

The Friends of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge

The latest updates | February, 2019



Annual Member Meeting & Brunch

Saturday, January 26th, 2019



2019 may have started off slow with the government shutdown, but the members, volunteers, and supporters of the Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge made time on Saturday, January 26th to meet, enjoy brunch, reflect on 2018, and talk about the year ahead. Ilani Casino provided an excellent location for our brunch meeting, with a delicious array of food and a lovely atmosphere.

Gathered in the Salish Room at Ilani, Friends enjoyed a slideshow featuring photo contest winners and photos of our Refuge, volunteers, and special events while they ate. The meeting portion of the day included the opportunity for a

membership vote to approve new board members Anna Wilde and Nick Legg, approve the addition of Kara Caselas and Drew Smith-Sanhov to the board from earlier in the year, and to renew of the terms of Susan Setterberg and Sam Robinson.

After a short program, attendees were treated to a special presentation of the First Annual **Spirit of the Wild Award**. The inaugural award was given to the City of Ridgefield for their long term partnership and outstanding support of the Friends and the Refuge over the years. The projects, programming, and events that the City has supported make up a very long list. A few examples include, the City providing ongoing counseling and support in the structural development of our organization, serving as a conduit between our smaller community of organizations and City-based organizations (First Saturdays, Chamber of Commerce, Arts Association, Main Street), always inviting and welcoming the Friends into their events, and serving as an outstanding partner in our BirdFest and Bluegrass festival (particularly over the last few years - largely taking over the in-town events and helping to create a wonderful festival for all ages and interests. Lee Knottnerus, the Deputy City Manager, and Sandra Day, City Council Member, attend every board meeting and are advisors to the organization. Lee also sits on the BirdFest committee and the Community Nature Center committee, and Sandra has adopted part of the I-5 highway near the Ridgefield exit in the name of the Friends! As if to solidify it all, our founding Friends members, Sydney Reisbick, Allene Wodage, Jim Maul, Amy Montoya, and David Dines are recognized at Overlook Park in the Wings of the World statue by Sharon Agnor. The City's support of the Friends and the Refuge is unparalleled, and we are very grateful for their partnership.



We thank all our members and volunteers who were able to attend on Saturday. We look forward to a great year ahead!

New Membership Brochure! And New Member Levels!



The Friends are getting a makeover, and it's starting with our brochures and membership levels! Check out our new brochure, and find them soon in a location near you! We have upgraded the first two membership levels to \$30.00 and \$60.00 respectively, and the \$60.00 level gets you your annual pass! Bonus! This year, Annual Refuge Passes will be good for 18 months due to planned construction closures throughout the year. More information will be included with your pass.

Ridgefield Refuge Complex News & Events River 'S' Auto Tour Closure

The River 'S' Auto Tour will be closed on Thursday, February 7th, for road grading.



The Carty Unit at 28908 NW Main Ave will remain open for hiking, walking, photography, birding and more, stop on by!

Please contact the Refuge Office at (360) 887-4106 during regular business hours (M-F, 7:30 AM - 3:30 PM) for more information.

Thank you for visiting the Refuge and supporting conservation. If you have any questions regarding activities and regulations on the Refuge, call the office Monday through Friday 7:30 am to 3:30 pm at 360-887-4106.

From the Contact Station Shutdown! And Christmas Bird Count on the Refuge



The contact station volunteers missed seeing all the Refuge visitors during the shutdown, since they were unable to volunteer during that time. Thank you for treating the Refuge so well in our absence.

Usually it is bad weather that causes anxiety over the ability to complete the Christmas Bird Count, but this year was a whole different story with the government shutdown commencing the day before our count. That's 5000+ acres filled with birds we...Keep Reading...

Cathlapotle Plankhouse Updates & Events

Save the Date!



The Cathlapotle Plankhouse opens for the season on May 4th and 5th, 2019!

Stay tuned for more details on upcoming Second Sunday Series events, every second Sunday of the month through October.



Preserve America is a national initiative in cooperation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation; the U.S. Departments of Defense, Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, Housing and Urban Development, Transportation, and Education; the National Endowment for the Humanities; the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities; and the President's Council on

Environmental Quality.

Habitat Restoration Updates & Events

Setbacks and New Starts

We are rescheduling events post-shutdown and we will have our first 2019 volunteer work party at Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge on February 6th (meet at Hunt Gate parking lot)! A new schedule of upcoming volunteer opportunities coming soon!

Now you can sign up to volunteer on our website!
[Check it out by clicking here!](#)

General Habitat Questions? Contact [Keith Rutz](#) or [contact us](#) for more information.



Gerald Williams

June 30, 1945 ~ January 3, 2019

The Board and Staff of the Friends of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge regret to inform you all that past Board Member Gerald (Gerry) Williams passed away on January 3rd of this year.

Gerry applied to be a board member of the Friends of Ridgefield National



Wildlife Refuge in the summer of 2013. Gerry didn't volunteer his time lightly, as he noted in the letter of interest he submitted when he applied, having only been on one other board before choosing to join us. He loved taking photos at the Refuge and attending the many presentations and events that we held, both before and after his time on the board.

Many of us think fondly of Gerry as we process the news. He was a major part in the hiring committee for many Friends employees, he helped with events like BirdFest & Bluegrass by tabling our information booth, and he always had a new incredible photo to share with us at board meetings and when we ran into him on the Refuge.

Gerry was a quiet man when it came to our work, but that didn't hide his vast knowledge of our Refuge and the history of our area. With a background as the National/Chief Historian and the Regional Sociologist for the Forest Service in the Portland area, and Research Director for Eugene Parks and Recreation (to name just a few of the many titles he held), he spent much of his life focused on the history, assessment, and implementation of public land management.

The board would like to express our deepest sorrow for Gerry's departure and convey our condolence to his family. The board would also like to express our sincere appreciation for Gerry's tremendous and valuable contribution to the Friends over the years. Gerry will be long remembered by his fellow directors, the staff, and volunteers of the Refuge.

<https://cascadiacremation.com/tribute/details/1847/Gerald-Williams/obituary.html>

Species Spotlight

American Mink

Neovison vison



One of the things I hear the volunteers say they get asked the most (well, besides if a Nutria was a beaver or muskrat) is the difference between a mink and a weasel. American Mink, which have been seen by a lucky few on our Refuge, have soft, thick, waterproof fur that is dark brown to almost black- with white patches on their neck and... [Keep Reading...](#)

Seeking Business Alliance Members And a New Brochure!

As a member of the Friends of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge Business Alliance, you invest in one of our urban metropolitan area's most unique and diverse natural and cultural resources. [Click here to find out more!](#)

Calling All Volunteers!

Volunteer Opportunities:

Habitat Restoration

Volunteers get to see the most beautiful places on the Refuge while helping to ensure that native wildlife have food and shelter. Summer work is focused on maintaining winter plantings and controlling invasive plants that threaten to take

over habitat. Crews meet on most Wednesday

and Saturday mornings. Contact Keith Rutz at Keith_rutz@fws.gov or 360-887-3883 x 14.

Refuge and Trail Greeters

Over 120,000 visitors flock to the Refuge annually

to enjoy nature through participation in wildlife observation, photography, environmental education, cultural interpretation, hunting, and fishing.

Volunteers help to make their experiences meaningful. Share your enthusiasm for nature and make the Refuge a welcoming place for people walking our trails, stopping at the Visitor Contact Station and driving the Auto Tour. Contact Josie Finley at josie_finley@fws.gov or 360-887-4106 x 130.

Cathlapotle Plankhouse

The Cathlapotle Plankhouse draws thousands of visitors to the Refuge each year. Help share the legacy of the Indigenous people who have tended to this land since time immemorial as a Plankhouse Docent or Cultural Educator. Field trips take place during the weekdays. Docents staff the house on weekends from April - September. Contact Juliet McGraw at juliet_mcgraw@fws.gov 360-887-4106 x 123.

Education

Help us inspire the next generation. Kids of all ages need hands-on learning and inspiration in the great outdoors as part of a well-rounded education. We need your help to make their visit to the Refuge fun and memorable. Field trips take place during the weekdays starting in April. Contact Josie Finley at josie_finley@fws.gov or 360-887-4106 x 130.

Now you can sign up to volunteer easily on our website!

[Check it out by clicking here!](#)

Birding Enthusiasts



Check out what species are being seen on the Refuge [here](#).

[Donate](#)

Ridgefield First Saturday:

Tailgate Party & Chilli Cookoff

February 2, 2019



Bundle up the kids, round up your prized pigskin, throw on your favorite team colors, and truck on down to historic downtown Ridgefield for a tailgate party extravaganza!

Enjoy loads of activities and festive foods that are sure to warm your body and

spirit.

[Full Schedule Here](#)

Benefits of Membership



Discounts at local businesses for new and renewing members! Would you like to enjoy a cup of coffee from Ridgefield's Seasons after a morning hike on the Refuge? Lunch at Vinnie's Pizza in-between the River 'S' and Carty Units? Dinner and drinks at the Historic Sportsman's Restaurant and Lounge after a busy day of wildlife viewing (5% off a meal with member card!)? Or maybe you would like to get a discount on some supplies at Shorty's or Backyard Bird Shop? How about a night out at Ilani? Find out more, become a Friend, or renew your membership today and receive a member card with great discounts at these wonderful local businesses! Feel free to [contact us](#) for any questions or inquiries.

The Friends of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge promote the enjoyment, understanding, and protection of native and endangered birds, other wildlife, and their habitats. We focus on our local community and the Pacific Northwest. Visit us on the web at www.ridgefieldfriends.org

Support the Friends While You Shop



When you link your Fred Meyer Rewards Card to the Friends, you help us earn donations from Fred Meyer Community Rewards. It doesn't change your regular personal shopping and fuel rewards, but it does make a meaningful contribution to our work on the Refuge. It's easy to sign up. [Just click here.](#) You can search for us by our name, Friends of Ridgefield NWR, or by our non-profit number, PK822.

Then, every time you shop and use your Rewards Card, you are helping earn a donation to support the Friends and Ridgefield NWR. If you do not have a Rewards Card, ask at the Customer Service desk of any FM store.



Log on to smile.amazon.com and shop as you usually would - .5% of your purchase will be donated directly to the Friends! Use the link with your existing user name and password. When prompted to select a charity, choose the Friends of Ridgefield Wildlife Refuge.



Giving Assistant makes it easy to donate to Friends of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge! Simply shop online, earn cash back, and donate as much as 30% of your purchase price - Giving Assistant facilitates the whole process. Now, you can help change the world for free while saving money at over 3,000 popular online retailers like Home Depot, ULTA, and Macy's! [Start HERE!](#) Thanks for being an EcoShopper and helping the Refuge!

Want regular updates on Refuge events and happenings? Follow the Friends on your favorite social media by clicking the logos below to stay connected even when you are off the Refuge.



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