



ASLA IDAHO/ MONTANA

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Boise, ID residence photo credit: Maggie Clark

Announcements and Upcoming Events

Chapter Presidents Council

The Spring Meeting and Chapter Presidents Council was held this spring virtually this year. There was a large amount of discussion around the changing professional environment due to COVID and what we can do to adapt. Since our chapter is so spread out geographically, we are already doing many of the things related to long-distance communication that other chapter are now being forced to do. One of the main points was concerning the challenges for students looking to join the workforce. The traditional job seeking methods are evolving making this step even more overwhelming than in the past. We need to be mindful of these young professionals and do what we can to reach out to them to ease their transition into the profession.

Free Student Membership

The Board of Trustees approved a change to make student membership free which will be a great tool to increase student membership. In conjunction with the start of free membership, ASLA launched a new mentorship program for students. If you are interested in becoming a mentor, you can find more information and the sign-up link on the [ASLA Students webpage](#). The sign-up survey for mentors and mentees is the same.

Conference on Landscape Architecture

The Conference on Landscape Architecture that was intended to be held this October was cancelled due to COVID. ASLA Nationals is working on revising this into a virtual event later this fall, more information on this will be sent out when the details are known.

Fun fact, ASLA made American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) list of 100 Associations that Will Save the World!



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Public Awareness Section

The Chapter was not able to participate in WLAM with our table displays in the libraries this year as they were closed during the month of April. We still were able to showcase your projects on our social media accounts, thanks to those of you who sent in photos! Please feel free to send photos (maggieclarkpla@gmail.com) at any time and we will post them and celebrate your great projects.

All events are a little bit different this year and the Site Tour is no exception. The Chapter had been working with BSU to host a Site Tour later this fall but with the limited events allowed it was decided to postpone this event until next year. The intent of the Site Tour is to get city, county, and state public elected officials to attend in hopes to increase their knowledge of what a Landscape Architect does and why their support of legislation to help fund these projects is important.

Parklets are a great way to expand a business's footprint and provide social distancing. There are many communities around Idaho and Montana who are encouraging businesses to set up outdoor dining on the sidewalks to accommodate more patrons. This is a great opportunity to partner with business this year for PARK(ing) Day! Consider working with a local business to bring some extra pizzazz to their existing outdoor dining areas or set up a new one for Parking Day on September 18th. Signage could be utilized to raise awareness of the profession instead of personally occupying the parklets to allow for social distancing. On a national level, ASLA is encouraging members to design imaginative curbside spaces for restaurants, businesses, recreation, and other public uses that adhere to safe, socially distant principles, all within the

confines of a parking space (or two). This doesn't need to be an actual parklet, you can draw or build a model of a virtual parklet and post images of your design on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram using the hashtag #ASLAParkingDay. Other hashtags the IMASLA Chapter uses are #imasla, #thisislandarch.



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Mary McGown Tribute

June 19, 1949 - February 29, 2020

Mary Grunewald McGown

June 19, 1949 - February 29, 2020

Mary Grunewald McGown, Ph.D., died peacefully, after a short illness, on February 29, 2020. She was a wonderful well-rounded person. Mary brought joy, intelligence, dedication, and love to her many roles as wife, mother, sibling, civic volunteer, and friend.

Mary was born June 19, 1949 in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. She was the eldest of six children, all of whom survive. Mary graduated from the University of Northern Colorado in 1978 with a B.S. in Biology. That same year she married John McGown. She was able to convince one of her professors that a short honeymoon to Steamboat Springs was a good enough reason to take a test late. Shortly after their marriage, Mary and John embarked on a fifteen-month tour of the U.S. and Canada in a fifth wheel travel trailer and a Ford F-250. One of the stops was Idaho where they took advantage of the incredible white water two years in a row. In 1979 they rafted the Middle and Main Forks of the Salmon River back to back. John turned 30 on the Middle Fork and Mary turned 30 four days later on the Main. Since John was the paddle raft captain, it was one of the few times Mary took orders without question.

Mary and John moved to Denver after their big adventure, where Mary received her Masters in Landscape Architecture from the University of Colorado at Denver and John received his LL.M. in Taxation from the University of Denver. They decided that Denver would be too big in 20 years and began a search for a new home. While Boise did not make any national top ten lists in 1982, it made their list as number one. After taking time to settle in, Mary decided to pursue her Ph.D. in Forest, Wildlife, and Range Management at the University of Idaho. She also took the time to have her firstborn, Erin. Erin spent much of her first year in Moscow and John found "tax deductible" reasons to visit from Boise. Shortly after her second daughter Brenna's birth, Mary finished her Ph.D. In 1994, she successfully defended her dissertation and graduated with her family to cheer her on.

Mary used her diverse skill set and education in a variety of jobs. She worked for the landscape architecture firm Beck & Baird, the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, the City of Boise, Idaho Rivers United, and the Idaho Department of Water Resources, where she retired as the State Floodplain Coordinator in 2013. Not satisfied with a small package of donuts at the afternoon break on her last day, she threw a retirement party complete with live Rock 'n' Roll music, catering, dancing, and tequila to celebrate her retirement in style. Few will forget the lady in the pink-feathered boa downing shots of tequila, or the Chancellors' rendition of "Mustang Mary" (aka Mustang Sally).

Mary's civic engagement was extensive. She was a member of the League of Women Voters, serving as Co-President of LWV Idaho and as President of the Boise LWV chapter; Idaho representative to the Northwest Energy Coalition; Chair of the Boise Parks and Recreation Commission; Chair of the Idaho Rivers United Board of Directors (John did not realize she was Chair until he asked why they were seated at the head table at an IRU Annual Meeting). Her community activity and advocacy extended to the Audubon Society, Great Old Broads, Idaho Conservation League, Girl Scouts, Sierra Club, Idaho Master Naturalist Program, Idaho Native Plant Society, Sunday school teacher, and more.

Mary was an avid hiker and traveler. In addition to exploring the mountains of the West, she completed ten walks in Great Britain with the Newport Outdoor Group, a trekking group based in Wales. She is one of a few to walk the whole length of Wales. John and Mary also hiked New Zealand, Bulgaria, the Republic of Georgia, and Ireland. Their most recent trip was a family "trip of a lifetime" to South Africa, Botswana and Zimbabwe. John let Erin and Brenna choose the location as long as he and Mary could tag along.

Family was key to Mary's life. She and her five siblings had a family reunion last August in Oshkosh. She took great pride in Erin and Brenna and their many accomplishments, especially their pursuit of education (both have earned Masters Degrees). A significant part of Mary's personal life revolved around the family cabin at Grandjean, Idaho where she was able to pursue her passion of bird watching. The beautiful setting of the cabin easily outweighs the lack of electricity and cell phone service.

Memories of Mary

"Larger than life"

Jim Mihan, PLA, ASLA

I knew Mary well and she was an incredible person with a diverse background. Mary, Bill Dial and myself stayed after a lunch and learn on playground safety put on by Boise Parks and Recreation and helped to formed the beginnings of what become the Olmsted Group in the fall of 1997 with the help of many others. She worked for Beck and Baird, the firm I worked for and acquired for some time under Dan Baird, as an employee and consultant, on projects ranging from environmental assessments in a canoe in Alaska (Dan will have to verify that story) to a recreational study of the entire Boise River system. Easily one of the most influential Landscape Architects in Idaho in all of her various roles and positions and one of the greatest stewards of the environment in the state of Idaho.

She was on the board of the City of Boise Parks and Recreation Department when I was doing my college thesis on Morris Hill Cemetery as well as when I presented the first official frisbee golf course in the state of Idaho at Ann Morrison Park which must have been around 1996 and was most likely my first city presentation.

Dan Baird, PLA, ASLA

I cant say enough about the impact and influence Mary has had on the Landscape Architecture profession in Idaho. Additionally, she was committed to using her broad education and background to make any project she worked on a success, resulting in making the environment a better place for all of us.

Mary worked for Beck and Baird on projects in Alaska and Idaho. In fact, she spent the better part of one summer while pregnant and away from her family in Southeast Alaska. We were doing a visual assessment portion of an environmental impact statement for a very large timber sale. She spent most of the summer traipsing around Prince of Wales Island and living on a boat, occasionally taking a break with the crew to do some well earned halibut fishing. Additionally, Mary's finger prints are all over numerous projects in Idaho. She played a significant role in doing streambank mitigation plans and visual assessments for mining reclamation projects near Yellow Pine, Idaho. In the Stanley Basin and Redfish Lake areas of Idaho, Beck and Baird was contracted by the US Forest Service to do environmental assessments on campgrounds throughout the area. Mary was a team leader for a diverse group of professionals working on numerous campground designs and redesigns of existing campgrounds. Many Idaho residents and visitors have had a better a experience camping and using these facilities because of her insight and dedication to her work. Truly, she left a legacy of a Landscape Architect committed to making the environment a better place for all of us.

Memories of Mary

“Larger than life”

Don Brigham, PLA, FASLA

I first met Mary when I joined ASLA back in '84 and she was chapter president. She called me up and welcomed me to the club, then, without pausing to take a breath, she asked if I would be willing to serve as a chapter officer, that being secretary. I really didn't know what I was getting into, but I told Mary that I had sat on the bench enough during my illustrious high school athletic career and I wanted to get into the game. So, that was my introduction to volunteering and saying Yes to ASLA. (Look where that got me - Ha!)

Two years later, Mary is up at the University of Idaho and the I-M Chapter Rocky Mountain Rendezvous is scheduled for Jackson Hole in mid-September. That's a helluva long drive from Moscow, so in our wisdom, Mary and I decide to charter a plane to fly over to the fun event. Well, it was more like a wanna-be plane: a tiny Cessna 180 with sort of four seats. We leave Pullman International at some gawd-awful pre-dawn departure time and take the direct route towards Jackson Hole. This involves flying over the greatest and largest wilderness area in the Lower 48 states - what later became the Frank Church Wilderness. Apparently my karma was catching up with me (it couldn't have been Mary's because she was too sweet, honest and forthright), for we soon found ourselves dodging in and around these 5-mile tall ominous thunderheads. Our trusty pilot, sensing our concern and possible doom, told us to just do what he does which is close his eyes. The thunder and lightning is providing us with tangible proof that there are more powerful forces on this planet than ourselves and we feel as if we are marionettes dangling and dancing on thin strings at the whims of those gods. Through it all, Mary is cool as a cucumber. Obviously, we made it to the Rendezvous where Mary ran the show with grace and professionalism as if we had arrived in a chauffeur-driven Bentley.

I know Mary cared deeply for two things: her family and ASLA. She serves as a model for all of us.

Don Belts, PLA, ASLA

I can't remember when I first met Mary. I suspect not long after she moved to Boise in 1982, the year Eric Jensen and I formed Jensen Belts Associates. As proactive as we know her to have been and with a fresh MLA degree in hand, it's not hard to imagine Mary canvassing as many potential colleagues as she could find to explore her path forward. The economy in the eighties was dismal. Fortunately for us she persevered, and one Degree later Dr. Mary McGown broadened her educational umbrella to serve the profession of landscape architecture so admirably.

I considered Mary a dear friend. We had common interests in family (my daughters baby sat her daughters), our profession, community, good humor and all wild things outdoors. I admired and respected Mary for someone so accomplished and yet so unassuming. She had a warm gentleness about her that defied her resolve in all matters unresolved.

After retirement our paths crossed not so often, but when they did, a smile, a hug and good conversation usually followed. Mary was the kind of person that if you were to walk into a meeting and saw her sitting next to an empty chair, that's where you would choose to sit. Her passing leaves a cavernous hole in her family and amongst her many friends...she will always be remembered so very fondly. I still consider her a dear friend...just thinking about her brings a smile.