

# CROSSROADS

BY CANYON COUNTY PARKS, CULTURAL &  
NATURAL RESOURCES











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*Above, left: Interpretive Specialist Larry Haney regales students with tales of old at the replica wickiup.*

*Above, right: Interpretive Specialist Mark Stradley demonstrates atlatl technique on the atlatl range.*

*Below: Larry Haney took sunrise photos, highlighting the beauty of the Snake River Canyon.*

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*Above, below: Second graders learn about macroinvertebrates at Lake Lowell Park every spring at our Lake Lowell Field Trip.*











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*Above: Maintenance Coordinator Shawn Gray and Outdoor Recreation Planner Alex Eells work on the George W. Nourse Gun Range.*

*Below, left: Martin Landing Camp Host Joanne Gilligan happily uses the new goathead removal tool to help maintain the campgrounds and trails.*

*Below, right: We're always experimenting with darts at the Celebration Park atlatl range. This was the result of two broken darts getting glued into one VERY big one. At over ten feet long, it was highly accurate!*

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*Above: Sunrise in the canyon.*

*Middle: New protocols for field trip introductions are put to the test with a big group of kids.*

*Below: A jet boater enjoys a solitary morning on Lake Lowell.*





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*Above: A beautiful morning at Halverson Lake. Interpretive Specialist Larry Haney captured the photo of this impressive waterfall.*

*Below: Larry Haney took this springtime photo at Guffey Bridge.*

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*Above, left: Interpretive Specialist Jenna Raino teaches cordage-making during Archaeology Month.*

*Above, right: Adelaide Starry learns how to flintknape during Archaeology Month.*

*Below: Interpretive Specialist Mark Stradley talks to students on the Atlatl Range.*









# CROSSROADS

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Grants Coordinator: Bill Moore

**Cover:** Idahoans were thrilled to be able to view the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights) from home this year. Many of us in the department went out to try to take great pictures, but none were as good as this one by local photographer **Elly Lyons**. We are grateful that she gave us permission to use this incredible photo of the Auroras over Guffey Bridge.

To see more of Elly's work, visit

[www.beautifulworldfineartphotography.com](http://www.beautifulworldfineartphotography.com).



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# FROM THE DIRECTOR: Laura Barbour

## ASSISTANT

In February 2015, I wrote my first article for the quarterly newspaper of what was then still called Parks, Recreation & Waterways (now Parks, Cultural & Natural Resources). Along with some photos immortalizing a DIY haircut (Dylon, don't you dare reprint them), there's a lot about me and my background. I had just graduated with my master's degree and was eager to prove myself and equally thrilled and terrified to start my first ever "real" job, as Programs Manager at Celebration Park. I wrote that I was so excited to have the opportunity to work with field trip programs that connect local students to "the landscape we all call home." I was beyond lucky and knew it, but I never could have imagined that the journey I was starting would last almost a decade.

Now, as I get ready to write my last *Crossroads* article, I want to spend more time talking about parks and places. A "place" is more than just a location—it's everything that makes that location unique and special; everything that makes us cherish it. Our "sense of place" is highly subjective: people forge their own understandings of particular places, and form their own bonds with the landscapes they inhabit.

The places and resources we choose to protect help preserve the unique character of our home landscape. In Canyon County, we



*Assistant Director Laura Barbour left a legacy behind at Canyon County Parks—from the Ecology Trail signage (she's pictured here tearing out the old signs) to the East End Campground.*



*Above left, right: A graduate of the McCall Outdoor Science School, Laura always felt right at home teaching lessons on ecology—whether it was to 8-year-olds or graduate students. She also fit in at the silly holiday parties!*

choose to protect archaeology and history, open space and habitat for people and for wildlife. Our Canyon County parks include places that conserve our agricultural heritage and showcase stunning natural landscapes. Places for explorers and recreationists, for students and researchers, for families and kids. Places you can immerse yourself in, not just visit. Rich, layered places, like Celebration Park, that combine the best of the desert and the river, the present and the past. Places you can spend a lifetime learning about. Places that teach you something about yourself and how you fit into the intricate landscape that surrounds you.



Like many kids who grew up in Canyon County, I attended the Stories in Stone field trip at Celebration Park in fourth grade, had family picnics at the shady parks near Lake Lowell to escape the summer heat, and learned about local wildlife while exploring the Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge. The parks we manage are a huge part of my own personal “sense of place” for Canyon County: it would not be the same without them, nor would I be who I am today without the experiences these parks made possible for me. By connecting residents and newcomers to their surroundings, Canyon County Parks, Cultural & Natural Resources plays a key role in protecting and preserving the unique character of Canyon County into the future.



*Laura's aforementioned photo from 2015 that she told the editor not to publish.*

As anyone who ever attended a fourth grade Stories in Stone field trip at Celebration Park can tell you, the impacts of that experience are beyond measure. For me, that field trip truly shaped the course of my life. Every time I visit, I feel the same sense of awe I felt when I was nine years old, standing face-to-face with a petroglyph that had been carved thousands of years before. Today I drove out to Celebration Park, a journey so familiar that I am on a first-name basis with the ground squirrels. Taking Swan Falls Road south out of Kuna is like making a straight shot for the horizon. As I crossed the desert, the Owyhee Mountains rose like clouds before me and the dark cliffs of basalt looked like the edge of the world. As I wound my way down Hot Spot Lane and saw the river canyon opening before me, it felt like coming home.

*Laura started with Canyon County Parks as Programs Manager in 2015. During her nine years with the department, she also served as Outdoor Recreation Planner and most recently Assistant Director. She's excited for this next adventure and forever grateful to Canyon County, and especially its parks. Laura is pictured below with Director Nicki Schwend.*







## CANYON COUNTY PARKS, CULTURAL & NATURAL RESOURCES

# DEPARTMENT UPDATE: ON THE GROUND

### Memorial Benches

If you've visited Lake Lowell Park recently, you may have noticed the addition of this special bench. To give citizens an opportunity to honor and celebrate their departed loved ones, the department is working to initiate a Memorial Policy. The bench is the first of these memorials. Maintenance Coordinator Shawn Gray and Outdoor Recreation Planner Alex Eels installed the bench this spring. Built locally by Bill's Machine shop, with high-quality materials, we anticipate the bench will last for generations to remember and enjoy.

### Parking Lot Striping

Several sections of the Celebration Park parking lot needed repainting and new lines striped. Rather than hiring a contractor to paint lines, we purchased a paint striping cart to handle small maintenance jobs internally. Maintenance Coordinator Shawn Gray (pictured) painted two speed bumps and three additional parking stalls. The next project will be to highlight the Marine Patrol trailer parking stall so Canyon County Sheriff's Department Marine Patrol have a designated area to park, ensuring rapid response during emergencies.



### Invasive Weed Control

Invasive weeds are always an issue in Idaho's sagebrush-steppe ecosystem. Celebration Park is no exception. Thanks to our hard-working and dedicated staff, however, we are able to keep these pests at bay. Interpretive Specialists Mark Stradley (pictured at left, below) and Larry Haney led the charge against the cheatgrass invasion on our trails by removing several loads of weeds this June. This not only helps with the visibility and walkability of the trails, but also reduces the spread of potential wildfires.



**CANYON COUNTY PARKS,  
CULTURAL & NATURAL  
RESOURCES**

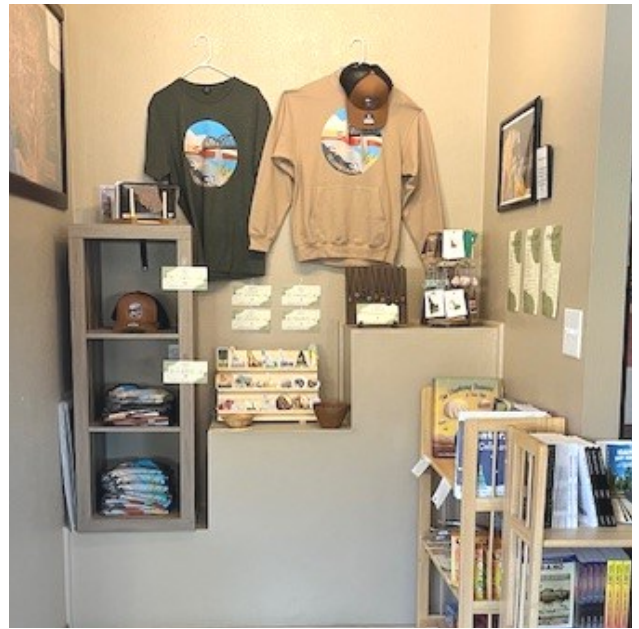
# DEPARTMENT UPDATE: IN THE OFFICE

## Gift Shop Update

Visitor Services Specialist Lily Brown has added new stickers, magnets, pins, patches, and keychains, which are now available at the Celebration Park Gift Shop. When you purchase an item from the gift shop, the funds go toward Education & Outreach, as well as the Bus Scholarship, which helps reduce the cost of busing to Parks field trips. If you would like to help support these programs, check out the gift shop in the Visitor Center!

## USFW Intern Visit

The US Fish and Wildlife Service at Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge recently arranged a visit for their interns to Celebration Park. Led by Refuge Manager Eddie Owens, young people from around the country took part in guided tours of Park facilities. They also attended a talk on raptors courtesy of Bureau of Land Management's education birds, led by Cory Roberts (pictured right, middle). Interns enjoyed petroglyph tours and practiced on the atlatl range.



## DFNWR Refuge Access Plan

Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge is working with the U.S. Department of Transportation Volpe Center to develop a Refuge Access Plan (RAP). The goal of the RAP is to help refuge management prioritize transportation projects that increase equitable access to the refuge and meet the needs of surrounding communities. On August 6<sup>th</sup>, the refuge gathered input from members of the public at an open house at the Happy Day Transit Center. The next day, the refuge hosted a collaborative discussion with local government and community organizations, including Canyon County Parks staff, to share ideas for enhancing multimodal transportation connections.





## CANYON COUNTY PARKS, CULTURAL & NATURAL RESOURCES

# DEPARTMENT UPDATE: EVERYTHING ELSE

### Melba Valley Museum

Congratulations to the Melba Valley Historical Society (MVHS), who celebrated the addition of their 1919 building—now the Melba Valley Museum—to the National Register of Historic Places! The Historical Society received funds from Canyon County's Historic Preservation Grant Award Program to nominate the building to the register. Together with TAG Historical Research & Consulting of Boise and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), MVHS worked through a multi-year process with the National Park Service to complete the process.

### Idaho Auroras

Like many people in Idaho (and much of the country), we were very excited to be able to see the Aurora Borealis (aka the Northern Lights) in May. This magnificent natural show is created when energized particles from the sun interact with the magnetic field surrounding earth. Usually only visible at the poles (they're called Aurora Australis in the south), it's a rare treat to see them in Idaho, especially as bright and easily visible as they were! This picture is of Interpretive Specialist Brendan Blowers-de Leon at Dedication Point, south of Kuna, taken by his wife, Emely De Leon.



### Mountain Home Archaeology Fair

Another fun event, the Idaho Archaeology Fair, organized by the Idaho Archaeological Society, took place in Mountain Home in May. Exhibitors included the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office, re-enactors, local experts, and our own Director, Nicki Schwend. Held at the Basque Park in downtown Mountain Home, the event also educated visitors on the Basque history of Idaho. Trae Schwend is pictured (below) grinding corn with a mortar and pestle.



# Archaeology Month at Celebration Park

by Lily Brown



*Above: A Ford Model T gleams in the sun during Archaeology Month.*

One of the best ways to learn about Idaho's history, including the history of indigenous and ancient peoples, archaeology, and how we can preserve this knowledge, is to participate in Idaho's Historic Preservation and Archaeology Month each May. Canyon County Parks has long taken part in the month's festivities. On May 4th, Celebration Park celebrated by hosting several groups who helped visitors and staff make connections to history and how the people before us lived.

The day started with the Celebration Park stop on the Melba Fun Run. This is a car rally held by the Idaho Model T Club. While many vintage cars and trucks take part, the majority are Model T Fords from the '20s and '30s. The parking lot was filled with antique cars and their owners. Drivers displayed their four-wheeled treasures so visitors and staff could walk around and talk to the owners about their unique cars. It was quite the view to see so many fascinating cars with the Snake River and Guffey Butte towering behind them.

As the antique cars filed out of the park, the rest of the programs began. One of the most popular was learning how to flintknape with the Idaho Flintknappers. Celebration Park welcomes them to the park each year, as they teach visitors the ancient techniques of flintknapping. Visitors of all ages visited the museum to join the experienced flintknappers. The Idaho Flintknappers taught the process of taking large chunks of obsidian, flint, and chert to craft them into projectile points, scrapers, blades, or other lithic (stone) tools. The experienced members made some extraordinary tools and even obsidian figurines by carefully and artfully breaking down the materials. While the



majority of visitors were not quite to the level of creating perfect projectile points or figurines, with enough guidance, visitors took home a point they had crafted.

In addition to flintknapping in the museum, retired Bureau of Land Management archaeologist Dean Shaw generously shared his collection of replica artifacts, made using prehistoric methods. This included bone, antler, and lithic tools, clothing items, weapons, and more. Some of the most fascinating were the large hides processed by brain tanning. This method of preserving and softening animal skins uses the brain of the animal being tanned. This process relies on enzymes in the brain to start a fermentation process that permanently softens the skin.

Of course, the atlatl range was set up for the entire day where visitors could try their luck at “mammoth hunting” (our targets are designed to look like miniature mammoths). If the visitor is skilled (or lucky) enough to hit the mammoth on the targets then they are awarded with a highly-prized “I Hit the Mammoth at Celebration Park” sticker. With the full day of visitors attempting the atlatl, several of the coveted stickers were handed out. In addition to the atlatl, petroglyph tours also ran all day.

Joined by his volunteer brother Aiden, Interpretive Specialist Colton Oswald taught primitive fire-making together. While not many visitors (or staff) had much luck, as it was a windy day, they still tried their hand at two techniques for making fire: the hand drill and the bow drill. The hand drill requires the user to spin a long, thin stick (called the spindle) back and forth very quickly to make an ember. The bow drill uses a small bow with a fiber string to turn the spindle faster and more times than you could by hand, while pressing down from the top to create friction in the hearth board (the piece of wood on the ground). Only a rare few are able to make fire, but luckily Colton helps keep this skill alive for us in the 21st century.

The last event included learning how to collect and roll cordage with our cordage expert, Interpretive Specialist Jenna Raino. She showed guests the best native plants for making cordage and the process of turning raw materials into strong, workable string or rope. With a steady flow of visitors throughout the entire day, Jenna helped create a large haul of cordage.

This year’s successful Archaeology Day was due to the wonderful individuals who volunteered their time and experience to teach anyone who wanted to learn. Thanks is also due to Celebration Park staff and volunteers who helped plan and see the day run smoothly. Canyon County Parks participates in Archaeology Month every May and will have many of the same activities and more in 2025. We are grateful for the volunteers, staff, and visitors who participated and we hope to have another great experience next year! ■



*Archaeologists Cameron Hogin (left) and Dean Shaw (right) discuss artifacts in the museum.*



*Adelaide Starry works a piece of obsidian under the watchful eye of the Idaho Flintknappers.*



# Historic Preservation Commission

The Canyon County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) has been busy! On April 23rd, the HPC hosted representatives from the Idaho State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) as they talked about updating the Idaho Historic Preservation Plan (IHPP). SHPO describes the purpose of the IHPP as setting “the priorities and goals for the historic preservation community throughout Idaho.” The meeting drew visitors from Canyon County, and as far out as Weiser.

- This year, the HPC saw almost \$140,000 in funding requests from Canyon County organizations – the most since the HPC was reestablished in 2013. We excitedly received applications from some of our frequent partners, as well as proposals from three organizations who’ve never submitted applications before. Parks staff presented the HPC’s funding recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners in June. Selected awardees will be notified this fall after the Board of County Commissioners have finalized the Fiscal Year 2025 budget.
- In July, the board of the Melba Valley Historical Society (MVHS) hosted the HPC at their museum. The MVHS and volunteers dedicate countless hours to preserving and caring for their historic building. Earlier this year, Preservation Idaho celebrated the MVHS for their work as part of their Orchids and Onions award program.
- Our new Historic Preservation Officer (see her introduction article on page 18) is working hard to familiarize herself with the Commission, the grant program, and the many history organizations in the county. She’s added several new features to the HPC website, including an interactive map and a list of historical or cultural entities in the county. If you can think of other ways she can help to improve access to history across the county – please let us know!



*Patricia Nillson with the State Historic Preservation Office talks about that Idaho Historic Preservation Plan at the Canyon County Administration Building this spring.*



# RC&D UPDATE

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## FREE FISHING DAY

The Southwest Idaho Resource Conservation & Development Council (RC&D) is a local non-profit supporting conservation efforts in the region. One of its projects is Idaho Free Fishing Day. Every year, on the second Saturday in June, anyone can fish without a license. Catch limits, opening dates, tag requirements, and tackle restrictions remain in effect. Together with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), the RC&D hosts a fishing clinic for those new to the sport. This includes lending rods, reels, and bait, as well as teaching how to cast, catch, and handle fish in a non-destructive way. RC&D President Tom Bicak said, “Free Fishing Day is not about a harvest. It’s about reinforcing a positive and responsible perspective on what makes Idaho a wonderful place to live. Our clean rivers, lakes, and streams; forests, deserts, and wildlands in general are opportunities to unplug the family from social media and refresh and rejuvenate our bodies and minds. In doing so, we are advocating for the conservation and excellent management of these public resources.”



*Hundreds of kids turned out at Kleiner Park in Meridian for Free Fishing Day.*

RC&D Grant Coordinator and Free Fishing Day supervisor Bill Moore and IDFG Volunteer Rich Williams were onsite, and reported that over 200 youth registered for the clinics at Kleiner Park in Meridian. With parents, guardians and other folks visiting, that number easily surpassed 400 in attendance. Clinics covered topics such as fish identification, fishing knots, and other relevant instruction.

Thanks to generous donations from local businesses and individuals, the RC&D and IDFG were able to give away door prizes every hour. These prizes included rods and reels, tackle boxes, and full sets of fishing gear.

The IDFG Rod Loaner Program was a great hit. This is the first year the event actually ran out of worms. All in all, everyone had a good time, and came away with a little better understanding of fishing and conservation of our natural resources.

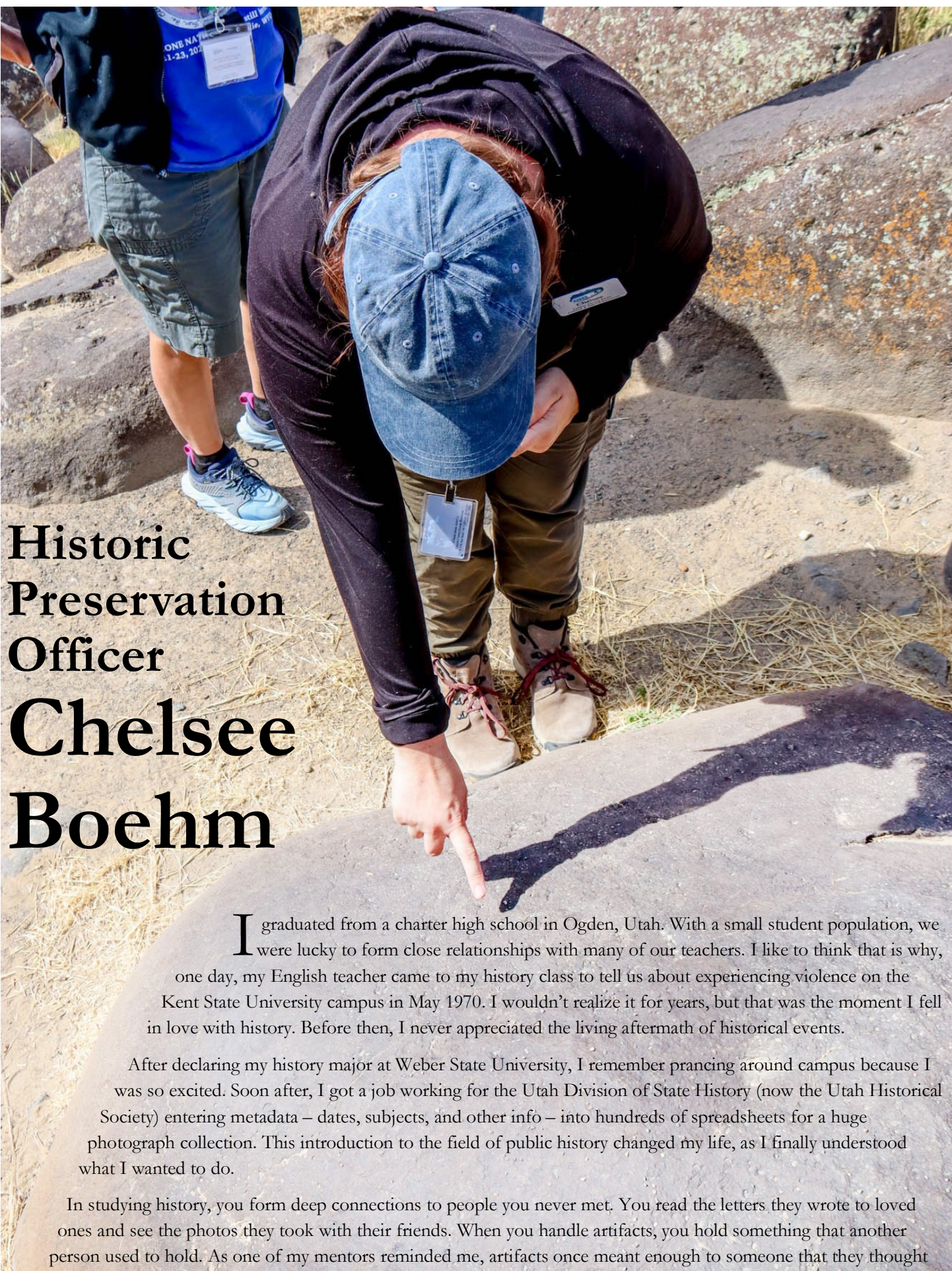


*The RC&D has been a partner of Idaho Free Fishing Day for years, and it's one of the council's favorite projects.*



*Idaho Department of Fish and Game employees and volunteers led several clinics on fishing, including this lesson on knot-tying.*





# Historic Preservation Officer Chelsee Boehm

I graduated from a charter high school in Ogden, Utah. With a small student population, we were lucky to form close relationships with many of our teachers. I like to think that is why, one day, my English teacher came to my history class to tell us about experiencing violence on the Kent State University campus in May 1970. I wouldn't realize it for years, but that was the moment I fell in love with history. Before then, I never appreciated the living aftermath of historical events.

After declaring my history major at Weber State University, I remember prancing around campus because I was so excited. Soon after, I got a job working for the Utah Division of State History (now the Utah Historical Society) entering metadata – dates, subjects, and other info – into hundreds of spreadsheets for a huge photograph collection. This introduction to the field of public history changed my life, as I finally understood what I wanted to do.

In studying history, you form deep connections to people you never met. You read the letters they wrote to loved ones and see the photos they took with their friends. When you handle artifacts, you hold something that another person used to hold. As one of my mentors reminded me, artifacts once meant enough to someone that they thought



the object should be preserved forever. There's nothing like immersing yourself in another person. While it can feel incredibly invasive, it also gives you an opportunity to learn and share stories you would never have known or appreciated otherwise. There's nothing like taking a walk in someone else's shoes to make you better understand the world around you (but really, please don't try to walk in a pair of shoes you find at a museum).

Sharing and preserving history and the physical manifestation of cultures has been the cornerstone of my career. Surrounding myself with historic documents, photos, and objects has been like a dream. But, more than anything, my work is about the people. I love the opportunity to share stories that people



*Chelsee (right) with Antoinette Cavanaugh of the Shoshone Paiute Tribe.*



never knew, and that the person isn't around to tell. When you're in a space sharing history, it often means getting to meet new people who have their own stories to tell. And all you have to do is listen.

Since I paraded around the Weber State University campus, I have been fortunate to work for archives, museums, and libraries at state, county, and city governments. I have visited places I never imagined and met incredible people, including astronauts and Olympians.

As the first person to serve as Historic Preservation Officer for Canyon County Parks, I help to manage the Historic Preservation Commission, work with the State Historic Preservation Office on Certified Local Government grants, care for the library at the Crossroads Museum, and more. I know I have a lot to learn, but I am looking forward to watching this position bloom. More than anything, I am excited to get to know the people and organizations that save and share history in Canyon County. ■

*P. 18: Photo by Chris Wethered*

*Chelsee tries her hand at cordage making during 2024 Archaeology Month.*



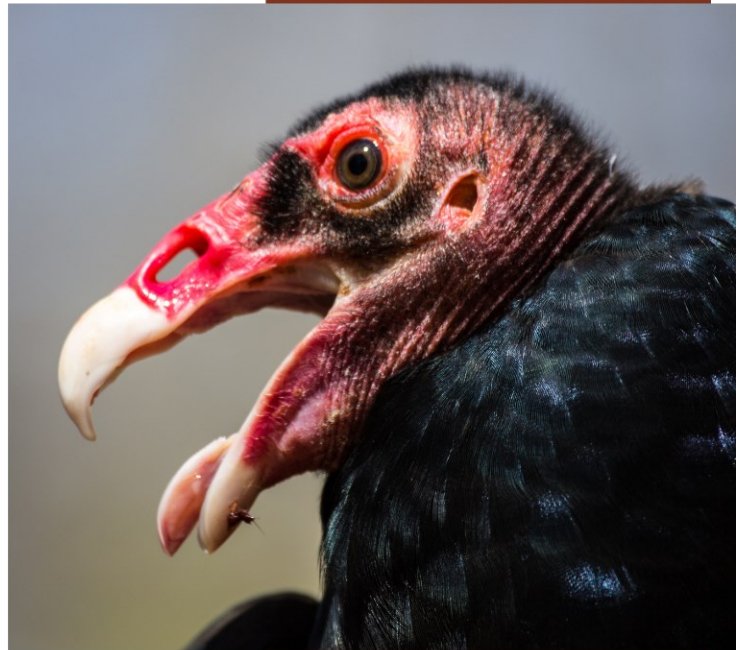
# Nature's Housekeepers

by Dylan Starry

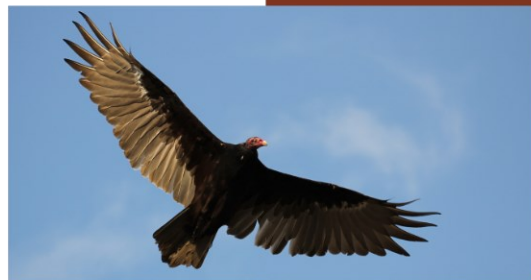
Movies have conditioned us to think vultures are a malevolent bird. In the old cowboy films, vultures circle the air above our brave protagonist, who's trudging through the desert in search of water after being left behind by some evil-doer. The vultures know our hero is about to die, and they're waiting for his death so they can swarm him to devour his remains. Now, they *do* eat carrion (dead animals), and their main defense mechanism is projectile vomiting acidic vomit in the faces of predators. But it's this, and many other unique adaptations, that make the turkey vulture such an interesting animal, ecologically; they are the clean-up crew of our world.

Turkey vultures breed in southern Idaho, so it's not uncommon to see them. Many birdwatchers might mistake them from below as an eagle or hawk. The best way to tell it's a vulture is to watch for its telltale teeter from side to side while flying, plus the V-shape of its wings while in flight. These behaviors help them catch rising thermals – they flap their wings very infrequently. Vultures are among the largest birds in Idaho with wingspans up to 72 inches. They also display minimal sexual dimorphism – males and females are nearly identical. Their scientific name, *Cathartes aura*, means “golden purifier” or “purifying breeze,” which sounds like a euphemism, but “purifier” is actually a pretty good descriptor for these important birds.

But all that isn't what makes them so fascinating; it's that vultures are the housekeepers of our ecosystems. They eat and safely digest the dead things of the world. With an extremely keen sense of smell – able to pick up trace amounts of odor (just a few parts per trillion) – vultures hover



*The majestic, beautiful turkey vulture.*



*In flight, they can detect odors at just a few parts per trillion in order to find dead animals below.*





Projectile vomiting is an effective defense mechanism.



They will stand in this position known as horaltic stance.



Vultures walk awkwardly on the ground; it takes a lot of effort to fly.



The pervious nostril seen here is vital to the turkey vulture's ability to eat **anything**.

over the landscape seeking out the scent of the recently-dead. They have what's called a pervious nostril – the hole goes all the way through the beak, making it easier for them to smell, as well as clear anything blocking their airway (they often eat by sticking their whole head inside a carcass). They'll eat pretty much any recently-dead animal, from small mammals to large ungulates (animals with hooves). But they've also been observed eating plant matter, live invertebrates, fruit, and even animal dung. This ability to eat **anything** is due to the extremely high acidity of their stomach acid, coupled with a symbiotic relationship with several highly-toxic bacteria in their gut, *Clostridia* and

*Fusobacteria*. The strong acid and dominant bacteria create an environment so toxic that no other bacteria can survive, including anthrax, tuberculosis, and even the virus that causes rabies. Another behavior observed is known as horaltic stance. This spreading of the wings is thought to serve multiple functions, such as drying the wings, warming the vulture up, and even baking off bacteria.


Turkey vultures also have a reputation of being pretty... gross. And I'm not going to try to convince you otherwise. They defecate all over themselves. (Gross!) But it's actually for a good reason. As mentioned previously, their stomach acid is highly acidic. This results in their urine also being highly acidic. When they step into a carcass, full of contaminated flesh, they will excrete onto their legs and feet, where the uric acid kills any bacteria or toxins. This process also serves another purpose, known as urohidrosis: turkey vultures use the evaporation of water in feces and urine to cool themselves.

These unique (albeit, yucky) adaptations make turkey vultures critical to our ecosystems. Their digestive tracts kill harmful bacteria and toxins that could wreak havoc on any other species. While they might not be great to look at, the benefits gained from these unique birds help maintain the delicate balance our ecosystems require. ■

#### Sources:

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# Canoe Science Camp

Another summer means another year of Canoe Science Camps at Lake Lowell Park. Typical to Idaho weather, some days were cold and blustery while others were wildly hot, but this year's staff and camp participants made it through with smiles all around. This season's staff were incredible, from their knowledge and experience, to their attitudes and readiness to take on anything: it really made for an enjoyable summer. Returning Field Instructor Paige Calley helped lead new Field Instructors Lacey Scott, Brendan Keleher, Alexa Barnum, and Noelle Halverson through the six-week program.

Training this year was an intensive course in outdoor education, including lessons on ecology and water testing and field trips to partner agencies at Boise Watershed Education Center, Idaho Department of Fish and Game's Nampa Fish Hatchery, and the College of Idaho Orma J. Smith Museum of Natural History. Safety training was conducted on boat safety with the Canyon County Sheriff's Office, first aid and CPR certification with Canyon County

*Canoe Science Camp participants dip their feet in the water while learning about water science.*



Paramedics, and in-house training on water rescue and boat righting.

Each week of camp brought 14 students, both new and familiar faces! Return students who loved camp in the past came back or sent their younger sibling to find out just how much they can learn right in their own backyards.

With new staff each summer, new ideas are incorporated. This year, participants tried new ways of learning science. Field Instructor Lacey Scott, a local P.E. teacher during the school year, brought lots of ideas of fun ways to incorporate science lessons into outdoor games. Students loved learning about animal adaptations during “Camouflage” - a fun twist on hide-and-seek!

Heat was an issue this year, with some days hitting over 110 degrees by the afternoon. Field Instructors put their heads together and came up with ways to modify activities to take place in the shade and with the sprinkler to keep kids (and adults!) cool. By using a tarp to re-create a watershed and a sprinkler to simulate rain, students were able to understand the hydrological properties of watersheds, how they store and move water, in a very visual, hands-on way, while also avoiding overheating

A big part of Canoe Science Camp is the Paddle Sports Education Certification participants receive. In partnership with the Canyon County Sheriff's Office Marine Patrol and Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, students learn paddle sports safety and take a test at the end of camp. Every student who took the test passed, resulting in over 50 new state-certified recreationalists on Idaho waterways. This means increased safety on our rivers and lakes, resulting in fewer casualties and rescues needed each year.

While the camp has ended, and temporary staff have left, this year was one of the most successful in terms of enrollment. And while it's difficult to quantify, it was one of the most successful camps in terms of fun, too. ■

*Right, all: Campers and Field Instructors enjoy the summer canoeing on the lake, learning ecology and hydrology, and learning boat safety. But most importantly, they learned to have fun and be safe in Idaho's great outdoors.*





# Nampa Fish Hatchery

## A Trout-of-this-World Experience

*By Brendan Keleher*

*This article appears as one in a series of nature- and science-themed pieces written by Canoe Science Camp Field Instructors as part of their work.*



*IDFG Fish Culturist Nick Minich gives Canoe Science Camp Field Instructors a guided tour of the Nampa Fish Hatchery and talks about fish rearing.*

Amid the heart of Idaho's Treasure Valley lies a hidden gem, pivotal to the preservation of aquatic life and sustainability of our natural ecosystems - the Nampa Fish Hatchery. This facility, operated by Idaho Fish and Game stands as a barrier between the encroaching suburban interface and the natural streams and wildlife of days of old.

### **A Sanctuary for Aquatic Life**

Established privately in 1975 and purchased by Idaho Fish and Game (IDFG) in 1982, the Nampa Fish Hatchery is a fish rearing facility located two miles south of Nampa on Powerline Rd. The facility

began as a modest place to raise fish to stock in the local waterways, but quickly grew to a large facility that supplies over 700,000 fish per year to multiple lakes and rivers across the state of Idaho. This hatchery plays a crucial role in maintaining a healthy balance and sustainability of the local streams, rivers and lakes.

### **Sustainable Practices in Action**

The Nampa Fish Hatchery embodies the principles of sustainability and stewardship. Through careful monitoring and scientific research biologists and specialists working at the hatchery oversee the breeding, hatching, and raising of various fish species critical to the waterways of Idaho. These efforts seek to maintain sustainable numbers of fish, and genetic diversity in the waterways, enhance natural survival rates of fish, and support local sport and commercial fishing.

### **Education and Outreach**

The Nampa Fish Hatchery also serves as an educational center. Visitors can go on a guided tour of the facilities where they can learn about the life cycle of fish, how water quality is maintained, and the role of hatcheries in providing



biodiversity to local aquatic ecosystems. Through this, not only are visitors educated on crucial processes to preserve local waterways, but can be inspired to become future conservationists.

### How It Works

The fish hatchery uses a maximum of eight pump-assisted artesian wells to house the fish. Temperature-controlled water (at exactly 59 degrees) is pumped through 16 early-rearing raceways, as well as 13 final-rearing raceways. Nearly all of the fish produced at the hatchery are comprised of 12-inch catchable and three- to five-inch fingerling-sized rainbow trout. They also rear Lahontan cutthroat trout to fingerling size and release them in waters statewide. During the early fall, employees also operate a Kokanee salmon trap on the tributaries to Deadwood Reservoir. The hatchery takes eggs of these various species and raises them to an acceptable size to release into the local rivers, lakes, and streams for future generations to enjoy.

### Looking Ahead

As the environmental challenges we face grow, and natural habitats face increasing pressure, places such as the Nampa Fish Hatchery become even more important. Their ongoing research into fish health and habitat regeneration, as well as collaborations with other state agencies, education groups, and conservation institutions will continue to be pivotal to the future success of our local aquatic ecosystems. Their interactive tours and engaging presentations foster a deeper appreciation for Idaho's natural heritage as well as fisheries management and ecological stewardship.

### Plan Your Visit

For those interested in experiencing Idaho's aquatic bounty first hand, a visit to the Nampa Fish Hatchery is well worth it. Visitors are welcome daily from 8 am to 4 pm year-round. Guided tours are provided to local school groups and anyone else who is interested by calling (208) 465-8479.

Whether you are a seasoned angler, nature enthusiast, or just simply curious about conservation efforts in Idaho, the Nampa Fish Hatchery offers a glimpse into the unique and careful balance between ever growing human activity and our natural ecosystems. Plan your visit today and discover the lasting beauty and importance of our natural resources. ■



*Boise State University sophomore Brendan Keleher is an avid outdoorsman. When he's not at school, he can usually be found on the local waterways searching for trout with his fly rod.*

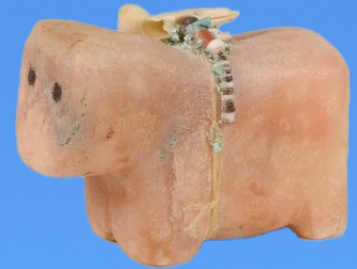
*The Nampa Fish Hatchery welcomes visitors daily between 8 am and 4 pm. For more information, visit <https://idfg.idaho.gov/visit/hatchery/nampa> or call (208) 465-8479.*



# Summer Stories In Stone

## How our flagship program is modified for summer

Idahoans are no strangers to dry heat. This year was no different. Our flagship archaeology program, Stories in Stone, is a favorite of students and visitors alike. But the heat and wildfire smoke can make it tricky sometimes. To combat these factors, we modify our field trips to include time in the shade, under the mister, or indoors. One of these modifications is including a lesson on ceramics, in lieu of the Guffey Bridge hike. During this program, kids learn about Native American figurines, made from various materials including stone, mineral, wood, bone, and antler. Our staff teach kids to make them from air-dry clay. The end result is a cute little charm that's fun to make and easy to take home.



*This figurine is an example of an animal from the Zuni culture.*

Other modifications to the field trip have been made to include students younger than we normally see during the school year. Summer camps, daycares, and other youth groups make up the majority of our summer programs. While atlatl remains one of the most popular programs, we also offer a hoop and stick game as an alternative for the youngest of our visitors. This ancient game played by Native Americans consists of a hoop woven with cordage to create a web and a stick with a wide end. The hoop is stood up or rolled along the ground and kids throw the stick by hand, and the stick gets caught in the web. This teaches kids hand-eye coordination in preparation for hunting and other necessary tasks.

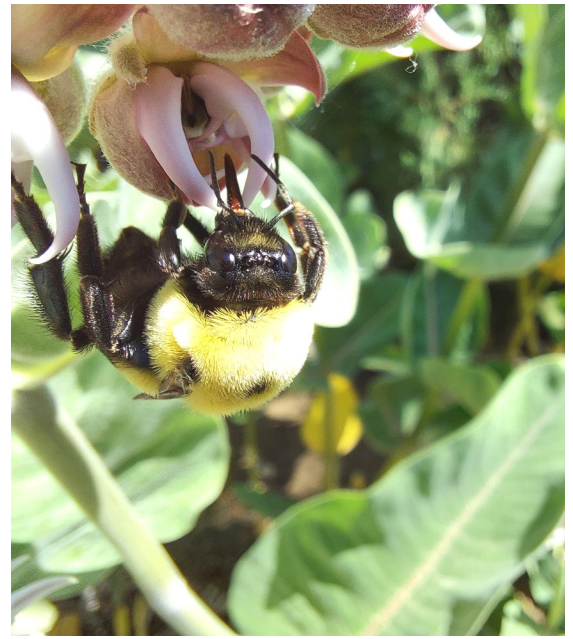


*This hoop and stick game is used for Summer Stories in Stone.*

More information is available on the Parks Field Trip website at [www.canyoncounty.id.gov/Field-Trips](http://www.canyoncounty.id.gov/Field-Trips).








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*This boulder has been shaped by wind and time.*

*Above left, right: Life abounds on the Snake River.*

*Center, left: The once-green cheatgrass is dead and dry by summer.*

*Below, left: These photos and many others in this publication are courtesy of Interpretive Specialist Larry Haney, pictured here.*





CANYON COUNTY  
PARKS AT  
**CELEBRATION  
PARK**

# STORIES IN STONE

This place-based archaeological field trip allows students to connect to where they live through exploration, observation, and hands-on experience. The program highlights how archaeologists draw conclusions from evidence left by early inhabitants.

Students will be immersed in the rich cultural and natural history of southwest Idaho. They will leave with a better understanding of how ancient cultures and lifeways relate to their lives today.

Students will learn about:

Archaeology on the  
**PETROGLYPH  
FIELD**

Ancient Tools in  
**LITHIC  
LIFEWAYS**

Mining History on  
**GUFFEY  
BRIDGE**

Hunting on the  
**ATLATL  
RANGE**

## Information

- ✓ 10:00 AM—2:00 PM
- ✓ 4th Grade and up
- ✓ Students should bring a lunch
- ✓ One lesson indoors, three outdoors

## Celebration Park

5000 Victory Rd.  
Melba, ID 83641

## Registration Link

[www.canyoncounty.id.gov/field-trips](http://www.canyoncounty.id.gov/field-trips)



**More Information:**

[parksprograms@canyoncounty.id.gov](mailto:parksprograms@canyoncounty.id.gov)

(208) 455-6022





CANYON COUNTY  
PARKS AT  
**CELEBRATION  
PARK**

# WILDLAND FIRE FIELD TRIP

A place-based ecological experience designed to teach students how they interact with fire in the natural ecosystem of Idaho, the sagebrush-steppe. While this program teaches fire safety, its main focus is on the impacts of fire in our local ecosystem.

Students will explore the Park's fire regime and learn about fire behavior. They will also learn about wildland firefighting tools and methods. Students will leave with a better understanding of how wildfire regimes relate to their lives in Idaho.



Fire Management

**FIREFIGHTING  
TOOLS**

How Fire Works in

**HANDS-ON  
FIRE LAB**

Fire Regimes on a

**FIRE  
ECOLOGY  
HIKE**

Hunting on the

**ATLATL  
RANGE**

## Information

- ✓ 10:00 AM—2:00 PM
- ✓ 5th Grade and up
- ✓ Students should bring a lunch
- ✓ One lesson indoors, three outdoors

## Celebration Park

5000 Victory Rd.  
Melba, ID 83641

## Registration Link

[www.canyoncounty.id.gov/field-trips](http://www.canyoncounty.id.gov/field-trips)



**More Information:**

[parksprogram@canyoncounty.id.gov](mailto:parksprogram@canyoncounty.id.gov)

(208) 455-6022





## CANYON COUNTY PARKS AT **CELEBRATION PARK**

# WINTER DESERT ECOLOGY

Students will be immersed in Celebration Park's winter landscapes. The program highlights the plants and animals of the Park, including birds of prey, and how they are adapted to winter in the high desert. Students will also learn how native people survived and thrived here during the coldest parts of the year.

This program is a collaborative teaching effort between Canyon County Parks and the Bureau of Land Management's Morley Nelson Snake River Birds of Prey National Conservation



Birds of Prey in

**MEET THE  
RAPTORS**

Ancient Tools in

**LITHIC  
LIFEWAYS**

Adaptation on

**ECOLOGY  
TRAIL HIKE**

Hunting on the

**ATLATL  
RANGE**

### Information

- ✓ 10:00 AM—2:00 PM
- ✓ 5th Grade and up
- ✓ Students should bring a lunch
- ✓ Two lessons indoors, two outdoors

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### Registration Link

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**More Information:**

[parksprogram@canyoncounty.id.gov](mailto:parksprogram@canyoncounty.id.gov)

(208) 455-6022



# Fall Field Trips

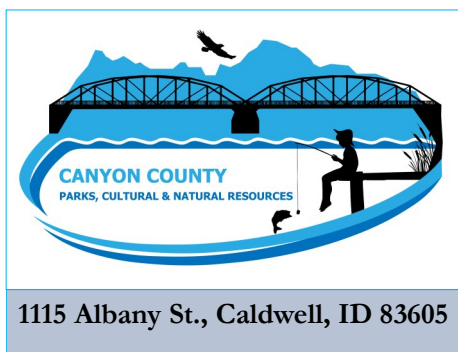
Fall field trips are fully scheduled, with some days even double-booked! While we're booked up for Stories in Stone through the first week of November, we are still accepting bookings for Wildland Fire in late Fall and Winter Desert Ecology during winter. See the flyers on the previous pages for details!



School	Date
Sage Intl Middleton	9/4/2024
Van Buren	9/5/2024
Pierce Park	9/5/2024
Horizon Elementary	9/6/2024
Sacred Heart	9/9/2024
Chief Joseph Elementary	9/10/2024
Highlands	9/11/2024
Trail Wind	9/12/2024
Cole Valley	9/13/2024
St Joseph's	9/16/2024
CDSA	9/20/2024
Valley View	9/23/2024
Cole Valley	9/27/2024
Reed	9/30/2024
Pioneer	10/1/2024
Hillcrest	10/2/2024
New Plymouth	10/3/2024
Siena Elementary School	10/4/2024
Longfellow Elementary	10/7/2024
Pioneer	10/8/2024
Whittier	10/9/2024
North Star Charter	10/10/2024
Thomas Jefferson Charter School	10/11/2024
Collister	10/14/2024
Anser	10/15/2024
Anser	10/16/2024
Roosevelt	10/17/2024
Connection Homeschool	10/18/2024
South Hills Homeschool	10/18/2024
Nampa Christian	10/21/2024
Adams	10/22/2024
Mtn View Hs - German Exchange	10/23/2024
Hillsdale	10/24/2024
Hillsdale	10/25/2024
Ronald Reagan Elementary	10/28/2024
Amity	10/19/2024
Taft Elementary	10/31/2024
Chaparral	11/1/2024
Future Public School	11/8/2024

*Above: Interpretive Specialist Larry Haney talks to students at the wickiup.*





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*The view through the spotting scope  
in the Celebration Park Visitor  
Center. Photo by Larry Haney*