March 2022

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Past GM Reports

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Quotes

“PBS is my daily viewing network; the programming is outstanding.” – Ghislaine

“I thoroughly enjoy watching the broadcasts, streaming on Passport and receiving the monthly issues of the Channels publications. Keep up the good work!” – Susan

Join Us for Festival
February 25 — March 13

Each night and weekend day of Festival is filled with musical specials, inspiring documentaries, Idaho history specials, and health and wellness programs that remind viewers of the vital role public television plays in educating, entertaining and enriching families throughout the year. You can find our complete daily broadcast schedule online at https://www.idahoptv.org/schedule.

JFAC State Funding Recommendation

On Thursday, February 24, the Joint Finance – Appropriations Committee voted 18-2 in favor of the Governor’s recommended budget for IdahoPTV. These state general funds pay for the technical positions, some administration positions, building leases, operational expenses, and hardware for our operations and broadcasting network. The budget recommendation now goes to the full House and Senate for their votes before going to the Office of the Governor.
In the Community

Idaho Legisladies and Gentlemen Event

The Idaho Legisladies and Gentlemen (legislator spouses) hosted an informational presentation by IdahoPTV staff this past month. Jenifer Johnson, Kari Wardle, Bill Manny, Bruce Reichert and Jeff Tucker talked about the importance of public television in Idaho and entertained the group with clips from upcoming programs and projects, including education work being done in communities around Idaho.

Nominate a Teacher to Be Our Next Digital Innovator

Do you know an innovative educator who finds creative and effective ways to engage their students and enhance learning by integrating technology or digital media into the classroom?

Nominate an Idaho teacher as the 2022-2023 IdahoPTV Digital Innovator! The nomination period is March 14 to April 15, 2022.

IdahoPTV is dedicated to supporting teachers throughout the state and fostering collaboration between teachers. Each May, we select one IdahoPTV Digital Innovator. The winner will receive an all-expenses-paid trip to the National Council for Computer Education Conference; a Classroom Innovation Kit of their choosing (worth up to $1,000); and the opportunity to represent IdahoPTV at educational conferences and collaborate with IdahoPTV’s education manager to help Idaho teachers integrate technology into their classrooms.

The winner will be entered into the national PBS Digital Innovator All-Star contest.

For more information or to nominate a teacher, visit https://www.idahoptv.org/education/educators/innovator/.
Idaho Experience is on track to bring the history of Idaho’s railroads to Idaho Public Television on March 3. Producer/director Forrest Burger says “It’s been a wild ride. The topic is so intriguing, and there’s such a huge fan base surrounding trains. I’ve met some incredible people while producing the show, and to say that I’ve learned a lot is an understatement!”

“Tracks of Time” includes segments on the first railroad to enter Idaho, how Union Pacific built the Sun Valley Resort, and “The Great Sheep Wreck of 1912,” to name just a few. Forrest wants to thank his colleagues Eric Westrom and Andy Lawless who have worked tirelessly to help bring this show to life.

“Tracks of Time” will air March 3 at 7 p.m. and March 13 at 5:30 p.m. during IdahoPTV’s Festival.

And be sure to check out the Idaho Experience website: https://www.idahoptv.org/shows/idahoexperience/. “All aboard!”

Outdoor Idaho will debut “The Next Chapter” — a program on “change” — Thursday, March 3, at 8:30 p.m., with a repeat Sunday, March 13, at 7 p.m.

“It’s a show about the ways individuals and organizations are turning the page on the next chapter of their lives,” explained Lauren Melink, co-producer of the hourlong program.

“Change is the inevitable constant,” said co-producer and host Bruce Reichert. “It doesn’t matter if you’re a farmer in Twin Falls trying new methods of growing crops or a couple retiring from a life in the Salmon River wilderness. Or even if we’re talkin’ federal agencies like the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management.”

“We’ll look at the way technology is changing how we manage wildlife,” said Lauren; “how climate change is affecting a business dependent upon timely snowfall; and the changes going on with trail maintenance. In other words, there’s something for just about everyone in this show.”
Others who have lent their talents to “The Next Chapter” are Jay Krajic, Pat Metzler, Peter Morrill, and Hank Nystrom.

Outdoor Idaho is a centerpiece of IdahoPTV’s major fundraiser each March. Aside from “The Next Chapter,” other programs on the docket for the two week pledge drive are “Spud Country” (Feb 27), “Off The Beaten Path” (March 6), and “Sawtooths on My Mind” (March 10). Be sure to check out the website, https://www.idahoptv.org/shows/outdooridaho/, to watch past shows dating back to the 1990s.

The Science Trek crew wants you to join them on “Family Night,” March 9, during IdahoPTV’s March pledge drive. Various shorts will air in-between programs and breaks, and viewers can pledge for the much-coveted Science Trek mugs.

“We’ve been busy working on topics that meet state and national science standards,” explains show producer Joan Cartan-Hansen. “We’re beginning our 24th season soon, so we’re always looking for new show topics and checking existing topics to see which ones need to be updated.”

If you have a suggestion, send your ideas to JCH@idahoptv.org. And be sure to check out the Science Trek website at https://sciencetrek.org/. Millions of students and parents have visited the site just in the past year!

Assisting Joan are videographer Troy Shreve, audio assistant Tammy Scardino and the show’s actors, Paris, Leah and Angelo (they recently filmed at the Julius Jeker Planetarium for the “Astronomy” show.

Upcoming shows include “Astronomy” in March, “Soil” in April, and “Elk” in May.

Marcia Franklin wrapped up her 14th season of hosting Conversations From the Sun Valley Writers’ Conference in January. If you missed any of the six interviews that she and the Dialogue team recorded at the well-known event, you can watch them at: https://video.idahoptv.org/show/dialogue/collections/sun-valley-writers-conference-collection/

Currently, Marcia and her colleagues Troy Shreve and Jennie Sue Weltner are in the planning stages for a new online series about the arts. The series, which will highlight creativity in its many forms, will premiere on Idaho Public Television’s website and YouTube channel in late fall.

“Coverage of the arts has been one of the few missing colors in our programming palette,” says Marcia. “We’re starting from a blank canvas, which is both exciting and daunting. So feel free to send ideas my way!”

Marcia can be reached at creative@idahoptv.org.
It’s almost March, and everyone at the station is preparing for our biggest fundraising event of the year; we call it Festival.

“It’s our public media version of a gala event and takes months of planning,” says Jenifer Johnson, Director of Strategic Fundraising.

She should know; Jenifer and her talented staff have handled a dozen Festivals, including the last two during a pandemic. “It’s a time to celebrate what makes Idaho Public Television unique and special, especially during a pandemic.”

“We particularly appreciate what our talented writers, producers, videographers and editors bring to each Festival,” said Jenifer. “Together, we all get to enjoy the debut of new productions from award-winning programs such as Outdoor Idaho and Idaho Experience, and hear from the talented crew members themselves, live from the Festival set. Hearing from the producers of Idaho Reports, Dialogue and Science Trek is the icing on the cake.”

Jenifer reminds us that “it is also when we ask you to contribute what you can to support public television that is authentically, beautifully Idaho. After all, Idaho Public Television is made possible, thanks to viewers like YOU.”

“Ligertown” is a future Idaho Experience show that is currently in production. It will tell the story of African lions that escaped the Ligertown compound back in 1995 near the town of Lava Hot Springs.

Producer Aaron Kunz just returned from Pocatello this week. He joined forces with the documentary class at Idaho State University for an interview with Sheriff Tony Manu. This particular documentary class at ISU’s Department of Media, Communications, and Persuasion was created with the Idaho Experience team in mind.

“Students in this class will provide story ideas, interviews, and do other work to assist Idaho Experience in the coming years,” said Aaron. “The work they do could be used in full-length shows and short videos on the IdahoPTV website. We are excited to work with the class and its professor, John Young.”

Aaron talked with Sheriff Manu, who was one of the responding deputies to Ligertown on the night of September 20, 1995. “He recalls that first night,” said Aaron, “and the following days as sheriff’s deputies and several other law enforcement agencies worked hard to collect all the lions that escaped Ligertown.”

If you have any stories, video, or pictures of Ligertown and want to share them with Idaho Experience, you can reach Aaron Kunz at aaron.kunz@idahoptv.org.

Idaho Experience will explore Idaho’s homesteaders, in a program called “Proving Up,” set to air later this year.

Kris Millgate, an independent producer from Idaho Falls, will be spearheading the effort. “It’s about Idaho’s homesteaders and how they shaped the Gem State more than a century ago, with a mass migration similar to the pile of pandemic people moving to our state now.”
Kris is familiar to Outdoor Idaho viewers, having produced a handful of shows over a ten year period. “But this is my first Idaho Experience. I can tell right away, it’s a different beast.” How so?

“Books. Three down. Seven to go. I’ll have 10 books finished by the time I shoot the first interview in April,” said Kris. “I’ve never read so much on one topic for one show. That’s what makes Idaho Experience a different beast.”

Kris notes that Idaho’s libraries host priceless collections for show topics like “Proving Up.” “Some of the books are so old I think I should be wearing gloves when I open them. Others are so rare or so Idaho-centric that they’re stored in the Idaho Room. Books in that locked space never leave the library so they have to be studied on site.

“What I’m enjoying most is how these paper tomes reveal repeat behavior. What we’re doing now mirrors what we thought was brilliant a century ago, too. It’s fascinating research for a show that will fascinate you in August.”

He makes it look so easy, but coming up with a cover for our Channels Magazine requires research and talent. We asked Jim Hadley to share his four favorite covers that he created for our Production programs. Turns out each of them has a unique story.

“Picking four favorite covers after twelve years of designing Channels Magazine was a challenge,” said Jim. “A photo I took at Merriam Lake graced the cover of the 2018 December Channels for the Outdoor Idaho show, “Land of The Lost River Range.”

“The lake’s elevation is 9,590 feet and sits at the base of 12,065 foot Mount Idaho. I found that after nearly a forty year break, backpacking with the Outdoor Idaho crew into the area of the state’s tallest peaks was a real physical challenge. Nine summits over 12,000 feet are located in Idaho, with 12,662 foot Mt. Borah being the tallest.

“The October 2021 Channels cover for Outdoor Idaho’s show “Salmon Reckoning” required the most research I had ever put into a cover image. I needed to educate myself on the numerous species of Salmon to locate the perfect Chinook image. Cloning a waterfall into the bottom half below the fish image finished the illusion of a salmon jumping in a natural setting.

“Finding the perfect Channels cover picture for Outdoor Idaho’s “Spud Country” show posed a unique problem. First was to make sure the view was the Idaho side. My final solution was to use Photoshop to combine a majestic Teton Mountain shot with a great-looking potato field. Add a few clouds into a sky background and mission accomplished.

“Our March 2022 Festival Channels cover featuring the Idaho Experience show “Tracks of Time” had me researching volumes of historic train images to understand a period-correct locomotive. I located a vintage map of Idaho and the Northwest to finish creating an historic feeling.”

It’s always a special treat when one of our locally grown shows makes the grade. An awful lot goes into it. It’s even better than getting the cover of the Rolling Stone!
We finally heard a few words from Bruce Reichert about his future plans.

“I know, I look too young to be retiring, right? But the time has finally come. I have to admit, though, it’s weird being the same age as old people!

“Creating TV shows is the most collaborative of projects, and there are many things I will miss... certainly the comradery of my colleagues, who have put up with me over the years and tried to make me better at my job.

“And to all of you, I extend my heartfelt thanks for your many kindnesses along the way, and for supporting locally grown programs like Outdoor Idaho and Idaho Experience, Idaho Reports and Dialogue and Science Trek.

“My last full day is April 1st. (But I’ve watched people ‘retire,’ only to return as volunteers when the right assignment comes calling.) I suspect there are things I’ll continue working on for a while; the Outdoor Idaho Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/outdoor.idaho, with its monthly photo contest, comes to mind. And you may hear my voice on a few shows currently in the pipeline.

“But Outdoor Idaho will continue to change and evolve, with new story lines that highlight the Idaho we don’t see often enough in today’s media landscape. I’m excited to see how it all plays out.

“I have no doubt that the station will continue to tell Idaho’s stories in a thoughtful and entertaining way, because our production team is as strong and deep as it’s ever been. And Management has always been supportive of our home-grown shows. Pretty sure that won’t change any time soon.

“It has been an honor and a privilege to be associated with Idaho Public Television for four decades. My love for the state has never once dimmed. Idaho truly is the keeper of special places. Esto Perpetua. May she endure forever.

“And may we have the wisdom to always appreciate what we have.”