, July 12, 2003 on your calendar for this year's event! Proceeds go to the wildlife center building campaign. Race sponsors' names and logos will be printed on the official Regatta T-shirts. For registration information, call 406-443-6532

MKFA Awards Funding to Non-profits

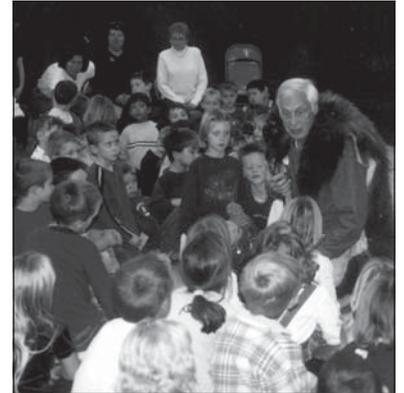
Domestic and Wild Animals Benefit from Small Grants

Three non-profit organizations were recently awarded funding through the Foundation's small grants program.

Bright Eyes Care and Rehabilitation Center in Choteau, MT received \$300; Bright Eyes was established by a group of dedicated volunteers who work through veterinarian offices and foster homes to provide care for lost, stray, and homeless pets while they raise funds to build a facility.

Global Wildlife Resources Inc. based in Bozeman MT, received \$350 to update equipment used in education programs given worldwide to wildlife professionals.

The Flyaway Wildlife Rehabilitation Center was awarded \$350 for feed for birds and small mammals. The Flyaway Center provides care for injured and orphaned song birds and smaller wild animals that are not rehabilitated at other centers in the region.



Carla Wambach (above left), science teacher, uses puppets and Vince Yannone (above right), conservation educator, uses fur pelts to educate elementary school students about species and habitat as part of the Adopt-A-Species program.

ADOPT-A-SPECIES PROGRAM FOCUSES ON IMPACT OF FIRE

Seventeen schools in three counties participated in the Adopt-A-Species program this year. Educational trunks were traded so that each school could study a different species, including osprey, bison, prairie dog, moose, lynx, grizzly bear, black bear, big horn sheep, river otter, mountain lion, pine marten, gray wolf, mountain goat, bald eagle, red tail fox, and black-footed ferret.

Projects included investigating the role of fire on species' habitat. Students shared ideas and thoughts in an essay poetry contest and winners were announced at the Earth Day Concert in Helena. Educators will attend the program's annual spring evaluation meeting to review program activities and trade species for next year.

"All our efforts to conserve wildlife are for naught if we fail to sow the seeds of an environmental ethic in the next generation"

... Annette Berkovits

EMERGENCY FUNDS AT WORK

“Bumper” got her name after an unfortunate run-in with a moving vehicle. The young golden retriever’s front legs were broken and her toes crushed. No owner could be found and the surgery needed was expensive, but a veterinary technician at the Animal Center in Helena saw something special in the little dog that “smiled” at her caregivers, and called MKFA to request financial assistance to help defray medical expenses.



“Bumper” fully recovered from a car accident and was adopted, thanks to The Animal Center and the MKFA Emergency Funds Program.

After Dr. Heidi Wampler performed surgery, the McNellis family provided foster care, and then adopted Bumper.

Bumper can run and play now, and her traumatic experience may help other animals. She recently accompanied Dr. Wampler to a class on “How to Care For Your Pets,” one of a series of classes offered through the Kids’ College program at Four Georgians Elementary School. 

ADOPT-A-SPECIES EARTH DAY CELEBRATION

Helena’s Community Earth Day concert on March 14 featured an entertaining, educational band of “slugs,” otherwise known as the Banana Slug String Band. The musicians, who are also educators, used a combination of music, theater, puppetry and audience participation to create a fun-filled learning experience about the environment and eco systems.

The Northern California band, recipients of the National Park Service Audio Interpretive Excellence Award, also presented a free teachers’ workshop the next day, integrating their educational techniques with hands-on science. Local educators learned strategies for creating thematic science units and gained ideas for energizing and supplementing existing units.

The concert and workshop were part of the Adopt-A-Species program and were sponsored by the Helena National Forest, the Helena Forest Foundation, MT Fish Wildlife & Parks, and

MKFA. 

SPAY/NEUTER PROGRAM SPIRIT OF COOPERATION BENEFITS ANIMALS

The Foundation’s spay/neuter program didn’t hesitate to help when contacted about a dog named “Spirit.” She was surrendered in July 2002 to the North American Shar-Pei Rescue organization (NASPR) by her owner in Roundup, who was very ill. MKFA granted financial assistance to spay the dog, who had already had one litter of pups. As part of their rescue program, NASPR arranged foster homes for Spirit while screening potential adoptive owners for a good match. Then, working with humane societies, they arranged for a series of volunteers from Montana and North and South Dakota to transport Spirit to her new home. We applaud NASPR, which requires that rescue dogs be spayed or neutered before leaving their program.

MKFA’s spay/neuter assistance program has been active for 10 years. In 2002 alone, 239 certificates were issued to pet owners to defray costs of altering pets, thus preventing unwanted litters. Many owners who request assistance can manage a pet’s daily care costs, but need help meeting the one-time cost of spaying or neutering. Pet owners who need financial assistance may call MKFA’s program coordinator, Judy Fenton, at 406-933-5922. 

BUY YOUR COFFEE AT THE BAGEL COMPANY AND HELP ANIMALS

A portion of proceeds from two special coffee blends at The Bagel Company in Helena will support MKFA’s domestic and wild animal programs. The “domestic” blend offers a nice mellow flavor, and the “wild” blend makes a great wake-up cup of coffee! When you buy your next bag of freshly-ground coffee, please try the “critter coffees” at the Bagel Company. With every cup of coffee you enjoy, you’ll be helping animals.



The Banana Slug Band entertained as they educated the audience about habitat at a special Earth Day concert in Helena for the Adopt-A-Species program.

A BUSY SEASON FOR NEW WILDLIFE CENTER DIRECTOR

Back to the wild went 21 deer, two elk, an antelope and a moose – rehabilitated wildlife released last season, which was a very busy one for the Montana Wildlife Rehabilitation Center Director, Caryn Amacher, two staff members, and 18 dedicated volunteers. In addition, they cared for over 30 young black bears that went into hibernation over the winter. These animals were the last to stay at the old shelter. This summer, wildlife will be cared for at the new center until their release in the fall and winter.

Amacher took the position as Wildlife Center Director just as the first phase of the rehabilitation facility was being completed. She has degrees in zoology and business administration. Her wildlife rehabilitation experience has included everything from raccoons to deer. She has worked as Curator of Education for the Dallas Zoo and Aquarium; Curator of Animals at Brookgreen Gardens, South Carolina; Zoo Director, Saginaw Children's Zoo in Michigan; and Zoo Keeper, Houston Zoological Gardens. "We are fortunate to have a person with Caryn's background at the new wildlife center. She has worked extremely hard and brings to this job just what we were looking for," said Ron Aasheim, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks Conservation Education Administrator. 



Center Director Caryn Amacher answers questions about the many wildlife species that will be cared for at the center.

VOLUNTEER TRAINING

A top priority for wildlife center director Caryn Amacher is to have a volunteer corps in place at the new wildlife center for the busy season starting in June. Volunteers at the center are asked to commit to a specific number of hours and duties. Summer is the busiest season at the center, but volunteers are needed all year.

"Volunteers are an important and integral part of the center's operations and many types of volunteers are needed to keep the center running," according to Amacher. Primary duties of "Wildlife Care Volunteers" include assisting with animal care, preparing diets, cleaning enclosures, and washing a lot of bottles. Another group, "Handy Volunteers," work on various projects from building shelters to fixing feeding stands and other ongoing repair work. Finally, spring rush requires one or two work days in May to clean up from winter and prepare enclosures for the new arrivals.

For further information, or to request a volunteer application, e-mail Caryn Amacher at camacher@state.mt.us. 



The diverse wildlife cared for at the new center will have a much better environment than the animals shown here at the old shelter.

A WILD WISH LIST

There are always needs beyond a basic operating budget, especially in a start-up operation like the new wildlife center. MKFA asked for a list of most-needed items. Some can be contributed directly but many are specialized, so donations are greatly appreciated. Just indicate "wildlife center wish list fund" on your check or include a note, and we will forward your contribution to the Center. Contributions are tax-deductible.

- **Food supplies/equipment:** wall-mounted microwave; submersible food mixer; goats milk, doe replacement, Pedialyte.
- **Animal care:** heart/respiration monitor (\$1,000); electronic scales for large animals (\$1,000); and pet carriers, large and small.
- **From your back acre:** clean hay (insulation for dens); willow branches in season (a baby moose wants nothing else); apples and berries in season (the bear cubs request).
- **Special equipment:** digital camera, computer and printer for animal records.
- **Special program needs:** funding for additional radio transmitter ear tags and collars (\$300 each) for the bear release program.
- **Gift certificates** are always welcome (hardware, office supply, discount stores, pet stores). 



PET CALENDAR BENEFITS DOMESTIC ANIMAL PROGRAMS

MKFA is producing a 2004 desk calendar and daybook featuring pets and their people – and it's not too late to be included. Individuals may purchase a "pet page" for \$100 (\$80 tax-deductible; \$20 calendar value). Each page will feature a photo of one or more pets and may also include pet owners. Businesses may wish to sponsor a photo pet page or have their business card printed on a "Friends of the Foundation" page.

As a contributing participant, you'll receive a copy of the calendar to use and enjoy throughout the year, and you will be helping animals through the Foundation's spay/neuter and emergency funds programs.

The 2004 calendar will be available by September 30, 2003 just in time for the holiday season. What a great gift!

To reserve copies, or for information about being part of the 2004 calendar, call MKFA at 406-443-6532. You may also request to be on our contact list for the next MKFA calendar.

Our sincere thanks to Sandy Newton at Newton Photography in Helena and to the Santa Fe Humane Society for their generous help with this project. 🐾



Enthusiastic animal supporter Hopie Stevens is surrounded by her special friends for a photo in the pet calendar. "Diedre" and "Sophie" wanted to get into the act too!



Sandy Newton of Newton Photography in Helena, generously volunteered to photograph pets for the MKFA 2004 Pet Calendar. Here, Sandy photographs Karen Walker and her dog Isaac, who will be featured on a pet page of the calendar.



"Kiki" posed like a princess for this snapshot by her owner. Candid photos, as well as professional photos, may be submitted for the calendar, a project that will raise funds for the MKFA Emergency Funds and Spay/Neuter programs.

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



Focus on Animals

Mikal Kellner Foundation for Animals
P.O. Box 389
Helena, MT 59624-0389
Telephone: (406) 443-6532
E-mail: mkfa@mt.net

Newsletter Contributors

Marilyn Bartlett
 Marilyn Evans
 Mikal Kellner
 Kelly Kuntz
 Dianne Nickman
 Cindy Utterback

Photo Editor: Dianne Nickman

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