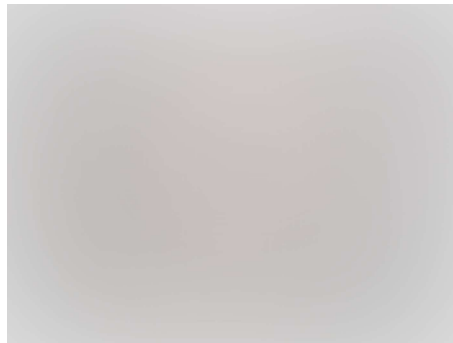


https://www.dailyrecordnews.com/members/inside-the-outdoors-run-chukar-run-for-another-95-years/article_bb7cd208-092b-11e4-8477-001a4bcf887a.html

Inside the Outdoors: Run Chukar run, for another 95 years

Jim Huckabay Contributing columnist
Jul 11, 2014



Jim Huckabay

Jim Huckabay is retired from the department of geography at Central and is the author of "WILD WINDS and Other Tales of Growing Up in the Outdoor West." Contact Jim and join in the discussion of this and other columns at www.insidetheoutdoors.com.

The Kittitas County Field and Stream Club turned 95 in March. You can come help celebrate the critical work of the oldest outdoor-oriented club in the state. Make it a date night — and enjoy the laughter, great food and fun that underlies the serious work of protecting our outdoor future.

Since 1919, the outdoor lives and traditions of most families in the county have been touched by one club activity or another. From the beginning, the club has lived up to its motto of "working today for tomorrow's wildlife." It has become ever more apparent that working for public access to enjoy our wildlife on our public ground here in Paradise is critical, and the club is out in front.

Along with the looming and ongoing battle for public access, the Field and Stream Club reaches out into the community in almost any way that supports short- and long-term fishing, hunting and outdoor activities.

The club was the largest supporter — financial and otherwise — of the Big Game Management Roundtable (BGMR) and its efforts to solve game damage problems and improve conditions for both wildlife and ranchers in the county.

For many years, life members of the club have offered a sizeable college scholarship to high school graduates in the county who wish to take up a field relating to our outdoor future. Many of those recipients are out in the world making a difference.

The club has long sponsored the Eyes in the Woods program — a free program designed to teach all of us to better look after our wild lands and critters. Trained volunteers have had an impact on the illegal and unethical activities to which too many people these days succumb. Maybe, with the club's education and training efforts, we can get ahead of the yahoos.

Annually, we pick up tons of yahoo trash on Durr Road.

The club sends kids to camp, and supports outdoor training — camping, fishing, hunting — programs for hundreds of kids at a substantial scale.

Then there are the chukars. We periodically release chukar partridge into prime habitat all over the valley (thus, our "Chukar Run"). Some will be hunted, but hunting is the least of their problems when you mix in hawks, coyotes, foxes, skunks, food supply and some pretty iffy weather.

The shrewdest, fastest and strongest of them will be making more chukars next spring. Releasing chukars is the keeping of promises made long ago; they run in honor of Bob McBride, Ike Hamblin, Ray Wheeler, Loel Knudson and Martin Pedersen, and the hundreds of outdoor volunteers before them.

Every winter, the club provides free bird seed at Ranch and Home and Shaw's Furniture to help you help your feathered buddies get through tough spots.

Very few residents of Paradise have not been touched by the work of the Field and Stream Club. For a fascinating look back for the club and our community check out "Club History" link at www.kittitasfieldandstream.org.

We pay for this work with a huge number of volunteer hours, our dues of 25 bucks a year (up from 50 cents in 1919), our Rodeo Weekend Hilltop Parking, a couple raffles and the Chukar Run — our primary fundraiser.

Among this year's items are wildlife themed quilts, custom handmade knives and other items, moose antler art, prints, outdoor books and more.

The raffle this year is for a Ruger SR Model 1911 stainless steel semiautomatic pistol on .45 auto caliber. Tickets are \$20 and only 100 will be sold. On top of all that are the games and raffles and the prizes for those, too. Check it out on the club's website.

The food will be by Cascade Mountain Grilling — consistently considered the finest banquet food in the state — and Dick Culver will be handling the auction. Jim Huckabay, with Deborah Essman, will be keeping things smooth, moving and on-time. It is, after all, the social event of the season.

Banquet tickets — only \$30 — are only available in advance. Get them online at www.kittitasfieldandstream.org or from one of these outlets: Arnold's Ranch & Home; Sure Shot Guns and Pawn; the Old Mill Country Store; or Shaw's Furniture. Board members have tickets also. Even if you can't attend and play, stop by the businesses above and thank them for their strong support of our forever outdoor lives here in Paradise.

See you a week from tomorrow. It's for now and for tomorrow. It's for wildlife and open land — and your ability to access them.

Jim Huckabay is retired from the Department of Geography at Central and is the author of "WILD WINDS and Other Tales of Growing Up in the Outdoor West." Contact Jim and join in the discussion of this and other columns at www.insidetheoutdoors.com.

Jim Huckabay