

Teton Raptor Center
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Teton Raptor Center Honors Its Amazing Volunteers

Jackson Hole, Wyoming – On Wednesday, January 9th, Teton Raptor Center (TRC)'s staff and board gathered to honor 83 community members who have donated over 9,371 hours of time and talent in 2018, to support the Center's mission of advancing raptor conservation through education, research, and rehabilitation. TRC's annual Ambassador Appreciation Night kicked off with a delicious dinner generously donated by Pearl Street Market. The evening continued with a celebration of TRC's ambassador accomplishments and an award ceremony. In 2018, TRC had 24 volunteers join the rankings of Talon Society, which is achieved by donating 100 hours within a calendar year.

"Our volunteers are a vital piece in the successes of Teton Raptor Center. Their contributions to each pillar are noteworthy and humbling." said Jessie Walters, TRC Raptor Care and Volunteer Coordinator.

Anne Hare earned the TRC Ambassador-of-the-Year Award in recognition of her consistent and enthusiastic dedication to provide care in our rehabilitation clinic and for her commitment to supporting TRC's education program. Anne has volunteered nearly every Tuesday and Thursday throughout the year. **Litt Clark** received the Golden Owl Award, which recognizes people who quietly work behind the scenes to help TRC accomplish its goals. Litt was awarded for his passion to better the lives of the birds through projects and teaching. He has become a familiar face for the education team! The Junior Ambassador-of-the-Year Award went to the center's youngest and very dedicated volunteer, **Karsten Bessonette**. He was awarded for his enthusiasm and eagerness to help both birds and humans.. TRC announced a new award last night, the Parliament Award, which was given to **Joanna Cooke, Karsten, and Chris Bessonette**. As a family, they dedicated over 160 hours to all three pillars of TRC's work! If you were unsure, the word "parliament" refers to a group of owls. **Salene Freeman** was recognized as the Rehabilitation Hero of the Year for her weekly assistance as our Lab Technician. She has a desire to learn more about all aspects of raptors and their care. The Research Hero of the Year went to **Tommy McClaren** for his enthusiasm, persistence, and flexibility while assisting with TRC's Great Gray Owl studies. **Lauren McClees** earned the Education Hero of the Year for her assistance with programs and special events. She engages all ages of program participants and has a passion for TRC's work. The Poo-Poo Hero was **Carol Poole** for her support and dedication to protecting wildlife from entrapment in vault toilets.

When asked what is the best thing about volunteering with TRC, Lauren McClees said, "It's a wonderful cause and I always feel like I'm contributing to something worthwhile and honorable when I volunteer at TRC. Also the people. They're the best people ever!"

For more information on how you can join the volunteer team at Teton Raptor Center, please

contact Teton Raptor Center at 307.203.2551, visit: www.tetonraptorcenter.org, or find us on Facebook.

Teton Raptor Center advances raptor conservation through education, research, and rehabilitation.
www.tetonraptorcenter.org -- 307.203.2551

Caption: 2018 Award Winners honored during TRC's Ambassador Appreciation Night. Clockwise from left: Lauren McClees, Education Hero; Litt Clark, Golden Owl Award; Karsten Bessonette, Junior Ambassador-of-the-Year and Parliament Award; Joanna Cooke, Parliament Award; Chris Bessonette, Parliament Award; Anne Hare, Ambassador-of-the-Year; Salene Freeman, Rehabilitation Hero; Carol Poole, Poo-Poo Hero.