

# WILD GOOSE TALES

FALL 2016



## BOARD MEMBERS

### INTERIM PRESIDENT

DAVE LANDKAMER

### VICE-PRESIDENT

LOGAN BENNETT

### SECRETARY

SANDY KUHN

### TREASURER

CARROLL DEKOCK

### STORE MANAGER

JEANNE TAYLOR

LENA PROEBSTING

### DIRECTORS

BRIAN WACHELKA

AZIZAH MOHD

DIANE YOUNG

ELIZABETH FRENCH

DOUG SPENCER

TOM NELSON

DEBBIE MAYNARD

## President's Column



Doug Spencer

There are many reasons why an individual or a family wants to become a member of our organization, many times it's their devotion to wildlife, plants and the land that are located on national wildlife refuges and they want to share this devotion with others. As an organization, we can show this devotion in a larger voice. We can have a bigger vision and higher goals to accomplish great things for our refuges. Our organization is not only known locally, but many know of us nationally. We are part of a group of Friends organizations nationwide that fully support our national wildlife refuges. The reason I bring this up, in recent years the national wildlife refuge system has had a reduction in its overall budget. This budget is provided by our Congress of the United States. National wildlife refuges manage millions of acres of lands throughout the United States and territories, more so than our national parks, yet they have one of the smallest work forces in the federal government. A drop in budget many times means a reduction in employment. This can be seen even at William L. Finley NWR, where the leadership couldn't fund an important biologist position and had to let an employee go. Reduction of budgets also affects control of invasive species, educational programs, public facilities, etc. As a leader of our organization and a friend of our national wildlife refuges, now is the time to contact your federal legislators and encourage them to support increasing our national wildlife refuge system

budget! Please take the time to do this.

On another note, there will be a change in our leadership for the organization. I have been on the board for nearly 5 years and the president for 4 years. With the planning and construction of the new Ankeny nature center, I plan to devote most of my time in seeing this facility become a reality. Due to this, I've asked the Board of Directors to begin recruiting for a new President. Also Vice President and Board of Director Tom Nelson, has stepped down after many years of advising our organization. Tom will certainly be missed and we hope he will be able to continue to provide all of us advice and help out at events. I plan to remain on the Board of Directors for another few years. At our next board meeting we will vote on who will be our new President and Vice President. We have two candidates at this time, Board of Directors David Landkamer and Logan Bennett. Both of them will make great officers for our organization. At present, we have two openings for Board of Directors, please make a decision to join our board and help lead our organization into the future.

So with all this said, thank you for allowing me to lead your organization for these many years. It has been my privilege and I'm honored and blessed that I got to know so many devoted supporters of our national wildlife refuges. Take care and I hope to see you at the next Friends event or work party.

## FRIENDS' MISSION

*The Friends of the Willamette Valley Refuge Complex is an independent nonprofit organization whose mission is to:*

- *Promote the conservation of the natural resources of the Refuge Complex*
- *Foster awareness and appreciation of the Complex through educational and recreational opportunities*
- *Participate in activities that help the Complex achieve its goals.*



## New Elk Monitoring Project

The Friends group has teamed up with USFWS Biology Staff this fall to kick off a new elk monitoring project at Finley National Wildlife Refuge, and the preliminary efforts are providing good data and terrific wildlife sightings for volunteers.

The idea for the project began when Azizah Mohd, Chair of the newly formed Friends Biology Committee, sat down with Finley Refuge Senior Biologist Brian Root to discuss ways in which the Friends group could help support the mission of the refuge. One answer was that the refuge staff needed more data on the Roosevelt elk herd that frequent the refuge, and Friends volunteers could help collect it. At this time, the size of the local elk herd is estimated at somewhere around 200 animals, but more needs to be known about the number of bulls, cows, and calves, and where they spend most of their time.

In late August, a survey method for observing and counting the elk was designed and the first survey was conducted by volunteers. On the first survey, a small herd of elk with one big bull was spotted from Prairie Overlook. Since then, the survey has been refined and conducted several times by volunteers. Besides elk, volunteers have reported seeing coyotes, red-tailed hawks, owls, bobcats, egrets, otters, wild turkeys, California quail, rabbits, and many other kinds of wildlife during the surveys.

The data the Friends collect from this exciting project will help with the successful management of wildlife refuge resources. It will also provide some great opportunities for Friends volunteers to have outstanding experiences on Finley Wildlife Refuge while contributing to the well-being of our Willamette Valley wildlife. **Please contact Azizah ([azizahmohd@yahoo.com](mailto:azizahmohd@yahoo.com)) if you would like to learn more about how you can volunteer to join in this valuable survey effort.**



*Roosevelt elk on refuge field*  
©Ray Foster



Looking for a trail that you can enjoy with young children? A beautiful trail where you can walk, ride in a wheelchair, or push a stroller? An easy, level trail that winds through shady woods, and ends in a covered area where you can watch wildlife?

Look no further than the **Homer Campbell Boardwalk at the William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge**. This elevated wooden trail winds through deciduous riparian forest, and ends at an observation hut at the edge of 125-acre Cabell Marsh.

The Boardwalk is ADA-accessible and open year – round. It is completely contained by fences that run the length of the trail, and keep little ones safe. Also, it is a shorter trail; the round trip is less than a mile. People with all different levels of walking skill can enjoy it. If you visit the trail before November 1<sup>st</sup>, you can walk past the observation hut to the walking trail around the shore of Cabell Marsh. In November, when the waterfowl come to Finley for the winter, that trail extension is closed, although you can still observe wildlife from the hut. The trail around the Marsh reopens on April 1st.

To get to the trailhead turn into the paved parking area off of Finley Refuge Road east of the historical Fiechter House.





Thirty-Five Friends members enjoyed delicious food and good fellowship at the **Annual Friends Picnic and Meeting** on September 10th at the Finley Refuge Office. The weather was great, and members enjoyed their dinner and conversation outside on the picnic tables as well as inside the office. Michael Babbitt from Salem Audubon gave an informative presentation about the new Ankeny Hill Nature center. Samantha Bartling did a great job with slides of the activities the Friends had accomplished this year. Azizah Mohd spoke about the new wildlife monitoring activity that our group will be doing for the refuge. Elections were held for board members and Debbie Maynard, Azizah Mohd, and Dave Landkamer were officially elected to the board. Sandy Kuhns, Secretary



**Save the Date!** Next year's big winter environmental education event, **Winter Wildlife Field Day** will be on Saturday, **March 18<sup>th</sup>** at Finley Refuge. If you want to volunteer, contact Sam: [Samantha\\_bartling@fws.gov](mailto:Samantha_bartling@fws.gov).



## **With Gratitude! by Samantha Bartling, USFWS**

On Saturday, October 1st we had a wonderful **Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon** out at the Finley Refuge headquarters building. We had close to 60 folks come out to celebrate an amazing year! We enjoyed a catered meal, caught up with fellow volunteers, enjoyed a slide show and played some games (did anyone end up going for the hula hoops?).

### **Volunteers, do you know how much you do and how much of an impact you have on the Willamette Valley Refuges?**

Events, running and staffing the Wild Goose Nature Store, outreach, habitat restoration, environmental education, fence pulling, helping run a non-profit organization, brochure creation, trail maintenance and mowing, to name just a few....

**Heaps of thanks and gratitude beaming your way!**

## **Volunteer Opportunities:**

**The Friends board needs new members: Are you interested in becoming a Friends Board Member? We invite you to attend our Board meetings and see if you would like to participate.**

**Interested board members should contact Dave Landkamer  
([djlandkamer@yahoo.com](mailto:djlandkamer@yahoo.com))**



## *Ankeny Hill Nature Center Update*

**Public meeting**  
to discuss the  
**Ankeny Hill Nature Center Project**

**Nov. 3, 2016,  
at 6:00 PM**

**Pringle Community Center, 606 Church Street, S.E. , Salem**

**Join the Discussion!**

Ray Temple  
President of the Salem Audubon Society  
September 28, 2016

In planning for the Ankeny Hill Nature Center and the general approach to the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) compliance, in November we get to participate in the process in an influential way.

NEPA's general approach is to describe expected impact of a project to cultural and natural environments, to evaluate those impacts, and to make a determination of whether the impacts are acceptable or the project needs to be modified. A key piece of that determination is public comment concerning the project, the impacts, and the evaluation.

**On November 3, 2016, at 6:00 PM the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will hold a public meeting at Pringle Community Center, 606 Church Street, S.E. in Salem to discuss the project and receive your comments on the nature center project.** Well before the meeting, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will widely distribute their draft environmental assessment of the project. If you favor the project, object to the project, or have other thoughts, this is your best opportunity to be heard, in the 45 day window for comments that includes this meeting. The window for commenting will go well beyond this meeting.

This is a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service meeting that is part of their legal obligation as described in the Act. Beyond that, it is a necessary part of the process by which Salem Audubon, The Friends of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will move down the road toward a community nature center at Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge. Please read the environmental assessment, and give the Service your thoughts for, against, or with questions about the proposed project.



### **Habitat Detective : Meet the Elders of Bald Top. Where am I located?**

1. Mississippi National River & Recreation Area: Minnesota
2. Tallgrass Prairie Preserve, :Oklahoma
3. Bald Top Savanna: Finley Wildlife Refuge, Oregon

Answer of course is #3!!

Submitted by Diane Young



# Learn



© Joe Staff

# Connect



© Joe Staff

# Discover



© Joe Staff



© Joe Staff

# Ankeny Hill Nature Center

## Open House

*We invite you to join us!*

**Why:**

We want to hear your thoughts on the Ankeny Hill Nature Center. It's an open house forum.

- Come when you can
- Talk with partners one on one
- Leave us your thoughts

**When:**

Thursday, November 3rd, 2016  
6:00 pm - 8:00 pm

*A short overview presentation of the project and partnership at 6:30 pm.*

**Where:**

Pringle Hall Community Center  
606 Church Street SE  
Salem, OR 97301

Get an electronic copy of the EA at:  
[www.fws.gov/refuge/Ankeny/Nature\\_Center\\_EA](http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Ankeny/Nature_Center_EA)

Send comments to:  
[ankeny\\_nature\\_center@fws.gov](mailto:ankeny_nature_center@fws.gov)



Salem Audubon Society



Friends of the Willamette Valley  
National Wildlife Refuge Complex



## Wild Goose Nature Store

Located in the  
William L. Finley NWR

Open All Year  
Friday, Saturday  
and Sunday

10 AM to 4PM

A great place  
for holiday shopping!

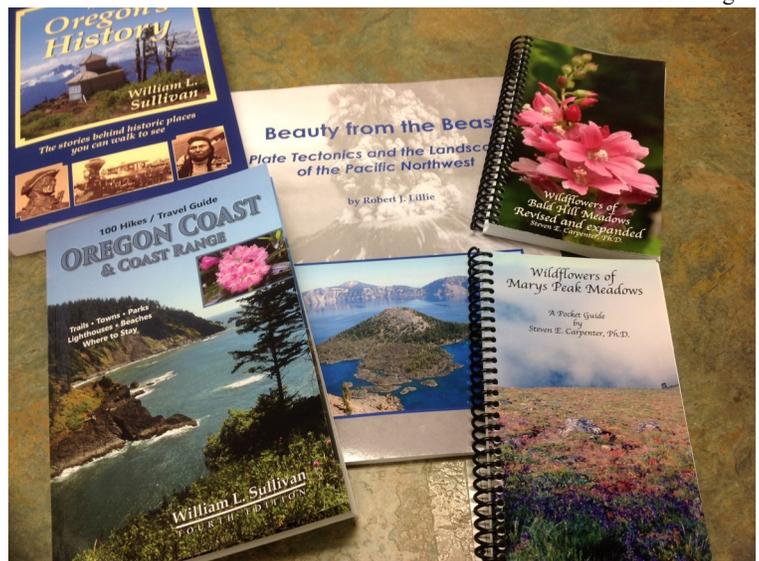


Photos: Lena Proebsting

## Celebrate Autumn at the Wild Goose Nature Store

The Wild Goose Nature Store gift shop on the William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge has gotten a lot of positive feedback from visitors. The store packs a lot of good quality merchandise into a small space. It offers books, T-shirts, caps, pins, stuffed animals, mugs, earrings, photo cards, table runners, canvas bags, bookmarks and other items with a nature theme, stressing local plants and animals. If you visit the Refuge and don't see any elk, stop by the store! We carry a lot of elk-themed items and very soon more Finley elk baseball caps will be added to the stock. We are also happy to offer several books by local authors including: hiking guides by William L. Sullivan; wildflower guides and a new mushroom book by Steven E. Carpenter; and a book on OR geology & plate tectonics by Robert J. Lillie.

The store is entirely volunteer-run. In addition to sales, store volunteers also act as representatives for the Refuge on weekends when the Refuge staff is usually not present, answering ques-



tions and welcoming visitors. We try to make the store a cheerful & informative place for guests to enjoy.

All profits from the store go to the Friends of the Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex organization and help support Refuge projects. As always, Friends members get a 10% discount at the store.

**Managers Lena Proebsting and Jeanne Taylor are deeply grateful to the loyal and dedicated store volunteers.**



## Seasons of the Refuges: Autumn

Fall is in the air again and the elk have begun to be more visible as breeding season arrives. Watch for them in the open fields near the tree line. They can sometimes be seen from the Finley Refuge Head Quarters building, looking toward Pigeon Butte. Also look for them at Prairie Overlook or the Field 12 Overlook off of Bruce Road. And hiking is good in the fall with the cooler temperatures.

Jeanne Taylor



Photo: Paul Farrell



Rough-legged Hawk  
Photo: Maura Naughton USFWS

The songbirds have begun their migration south in late August and flocks of geese and ducks begin to arrive on the wetlands throughout October. Sightings of migratory raptors increase as the season progresses, with the rough-legged hawks arriving in November just as the turkey vultures depart. [https://www.fws.gov/refuge/William L Finley/seasons of wildlife/](https://www.fws.gov/refuge/William_L_Finley/seasons_of_wildlife/)

**Sanctuary season begins on November 1st**, closing the interior of the refuge and providing a safe and comfortable wintering site for migratory birds, geese and waterfowl.



Canada Geese  
© Ray Foster

Submitted by: Samantha Bartling, USFWS

## Happy National Wildlife Refuge Week! October 9<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>

In August the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument was expanded and on September 15<sup>th</sup> President Obama announced the first marine monument in the Atlantic. **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is now responsible for managing the largest conservation estate on the planet!** The Refuge System, which started at Florida's little Pelican Island in 1903, has grown to 565 National Wildlife Refuges, 38 Wetland Management Districts and management responsibility for 5 Marine National Monuments. That's more than 850 million acres of land and water!



Pelican Wikipedia.org



"Green-Winged Teal" by Oregon high school student Maddie LeBrun

## William L. Finley Refuge Hunt ends on 10/31

The hunt season is in its final month at Finley Refuge. There will be 10 elk hunters in October and there will continue to be deer hunters as well. But on October 31st the hunting season at the Refuge ends and no more hunting will happen until next year. You'll see the hunt kiosks come down soon after the end of the hunt. If you missed this year's hunt, look for information and an application (if you're hunting elk) to come out in the Spring of 2017.

## Jr. Duck Stamp Artwork at Finley Refuge

To celebrate National Wildlife Refuge Week, the walls of the Finley headquarters building were transformed by Jr. Duck Stamp artists! Come see the amazing winning entries from youth across Oregon. You won't believe what these creative young artists can do.



Muddy Creek riparian zone wet prairie  
Jarod Jebousek USFWS

# Membership Form

New Membership     Renewal

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check this box if you **DO NOT** wish to share your information directly with the Refuge Volunteer Coordinator for additional volunteer opportunities.

I am interested in these volunteer opportunities:

- Work Parties     Special Events     Wild Goose Nature Store  
 Education Programs     Board Member  
 Habitat Restoration     Grounds Maintenance  
 Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Annual Membership Categories

- \$10 Senior / Student  
 \$15 Individual  
 \$25 Family  
 Volunteer\*

**All contributions in excess of membership fees are tax deductible under corporation guidelines.**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Tax deductible donation

**Please make checks payable to FWVNWRC.**

\* Please contact the Friends Volunteer Coordinator to see if you qualify.



Friends of the Willamette Valley  
National Wildlife Refuge Complex

P.O. Box 2238  
Corvallis, OR 97339

secretary.friends@gmail.com

Phone: 541-757-7236 Ext. 224

**VISIT US ONLINE AT  
WWW.FRIENDSWVNWRC.ORG**