



# The Nature Center Stream

SUMMER

The Seasonal Newsletter of the MK Nature Center

2015

## Announcing.....

### Friends of the MK Nature Center

*Tony Sandor, Friends of MKNC President*

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We are pleased to announce the formation of the *Friends of Morrison Knudsen Nature Center*, (FMKNC), an official Public Charitable Organization with Federal tax exempt status under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. The mission of the FOMKNC is to support the MK Nature Center through various fund raising activities dedicated to the MKNC. The Friends Group was inspired by a small group of MKNC supporters who love the place, recognize its value, see it has needs, and shares the vision for constant improvement. These supporters wanted an organization dedicated solely to helping the Nature Center, much like other “Friends Groups” you are familiar with, such as Friends of Zoo Boise, or Friends of the Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge.

Congratulations go out to the volunteers who spent many hours working through the legal details of a tax free FMKNC organization and interfacing with legal and accounting firms to finalize documents and obtain the IRS approval. We have many people to thank, but we want to use this space and time to thank Dustin Liddle of Hawley Troxell and Randy Heidel of JITASA for legal and accounting assistance. We would like to acknowledge the diligence and attention to detail provided by Dustin so the application for 501(c)(3) status went through the IRS on the first pass, taking less than 90 days from submittal to approval.

The Board of Directors of the FOMKNC looks forward to working with the MK Nature Center in support of our mutual goals. We invite you to join us! 100% of your donation to the Friends of MK Nature Center goes to on the ground projects and improvements at the Nature Center. Please send donations to Friends of MK Nature Center, PO Box 604, Boise, Idaho, 83701.





## Dave's Two Cents

Dave Cannamela, Superintendent, MKNC

This summer, we welcome six new volunteers. In June they attended a training session to help them learn the daily tasks at the Nature Center (of which there are many). They will be sweeping, weeding, cleaning, wiping, feeding critters, and really helping us out. There are so many jobs that need to be performed to keep the Nature Center running. We are so happy to have their support. Welcome aboard!



*Pictured left to right: Graydon LeGault, Miles Giso, Katie Hebdon, Megan Smith, Sierra Zierler, Holly Moss.*

The following people volunteered their time to the MK Nature Center between April 1 and June 30th, 2015. MK Nature Center receives an average of nearly 500 volunteer hours monthly. Thank you!!

Michele Andrew  
 Ron Andrew  
 Kara Ashbaugh  
 Lori Atkins  
 Becca Bailey  
 Joel Barker  
 Kris Barrash  
 Kristin Barstad  
 Stephanie Bayless  
 Kay Beall  
 Eve Bentley  
 Steven Berg  
 Teresa Browning  
 Ann Brueck  
 Elizabeth Bruner  
 Erica Buchanan  
 Libby Burtner  
 Peter Cannamela  
 Corrine Christ  
 Bill Clark  
 Cindy Clark  
 Levi Clausen  
 Beth Corbin  
 Ray Corbin  
 Cyndi Coulter  
 Tim Curns  
 Patrice Davies  
 Seth Davis  
 Alexa DiNicole  
 Margit Donhowe  
 Derek Duvall

Lisa Eller  
 Rebecca Estraca  
 Peggy Faith  
 Bob Foss  
 Renee Frazier  
 Marlene Fritz  
 Bev Fry  
 Amanda Gailbreth  
 Genny Gerke  
 Miles Giso  
 Roxanne Goehno  
 Bob Goenhaus  
 Willow Hahn  
 Doug Hale  
 Marylee Hale  
 Anne Halford  
 Chris Hanson  
 David Harmon  
 Erika Harmon  
 Karah Harrold  
 Kevin Harrold  
 Rilee Harrold  
 Joyce Harvey-Morgan  
 Katie Heady  
 Raymond Heady  
 Katie Hebdon  
 Jennifer Hemmer  
 Camden Hopkins  
 Tricia Hosch-Hebdon  
 Brian Howard  
 Amy Hunt

Seth Husing  
 Linda Jarsky  
 Kiarra Jenkins  
 Kymber Jenkins  
 Shannon Johansen  
 Harold Karah  
 Connie Kratz  
 Sandy Kurka  
 Amanda Laib  
 Julia Lamkey  
 Jacob Landen  
 Wayne Larsen  
 Graydon LeGault  
 Mack Leith  
 Howard Little  
 Mike Mancuso  
 Ethan Mansfield  
 Hayden Marotz  
 Mary McGown  
 Tim McNeil  
 Cheryl Minckler  
 Pollyame Moberley  
 Barbie Mockenhayt  
 Steve Mockenhayt  
 Ryan Monaghan  
 Dave Monsees  
 Abby Moone  
 Owen Moroney  
 Caroline Morris  
 Holly Moss  
 Daniel Murphy

Bronwyn Myers  
 Rick Nielsen  
 Marilyn Nielson  
 Karrie Pappani  
 Megan Parker  
 Clint Penfold  
 Laura Pierce  
 Mike Preece  
 Jerry Pugh  
 Barb Recla  
 Emily Rigg  
 Leslie Roswell  
 Kimber Russell  
 Arleen Schaeffer  
 Tony Senethavilay  
 Jenna Sherrick  
 Christine Simon  
 Aubrey Smith  
 Megan Smith  
 Lorna Snowden  
 Boyd Steele  
 Julie Steele  
 George Steier  
 Jacob Stewart  
 Jonathan Stoke  
 Melissa Sunshine  
 Sandra Sweet  
 Roxie Tibbets  
 Charlie Waag  
 Becca Wagner  
 Elizabeth Wakley

Elaine Walker  
 Sarah Wilcox  
 Susan Wildwood  
 Jennifer Wooden  
 Peter Wren  
 Kurt Yanke  
 Harry Young  
 Sierra Zierler



*John Townsend from Healthwise takes a break from gardening to release Chinook Salmon in the nature center Alpine Lake.*

# Corporate Volunteer Groups Help MKNC



*U.S. Bank volunteers take a break to hear about Chinook Salmon from MKNC Superintendent, Dave Cannamela.*

April was a crazy month at the MK Nature Center! The visitor center and paths were full of kids and families enjoying spring break and our schedules were full of tasks and jobs that needed to be finished in order to prepare for our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Festival. We weren't sure how we were going to get everything done... then U.S. Bank came to our rescue! A team of 15 U.S. Bank employees joined us at the MK Nature Center on April 21<sup>st</sup> to help us prep for the event. They set up tables, raked and swept, and did an all-around excellent job of helping us get the grounds in party-ready shape for our 25<sup>th</sup> celebration. Thanks U.S. Bank! We really appreciated your hard work, great attitudes, and support.



U.S. Bank is not the only corporate group that comes in and “takes care of business.” In June, Deloitte sent over 20 volunteers for the second time. They carried rocks, painted the bike shed, drilled, raked, chopped, dug and spruced the place up! A couple of them even helped with an educational program, jumping in and helping kids with art projects. They seemed to enjoy their day out of the office! Corporations like U.S. Bank and Deloitte encourage work days in the community and we are thrilled to be the beneficiary of that service.

Healthwise employees came on the hottest day of the year to deadhead flowers in the hottest garden in the Nature Center. Luckily, they also were able to help us release Chinook Salmon into the Alpine Lake while they were here.

Broadview University sent a group over in mid-June. Seven people worked a half day on the native plant garden, clipping back unwanted grasses to reveal our beautiful native flowers. They also helped us get the aviary ready for the Peregrine Falcon (see page 9).



We thank all our volunteers (individuals and groups) as they are a big part of our successes. Thank you!



*Photos top to bottom: U.S. Bank volunteers take a break to hear about Chinook Salmon from MKNC Superintendent, Dave Cannamela. Deloitte employees looking happy on the bridge. Healthwise employees working under a shade tent in 104 degree weather. A volunteer from Broadview University happily pulling grasses in the native plant garden.*



*MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection*

# You Gave

*Jillian Moroney, MK Nature Center Volunteer Coordinator*

Idaho saw an incredible outpouring of generous donations for nonprofits throughout the state for the third annual Idaho Gives online giving day, held on May 7<sup>th</sup>. In total \$1,083,365 was raised in the form of 15,387 donations from 8,905 donors all in ONE day!

Many Idahoans came together to celebrate a cause they care about: the MK Nature Center. We were blown away by your generosity! In total you donated \$4,250 to the Nature Center through the Idaho Fish and Wildlife Foundation, money that will be well spent. Even though the Nature Center is operated by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, site enhancement, our education programs, and our ability to stay free to the public would not be possible without your support.

Thank you to everyone who gave. We love being a part of the Boise community and we love knowing that you like having us here, too!



## Volunteer Spotlight



Emily Rigg volunteered two times a week this spring. She was a 9th grader at Hillside Jr. High (she will be entering 10th grade at Boise High in the fall). Emily and her helper Katie Noud brightened our days when they came in to feed our captive critters. Emily learned to thaw mice for the birds, dangle worms in front of the salamanders, and wash the fingerprinted windows. Emily's teacher thought she would like the Nature Center because of her love for animals and he was right. A big thank you to Emily for all her hard work and infectious smiles.

*One of Emily's favorite animals is Fiona the American Kestrel. Pictured here from front to back is Fiona, Emily, and Katie. Photo by Susan Ziebarth, MKNC.*

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# A Beaver Day

Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, MKNC

Beavers are one of my favorite animals. I could talk about them all day and I sometimes do! When I need to explain what an adaptation is....my “go to” example animal is the beaver! When I need to give an example of how one animal’s actions or behaviors affect all the other animals and plants in the ecosystem, I talk about beavers. And when I need to prove that humans need other animals and how we are responsible for making sure they have adequate habitat for their sake and ours....you guessed it, beavers! Since I spend so much time talking about beavers, you would think the Nature Center would have a stellar beaver taxidermy, but we don’t. Surprisingly, we have an otter (and we don’t even get otters here!). We have been looking for a suitable beaver specimen for a couple of years now with little success. But recently we received a call bright and early from Kevin Farris, a professor at BSU, on his morning greenbelt commute. Kevin called to report a HUGE dead beaver on the greenbelt. I quickly called Jerry Pugh from Boise Parks and Recreation to see if he could bring it to us and he did! We stuck it in the freezer and then shipped it off to the taxidermist. Turns out, the beaver was pretty damaged. The beaver had died as a result of a dog attack and parts were pretty messed up. Not the best material for a taxidermy.

Later that *same* day, we received a call from the Wildlife Bureau (IDFG) that there was a live beaver in a plastic box under the carport! The injured juvenile beaver was awaiting transport to a vet. We were able to take a close look at it and give it a little food. The beaver turned out to be pretty ill and was unable to be saved. The “Dead Beaver Day” as it has now been coined, was a reminder of many things!

1. I love beavers!
2. There is a reason dogs need to be on a leash along the Boise River Greenbelt and other areas where wildlife live.
3. IDFG deals with populations of animals, not individuals.
4. People’s attitudes toward some wildlife species (wolves, beavers, ravens) ebb and flow over time. What people are willing to live with, deal with, accept, embrace, reintroduce, exterminate, hunt, love, protect, and cherish *has and will* change over time.
5. MKNC has friends that want to help us (Kevin, Jerry) and keep a look out for us!
6. The Boise River is amazing!
7. We still need a beaver taxidermy.



# Catfish Leaves the Nature Center

*Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, MKNC*

Our catfish is leaving! No, we never had a catfish at the Nature Center! I am referring to Rebecca Fritz, much better known around these parts as “Becky Jo Catfish.” She earned the nickname when we found out her middle name was Jo and she was a fish lover, the term of endearment just slipped off the tongue and stuck. So much so, that some folks around here do not even know her real name!

Rebecca Fritz started working for IDFG in 2010 in McCall as a Bioaide. Early the next year, she started volunteering at the Nature Center and was quickly brought on as an employee when we saw her skills. Since then, Rebecca has worked part time for the Nature Center doing just about every job imaginable. During busy programming times, she is my teaching partner, teaching about 60 programs annually! When not teaching, she is sweeping (the woman loves to sweep), washing, feeding, weeding, raking, picking, filling, selling, opening, closing, and always smiling!

Between seasons at the Nature Center, Rebecca has had several exciting adventures. She joined AmeriCorps in 2012 and headed to Alaska for a year. Additionally, for the past 3 summers, she was hired on with IDFG’s summer snorkeling crew in Nampa to count fish in Idaho’s rivers and streams. Each time her adventures end, she returns to the Nature Center (which can be an adventure too).

Famous for her hilarious Streamwalk Introductions, “Please stay on the path when we walk around the Nature Center....if you step off the path, you might be stepping on someone’s lunch....would you like me to step on your pizza?” and “Squirrels are like tater tots to wolves,” she keeps kids and parents smiling and laughing. I notice that when Rebecca teaches, the parents often raise their hands and try to answer questions. I can see that Rebecca so fully engages her audience, that parents forget for whom the field trip is intended. She is so enthusiastic when she teaches that the audience catches the fever.

Rebecca’s heart is with fish. Graduating from University of Idaho in 2009 with a B.S. in Environmental Biology degree, her passion for fish and fisheries radiates in everything she does. Rebecca crafted an intriguing lamprey program for Salmon and Steelhead Days in 2013 which gave rise to our “Dinosaurs of the Water” program featuring Lamprey and Sturgeon.

And now Catfish is off to graduate school at Northern Arizona University! We will miss her daily hard work, humor, passion for nature, infectious smile and friendship. She will undoubtedly succeed at anything she tries.



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# Let's Learn About Magpies

Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, MKNC



Black-billed magpie photo by Dan Dzurisin. From Flickr CC BY 2.0.

Black-billed magpies are native to Idaho and are members of the corvid family (also known as the crow family, which includes Jays, ravens and crows). I am really thrilled about magpies, but I realize that not everyone shares my zest for this bird. Magpies are opportunistic omnivores and most animals that fall into this category have a bad reputation. But being an opportunistic omnivore is a good thing if you are one of them! It means that the species can survive in many habitats and conditions. Magpies can and do eat almost anything, including pet food, other bird's eggs, rotting animals, and garbage, which might contribute to their bad reputation. However, they also eat insects, berries, nuts, and small rodents.

Lets start with looks. Magpies are unique looking birds. With their tail nearly as long as their bodies, they look almost tropical in nature and come in at 18-24 inches long! They are beautifully colored black, white and iridescent blue, green, and purple! The looks are most certainly impressive, but their sound is not! They have a loud, slightly annoying vocalizations.

Magpies build impressive tree nests with roofs! Really? Why don't more birds build nests with roofs? The nests are large conglomerations of sticks, mud, needles, vines, and bark strips.

Magpies glean insects and ticks from bison and now more commonly, cattle. They live in cities and towns, as well as pastureland, agricultural fields and native forests. Because they can live almost anywhere, and eat almost anything they are amazing and, depending on your viewpoint, annoying. If you think about it, humans are opportunistic omnivores, living almost everywhere and eating almost anything, so we shouldn't be too hard on magpies...they are just trying to make a living like everyone else. And they do a great job of it.



A magpie nest near found at Montour WMA near Horseshoe Bend. Photo by Sara Focht, MKNC.



I feel there is more to like about a magpie than to not like and I also think liking and disliking a certain animal can be learned, instead of reasoned. However, whatever your opinion of magpies is, you cannot dispute their unique and amazing qualities and the fact that they are a lot like us!

Jan Dalquist of Middleton, Idaho was cutting down a wild rose bush in her pasture and down came a huge magpie nest! Thankfully, it was not occupied! Jan donated the nest to our collection, which we so appreciate!

# Popular Native Plants

*The Idaho Native Plant Society's Pahove Chapter annual native plant sale was a success-again-! People lined up early to get the best selection. Popular flowers were the Rocky Mountain Penstemon and the firecracker Penstemon (pictured right). Susan Ziebarth (MKNC) worked tirelessly to order plants, arrange, price, coordinate volunteers, set up tables, and educate visitors about the benefits of native plants. She is a hero! Plant sale photos by Wayne Larsen.*



*A growing number of people are catching on to the beauty, ease, and value of native plants.*



“M” is  
for MK  
Nature  
Center

Hello, My name is Isaac Meyer and I am a 3rd grader at Riverside Elementary. For our class “Boise A to Z Report,” I had the letter M and was given the MK Nature Center. My favorite thing about the MK Nature Center is all the wildlife you get to see. I will be in 4th grade next fall.



*Isaac Meyer poses with his class project at the MK Nature Center (right). His diorama of the Nature Center included, paths, bridges, taxidermied animals, sturgeon, the butterfly garden and more!*

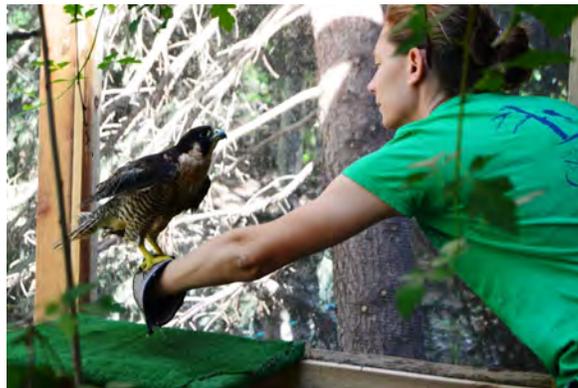


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# Peregrine Falcon

We have been anxiously awaiting the arrival of a female Peregrine Falcon since January 2015. She arrived on June 20th and we are very excited to have her. She was picked up on a road near Idaho Falls with a severe wing injury (presumably from a collision with a car). She was taken to the Teton Raptor Center in Wilson, Wyoming in August 2014. There, she received surgeries to pin her broken humerus, but despite this best attempt, she cannot fly. The Teton Raptor Center's mission is, "Helping birds of prey through education, conservation and rehabilitation." They have six education birds to, including a male Peregrine, so they could not keep this female. We were offered the bird for education and really had to consider if it was worth the time and effort, but decided that having a Peregrine to show visitors was something really special and we just could not pass it up.

While undergoing surgeries and physical therapy in Wyoming, we were busy building a new aviary and obtaining federal permits for her arrival. Dave Cannamela and Susan Ziebarth (MKNC) worked tirelessly to get the aviary ready, with help from Jerry Pugh, Jan Tietjen, Rick Nielsen, and Bob Foss. More to come about our new resident in future newsletters!



*Photos clockwise starting upper left: All bandaged after surgery in Wyoming. Volunteer Jerry Pugh working on the new aviary. Genny Gerke and Susan Ziebarth (MKNC) adjusting perch levels. Genny practicing "step up" with the new bird. The new aviary all finished.*

# We Partied Like Animals

*Jillian Moroney, Volunteer Coordinator, MKNC*



*Hokum High Flyers playing music at the party.*



*Karah Harrold, Rilee Harrold, and Rene Frazier*



*Scott and Liam Sliney practice archery.*



*Jillian Moroney, MKNC*



In April we celebrated the MK Nature Center's 25<sup>th</sup> birthday with a huge community event which involved 13 education activities and games, a native plant sale, music and beer garden, 45 **volunteers** and 14 business sponsors. The event was a complete success with well over 800 people in attendance. THANK YOU to Sue Dudley (MKNC) who was the master event planner and all of our wonderful volunteers and local sponsors, we could not have pulled this event off without your support. Photos by Wayne Larson.

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# Thank You For Supporting What We Do!

These individuals and businesses supported the MK Nature Center between January 1 and March 31, 2015. Donations come in the form of cash or in-kind materials.

Answer Charter School  
 Kristin Barstad  
 Carla Beck  
 Elyse Begnoche  
 Tim & Lee Ann Berry  
 Biomark Inc.  
 Michael Bixby  
 Blue Sky Bagels  
 Klaus Brown  
 Ericka Buchanan  
 Clarice Buckmaster  
 Dallas Burkhalter  
 David R. Butzier  
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 Luis Castaneda  
 Chique Lixo  
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 Catherine Fischer  
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 Amanda Gaibreath  
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 Steve Hannula  
 Sara Hergerle  
 Carleen Herring  
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 Jody Hull  
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 Beth Mullenbach  
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 Don Newberry  
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 Thomas Stuart  
 Brent Studer  
 Stephanie VanDiest  
 Johnna Vejar  
 Laurel Wagner  
 Rebecca Wagner  
 Whole Foods



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A Mule deer fawn just a few days old.  
Photo by Christen Sapnas, MKNC

To Donate to the MK Nature Center Friend's Group, fill out the form below, enclose your check, and mail to MK Nature Center, PO Box 25, Boise, ID 83707.

## F R I E N D S   O F   T H E M O R R I S O N   K N U D S E N   N A T U R E   C E N T E R

Individual Memberships:	
<b>\$10</b>	Mayfly
<b>\$25</b>	Sagebrush
<b>\$50</b>	Gopher Snake
Family Memberships:	
<b>\$100</b>	Mink
<b>\$250</b>	Mule Deer
<b>\$500</b>	Great Blue Heron
<b>\$1,000</b>	Chinook Salmon
<b>\$10,000</b>	White Sturgeon

Name(s)		
Address		
City	State	Zip
E-mail Address		
Phone Number		

**Members receive\*:**

- “The Stream” E-newsletter
- Invitations to Nature Center events
- Invitations to “Friends Group Days”
- On-site birthday party options
- Free souvenir penny
- **Sagebrush Level and above:**  
15% discount at MKNC gift shop

*\* Fees/restrictions may apply.*



Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- New Membership (\$ \_\_\_\_\_)
- Renewal Membership (\$ \_\_\_\_\_)
- Check here to receive a donation receipt.

**Make checks payable to MK Nature Center**



[fishandgame.idaho.gov/MKNC](http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/MKNC)

Questions? Sue Dudley 208.287.2900 [sue.dudley@idfg.idaho.gov](mailto:sue.dudley@idfg.idaho.gov) or  
Dave Cannamela 208.287.2902 [david.cannamela@idfg.idaho.gov](mailto:david.cannamela@idfg.idaho.gov)