

## GUEST COLUMN

# Collaboration provides new homes for fish hawks

There are numerous bird species that benefit from human-made nesting structures, including several species that breed here in Sheridan County. Some of these birds may have difficulty finding the necessary natural resources or structures required to safely and successfully raise their young.

One of the species that is a common summertime resident at The Brinton Museum's Quarter Circle A Ranch is the Osprey. Ospreys (sometimes called fish hawks) are a raptor species typically found near water and feed almost exclusively on fish. Ospreys have a reversible outer toe, and barbed pads on their feet that help them grab slippery fish from the water.

Ospreys typically construct large nests out of sticks in dead trees with open tops where they can easily access the nest from above. However, sometimes they can have a difficult time finding a suitable, open-topped tree in the wild. Research has shown that in areas where natural nesting structures are limited, human-made platforms can be installed and ospreys will readily use them.

The Brinton Museum in collaboration with the Bighorn Audubon Society and Montana-Dakota Utilities worked together to provide two nesting platforms for osprey on the Quarter Circle A Ranch, after a nearby cottonwood tree that supported an osprey nest fell in a wind storm.

Bighorn Audubon Society provided human-made nesting platforms that were constructed specifically for these birds. MDU provided the poles (one 30-foot tall, one 35-foot tall) and they excavated the holes and also erected the poles and platforms on the west side of Little Goose Creek.

In the summer of 2022 we were lucky enough to observe two



COURTESY PHOTO |

In the summer of 2022 a pair of ospreys successfully raise young on one of two man-made nesting platforms at The Brinton Museum's Quarter Circle A Ranch.

pairs of ospreys successfully raise young on both man-made nesting platforms. The ospreys have flown south now, as they do every fall to find warmer climates where they can hunt for fish. However, we will be eagerly awaiting the arrival of the osprey pairs in early

spring to begin the breeding and nesting cycle all over again. The nesting ospreys can be observed from a safe distance on our 2.5-mile nature trail that follows Little Goose Creek, typically from late March through early October. The Brinton Museum takes

great pride in providing high-quality environment for all types of wildlife.

We construct nesting boxes for tree swallows, house wrens and wood ducks. We provide pollinator gardens for bees, butterflies and hummingbirds.

The Brinton Museum strives to provide a special place for not only those folks that enjoy art and history but those that appreciate the outdoors as well.

ANDREW SUTPHIN is property manager at The Brinton Museum.

## Bio of Polish statesman holds lessons on today's Ukraine

NEW YORK (AP) — One hundred years ago, a revolutionary Polish patriot argued that Russia's hunger for territory would continue to destabilize Europe unless Ukraine could gain independence from Moscow.

Poland's Marshal Józef Piłsudski never managed to fulfil his hope for an independent Ukraine connected to Europe. But the farsighted and analytical statesman did manage to wrest his own homeland from the grip of czarism and from two other powers, Austria and Prussia.

At a time when many Poles had given up on the dream for full independence, Piłsudski put a sovereign Polish state back on the map of Europe at the end of World War I, after more than a century's erasure.

Piłsudski's story, complete with flaws, accomplishments and echoes of today's war in Ukraine, is brought to life in a recent biography, "Józef Piłsudski Founding Father of Modern Poland," by Joshua D. Zimmerman, a professor of Holocaust Studies and eastern European history at New York's Yeshiva University. The book, published by Harvard University Press, also reexamines Piłsudski's relationship to Ukraine.

Thickly mustached, with heavy brows and a hawk-like visage, Piłsudski lived modestly and inspired his troops by leading them in battle. He was celebrated at home and abroad in his day, but his memory outside of Poland has faded.

After proclaiming a new Polish republic, Piłsudski and his legionnaires fought a series of wars to define, secure and defend its borders, culminating with his greatest victory: turning back a Bolshevik army in 1920 that was threatening to drive all the way to Berlin and carry a Communist revolution to the heart of industrial Europe.

Before that battle, known as the "Miracle on the Vistula," Piłsudski's forces had marched deep into Ukraine and occupied

Kyiv in an alliance with nationalist leader Symon Petliura, who also was fighting the Bolsheviks, amid Ukraine's short-lived independence in 1918-21.

As Zimmerman recounts, Piłsudski had a vision of a multilingual and multiethnic Poland that respected the rights of minorities, especially Jews. That earned him the enmity of nationalists who wanted a Poland run for ethnic Poles.

President Vladimir Putin must be contained.

On May 7, 1920, Piłsudski's cavalry entered Kyiv, followed by Polish and Ukrainian infantry. At the peak of his Ukrainian campaign, he ordered his commanders to withdraw "as soon as possible" in order to establish friendly relations with the new Ukrainian state, according to Zimmerman.

"My view is that he clearly championed an independent

contested" between Poles and Ukrainians.

Indeed Polish and Ukrainian nationalists clashed in the early 1900s and again during and after World War II, and some ethnic animosities have lingered.

During Russia's civil war between the Red Army and the anti-Bolshevik White Army, Piłsudski resisted pleas for Poland to help the Whites. No matter who won, he believed, Russia would remain "fiercely imperialistic."

There was little to gain from negotiations because "we cannot believe anything Russia promises," Piłsudski is quoted as saying.

Piłsudski, born in 1867 and raised in present-day Lithuania, was steeped in the romanticism of Polish independence. He acquired a burning hatred of czarist authority that held Poland, Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine in its grip, and he and his brother were implicated in a plot to assassinate the czar and imprisoned.

Zimmerman traces how, upon his release, Piłsudski became the leading activist of the banned Polish Socialist Party, published its newspaper for years, made a daring escape from a second Russian imprisonment after he was caught — by pretending to be insane — and then turned to creating a military force in Austrian-ruled Poland that eventually fought against Russia during World War I.

Although they fought under Austria and Germany, Piłsudski's insistence on Polish independence ultimately led to his imprisonment by the Germans, a sacrifice that enhanced his legend among his fellow Poles. Upon his release, he was acclaimed the country's leader and the de facto founder of modern Poland on Nov. 11, 1918, now celebrated as Polish independence day.

After Poland's borders were secured and a civil government established, Piłsudski mostly stepped back from public life. But after several years, he followed with his own turn to strongman rule.

**'My view is that he clearly championed an independent Ukraine, one that would be a democratic outpost on Russia's border, a buffer between Russia and the West, but also a staunch Polish ally that shared Piłsudski's democratic values and the values of at least his followers.'**

Joshua D. Zimmerman, author

After World War I, Piłsudski hoped Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine could form an alliance to counter Russia in the style of the Polish-Lithuanian union that existed for centuries prior to 1795. But Ukrainians and Lithuanians were wary of Polish claims on their territories, and Piłsudski's vision of an anti-Russian alliance never became reality.

In language that might be applied to today's discourse, Piłsudski conceived of a sovereign Ukraine not merely to prevent Russian aggression but as an outpost of Western liberal democracy.

"There can be no independent Poland," he is quoted as saying in 1919, "without an independent Ukraine."

Piłsudski launched a military campaign in 1920 to support Ukrainian nationalists against Bolshevik rule, an action condemned by some as an overreach. Zimmerman believed he had a rationale that echoes today, when Poland, Lithuania and the Baltic countries, as well as Finland and Sweden, feel that Russia under

Ukraine, one that would be a democratic outpost on Russia's border, a buffer between Russia and the West, but also a staunch Polish ally that shared Piłsudski's democratic values and the values of at least his followers," the author said.

Poland and Lithuania — two countries that emerged from Soviet rule — are among Ukraine's strongest diplomatic champions against Putin's Russia.

Zimmerman's book makes a balanced and "significant contribution" to the understanding of Piłsudski, said Michael Fleming, a historian and director of the Institute of European Culture at the Polish University Abroad in London.

"Piłsudski was well aware of the challenges posed by Poland's geography and concluded that an independent Ukraine would share Poland's interest in limiting Russia's expansionist tendencies," Fleming said by email. "At the same time, however, it is important to remember that western Galicia (including Lviv) was much

## 'The Menu' filmmakers share ingredients of dining thriller

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A group of 11 diners gather one evening on a private island in the Pacific Northwest for a once-in-a-lifetime meal from a renowned chef in the new thriller "The Menu."

At \$1,200 a head, it promises to be a singular experience, but no one, not the movie star, the tech bro, the foodie fanboy, the food critic, the wealthy regulars, nor the wild card date, is ready for just how intense, and dangerous, things will get as the meal unfolds under the direction of Ralph Fiennes brilliant and tortured Chef Slowik.

The film comes from the minds of Will Tracy and Seth Reiss, both alums of The Onion and HBO's "Succession." The idea to satirize the cultish fine dining world came after an experience Tracy had at a fancy restaurant on a private island in Norway. They sent their script to director Mark Mylod, who directed the big excruciating dinner party episode in season two of "Succession," and they all hit the ground running to create one of the year's most exciting and unexpected films — funny, twisted and even a little heart-breaking. It opens in theaters nationwide Friday.

To create a dynamic dining room experience, Mylod took a page from Robert Altman's playbook in which all of the characters would be on set all the time, acting and conversing even when the script was technically focused on someone else.