



**Tales from a  
Sisters  
Naturalist**  
by Jim Anderson

**Working with  
eagles at 91**

My wife, Sue, and I are finishing up surveying this season's golden eagle breeding territories. "Finishing up" means we're visiting eagle breeding sites we have been given the responsibility to keep track of by the Oregon Eagle Foundation.

Early in the season we visit the nest sites to determine if the eagles are going to raise a family that year. Then we return weeks later to see if they hatched babies, and how many. Then finally about the middle of June we come back and see if those babies made it to seven weeks of age and will fledge.

Wind farms are killing eagles, and we need to know what that will mean to the golden eagle population in the long run. (The wind generators also kill about 50,000 bats a year, but to date, not much has been done to mitigate that loss.)

I started to really become involved in the life and times of golden eagles in 1962 when I was granted a permit from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to band birds — which has now become the responsibility of the Department of Interior's United States Geological Survey (USGS).

Banding birds is commonly done by placing a numbered metal band on the bird's leg. The band has instructions printed on it for anyone finding the bird to contact the USGS. The finder will be informed of who the bander is and when and where the banding was done. When I hear from the banding lab that one of my banded birds has been recovered, I write to the finder immediately to

learn what the circumstances were/are of the bird's discovery or capture.

That's how I learned that osprey I banded at Crane Prairie Reservoir years ago spend their winters all over Mexico and Central America, and even at their southernmost destination: Volcan, Costa Rica.

Banding time for golden eagles is from when the youngsters are four weeks old to when they're about six weeks. They don't know they're eagles at that point, and really don't give the bander any big trouble when the band is placed on one leg. The parents never give us any grief, they just climb high in the sky and watch the process.

Bald eagles, on the other hand, will try to knock your head off!

This year I placed eagle-banding on the "not to do" list. Our climber called to tell us he'd not be available because he fell and broke his arm. I do not/can not climb anymore because Sue hid all my climbing equipment and I'm just too old.

My older sons, Dean and Ross, come every spring with their kids to play pinochle and band birds with Sue and

me. During one of our many, wonderful pinochle games this season I mentioned to both Dean and Ross I did not plan to band birds this year. Oh boy did I get a thrashing!

"What do you mean, 'No Banding!' both boys got on me. "What about us? What about the kids?! We've grown up banding birds with you from the day we were born!"

Then Ross waved his hands at Dean's towering sons, Sam and Tom. "And look at them," he said, "They're over six feet tall and can climb into and out of anything — be it tree or cliff!"

With that, Sue got out the banding maps.

"Let's go do the quarry nest first," she suggested, and everyone agreed.

Now, I've been banding eagle babies in that nest from way back in the mid-1960s. It's about 300 feet above the parking spot and the only way to get there is to walk up a very, very steep rocky slope. My getting to the nest tree was nearly impossible. However, being an optimist, I started to make the climb.

After going up about 50 feet I was huffing and puffing, and my heart was shouting at me, "Enough is enough, Old



PHOTO BY MARY-CATHERINE ANDERSON

Old Jim and a baby golden eagle.

Man!" and I popped a couple of nitro pills to relieve pain.

I was really wanting badly to sit down, but there was no big rock, and once I get down it's tough to get all of me up and going again. At that very moment Ross, my Number Two jetpilot son, stepped in front me, put his hands behind his back and said, "Grab on Pop, we're going to the top!"

With Tom on my heels (just in case...), Ross towed me almost to the top of the slope, where my oldest son, Dean, and his sons Joseph and Sam were waiting for me

to band the first eagle they brought down from the nest.

During the banding I asked our OEF volunteer, Nancy Boever, who monitors that breeding territory, to hold the eagle while Ross and I installed the rivet-on leg band, "Oh," Nancy said, with her nose inches from the bird, "The eagle is so beautiful!"

That was the first time Nancy had ever been that close to a golden eagle. My granddaughter Mary-Catherine took photos with my Canon.

You just can't beat family and friends!



Spring is the perfect time of year to prepare for next winter. A large stack of firewood cut, split, and protected assures that you will be warm all winter.

*Firewood is one of the most cost-effective ways to heat your home — and you can't beat the comfort.* The demand for firewood in Central Oregon always peaks in the fall. Our delivery list becomes unmanageable, and then no one is happy! Please save yourself and my crew this difficulty and plan ahead this year.

*Make some extra room, buy your wood during spring and summer months, and you will have great firewood the easy way!*

**SISTERS FOREST PRODUCTS, LLC**  
SistersForestProducts.com  
18155 Hwy. 126, Sisters  
Drive-ins welcome year-round  
Email orders to [elpeez@aol.com](mailto:elpeez@aol.com)  
541-410-4509



"Anti-gravity Fox"  
By Daisy Draper, Age 13, Baker Web Academy

Hey Kids! Anti-gravity Fox here. Summer days are coming! Two of my favorite things to do in the summer (beside playing outside!) are **SPENDING TIME BEING CREATIVE** and **READING**.

Here in Sisters, you have a fun opportunity to share your creative projects each month in The Nugget's "Kids in Print" feature, and you can read other kids' stories there, too.

**Submit to Kids in Print!**  
Bring your original illustrations, paintings, stories, and poems on down to The Nugget Newspaper!

(442 E. Main Ave., 9 a.m.-5 p.m., Mon., Tues., Thurs., Fri.)  
Include child's name, grade level, and school or homeschool. You can use a full name, or just first name with last initial. Submissions are also accepted by email, [kidsinprint@nuggetnews.com](mailto:kidsinprint@nuggetnews.com), or at the front office of Sisters Elementary School.  
Please put them in a clearly marked envelope or clip on a cover sheet reading: "The Nugget — Kids in Print."

**KIDS IN PRINT**

Sponsored by Kid Made Camp | A service of The Nugget Newspaper

**Kids in Print Mission:** Kids are the readers, writers, and leaders of tomorrow. We're passionate about getting them involved with print media — as both creators and readers. Expressing themselves in their local newspaper empowers children and teens, and connects them with their community. Through educational events with our sponsor, Kid Made Camp, the youth of Sisters Country learn hands-on artistic, literary, and critical-thinking skills.

Due to space limitations, publication of submissions is not guaranteed. We seek to showcase a wide range of ages, styles, and abilities that represent the diverse talents of the youth of our greater Sisters community.

**Privacy Statement:** The Nugget Newspaper LLC does not ask children to disclose more personal information than is necessary for them to participate in Kids in Print. The Nugget limits its collection of information from children to non-personally identifiable information (e.g. first name, last initial, age, school).



PHOTO BY MARY-CATHERINE ANDERSON  
Eagle banding at 91 with family and OEF volunteer Nancy Boever.