

Subject: Raptor Show & Nature Center News ~ April 23, 2023

From: John and Balinda from Raptor Flight at WMNC <johnglitsos@gmail.com>

Date: 4/23/2023 11:09 PM

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Raptor Flight Show and White Mountain Nature Center

Email Newsletter ~ April 23, 2023

Please like us on Facebook ([wmnature](#)) and Instagram ([white_mountain_nature_center](#))

Raptor Show & Nature Center news for this week:

- Food Prep Building is going up. Finally!
- Balinda is profiled in International Avian Trainer Magazine
- We are OPEN TO THE PUBLIC for FREE Training Exhibitions!
- New, double-size bird enclosure is being readied.
- Ron Miller receives prestigious award!
- Weekly hikes continue- EVERY Saturday at 8:30 AM
- We need more Volunteers
- Earth Day was - April 22nd - Night Sky Viewing was a bust :-)
- May 6th we take Astro inside for the Falcons of Arizona program

If you want to donate, [click here](#) and then click the Raptor Show Donation button - *we need your help* to feed and care for our show ambassadors and to build their new enclosures and viewing area.

Thank you so much!

New Raptor Food Prep Building Takes Shape



A crew from iConcrete led by Bruce Kremins pours tons of concrete to form the pad for our new food prep



building. One day later, the 2x6 wood studs go up for the walls... finally, construction progress!

[Balinda is Profiled in Intl Assoc of Avian Trainers Quarterly](#)

Meet Your Board Members

Balinda Strosnider



Company you work for: Land On Sky Wildlife Experiences

Job Title: President & Head Trainer for the White Mountain Nature Center in Pinetop, AZ

Years of Service: 12 years in various capacities

Describe your responsibilities: As a small non-profit, I have to wear multiple hats. Along with training, writing scripts, prepping food, coordinating volunteers, managing the store merchandise, maintaining records, and leading enrichment nights (or happy hours), I have the responsibility of doing pretty much everything else as well. With the help of a great team, of course.

Current Goals/Objectives: My current goal is to build a world-renowned (OK – maybe just Northern Arizona renowned) bird show for the White Mountains that delights the pants off of people and gets them excited about raptors in nature. In doing so, I want to ensure that animal welfare is first and foremost.

Biggest Challenge in your Career: Moving from a large city to a small town and starting a program from scratch. There were/are so many hurdles and roadblocks, but I have a great team with a can-do attitude and a stubborn side that keeps me moving forward.

Most interesting/enjoyable experience working with birds: The birds are wonderful, but seeing people excited (especially the kids) reminds me why I love doing what I do. I remember talking to a mom and her young son while I had a Turkey Vulture (*Cathartes aura*). The boy looked about the same age as the vulture, so I asked him how old he was. He said he was four, so I told him how the vulture was the same age and then told him all of the cool things about vultures. I finally asked if he had any questions and he asked (much to the chagrin of his mother), "How old are YOU?"

Favorite animal: I have a soft spot for corvids, but then there are the

Zone-tailed Hawks (*Buteo albonotatus*), and of course the silly Burrowing Owls (*Athene cunicularia*) that just make you chuckle, and the elusive roadrunners, or the beautiful Bali Mynah (*Leucopsar rothschildi*), and then... OK, you get the point. It's too hard to pick just one!

Other interests/What People Don't Know About Me: I have had some pretty eclectic hobbies. I was a member of an all-women's steel drum band for over ten years (we even cut three CDs!). I played the six-bass which was six full-sized 55-gallon oil drums. With cases, it was 300 lb. of drums to haul around. I was also on a competitive Dragon Boat racing team (yes, in Arizona). A dragon boat is a 45' wooden boat with 20 paddlers, a drummer, and a steer person. For races, we mount a dragon head and tail on the boats. It is quite a sight to see! We have raced in Puerto Rico, Taiwan, New York, and many other places. Now our St. Bernard is my exercise. I have also written and published three children's books on birds of prey.

Your Message to IAATE Members: I started as a volunteer. Don't ever think you can't do it. If this is your passion, stick with it. Figure out what it is that makes you say, "THIS is why I do this!" Then, never give up, never stop learning, and don't let those 'bad training days' burst your bubble. We all have them!

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2022 IAATE BOARD ELECTION RESULTS

President Elect	Lacey Zeno
Secretary	Erin Katzner
General Board	Amy Fennell
General Board	Kristin Dean
General Board	Balinda Strosnider

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FREE Raptor Training Exhibitions EVERY DAY

Our daily 3PM Training Exhibitions are open again!

We have signs at the Nature Center Entrance and in the driveway to guide you.

There is plenty of free parking. Try to get there a few minutes early because we start promptly at 3 PM, usually with Azul the Recycling Crow, a crowd favorite.

You call this a Construction Crew?



We do! We should probably send a pic to Ryobi, everyone brought at least one Ryobi tool along... Lots of work and lots of fun!



As you can see, they are making great progress. The vertical slats are going in now, and we hope to have the it all done by Friday!



News from the White Mountain Nature Center



Ron Miller, one of the White Mountain Nature Center's long-standing Board Members traveled to Phoenix to receive the Citizen Forester of the Year Award from the Arbor Day Foundation. He accepted the award from Will Green, Policy Advisor to Governor Hobbs on the left, and Arizona State Forester Tom Torres on the right.

Each year, the Arbor Day Foundation asks the public to nominate individuals, businesses, government employees, and partnerships for exceptional urban and community forestry work performed in the previous calendar year. Congratulations to Ron for being one of this year's winners; whose work in 2022 has improved Arizona's urban and community spaces in *tree-mendous* ways!

WEEKLY HIKES CONTINUE
EVERY SATURDAY AT 8:30!



Saturday's hike was lead by Lynn Krigbaum of TRACKs. Within minutes she had a group of hikers



hopelessly lost and looking up at the sky for a rescue copter. **Kidding!** Lynn is pointing at a remarkable tree.

Calling All Volunteers

The Nature Center needs you! Register for our new Volunteer Force and help us do more than ever to connect people with nature! Click here to get started: [WMNCVolunteerSignup](#)

Earth Day ~ Was April 22nd



Nature Center celebrated Earth Day 2023 with the Digitalis Mobile Planitarium sponsored by the Arizona Science Center. Also, booths and activities celebrating



In the evening we had hoped to view near Earth Objects like satellites and rocket boosters. Nature wiped that out by featuring a beautiful sunset followed by a solid cloud cover that blocked out everything but the moon. At least the 15 who gathered

Earth day attracted more than 50
Guests!

enjoyed some delicious hot
chocolate!

Falcons of AZ - May 6th at 6:00 PM



On Saturday May 6th at 6PM we will be presenting a program about the Falcons of Arizona starring our own Astro, the Aplomado Falcon. Here you see him practicing his hoop navigation for the event.

It will begin with a multi-media presentation with beautiful full-color slides and videos of falcons. You will learn how these fearless masters of flight catch their food on the wing+with spectacular aerial acrobatics.

Arizona is home to a variety of falcons, from the smallest, the American Kestrel, to the largest, the Prairie Falcon, and to the fastest, the Peregrine falcon. You will also see the special adaptations that enable them to do what they do . many of which have been copied in modern jet fighters.

Finally, we will be demonstrating with an in-person guest appearance by our resident Aplomado Falcon, Astro! He will be flying between an artificial forest of trees set up

on our stage for you to witness first hand. Don't blink (he's that fast)! Aplomados are the falcon of choice to scare away grape eating birds from the vineyards in Sonoma Valley. You will know why when you see Astro perform!

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