



# the Grebe

Volume 3, Issue 2

Spring 2008

Mission of The Friends  
of Deer Flat:

*The purpose of this group is to promote, protect, and provide resources to preserve and enhance Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge for the enjoyment of present and future generations.*

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## Volunteers Needed to Help Stop Invasive Weeds!

**DID YOU KNOW...**According to FWS estimates for 2007, invasive plant species cover 2.3 million acres of refuge lands -- that's more than the area of Delaware and Rhode Island combined!

As any home gardener knows all too well, invasive plants can quickly overwhelm an area if left unchecked. Compound that problem by millions of acres, and you get some idea of the challenge facing the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service—the agency responsible for protecting habitat across the 97-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System.



Squarrose Knapweed

Luckily there is help: **volunteers**.

In collaboration with the Center for Invasive Plant Management, the National Wildlife Refuge System has designed an online training course for volunteers and others interested in joining the army to help fight invasive plant species - one of the single greatest threats to the Refuge System .

The Refuge System has worked aggressively to combat invasive species, targeting more than 280,000 acres of refuge lands. Yet an estimated 1.72 million acres remain untreated. That's where the training and volunteers come in.

“We want volunteers to be able to engage their communities on the issue of invasives,” said Jenny Ericson, national invasives volunteer coordinator for the Refuge System. “The online training provides practical tools on how to prevent and control invasive plants. Volunteers can be our greatest advocates in the fight against this major nationwide threat to wildlife and habitat.”

The new invasive species Web site, [www.fws.gov/invasives/volunteersTrainingModule](http://www.fws.gov/invasives/volunteersTrainingModule), includes video, text and photos that provide background on the Refuge System and information about the science and management of invasive plants. The site also includes links to government and private Web sites dealing with the issue.

## President's Corner

Here it is, our third year as a Friends group - how wonderful and exciting! We started out with a bang weather-wise - the "big snow" in January. It was so windy and the roads so treacherous, the first meeting of the year was postponed until February. February brought us a very long, productive evening discussing and voting on the Bylaw changes. The meeting also brought us two well done power point presentations. We have extremely talented and committed members who share their love for the Refuge in many ways; the power points were definitely fine examples. Now that we have the Bylaws out of the way, we are ready to move forward.

We received great results from the membership survey that was sent out the end of December 2007. The Board has heard you and will be implementing your suggestions and comments. I hope you'll be pleasantly surprised, enticed, and enthusiastic about the calendar of projects, events, and get-togethers we've planned this year.

Here's to the New Year, 2008! Another year to "promote, protect, and provide resources to preserve and enhance the Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge as a treasure for the enjoyment of present and future generations".

Lyndell Jackson, President

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### Membership News

by Lee McGlinsky

As we look forward to a new and interesting Friends year I'd like to welcome new members, *Dep and Case Houson*. I'd also like to thank *Elaine* and *Steve Johnson* for their very generous donation to Friends. Another donation was *Jim Holcomb's* money for bird seed. I'd like to encourage everyone to add a donation of money or bird seed to the Friends if they can.

**...I'd like to  
welcome new  
members, Dep  
and Case  
Houson...**

Please get your 2008 dues in to Friends:

Individual \$15.00

Senior \$10.00

Student \$10.00

Family \$25.00

We have some interesting programs and projects coming up. Bring a friend to the next general meeting.

At the February general meeting the Friends honored Brian Cooper for all the work and the materials he supplied in building our Photo Blind. Besides naming the blind, "The Coop" in Brian's honor, the Friends also presented him with a certificate of appreciation and an honorary family membership to the Friends for 2008. Helen Cooper's parents, Dep and Case Houson, also attended the meeting and joined the Friends of Deer Flat.

*Mark your calendar...*

## Upcoming Events

### **Lecture Series**

Tuesday, March 11th, 7 p.m.- **Gardening with Color**

### **Executive Board Meeting**

Wednesday, March 12th, 2:00 p.m.

### **Weed Warriors**

Saturday, March 15th, 9:00 to Noon at the Visitor Center

### **General Member Meeting**

Tuesday, April 1, 7:00 p.m. **Candidate Forum - County Commissioner and Prosecuting Attorney**

### **Lecture Series**

Tuesday, April 8th, 7 p.m. - **Reptiles of the Northwest and beyond**

### **Executive Board Meeting**

Wednesday, April 9th, 2:00 p.m.

### **Earth Day, Work Day & Weed Warriors**

Saturday, April 19th, 9:00 to Noon at the Visitor Center

### **Friends Event**

Saturday, May 10th, **International Migratory Bird Day**

### **Lecture Series**

Tuesday, May 13th, 7:00 p.m. - **Mule Deer Neighbors**

### **Weed Warriors**

Saturday, May 17th, 9:00 to Noon at the Visitor Center

### **Earth Day Work Day**, April 19 - 9 AM to Noon

Celebrate Earth Day by cleaning up and improving wildlife habitat at the refuge. After a 9 AM orientation at the refuge Visitor Center, we will disperse around the refuge to pick up litter and remove noxious weeds. Please register in advance (208-467-9278 or deerflat@fws.gov) to be assigned to a project.

### **Snake River Islands Goose Nesting Surveys**

**What:** Boat to the survey islands and walk up and down them to search for goose nests. In *April* we count nesting geese. In *May* (or late April), we revisit the April nests and evaluate whether they successfully fledged goslings.

**Who:** You!?! Boat space limits the number of people who can participate, so please get back to me ASAP to insure a spot.

**When: First round:** Tuesday-Saturday, April 1-5

**Second round:** Tuesday-Wednesday, April 29-30 & Friday-Saturday, May 2-3. We meet at 7:30 AM at the refuge shop at Lake Lowell, and then travel together to the river. We return to the refuge shop usually between 2 and 4 each afternoon (but it might be a little earlier or a little later). Each volunteer will probably be scheduled a maximum of one time for the early April surveys and one time for the late April/May surveys, unless we don't have enough volunteers who would like to participate.

Please call or e-mail Susan Kain (467-9278 or Susan\_Kain@fws.gov) and let her know on which days you *can* participate by March 21st.

*The Grebe is published quarterly for the members of the Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge. If you have photos, stories, or other information for the Grebe, please email it to: idahobirder@hotmail.com or call 850-5885*

## **Year of Accomplishments**

*By Geoffrey L. Haskett*

*Chief, National Wildlife Refuge System*

In 2007, the bald eagle soared off the federal endangered species list. It was a year of other soaring accomplishments, as well. The National Wildlife Refuge System welcomed more than 37 million people. Those visitors made a measurable economic impact. Recreational use of wildlife refuges generated more than \$1.7 billion in economic return. That's extraordinary for a federal agency whose mission is to conserve wildlife habitat and the creatures that depend on it.

### **Land Acquisition**

Although land acquisition funding was limited, we expanded the Refuge System by about 102,000 acres. We established Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuge, just 16 miles northwest of Denver, on what had been a former defense site. Eventually, the refuge will have walking trails, some hunting and a visitor contact station to give people in Denver a place of solitude and personal rejuvenation just a step from the hubbub of a major city.

### **Our Built Assets**

The Refuge System has more than 47,000 "built" assets – from office space and visitor centers to wildlife observation towers and production facilities for fish hatcheries. All together, they are valued at more than \$21 billion. Unfortunately, our maintenance backlog increased from \$1.5 billion to \$2.5 billion.

### **Comprehensive Conservation Plans**

We have completed Comprehensive Conservation Plans for 259 national wildlife refuges, outlining our long-term vision for what they will look like and how they will serve both wildlife and the American taxpayer. Another 168 CCPs are in the draft or comment stage. We will complete the remaining 127 CCPs by 2012, meeting the congressional deadline.

### **Fighting Invasives**

One of the greatest threats to national wildlife refuges is invasive nonnative species. We've made some headway in fighting the problem. For example, 61 refuges have received grants to engage volunteers in the mapping, treating and restoration of refuge lands. Preliminary statistics from 46 refuges show that more than 1,000 volunteers have already put in more than 10,200 hours. The fight will be a long one, but it's one we have to win.

### **Birding Initiative**

A group of 14 renowned professionals joined together as the Birding Team, a driving force behind the Birding Initiative that will help birding enthusiasts better appreciate the importance of national wildlife refuges. The dedication and enthusiasm of the Birding Team is impressive. In 2008, we hope to complete a cooperative agreement with Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology.

All credit for last year's accomplishments rest with Refuge System employees. They are the most dedicated and enthusiastic people I've ever met.

## *Deer Flat Friends - In Memoriam*

It is with great regret that we must acknowledge the passing of a good Friend:

You may have read about *Rachel Schild's* passing away on the front page of Monday's Idaho Press Tribune.. Besides all Rachel's community work she was also a member of the Friends. She was living in a retirement home and wasn't able to attend meetings but we appreciated her financial support and interest in what the Friends were doing these past three years.

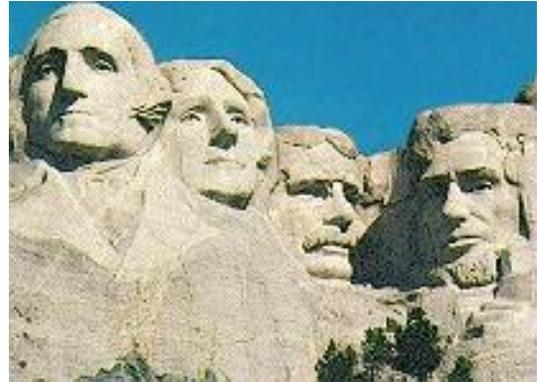
## Classified Ad

### NEEDED: One Vice President!!!

- Flexible hours
- Great benefits
- No experience necessary
- Friendly, cooperative work environment
- Energy and ideas a plus
- Opportunity for advancement

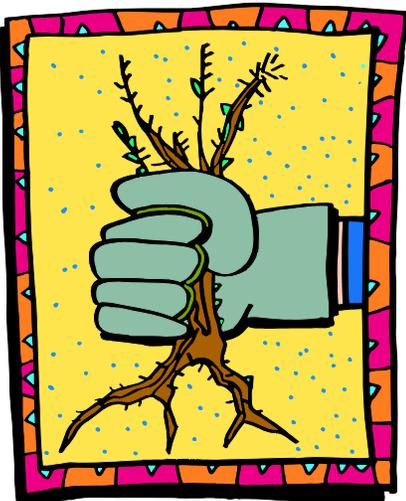
#### Job duties:

- Attend monthly board meetings
- Assist as needed
- Assume role of president in 2009



To apply or for more information, contact:  
Lyndell Jackson at 459-4740

## *Weed Warriors*



**What are Weed Warriors:** A person who has declared war on weeds. Help remove invasive and noxious weeds to improve wildlife habitat at the refuge. Bring gloves and water and wear clothes you don't mind getting dirty.

**When:** 9-11 AM on the 3rd Saturday of every month between March and October.

**Begins again on March 15.**

**Where:** Meet at the Visitor Center. Weed removal occurs all around Lake Lowell. There may be special visits to the Snake River Islands in the summer

## Travis Vance, BSU Publicity Intern

Lyndell Jackson, new President of Friends of DFWR, put forth the excellent suggestion of hiring a BSU student for an internship for Friends of DFWR to take charge of extensive and aggressive publicity for the Refuge. Lyndell received a call from Mary Francis, BSU, stating that Travis Vance, a senior in Communications and Journalism, from Bend, Oregon, was interested. Lyndell and Dixie Blome, who will be in charge of overseeing this venture, interviewed Travis on Feb. 8th and were impressed with his qualifications and enthusiasm. Travis has since met the Board members during their Feb. 13th meeting. Following is a brief bio of Travis:

*I was born in 1984*, in a small, rural town in Northern California. My parents were strongly influenced by their love of nature; both worked for the Forest Service so I guess you could say I had an itch for the wild instilled in me at a very young age. My family moved to Central Oregon when I was about three years old and our home was located adjacent a canal that served as my research station during the summer months. I spent countless hours sifting through the sand for gold, diving to the bottom of the canal for golf balls from a nearby golf course and making river boards out of two by fours and a little ingenuity.

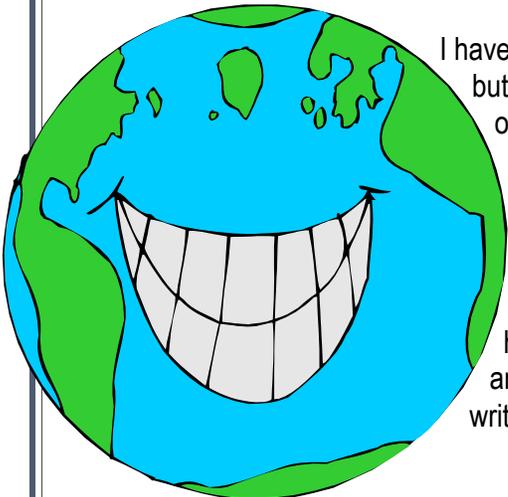
I love sports and I soon became enthralled in basketball, football, baseball, and roller hockey. The fast pace and intense competitive nature of these sports has served me well. I played football in Bend during my high school years and received a scholarship to play football at Pima Community College in Tucson. I stayed in Tucson for only one year; I missed the Northwest too much. So I returned home to continue my education.

I have several friends that I grew up with who attend Boise State University so in 2004, I moved to Idaho. I was impressed with the college and people I came in contact with and also with the magnificent scenery and the general vibe of the city. So I enrolled in school the next semester and dedicated myself to my schooling though I found time for a wide array of intramural sports activities.

In the spring of 2006, I was injured during an intramural basketball game. While lying in bed recovering, I had the idea to leave Boise for the last frontier – Alaska. So by the following summer, I was living on the Kenai Peninsula in southern Alaska and working with salmon. The salmon population in Alaska is immense and this led me to become active in the debate over the current salmon population in Idaho and the importance of removing the four crucial dams that stop the smolts from reaching the ocean. Alaska also served as the stepping stone for my travel ambitions; I am currently making a trip to Ecuador a reality.

I have always been curious about environmental issues that affect local areas but also on the grander scale with our daily footprints – especially as citizens of the United States. This internship opportunity finally allows me the freedom to pursue recognition, conservation, relationships and changes that will enable the Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge to flourish in its natural habitat.

My interests, curiosities, and hobbies include: mountain biking the foothills, all types of skiing (especially Mt. Bachelor), golfing, playing basketball and football, fly fishing, reading, enjoying quality beer, camping, running, writing, learning, and now...BIRD WATCHING!



## Friends as Volunteers

Friends members who volunteer for refuge-related activities are very much appreciated! To be fully appreciated—and fully counted—please track and report the time you spend. You can even estimate and submit hours spent on past projects.

Tracking refuge volunteer hours benefits you and the refuge. Refuge volunteers who pass particular milestones receive a certificate and award at an annual volunteer luncheon. For example, volunteers earn a patch after 15 hours, a keychain after 30, and a mug after 60. Also, submitting your hours helps the refuge prepare an annual volunteer report. Last year, well over 550 volunteers contributed over 6,450 hours, the equivalent of over 3 full-time employees!

Many Friends activities count as refuge volunteer activities, including planning and holding wildlife-related special events, planning and implementing refuge projects (e.g., building the viewing blind), staffing event booths with refuge information, or staffing the book store. However, some Friends activities cannot be counted, including attending board, committee, or general meetings; managing accounts; preparing the newsletter; advocacy; fund-raising; and Friends member recruitment.

Please submit your hours and activities to Susan Kain, refuge volunteer coordinator (467-9278 or [susan\\_kain@fws.gov](mailto:susan_kain@fws.gov)). Also contact her with questions about which activities “count,” or if you would like a formal timesheet.



Jim Holcomb painting the photo blind

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## Scout Day at Deer Flat still needs a few more volunteers for March 8th and April 5th...

The Scout Days in January and February were **huge** successes! So far nearly 150 people have participated in this event and there has been positive feedback from the public, plus all of our volunteers have enjoyed interacting with the scouts and families. *Sign up sheets for March and April are already full!*

Each month we need four volunteers to run the event. One volunteer will staff the welcome table from 12:30-1:30 and the other three volunteers will be station leaders and should plan to be at the refuge from 12:15-3:00.

Station leaders facilitate activities and a nature hike for one of three groups of scouts; Webelo Cub Scouts, Bear Cub Scouts and Junior Girl Scouts, or Wolf Cub Scouts and Brownie Girl Scouts. Lesson plans and supplies are ready for you and they meet the badge requirements for the scouts at your station.

***If you would like to help at Scout Day on Saturday March 8th or Saturday April 5th, or want more information please send me an e-mail or call me at the refuge (467-9278).*** First time station leaders will receive training prior to the event. Also, if you have experience in a certain field of wildlife biology, please let me know (but it is not required at all) and feel free to contact me with any questions.



I look forward to working with you and thanks for your time ~

This event is only possible with help from volunteers like you so contact me soon, [Amy\\_Ulappa@fws.gov](mailto:Amy_Ulappa@fws.gov)

Thanks!

***Amy will be giving a brief volunteer information session for Scout Days at the April general meeting of the Friends of Deer Flat. Join us at the meeting or contact Amy at the refuge.***

## NOREEN TRIPP AND CATHY EELLS GO TO WEST VIRGINIA

Noreen Tripp, Friends Past President and Cathy Eells, Bookstore Coordinator, will be representing Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge at the "Friends for the Future" Conference on April 4-6 at the National Conservation Training Center in West Virginia. Other attendees from approximately 85 other wildlife refuges will also be at the conference. This annual event is sponsored by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Wildlife Refuge Association. Seminars will cover subjects ranging from organizational and program development to key trends affecting all refuges including housing development encroachment and climate change.

On April 7, they will be going to Washington D.C. to meet with Idaho's elected officials to help educate them to the need for support and increased funding for the Deer Flat Refuge as well as the entire National Wildlife Refuge System.

*Be a Friend! Join Today!*

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*Name*

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*Address*

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*City*

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*State*

*Zip Code*

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*Telephone*

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*Email*

*Annual Membership Categories*

*Senior (62+)*            \$10

*Individual*            \$15

*Family*            \$25

*Student*            \$10

*All contributions are tax deductible*

*Please print this page and return with a check payable to:*

*Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge  
13751 Upper Embankment Road  
Nampa, Idaho 83686-8046*

*Lyndell Jackson - 208-459-4740*





**FRIENDS OF DEER  
FLAT WILDLIFE  
REFUGE**

13751 Upper Embankment  
Road  
Nampa, Idaho 83686-8046

*Executive Board:*

*President - Lyndell  
Jackson (459-4740)  
Vice President -  
Treasurer - Bob  
Christensen (454-2518)  
Secretary - Lynette  
Wilfling (468-0506) & Lee  
McGlinsky (465-0404)*

*Membership - Lee Mc  
Glinsky (465-0404)  
Projects - Noreen Tripp  
(468-0402)  
Newsletter - Denise Hughes  
(850-5885)*

**We are on the web at  
[www.deerflatfriends.org](http://www.deerflatfriends.org)**

To preserves and enhance Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge

The Grebe is published four times a year — look for the next issue in June 2008

## Lecture Series Programs (7 to 8 p.m.)



**Tuesday, March 18th  
Gardening with Color**

Learn to use the bold colors of annuals and perennial flowers to brighten your garden. This presentation includes gardening and design tips and a seed swap. Bring a bag of labeled seeds to trade - Susan Bell, Univ. of Idaho, Ada County Extension

**Tuesday, April 8th  
Reptiles of the  
Northwest & Beyond**

The northwest is home to some amazing reptiles. This talk will explore the life history of these animals and includes interacting with a few live reptiles. - Idaho Herpetology Society



**Tuesday, May 13th**

**Mule Deer Neighbors**

Discover the fascinating lives of mule deer. This presentation will look at the lives, history and interesting facts about this Idaho inhabitant - Michelle Commons-Kemner, IDFG