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The Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge

The latest updates | February, 2021

Friends Annual Meeting, Spirit of the Wild Award Winner - Seasons Coffee & The Old Liberty Theater!



Dear Friends,

We love all our members and are ever grateful for your support. Some years ago, we also realized that there was a little gap in our gratitude, and so we initiated a Spirit of the Wild award to bring a little more attention to those loyal loyal citizens who are a constant in our universe of stars. These are individuals or even groups who work quietly on behalf of the refuge, year after year. They provide the bursts of energy and the little graces that keep us moving forward. They never take their eyes off the ball; they never ever let us down in supporting the life force of this amazing urban refuge.

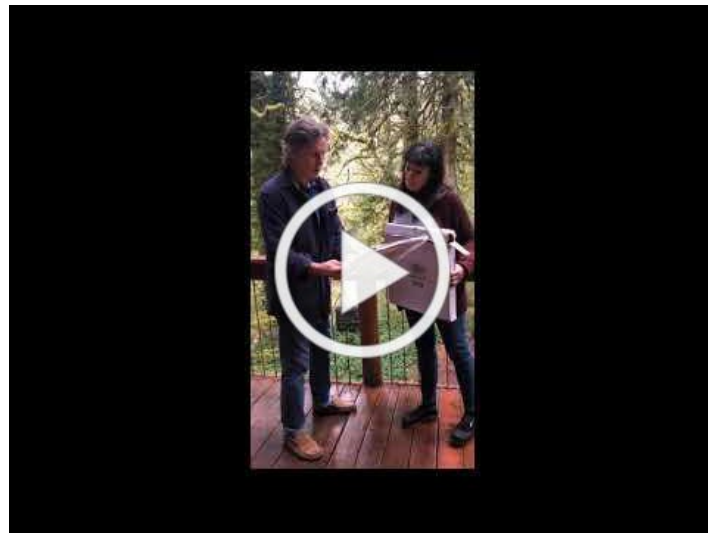
For our third year, we heartily recognize **Don and Earleen Griswold, owners of Seasons Coffee and Tea, and the Old Liberty Theater**. The Griswolds have been supporters of the refuge and the Friends for as long as anyone can remember. Friends events at the Old Liberty Theater are heavily discounted so we can conduct meetings, events, BirdFest movie screenings, and showcase speakers or entertainers. They sell our fundraising items at no cost to us.

They ask questions to better inform townies or passing travelers about Refuge minutia, events and closures. Basically, they are the Town Criers who spread our posts and messages on social media and lend their voices to promote Southwest Washington's most fascinating wildlife and ancient cultural landscape. The Griswolds daily show their love and commitment for their community. We want to recognize them with a little love of our own...by presenting the Griswolds with this year's Spirit of the Wild Award.

-Tanna Engdahl and the Friends of Ridgefield NWR Board of Directors

[Contact the board](#)

Below, see Don & Earleen Griswold as they receive the award, on Don's birthday, at their Air BnB, the day of our meeting!



From the Refuge Recreating Safely at Your Local Refuges

I assume that readers may be wondering what the newest [Executive Order](#) about mask-wearing on public lands might mean for Ridgefield and other National Wildlife Refuges. As I write this article, I have not yet heard any specific directions for our local sites. However, as I mentally scan our facilities, staff, and visitors, and all the actions we have taken over the last year, I am assured that we are already set up for such safety. As you know, our office is very small and some staff, like me, have set up offices in our homes. Those working on-site are spread out and wear masks both inside, and outside when they are around the public and other staff.



Our care for each other as a Refuge family does not allow us to take any chances and there have been no issues with our ability to work safely and efficiently. What this has changed, to my great sadness, is our ability to interact with the public like we used to do. The office remains closed with only calls being taken by a smaller staff presence on-site. Our home offices are filled with virtual meetings rather than sitting around a table, and the ability to walk the trail and chat with you, is for many of us, not so easy. However, when we do get out, for work or pleasure, we are finding it just as fun to experience nature in a mask as it was without one. I wear a mask not just to protect myself and my family, but also to protect yours. We will continue to be safe as we work and interact in public areas and strive to find creative ways to interact with you as we move ahead on planning facilities and programming we can all enjoy in 2021 and beyond.

Pictures in order:

1. Deputy Project Leader Eric Anderson at the Carty Unit Refuge Office

2. Park Ranger Mesha Wood and I used to share office space regularly to work on public programming. Now if we want to get together off-screen, we must find a local trail. Hiking in masks and keeping distance isn't quite the same. Lunch breaks look different as we spread out. There is a lot of "HEY - when you get up here look at this cool insect!" And scrambling off-trail when another hiker passes by, certainly goes against our usual hiking ethic, but feels like a healthy community when others pass with appreciative smiles through their own masks. Getting out in a safe way makes things feel a little more normal, fills us with hope and ideas, and shows my daughter that we can be resilient in the most uncertain of times.

3. When Project Leader Juliette Fernandez has to leave her dog at home for a walk on the Refuge, she still gets to hike with his spirit for adventure, and fashion sense.



-Josie Finley, Ridgefield Refuge Visitor Services Manager



Ridgefield Refuge Complex News & Events Refuge Access Update During Pandemic

CARTY UNIT: (FROM MAIN AVE)

The Carty Unit trails are open- BUT public use facilities and access to those facilities (including the Cathlapotle Plankhouse and the Refuge Office) are NOT available to the public. The end of the Oaks to Wetland will be posted as a one-way loop. Please follow all posted signs. The trail will be closed every Thurs. at the old oak. Access from the Port Entrance is closed for the season.

RIVER 'S' UNIT & AUTO TOUR ROUTE:

The Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge Auto Tour Route on the River 'S' Unit is open to vehicle traffic ONLY. The Kiwa Trail is closed for the season.

Current gate times (as of 2/1/2021): 7:30 AM - 5:30 PM.

The Refuge is fee-free at this time.

Note that gates close automatically. Vehicles must exit before gate closes and there is no entry before or after hours. Please expect increased traffic and long waiting times to navigate around the tour and plan accordingly. By following these temporary adjustments to access you ensure the safety and health of yourself, other visitors, the Ridgefield community and our staff. We look forward to continuing to serve you by providing safe and healthy wildlife-dependent recreation into the future.

Don't forget to continue to check the [Refuge2020.info website](http://Refuge2020.info) for project updates, like the recent Prescribed Fire, the Steigerwald Lake reconnection project, Carty Unit Oaks-to-Wetlands Trail developments, and more!

To feel more connected to nature and the Refuge while staying home, stay tuned to the Friends Social Media streams on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram - we are working to share activities, videos of nature on and off the Refuge, and more. Social links can be found at the bottom.

2021 Refuge Photo Contest Calendars and other merch!

If you haven't gotten a 2021 calendar yet, there is still time!

\$18.00 - [Buy online HERE](#)

8.5x11 size, with bonus contest photos, highlights important



Refuge dates and more!
XL size available



Plus, ***check out our other items***, with more being added all the time! We have mugs that change colors, tote bags, sweatshirts, and more! Get your Valentine (or yourself!) a gift that will remind them of nature's beauty and support a wonderful cause!

Let us know if there is something you'd like to see!

If there isn't something you like, you can always donate, or buy a membership to the Friends in someone's name - an annual gift program that supports wildlife, habitat, volunteers, education, and more.

From the Contact Station

Water Everywhere and Counting Birds for Christmas



January rains have topped up most of the lakes and ponds around the auto tour. Long Lake is now long and wide lake. Many of the dabbling ducks have moved off to shallower water on other parts of the refuge and the swans, which are quite abundant, have moved to the far edges to find the sweet spot where they can reach the food they like best. So far, I have seen only one morning cold enough to put a bit of ice glaze on the water. Although there is a hint of possible snowflakes for the last week in January as I write this, it does not look like we will have temperatures to

freeze the pond water. There is nothing like seeing a Bald Eagle on the ice ... **Keep Reading...**

-Susan Setterberg, Contact Station Volunteer
Photos by Susan Setterberg

Cathlapotle Plankhouse Updates & Events

2021 Plankhouse Plans

taxatam All,
We are pleased to announce that the Cathlapotle Plankhouse floor will be refurbished in the coming year.

Longtime friend of the Plankhouse, David Rogers of Logs and Timber, LLC, will undertake the renovations in the coming months. In 2019, David and I traveled to Bay Center, Wa, and met with the Chinook Indian Nation's (CIN) Tribal Council to discuss needed repairs to the House floor. David worked closely with the CIN to ensure that project design would not greatly impact the visual presence of the Plankhouse.



In personal gratitude, I wish to recognize Eric Anderson, Deputy Project Leader USFWS RNWRC. Eric

has been an invaluable resource over the years, as I have regularly peppered him with questions regarding the history and care of the House.

We are grateful to the Community Foundation for Southwest Washington for hosting a fund for the Cathlapotle Plankhouse. This fund is the primary financial resource for the maintenance and care of the Plankhouse. Without it, funding a project of this magnitude would be quite challenging.

I look forward to reporting out the work as it occurs. Watch this space for flooring updates!

atqui,

-Juliet McGraw, Friends of RNWR Community & Cultural Education Director



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. [RNWR Page here.](#)

Habitat Restoration Updates & Events

January 2021 Habitat Recap

January has been an interesting month for our Habitat Restoration Program. With heavy rains and mild temperatures, willow planting at Turtle Lake has been put on hold due to high water levels and poor dike-road conditions.

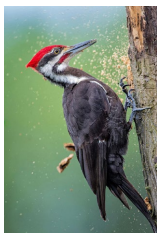


Our staff has been able to get out to the site periodically to plant at low tide, but we are waiting for water levels to become slightly more reliable before we bring out volunteers to help with planting. With the Turtle Lake Project slowed to a halt, our Habitat Program has been putting effort into maintaining plants in the High Tunnel. We are hoping that the rains let up soon, so that we can get out into the field and officially begin our planting season!

-Emily Lane, Friends of RNWR Habitat Restoration Technician

Birding Enthusiasts

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



Ridgefield First Saturdays - Move, Play, Eat! January 4, 2021 - February 28, 2021

For many households, the COVID-19 pandemic has meant an increased amount of time at home and an endless list of canceled events and activities. To start out 2021 on the right foot, the City of Ridgefield is encouraging you to set aside time each week to Move, Play, and Eat with your household using our activity, game, and recipe suggestions!

Each week they will share a new idea for an activity, game, and recipe. These will be posted on their Move, Play, Eat webpage (coming soon!) and shared on social media. On Saturday, February 6th they will have take home activity bags, a scavenger hunt, and live activities.



[Check back here for updated 2021 event info](#)

Species Spotlight

White-faced Ibis

Plegadis chihi



One of the great things about our Refuge is not only that there are so many different types of birds here, but also that because there is so much Refuge that we don't allow people to visit, there are a ton of those species who live here, but are only seen rarely. The shy White-faced Ibis is one of those birds.

Since this species is so dependent on wetlands and marshes for both feeding and nesting, changes to water systems such as pollution and man-made draining of water habitats

had devastating ... [Keep Reading...](#)

-Samantha Zeiner, Friends of RNWR Administrative Coordinator

Photo by Debbie Meader

Become a Business Alliance Member!

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](#)



Board Seeking New Members Or, Join a Committee

The Friends of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge is a non-profit dedicated to promoting educational and cultural programs of the Ridgefield NWR, and protecting and enhancing its wildlife habitat. We are currently seeking candidates to serve on our board of directors. We are recruiting candidates with diverse backgrounds and skills for several open board positions, in addition to candidates interested in serving on a committee (board membership not required).

Find out more, and [contact us here](#)

Friends Board Meetings

Join the Friends of Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge Board for their monthly meeting. Meetings start at 5pm every second Monday of the month and will be **on Zoom until further notice**, [contact us](#) to join in!

February 8th, March 8th, April 12th, May 10th, June 14th, July 12th, August 9th, September 13th, October 18th (moved for Indigenous Peoples Day), November 8th, December 13th



Support 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!

Would you like to enjoy a cup of coffee from Ridgefield's Seasons Coffee 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.

Benefits of Membership



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.

Sponsors

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Granting Organizations & Partners:



Header Photo Credit: Raul Moreno, 2017, 2nd Place, Refuge Photo Contest

FRIENDS OF RIDGEFIELD NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE



[Contact Us](#) | [Website](#)

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.

