February 2021

Quotes

“Idaho PBS is always our first place to go for news, and the variety of programs.” –Don and Sue

“We always enjoy Idaho Public Television. Our children grew up watching educational TV-now we watch with our grandson.” –Laurynda

February 26 – March 14


Preschool Development Grant

The Idaho Association for the Education of Young Children and the Idaho State Board of Education were recently awarded the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five from the U.S. Department of Education. Idaho Public Television is written into the grant for approximately $450,000 per year for the three-year project. IdahoPTV’s role is to expand the Idaho Ready to Learn campaign by creating public service announcements that promote quality early learning activities for families with young children. New and existing Ready to
Learn PSAs will be translated into Spanish to serve a larger segment of the population. IdahoPTV plans to create a documentary that features the history and importance of early learning in Idaho. We will also explore the possibility of creating a family-friendly app to encourage engagement in fun early learning experiences.

In the Community

Access to the internet can be a challenge in Idaho, especially in the state’s rural areas. That’s why, with online learning continuing in many districts until the end of the current school year, Idaho Public Television is continuing to bring the classroom into viewers’ homes with free broadcasts of Classroom Idaho: Learn @ Home on our CREATE Channel.

Last spring when schools across the state shut down and moved to distance learning, IdahoPTV knew there were thousands of parents and students without internet access and/or devices with which to access high-quality instruction. In response to that need, we launched Classroom Idaho, a free broadcast service that allows students to receive over-the-air instruction each weekday from certified Idaho teachers. Each lesson is aligned to Idaho content standards.

The Classroom Idaho broadcasts will continue for a spring 2021 session (February 1-May 21 with a pause from March 22-26 for spring break).

Lessons for students in grades K-6 will broadcast each weekday on our CREATE Channel (one of our five free broadcast channels) at the times listed below. Late afternoon hours will be a mix of English Language Learning (ELL) programs for all ages and PBS At-Home Learning programs for grades 7-12.

Classroom Idaho spring session 2021 is available for free across the entire state via an over-the-air antenna. Additionally, many cable providers carry the CREATE Channel in areas around the state. Check with your local cable provider for availability.

We are pleased to partner with the Boise School District, Jannus, and the Idaho State Board of Education to use the power of public television to deliver these lessons to students and families in homes throughout Idaho. PBS has always been America’s largest classroom, but now we are bringing Idaho’s teachers and their lessons directly into students’ homes.

Classroom Idaho: Learn @ Home is a partnership of Idaho Public Television and the Boise School District, the English Language Center and the Idaho Office for Refugees (projects of Jannus), and the Idaho State Board of Education.
Idaho Public Television’s PBS KIDS Writers Contest is here! This annual challenge for students in kindergarten through third grade encourages children to use their imaginations to write and illustrate their own stories. Up to 36 winners from around the state will receive wonderful prize packages including books and a $100 contribution to an Ideal Idaho College Savings account. All entries must be mailed March 20 to be eligible. Information can be found at https://www.idahoptv.org/kids/writers/.

“Airs Tuesday, February 16, at 8 p.m.”

Abuse, neglect and even divorce are all Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACEs for short. These types of experiences left unresolved or untreated, can create childhood trauma and toxic stress that can last a lifetime. Research shows some of the most common health conditions adults face like high blood pressure, diabetes and depression can all be rooted in ACEs. They can even shorten a person’s life span by up to 20 years. This documentary looks into the ACE’s research, how it effects people here in Idaho and most importantly, resilience, which could be considered the anti-dote to ACEs. We explore what makes people resilient and share powerful stories of how people have overcome tragedies. Learn how you can also become resilient and bounce forward after trauma.

“The Last Log Drive”
–Airs Thursday, February 18, at 8:30 p.m.

The 100-mile log drives on the North Fork of the Clearwater River represented the high-water mark of the timber industry in North Idaho, which employed thousands and shipped lumber around the country. The last drive in 1971 marked the end of a way of life.

In early-1900s Idaho, timber was king. The supply of coveted western white pine seemed endless. To the newly arrived Weyerhaeuser family, it was as if money grew on trees. Although Idaho forests promised jobs, the work of cutting timber and transporting it to the mill across rugged, roadless mountains would take innovation and hard work. North Idaho’s Clearwater River would serve as a channel to transport the valuable timber in annual log drives that would span a half century.

“These drives were hard,” says producer Aaron Kunz. “It took young, strong, agile men working all day in 37-degree water. We interviewed some of the men who worked those log drives. Their stories take viewers back to a different time in Idaho.”
“Earthquakes”

In new video shorts, host Joan Cartan Hansen explores Earth’s seismic rumblings, the tools scientists use to measure them, and the safety precautions people should take during an earthquake. Each month, Science Trek explores subjects with short videos available on the Science Trek website (https://sciencetrek.org/), YouTube, and PBS LearningMedia. The Science Trek website has facts, games, links, and lesson plans correlated to Idaho and national science standards.

Aaron Kunz:
In the early 1900’s, the timber industry in Idaho was booming. It seemed like an endless forest of western white pine. To the Weyerhaeuser family from the Great Lakes region of the country, it was too good to pass up. If money could grow on trees...this was it.

According to former state historian Keith Petersen, timber was one of the big three industries in Idaho alongside mining and agriculture. But while a rich supply of western white pine in Idaho meant money and jobs, getting the cut trees out of the mountains and to the mill was difficult.

Rugged mountains and a lack of roads at the time meant that sending the logs down river was the most effective way to move them.

For February’s Idaho Experience we focus on "The Last Log Drive" on the historic Clearwater River. The log drives began in the 1920’s and ended in 1971. These drives were hard; it took young, strong, agile men to be able to work all day in 37-degree water. We look at how they did this and the tools they used to make it possible.

And we look at one company that not only financed this log drive, but also built one of the biggest company towns in the West.

This is a revealing show that we started filming after the global pandemic; so we had to take it slow and careful; and yet we also limited our travel to just two weeks. We relied on a rich library of historical video and photos.

I hope this takes the viewers back to a different time in Idaho history. Catch the all new Idaho Experience: The Last Log Drive on February 18th on Idaho Public Television.
Troy Shreve:
The “State of the State Address” is typically presented with a lot of pomp, circumstance, and formality, and Idaho Public Television is right in the middle of it; we’re the broadcast pool feed for other media outlets in the valley and the state.

Like we’ve heard countless times over the past 10 months, this year was different, and we knew it would be. Seeing how a couple hundred people packed into the House of Representative posed a bit of a health risk this year, the Governor’s people decided to avail themselves of the new technology installed in the Capitol building last fall. The Governor would deliver his socially-distanced address from the Lincoln Auditorium, while the Senate and House would sit and listen from their respective chambers. Everyone would be able to see and hear each other.

Last week the lights, camera, teleprompter, and computer technology were set up in the Auditorium and a couple of practices took place, but the timing of presenting the Governor to the House and the Senate at the right moment for the broadcast feed turned out to be a challenge. That idea was scrapped after Speaker Scott Bedke pointed out that the Governor only has to “deliver” the speech. “As long as this happens, we’re good.”

Somewhere along the way, the Governor’s office asked if he could deliver his address from our main studio, but the logistics of broadcasting the speech and the subsequent press conference alongside a live Idaho Reports and pundits panel from the same studio posed a resource problem.

After more discussion with the Governor’s office, at the eleventh hour we collectively decided that our smaller Idaho Reports studio -- which wasn’t going to be in use during the speech -- would be the final resting place, and all the equipment was moved on Friday. After two more practices over the weekend, and some thoughtful set design, the Governor delivered his “State of the State Address” live to all Idahoans at 1:01 pm on Monday, January 11th.

Forrest Burger:
And, the barns will keep on comin’ for our annual March pledge drive. I’m working at home scouring footage and leafing through interviews to expand on our Outdoor Idaho “Barns of Idaho” show that aired in October. The hourlong version will feature some barns and interviews that we didn’t include in the half-hour episode.

Look for the lava rock Mountain View Barn in Jerome, a Sears kit barn outside of Juliaetta, a round barn near St. Maries and more!

Joan Cartan-Hansen:
Fish. Earthquakes. The Skeletal System. Horses. Animal Adaption. The Science Trek crew are working on various aspects of all of these shows. We recently filmed at the Idaho Museum of Natural History on the ISU campus. Dr. Brandon Peacock explained what scientists can learn about an animal (even we human animals) from the bones. It will be a video for our Skeletal System topic.

The museum has a show on skulls and a really good display of Idaho dinosaurs. (Yes, paleontologists have found some Idaho dinosaurs). I recommend a visit. We’ve also started looking at topics for our 23rd season, so if you have some suggestions, send me an email: JCH@idahoptv.org.
Lauren Melink:
"Solitude." That’s the word most frequently used by people interviewed for Outdoor Idaho’s upcoming show, “Off the Beaten Path.” A word that perfectly fits the year in which most of the video was shot. The show includes 11 segments, each of which highlights an “unbeaten path” across Idaho. I’ve written five segments so far; Bruce has added his narration, and Jay has already begun the tedious process of editing. As we dive deeper into that process, we’ll continue tweaking the scripts, soundbites and video until we think it’s just right.

We’re still exploring the possibility of including in the introduction a small segment on the historic Three Blaze Trail that led miners to Idaho’s last gold rush.

In the meantime, I’ve been turning each segment into a short video for our Outdoor Idaho Youtube channel. Be sure to check out southern Idaho’s Curlew National Grassland and Cougar Bay near Coeur d’Alene.

As far as the May show, "Women Who Hunt," nothing has been written yet, but I’m in the process of figuring out how exactly the show will look. And even though it’s nearly a year away, early conversations and research has already begun in regards to our December 2021 Outdoor Idaho hour-long show.

Bill Manny:
When we learned that Ken Burns and his Florentine Films were at work on a documentary about Ernest Hemingway, we saw a chance for Idaho Experience to tell an accompanying story about Hemingway’s life in Idaho.

Many Idahoans are familiar with the general outlines of Hemingway’s Idaho story: the celebrities, the PR for the new Sun Valley resort, the bird hunting in the fields south of the Wood River. And people probably know that he died by suicide at his home along the Big Wood River. For a lot of people, that’s about it.

With Ken Burns providing the deep dive into the writer, the writing and all the mythos that surround both, we figured we could hone in on how the time he spent in Idaho from 1939 to 1961 influenced his life, his loves and his literary output. By examining the traces of Hemingway that remain in Ketchum, we could see what the Hemingway story can tell us about our state’s cultural landscape, then and now.

We started filming in Ketchum last summer and are finishing up soon. Our episode on March 4 will serve as an Idaho introduction to the six-hour Burns documentary that airs April 5, 6 and 7. We’ll also be hosting screenings and discussions for the Burns and the Idaho Experience documentaries in March. It’s been a fascinating experience and we’re eager to share “Idaho’s Hemingway” with viewers this spring.

Marcia Franklin:
I recorded my final “180” of the year, a conversation with former Idaho Public Television reporter Mindy Cameron. Cameron, who worked at the station in the mid-1970s, recently wrote a memoir called “Leaving the Boys.” In it, she reflects on the most difficult decision of her life, leaving her two sons with their father in Boise to pursue her career and a new love.
I talk with her about that choice, as well as what it was like to be the first woman to be in a management position at several newspapers, including the first female editorial page editor at the Seattle Times.

All told, I taped and edited more than a dozen of the 180 shows in my home, all of which “live” on this page. The experience was certainly a “180” for me as well, as I’ve had to learn many technical aspects of recording and editing videos, details that are normally handled by colleagues much more adept than I am in that realm. So I’d like to send a big shout-out to all the co-workers who helped me navigate that digital thicket!

In the near future, I’ll be contributing a piece to Outdoor Idaho’s “Off the Beaten Path” program, highlighting an area that most people just drive through -- the (other) Camas Prairie near Cottonwood. That includes the restful setting of the Monastery at St. Gertrude.

Beginning this week, I’ll also start filming for an Outdoor Idaho program about extraordinary athletes who haven’t let their physical disabilities get in the way of enjoying a sport and even competing at the highest levels.

Sauni Symonds:
It’s an interesting time to be working on an Idaho Experience documentary about Idaho’s State Capitol building, tentatively called “Capitol of Light, The People’s House.” With the U.S. Capitol under siege last week by its own citizens, I have to admit I had a hard time focusing on words that described how a building could represent the meaning of democracy and should be respected as a symbol of American freedom and equality.

And what would the original architects, Tourtellotte and Hummel, think about Idaho’s own Capitol, the one they so proudly designed and constructed being besieged by its own citizens in the summer of 2020?

Our most recent shoot took us to the very top of the dome. Not many people get to make that journey anymore – it’s not open to the public for safety reasons. It was exhilarating climbing the series of stairs and ladders, even the precarious spiral staircase that hangs over the rotunda – yeah, that one. Yikes, don’t look down! The views from the top looking out over the city of Boise were breathtaking and inspiring.

Yeah, it’s just a building. But it was built from the sandstone of our very own Table Rock Quarry, and its construction surely resulted in some blood, sweat, and tears from Idaho laborers. For that reason alone, its story has an honored place in Idaho’s history.

The People’s House has and always will be a place for our citizens to gather, to celebrate, or protest, but the darkness of late holds the country hostage, and we can only hope that our own magnificent Capitol does not become a victim of more hate and violence in the days to come.

Nicole Sanchez:
Hank Nystrom and Pat Metzler are finishing up the final edits on “Resilient Idaho: Hope Lives Here.” The hour long documentary examines real-life instances of Adverse Childhood Experiences, or ACEs, for short. It’s a story of raw emotion and personal tragedy that emphasizes the importance of providing support for young children caught up in traumatic events beyond their control.

The evidence is conclusive: trauma can lead to serious health problems as an adult, and can even shorten a child’s life.
We’ve been working on this documentary for more than a year, most of that during the Covid pandemic. We’ve interviewed dozens of individuals from all walks of life. Some have studied the effects of this pernicious societal problem and are experts in the field; others have experienced trauma first-hand.

We are honored to share their stories of hope, healing and resilience. “Resilient Idaho: Hope Lives Here” will air February 16th at 8 pm on Idaho Public Television.

Dexter Sear:

Excited to recently join the IdahoPTV production team as a part-time videographer for Outdoor Idaho and Idaho Experience. I’ve been helping Lauren Melink on her “Women Who Hunt” show, along with various forays into Idaho’s wonderful outdoors, filming material for “Off the Beaten Path.”

One highlight was exploring frozen waterfalls and the fanciful sculptures a cold snap can create. Another was the Oolite geological formations south of Boise.

Joining PBS during this prolonged pandemic chapter has been a true blessing. After arriving in Idaho from Kauai, 16 years ago, I now get a chance to craft cherished Idaho stories. Prior to the pandemic, I spent 6 months each year filling my passport and at this time would have been on assignment on-board the National Geographic/Lindblad Expeditions ships galavanting around the Antarctic Peninsula filming penguins and working on my Antarctic summer tan.

Very much looking forward to future collaborations with this talented crew and enjoying more local adventures.

Aloha!

Bruce Reichert:

Among the many things that have changed since the pandemic is a heightened awareness of photography ... at least it seems that way if Outdoor Idaho’s ‘Iconic Idaho’ photo contest is any indication.

If you’re not spending time on social media, you may not know that Outdoor Idaho has a Facebook page, with 110,205 people who currently “follow” it. And for the past 11 years, the site has sponsored a monthly photo contest. Everyone is welcome; the judges are the previous month’s winners; the prize is a lowly DVD; and the only requirement is that it be an Idaho photo.

Back in 2009 the contest started out small, with maybe 5 or 6 photos. The judges were colleagues Marcia Franklin, Kevin Rank, Anne Peterson and anyone else unfortunate enough to pass me in the hallway. I began posting the winners on the first day of each month. Pretty sure no one cared.

But this January 1st, the numbers of “people reached” had mushroomed to 246,209 -- assuming you can believe Facebook’s own metrics. I'm pretty sure the pandemic had something to do with the doubling of viewers since September. Either that, or it was just a lousy Rose Bowl parade.

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Today the number of judges is still the same -- 6 to 8 -- but now the poor souls have to pore over nearly 1,000 photos posted each month. Afterwards, judges send me their favorite 25. The photos that the judges agree on become the new Winners; the rest are Honorable Mentions.

I've learned a couple things from this project. First, most of the time, I still prefer to use "auto setting" on my camera, which means I'd never win this contest. Second, I can no longer go on backpacking trips on certain days of the month; someone has to collect those judges' photos and post them.

Oh, well, at least the comments from viewers have been gratifying. Here are two: Gwen Eckles Brown wrote, "Absolutely love these monthly pictures. These bring peace to my heart especially during these turbulent times." And Jim Pat wrote, "Thank you for making us Idahoans proud to call Idahome." I have to say, those kinds of comments kinda make it all worthwhile.