

**The Heart of Citizen Stewardship** by Megan Mosby, Executive Director, Liberty Wildlife, Scottsdale, AZ

*Thank you,*

*Oh so much. I loved the show. You did an awesome job. You inspired me to keep the planet clean and do my part. I wonder how much love you all feel from doing what you did here @ Seth (SEF, Southeast facility). You and your team must love animals like I do. My favorite was the eagle. It was nice to see how the eagle eats—that's new to me. Thanks a lot for coming. You did a really nice job. You caught my eye and my mind.  
High school student—Mesa Detention Center*

If we can “catch the eye and the mind” of an incarcerated teenager with a message of stewardship—just think of the magnitude of what else we can do, if we try.

For the past two years Liberty Wildlife has been fortunate to be a part of a study group funded by the Arizona Community Foundation and charged with the job of creating portable programs that serve to disseminate the message of living with deep respect for animals and the world they inhabit, i.e., to have a meaningful relationship with nature. A collaboration involving Liberty Wildlife, The Phoenix Zoo, Tucson Audubon Society, the Grand Canyon Trust, Arizona Animal Welfare League and Second Chance Center in Flagstaff has spent the past two years understanding each other's various missions, what goals we have in common, and how we can leverage each other's program to encourage citizens of all ages to actively participate in caring for and nurturing not only other creatures, but also the world they inhabit—our world.

In a day when virtual experiences seem to be gaining ground over the real and sometimes less convenient experience of the world, it takes a concerted effort to capture the attention of busy, overscheduled people. Dissemination of the message of citizen stewardship must happen on a grand scale to compensate for the insidious creep from the real world with its daunting problems to a virtual world that can be easily manipulated by the turn of a knob...the slide of a mouse...but no real solution to problems.

Part of our “job” is to team up with another member of the group to engage in a joint program promoting citizen stewardship—to work in tandem with another entity toward a noble goal. Our shared goal will be to remind our audience of the necessity, the joy and the fulfillment that results from caring for our neighbors and our home. The message might be relayed to a young child learning to care for a new puppy. It might be instilled in an adult who respectfully supports organizations with stewardship missions. Or, it could be a reminder to a teenager—troubled at an early age with the realities of surviving in a sometimes scary world—a reminder that no matter what, each of us has a part to play in protecting this world that we share.

If all of the groups are able to spread our respective stewardship messages, and the groups grow in number and size, we are making headway. Our goal of spreading the word exponentially will be working.

We will be working to catch your eye, your mind, and ultimately your heart.