

Centennial Celebration 2003

by Bill Kent

The Kenai and Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuges will host a Refuge Centennial Celebration Saturday at the Kenai Peninsula State Fairgrounds in Ninilchik, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The event is free to the public. Attractions include speakers, movies, displays, and kid's activities. Live music will be heard throughout the day. Delicious food and drinks will be provided by Marathon and UNOCAL Oil companies.

This year marks the 100th birthday of the National Wildlife Refuge System, which includes the two million acres of the Kenai National Wildlife Refuge with headquarters in Soldotna. On March 14, 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt signed the papers to set aside Pelican Island as the first national wildlife refuge. From that humble beginning arose the world's largest and most diverse network of lands dedicated to the protection and management of a vast array of wildlife.

Entering its second century, the National Wildlife Refuge System covers 95 million acres in more than 535 refuges and thousands of small prairie wetlands that serve as waterfowl breeding and nesting areas. There are wildlife refuges in every state, and at least one within an hour's drive of every major American city, providing much-needed refuge for people as well as wildlife. Every American should be proud to say, "Look what we have done in this country to protect our wildlife resources."

In order to help plan your day at the celebration listed below are schedules for speakers, movies, and bands.

Speakers:

10 a.m. - *Seasonal Migrations of Rainbow Trout and Dolly Varden in the Kenai River Watershed*, Doug Palmer, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

11a.m. - *A Century of Birding on the Kenai Peninsula*, Todd Eskelin, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge.

Noon - Bird TLC (Treatment and Learning Center) Bird Education Program: Alex Carter, Golden Eagle; Ruth Dorsey, Rough Legged Hawk; and Kristen Guinn, Great Gray Owl.

Note: Bird TLC will also do "walk-by" presenta-

tions with the birds on the Fair Grounds from 10 a.m. to noon and from 2 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Bird TLC will use the small outdoor stage.

1 p.m. - Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton and other dignitaries at outdoor stage.

2 p.m. - *History of Hunting Guides on the Kenai Peninsula*, Gary Titus, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge.

3 p.m. - *Kenai Peninsula Brown Bear Project*, John Schoen, National Audubon Society.

4 p.m. - *The Up's and Down's of the Killey River Caribou Herd*, Rick Ernst, Kenai National Wildlife Refuge.

5 p.m. - *Exploring the Kenai Canoe Trails*, Mike Adlam, Blue Moose Lodge.

Movies:

10 a.m. - *America's Best Kept Secret: The National Wildlife Refuge System* (10 min.).

10:15 a.m. - *Alaska's National Wildlife Refuges* (29 min.).

11 a.m. - *Kenai National Wildlife Refuge: Where Wildlife Comes First* (10 min.).

11:15 a.m. - *Alaska Maritime National Refuge: Life on the Edge* (10 min.).

11:20 a.m. - *Arctic National Wildlife Refuge* (5 min.).

11:30 a.m. - *Arctic Kingdom: Life at the Edge* (85 min.), a great natural history film sharing marine and land wildlife of the Arctic. The video also shares how the video production unit did their photography under very challenging conditions.

1 p.m. - Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton and other dignitaries at outdoor stage.

2 p.m. - *The First and Last Frontier*, the story of wildlife and cultural contact in Alaska by American and European settlers and explorers (55 min.).

3 p.m. - *Braving Alaska*, a film following the lives of Alaskans living the "bush" lifestyle throughout Alaska adjacent to several national wildlife refuges (55 min.).

4 p.m. - *Toothwalkers: Giants of the Arctic Ice*, an excellent film on walrus with segments filmed in waters of several national wildlife refuges (55 min.).

5 p.m. - *A Mystery in Alaska*, an excellent new film on the decline of the Stellar Sea Lion with segments

from Alaska Department of Fish and Game and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists on research vessels. Great underwater and above scenic photography of wildlife including humpback whales, brown bears, salmon, eagles, and much more (55 min.).

Bands:

10:15 a.m. - Little Su, composed of award-winning songwriters Karen Boylan and Ellen Lockyer. Expect catchy original tunes, hand-crafted lyrics, sweet harmonies, pretty good harmonica, and smokin' guitar.

11:30 a.m. - Hobo Jim. Be entertained by one of the Peninsula's premiere local folk musicians. Hobo Jim is well known on the Peninsula in Soldotna, Kenai and Homer and has made many Alaskans leave warm homes to brave the winter cold to enjoy his wonderful sense of humor. Come listen to a phenomenal songwriter, performer and most especially, entertainer, Hobo Jim.

12:45 p.m. - Keith McGough as President Theodore Roosevelt.

1 p.m. - Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton and other dignitaries (speeches and awards).

2 p.m. - Spur Highway Spankers, one of the Kenai's hottest local bluegrass bands, the Spankers

have been entertaining bluegrass fans in Alaska for decades. Performing at many bluegrass festivals, the Spankers are always a exciting favorite.

4 p.m. - Katie Skrha. Kenai born and raised, "The Alaskan Songbird" is a gifted young songwriter who is blessed with a hauntingly beautiful voice. During the summer months, you can usually find Katie singing every evening on stages across the Kenai Peninsula.

6 p.m. - Dreamtrybe. All the way from Austin, Texas. Consistently placing in the highly coveted Austin Chronicle Music Awards, Dreamtrybe's music is well-crafted, energetic rock, so come finish the evening with this awesome band from Texas and maybe even dance a song or two on the lawn of the fairgrounds.

There will also be many exhibits provided and staffed by twenty-eight partners of Alaska Maritime and Kenai Refuges. The day promises to be enjoyable for the entire family. Hope to see you there!

Bill Kent is the Supervisory Park Ranger at Kenai National Wildlife Refuge. For more information about the Refuge, visit the headquarters in Soldotna, call (907) 262-7021. Previous Refuge Notebook columns can be viewed on the Web at <http://kenai.fws.gov>.