

Grand Rapids History & Special Collections

Archives

GRAND RAPIDS PUBLIC LIBRARY

Finding Aid for the
Peregrine Grand Rapids
Collection #384

July 2011 Version

Abstract

The collection documents the reintroduction of peregrine falcons to the Grand Rapids area in the mid to late 1980s. Peregrine Grand Rapids, a non-profit group, worked with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources' Nongame Wildlife Fund to establish a hack box (nesting box) on the top of McKay Tower. Over three years, nearly 20 young peregrine falcons were released into the wild from the hack box. The Grand Rapids effort was part of a larger Great Lakes area effort to boost the numbers of peregrine falcons. Included are papers from Peregrine Grand Rapids, as well as articles, news clippings, pamphlets, reports and photographs.

Collection # 384

Accession # 1990.032A, 1990.032A2, 2007.077, 2008.048

Donor: Sue Blandford, Patricia Allen, John Will

Span dates: 1985-2008

Processor: Julie Tabberer, 2011

Size: 20 linear inches

Scope and Content

The collection contains material collected by members of Peregrine Grand Rapids, including articles, pamphlets, reports, press releases, minutes and photographs. The materials mostly date from 1985-1990, with a few items from 1999-2008.

History

The peregrine falcon is a bird of prey that nests on high cliffs. In the 1950s and 1960s, the peregrine falcon population in the United States fell due to the use of pesticides and the birds were classified as an endangered species. Beginning in the 1960s, programs were put in place to reestablish the species. In Grand Rapids, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources worked along with the nonprofit Peregrine Grand Rapids group to establish nesting sites in Grand Rapids. Urban areas with tall buildings provide a similar environment to the cliffs that the peregrine falcons historically nested in, and offer safety from their natural predators.

In 1986, a hack box (nest) was placed on top of the McKay Tower in downtown Grand Rapids. Young peregrine falcons were placed in the hack box each spring for three to four years, beginning in 1986. They learned to fly and hunt from the top of the McKay Tower. Most of the young peregrine falcons released in Grand Rapids survived to adulthood and left to nest in other locations. In 1988, additional nesting boxes were placed on the Michigan National Bank Building and Grand Valley State University's Eberhard Center.

Series

Series I: Peregrine Grand Rapids Records

Documents from the non-profit Peregrine Grand Rapids organization. These include meeting minutes, correspondence, financial records, ephemera and miscellaneous documents. (Note that financial records may also be found with the meeting minutes).

Series II: Pamphlets and Articles

This series contains items detailing peregrine falcons and peregrine restoration projects, including pamphlets, articles, newsletters and press releases. The articles and press releases mostly focus on the Grand Rapids project.

Series III: Reports

Reports written during peregrine falcon restoration projects, including Grand Rapids, Mi; Minnesota and the Midwestern Peregrine Falcon Restoration.

Series IV: Photographs

Photographs of Peregrine Falcons, including two of Radar (1987) and several of peregrines from 2007 and 2008.

Contents

<u>Box</u>	<u>Folder</u>	<u>Description</u>
Series I: Peregrine Grand Rapids Records		
1	1	Minutes, 1986-1988, n.d.
1	2	Correspondence, 1986-1990, n.d.
1	3	Financial Records, 1986-1990, n.d.
1	4	Proclamation, official welcome to the Peregrine Falcon from the City of Grand Rapids
1	5	Miscellaneous
1	6	Program, North American Peregrine Falcon Victory Celebration, 1999
2	1	Commemorative Plaque, Presented to Peregrine Grand Rapids from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources' Nongame Wildlife Program, n.d.
FF (VIII-E)		Poster, Peregrine Grand Rapids, signed by Lynn A. Ayres, Numbered 15/25
Series II: Articles and Pamphlets		
1	7	Pamphlets
1	8	Press Releases, May 1986-May 1989, n.d.
1	9	Articles and Newsletters, 1985-2008, n.d.
Series III: Reports		
1	10	Reports – Grand Rapids project, circa 1985-1990
1	11	Reports – Minnesota project
1	12	Midwestern Peregrine Falcon Restoration Project Report, 1988
Series III: Photographs		
1	13	Radar, May 1987
1	14	Miscellaneous
1	15	Scott Kacos photographs, 2007
1	16	Scott Kacos photographs, 2008

*Note: The Scott Kacos photographs are indicated as copyrighted. Usage permission should be sought from the copyright owner.