

GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT

IDAHO
PUBLIC TELEVISION



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Reports

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A Night of Premieres and In-Studio Guests



Scott Graf, general manager

In the television world, fall means the release of new shows. At Idaho Public Television, our latest seasons of *Outdoor Idaho* and *Idaho Experience* will kick off Thursday, Oct. 22, with a special live, in-studio event. These shows represent the very best of IdahoPTV's commitment to local storytelling. Yet again, our talented production team has created a new batch of unique local programs that explore the people, places and history that make our state special.

This year's season opens with two distinctly Idaho stories. "Ridin' Trail" on *Outdoor Idaho* (7 p.m.) explores the history and lasting impact of the Honda Trail 90, a motorcycle that transformed recreation across Idaho's rugged terrain and ultimately became a global icon of two-wheeled transportation. Meanwhile,

"Gridiron Innovations" on *Idaho Experience* (8 p.m.) takes viewers inside the unique stories behind the college football stadiums at Idaho's three major universities, highlighting how these venues have become important gathering places and symbols of school and community pride.

We're proud to share these stories about our state. They examine the innovations and traditions that connect Idahoans across generations. They're shows made by Idahoans for Idahoans.

For decades, Idaho Public Television has served as a trusted home for this kind of storytelling. Long before streaming services and endless content choices, our mission was to document Idaho's stories with a depth and understanding that comes from living here. That commitment remains unchanged today. In a world of seemingly countless entertainment options, there is still only one place where audiences can consistently find in-depth stories that preserve history, celebrate our shared culture, and foster a deeper understanding of our state.

Of course, none of this would be possible without you. Every local production

we create is made possible by the generous support of viewers who believe Idaho's stories matter. Your support allows us to continue investing in local shows that inform, inspire and connect.

As always, thank you.

—Scott

More on Oct. 22

During this night of premiere episodes, we're doing something we rarely do: devoting an entire live evening to celebrating the local programs and Idaho stories at the heart of the work we do. Tune in during the broadcast to enjoy live in-studio conversations, exclusive behind-the-scenes stories, and previews of what's ahead this season from *Outdoor Idaho* and *Idaho Experience*. We'll take viewers deeper into our local productions, with extended discussions with the people who make these programs and the Idahoans whose stories they tell. You'll see clips that didn't make it into the finished episodes, learn more about what happens behind the camera, and meet some of the directors and producers who bring these uniquely Idaho stories to life.

Our IdahoPTV Productions

Outdoor Idaho "Ridin' Trail"

"Ridin' Trail" explores the origins of the iconic Honda Trail bike and talks with the people who love them. Born out of the Honda Super Cub, the Trail was invented by Herb Uhl in Boise back in the late 1950s. Looking to fulfill the needs of his customers, Herb recognized its potential as a trail bike. As he recalled, "I got those things to Boise, and I had to walk by that little Honda Cub. The more I looked at that thing, the more I saw that built into that design was an ideal trail bike."

Herb modified the Super Cub for off-road use by putting on a large rear sprocket, a smaller muffler and knobby tires. Sales in Boise for Herb's modified Super Cub were so great that Jack McCormack, the sales manager at the year-old American Honda noticed that he was selling more bikes than all of his dealers in Los Angeles. McCormack asked if he could test the prototype, so Uhl sent one of his converted bikes to California for him to inspect. McCormack was so impressed he sent the bike to Honda in Japan with a request to build a production version of Uhl's off-road adaptation.

By March of 1961 Herb's innovation became the Honda CA100T Trail 50. With its light weight and automatic clutch, it could climb almost anything. It made riding off-road in the backcountry accessible for hunters and anglers alike. It also opened a new market for the industry and launched a thriving fascination with adventure riding around the world.

When Herb was asked whether he'd ever been compensated by Honda for his innovations, he just smiled and said, "Not a cent." When asked how he felt about that he said, "I feel great. I put millions of smiles on people's faces."

"Ridin' Trail" airs Thursday, Oct. 22, at 7 p.m. As part of the broadcast, Herb's son, Mike Uhl, will join producer/director Andy Lawless in the studio for a special conversation about his father, his legacy, and the stories behind the episode.



Idaho Experience "Gridiron Innovations"

From unique domes to a one-of-a-kind blue field, Idaho's three public universities are home to some of the more distinctive football stadiums in the country. "Gridiron Innovations: The Kibbie Dome, the Minidome & the Blue" explores the history and innovation behind the design and construction of each stadium, as well as the contribution each facility has made to Idaho's identity.

The program traces how the University of Idaho Kibbie Dome, Idaho State University's ICCU Dome, and Boise State University's Albertsons Stadium became symbols of innovation. From the engineering behind the Kibbie Dome's sweeping roof to the Minidome's place as the first indoor stadium on a college campus, the show explores how bold ideas helped shape facilities that were unique in college athletics at the time.

That spirit of creativity is visible in the segment about Boise State University where the now-famous blue turf transformed a football field into a national landmark. According to producer Eric Westrom, the idea came to athletic director Gene Bleimeyer on a flight to an NCAA convention. "He said they were getting ready to replace the turf at Boise State. He kept thinking, 'If I do another green field, no one's going to notice.' And that worked out." The decision made Boise State instantly recognizable.

Westrom says he learned something new about all three facilities. "I didn't know that the Minidome was the first collegiate dome, or appreciate the engineering that went into creating the Kibbie Dome's wooden roof. Or that Bleimeyer tested out his idea for blue turf by adjusting the color on a TV set during a baseball broadcast."

More than stadiums, these facilities reflect Idaho's spirit of innovation, creativity and ambition. Through the stories behind these landmarks, viewers will discover how bold ideas at Idaho's public universities left a lasting mark on the state and beyond.

"Gridiron Innovations" airs Thursday, Oct. 22, at 8 p.m. As part of the broadcast, sports journalist Tom Scott will join producer/director Eric Westrom in the studio to share stories and insights about these three uniquely Idaho innovations.



Science Trek "Mars"

Mars is one of our closest planetary neighbors. Scientists study this red planet using specialized rovers and the first space helicopter. What are they looking for? What have they learned so far? Find out more about Mars, its two moons and why exploring the planet is so important to people on Earth in this month's videos, games and lesson plans from *Science Trek*.

Science Trek explores scientific topics with short videos available on the website sciencetrek.org, on the *Science Trek* YouTube page, and on PBS LearningMedia. Look for *Science Trek: The Podcast* with hosts Evie and Garrett wherever you find your podcasts!

Idaho Stories Find a Nationwide Audience

Idaho is known for agriculture, but there's much more to the story than crops and cattle. Across the state and the Mountain West, farmers and ranchers are adapting, innovating, and finding new ways to meet the challenges of a changing industry.

That's where a new chapter for Idaho Public Television comes in. We're now contributing stories about agriculture and rural life to *Market to Market*, a public television program that reaches audiences across the country.

As *Market to Market's* Mountain West bureau chief, IdahoPTV's Tammy Scardino is helping tell stories from our region and share them with viewers far beyond Idaho. Her work will take her to farms, ranches, businesses and communities where the future of agriculture is taking shape.

"As a journalist, I truly enjoy one-on-one conversations that bring everyone to the table," Scardino says. "I look forward to learning about traditional agricultural practices and new ones, getting out into communities, and seeing what makes people tick. I also like the creative side of capturing footage and editing it all together."

Scardino hopes these stories will also help viewers understand the larger role agriculture plays in our lives and economy.

"Agriculture is a primary driver of U.S. economic activity, with a \$1.5 trillion GDP share," she says. "My goal is to tell the stories of those who live in the Mountain West and highlight each unique region. At the end of the day, whether you live in the city or on a farm, chances are you share similar values."

Scardino recently reported on hydroponic lettuce production, one example of the innovation happening in agriculture today. We're looking forward to sharing many more stories that give viewers a closer look at the people, ideas and work shaping agriculture in our region.

Catch *Market to Market* Saturdays at 7 a.m. on the Idaho channel.



Community Events

Entertainment and History at the Kenworthy Performing Arts Centre

Throughout this summer, hundreds of children in the Moscow area enjoyed *Xavier Riddle and the Secret Museum* at the Kenworthy Performing Arts Centre's theater. Based on the *Ordinary People Change the World* books by Brad Meltzer and Christopher Eliopoulos, the animated show follows the adventures of Xavier Riddle, his sister Yadina, and their friend Brad as they travel back in time to meet real-life historical figures when they were kids.

At the invitation of the Idaho Humanities Council, Idaho Public Television shared episodes of the popular children's series, which features stories about famous figures ranging from Frederick Douglass and George Washington to Susan B. Anthony and Idaho's own Sacagawea!

Thank you to the Kenworthy Performing Arts Centre for including these programs before each showtime of the popular (and free!) summer family matinee series during June, July and August!



Behind the Scenes

How an *Outdoor Idaho* Story Takes Shape



We recently sat down with *Outdoor Idaho* producer Mya Long to get an insider's look at how stories come together and what it is like to work on this beloved show. Mya's upcoming episode will premiere in December, but we want to give you a first peek into what the episode will be about and what *Outdoor Idaho* means to her.

Q: Many viewers probably imagine an *Outdoor Idaho* episode starts with a fully formed plan. Is that how it works?

Mya: No, definitely not. For the upcoming foraging episode, I started with something I personally love. I was part of the Idaho Mushroom Club, and I just kept thinking there are so many great people and stories here.

Q: What happens after that initial idea?

Mya: You start following leads. And some of them don't work. That's just part of it. You might think something's going to be a big part of the story,

and then it falls through. You follow something, see where it goes, and stay open to it becoming something completely different than what you first imagined.

Q: Do you have a favorite *Outdoor Idaho* episode or story?

Mya: My favorite project I've worked on so far has been "Return of the Giants," a show about the western white pine, Idaho's state tree. We filmed all across the state and even got to discover, climb, and film from the tallest known western white pine in Idaho. It was such a unique experience to do an interview, sitting on a branch, in the canopy of a 180 foot tree. Beyond the adventure, I loved delving deeper into the story of the tree itself — the economics, culture, science and history connected to these giants.

Q: You've been with Idaho Public Television since 2022. What has stood out to you most about traveling around Idaho and meeting the people featured in *Outdoor Idaho*?

Mya: No matter where I am in the state, people are incredibly kind, welcoming, and excited to share the stories they're passionate about. It's been really special to work on a show that so many people know and care about. I've loved getting to meet people from every corner of Idaho and hear the stories they want to tell.

Q: When someone makes a donation to Idaho Public Television, what are they really making possible for *Outdoor Idaho*?

Mya: I believe *Outdoor Idaho* helps create a stronger connection between people and place. Whether that inspires someone to explore a new part of the state, try a new outdoor activity, or simply appreciate Idaho in a different way, donor support helps build a deeper community of Idahoans who care about the outdoors and the stories that connect us to it.

A Closer Look at *Outdoor Idaho's* "Foraging"

In December, *Outdoor Idaho* takes us into Idaho's forests, mountains and riverbanks to explore the age-old practice of foraging. Along the way, we'll meet experienced foragers who share their knowledge of finding wild mushrooms, berries and other edible treasures, while exploring the traditions and connection to place that make foraging so meaningful.

It's a closer look at a side of Idaho's natural world that many of us may have never experienced, and a reminder that sometimes the best stories are found by simply following where curiosity leads.