

Pfeiffer Nature Center and Foundation

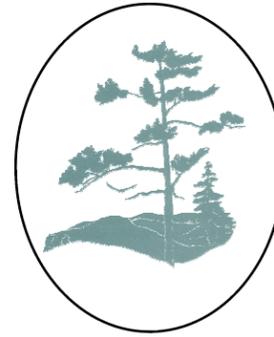
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Portville, NY 14770

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**Pfeiffer Nature Center—  
where science, art, and  
nature come together!**

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Portville, NY



# The Ovenbird

Pfeiffer Nature Center and Foundation

Fall, 2010

## The Seedy Truth

Walking around the woods during the autumn season can be a beautiful time. The leaves are changing into brilliant reds, yellows, and oranges and animals are busy getting ready for the winter. The plants, on the other hand, are getting ready for spring next year. They have actually been working on preparing for it all summer long. They have been creating seeds and nuts that will hopefully make new plants in the spring. But first the seeds need to leave the parent plant and move to a new home to grow. But how do they get there? Seeds move in a variety of different ways. Based on who you talk to there are five to six ways seeds move; gravity, animals, wind, explosion, water, and fire.



The first way seeds move around in this world is through gravity. Many plants just drop their seeds and they fall straight to the ground where they can grow in the shelter of the parent plant. Gravity is the simplest form of seed dispersal and is sometimes accompanied by a second form of dispersal, which can be animals.

Nut bearing trees, such as the Beech, Oak, and Shagbark Hickory, which can be found on Pfeiffer properties, rely on gravity but they also use animals to help move their seeds. Animals, such as squirrels, chipmunks, and other gathering rodents will collect fallen nuts which they store in caches to eat later. Many nuts are buried throughout the forest and are forgotten by these little critters. They are essentially planting the nuts for the trees.

Another way animals help disperse seeds is through eating them, which is called endozoochory. Berries are a prime example. The fleshy fruit is covered with tiny seeds. Birds and other animals, such as bears and even turtles, will eat the berries and later deposit the millions of seeds in other places around the forest. Some seeds need the

animals to eat them so that the animal's digestive system can start to break down the seed's outer coating. The animals cannot digest the seeds but their stomach acids weaken the seed's outer shell making it easier for the seed to germinate.



A third way that animals help disperse seeds is on the outside of their bodies. Many seeds have ways of sticking to animals so they can hitch a ride to another location in the forest. This process is known as epizoochory. Some plants, like the Burdock plant, have hooks or barbs attached to their seeds. This allows the seed to attach to the fur of an animal and be carried along to a new location where it will eventually be rubbed off by the animal. Another way that seeds attach to animals is through a sticky mucus. Mistletoe is a plant that has sticky fruit which attracts birds. The seeds stick to the outside of the bird's beak. When the bird scrapes its beak against the bark of a tree to get the seeds off, the seeds are deposited onto a new tree. This works for the Mistletoe because it is a parasitic plant. It needs another plant, in this case a tree, to survive.

Besides animals, many plants rely on wind to help disperse their seeds. On the Pfeiffer properties you can find a variety of trees and other plants that use this method of seed dispersal. Maple trees have winged seeds. These seeds will flutter to the ground and be blown away from the parent tree, though usually not very far. The American Elm is another example of a tree with winged seeds. The key to this type of dispersal is large quantities of seeds. This



(Continued on page 4)



**Wonders of Fall Walk  
@ Lillibridge**

October 2

**Let's Make: Tie Dye**

@ Office

October 6

**Let's Make Holiday  
Centerpiece @ Office**

November 17

**Let's Make Gifts for  
the Birds @ Office**

December 8



**Get Out There And Walk!**

We support our local hiking interests!  
You can reach them on Yahoo! Groups.  
Olean\_Area\_Hiking &  
Southern\_Tier\_Greenway\_Hiking.

## Let's Make—A Holiday Centerpiece

Learn how to fashion a stylish centerpiece to grace your holiday table or give as a hostess gift. You'll leave this fun, hands-on workshop with one lovely centerpiece and the skills to make more for family & friends. The boxwood base is hardy and will last for months with minimal care. Simply change the candle and accents for every holiday from Thanksgiving through Valentine's Day.



This event will take place November 17th from 6—8 PM at the Office at 14th South Main Street, Portville, NY. The cost is \$25 for the general public and \$20 for PNC members which includes all the supplies. Please register for this event by November 3rd because we need time to order the materials.

### Hours of Operation

**Office, 14 S. Main St. Portville:**  
Generally Tue-Wed, 8am to 3pm;  
other times by chance or  
appointment

**Lillibridge Road Property:**  
Trails open to non-motorized  
usage dawn to dusk, 7 days a  
week, year round.

**Yubadam Road Property:**  
Trails open to non-motorized  
usage dawn to dusk, 7 days a  
week, year round EXCEPT during  
hunting season Oct —Dec , when  
all trails are closed.

Staff is available for questions,  
tours, and programs as scheduled  
or by prior arrangement.

~~~~~  
Check our website or call for the  
most up-to-date information and  
upcoming programs:

**www.PfeifferNatureCenter.org**  
**716-933-0187**

Be sure you don't miss out on any of our exciting programs! Simply write programs@PfeifferNatureCenter.org with the subject line **Count Me In** and we'll add you to our e-mail distribution list.

As we approach the autumnal equinox, that single date when the day and night are of equal length, we notice how much things are changing. Leaves are changing color and drifting down to the ground. Clouds are changing shapes and color, no longer looking like summer clouds. While we still have some beautifully warm summer days, nights are consistently cool. Garden flowers and wildflowers alike are rapidly going to seed, preparing for their progeny. Animals are busy gathering their stores of winter food, and the small ones are attempting to move into my basement.



As the seasons change, so, too, things change here at Pfeiffer Nature Center. In August we bid a fond farewell to Susan Avery, our intrepid Naturalist for the past two years. Susan and her ever-faithful canine friend, Sassy, headed south to the Washington, DC area. Susan had a large impact on the Nature Center, building new programs and adding both depth and breadth to existing programs. Not to mention lending her amazing organizational skills to our office space! Susan's generosity of time, energy, and spirit were greatly appreciated, and she will be missed.



A few weeks prior to Susan's departure, Reann Ehman joined us as our Naturalist. Reann is a certified teacher, and has lots of experience working with students at all levels. Reann has a quick smile and is

eager to share her life-long love of the outdoors. I know you'll enjoy her positive outlook, easy nature, and attention to detail. Come to our nature hikes, our programs, or just stop in the office and say hello. Reann will love to meet you.

Shortly after Susan left we learned that we'd be saying goodbye to one of our Board members. Bob Wood has his fingers in many pies, and unfortunately several of them conflict with our meeting times here at Pfeiffer Nature Center. Bob has been instrumental in making stronger connections between the Nature Center and Cooperative Extension's Master Forest Owners (MFO), and in bringing a joint meeting of the MFO and NYS Forest Owner's Association to our Lillibridge property (see page 5). I'm sure we'll be calling on Bob for some of his knowledge in the future!

I don't know about you, but it seemed to me as if MANY trees suddenly started displaying their fall colors over the weekend of September 18-19. Friday they were mostly green, and by Sunday the hillsides were shades of umber, sienna, copper, amber, and brick, with splashes of magenta thrown in for good measure.

Enjoying the autumn!



Peg Cherre

### Seasonal Stirrings & Nature Notes

#### OCTOBER ~

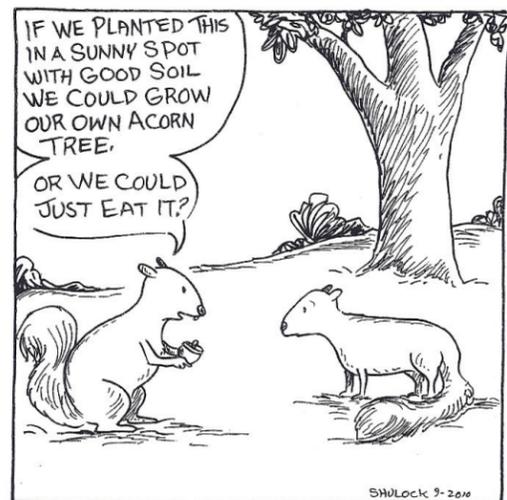
- ♦ Shorter days and dropping temperatures signal many plants to withdraw their valuable chlorophyll from leaves, revealing the yellow and red colors associated with waste products that have built up in the leaves over the summer.
- ♦ Chemical reactions caused by diminishing daylight make many animals grow more fur or feathers as they brace for the coming cold.

#### NOVEMBER ~

- ♦ Raccoons scout out winter dens where they can conserve their fat when food becomes scarce. They do not hibernate but merely become inactive.

#### DECEMBER~

- ♦ While the ground's surface may be frozen, each foot of snow on the surface reduces the depth of soil freezing by approximately the same amount.
- ♦ The Geminid shower can produce around eighty meteors per hour at its maximum. Look for slow moving streaks of light in clear skies after dark between December 6th and 18th. It will peak December 13th.



Margaret Shulock lives in Friendship, NY. Her "Sticks" cartoons can be seen in the Olean Times Herald. Visit her website, [www.thesixchix.com](http://www.thesixchix.com) to see more of her work.

#### Membership Levels and Benefits

All members receive a subscription to *The Ovenbird*, our quarterly newsletter, delivered to your home.

|                     |         |                                                                            |
|---------------------|---------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Student/senior      | \$10    | 1 \$5 off program admission coupons                                        |
| Individual          | \$25    | 1 \$5 off program admission coupons                                        |
| Family              | \$35    | 3 \$5 off program admission coupons                                        |
| Conservator         | \$100   | 4 free family program admissions                                           |
| Patron              | \$250   | Same as Conservator, invitation to wine & cheese reception, 1 tree planted |
| Guardian            | \$500   | Same as Patron, plus 1 decorated fir holiday wreath                        |
| Benefactor          | \$1,000 | Same as Guardian, plus unlimited free program admissions                   |
| Additional Donation | \$_____ |                                                                            |

All members also receive discounted admissions and gift shop purchases at many other nature centers. Your contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowable by NYS Tax Law.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

STREET ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL: \_\_\_\_\_ Is this a \_\_\_ new or \_\_\_ renewing membership? (Check one)

May we contact you about volunteering? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No, thank you.

Send your completed form to: Pfeiffer Nature Center, PO Box 802 Portville, NY 14770



### The Seedy Truth (Cont.)

(Continued from page 4)

A fifth way that seeds are dispersed is through water. These seeds usually have a special coating that helps it survive this wet form of transportation. Seeds might have a heavy wax coat or many thick layers to protect it. Seeds like the coconut can drift for hundreds of miles on the open ocean before the salt water will seep into the shell and ruin the seed. Some seeds, like the sedge fruit have sacs of air that help them float.



The last way that seeds are dispersed is through fire. Plants that live in high fire risk areas have traits that allow them reproduce when a fire occurs. Animals can run and hide from a fire but plants cannot so plants need another way to survive. The plants have a seed dispersal mechanism that is based on the destructive fire. These plants need the fire to release their seeds. The intensity or heat of the fire is important to this form of seed dispersal. Certain temperatures need to be reached for some of the

seed pods to open. A number of species of pine, called serotinus, have cones that only open after a fire. The Jack Pine is an example of this type of pine. Lodgepole pine, which is found in the western United States, is serotinus and free-opening. When it grows in an area of frequent fires it is serotinus and relies on the fire to release its seeds. When the Lodgepole pine grows in an area where there are few fires it will release its seeds on its own without the use of fire. Some species of plants will store their seeds in the ground until a fire reaches the right heat for germination.



So the next time you hike through the forest at the Lillibridge property or the fields of Eshelman property on a fall day look for the ways that plants disperse their seeds. Are their seeds floating through the air or dropping on the path in front of you? Keep your eyes open and see how many different ways you can find.

## Thank You To Our Financial Supporters

### Thank You & Welcome to New & Renewing Members

June 16 – September 9, 2010

- Joy & Mark Baker
- Don & Peg Bergreen
- Joe & Tricia Bohan
- Dan Breidenstein Family
- Tyler Ferguson
- Amy Choboy
- Steve Cipolla
- Mikki & Alex Cole
- Albert Cousins
- Donna & Dominic DiGirolamo
- Bob & Barb Fairbanks
- James Frair
- Bill & Sondra Fox
- Marilyn Hale
- Richard E. Heiser
- Franz & Emily Hodge
- Casey Jarman
- Randy Martin
- Mary Marvin
- Jeff McMullen
- Melora Miller
- George & Virginia Nuffer
- Bill Penoyer
- Ed Reisman
- Maureen Sheahan
- Ken Shields
- Mark Shields
- Troy, Jeremy, Jesse, & Jordan Spehar
- Lynford Swetland
- Preston & Wendy VanCuren
- John Van Hoff
- Christine Walden
- Harry R. Weber
- Daniel Wilson
- Shawn & Heather Wray
- Yoga Betsy: Brian & Betsy Afton

### A Heartfelt Thanks to Our Generous Donors

- Franz & Emily Hodge
- Marc & Nancy Mantelli
- Francis Shields
- Joe & Theresa Schueckler
- Bob Waltz

*We are grateful for your generosity and support! Kind acts and thoughtful gifts such as these assist us in fulfilling our Mission. If we have inadvertently omitted your gift from these lists, please bring it to our attention and we will happily correct our oversight.*



### Create a Lasting Tribute

You can honor your family and friends in ways that will have lasting impacts on Pfeiffer Nature Center and therefore the local community. Gifts can be either memorials or tributes to the accomplishments of someone still with us, and all gifts will be acknowledged in this newsletter.

Gifts to the **Kay Pfeiffer Gerkin Endowment Fund** are maintained and

### Pfeiffer Nature Center Mission

- To preserve the integrity of the old-growth forest
- To provide an area for scientific research
- To promote community-based nature study programs for grade school, high school, college and adult students
- To further natural resource stewardship

managed separately from our operating funds. The principle in this fund is retained exclusively for investments and income generation, with only interest and dividends available to support our ongoing activities. Check with your financial or legal advisor to name Pfeiffer Nature Center in your estate planning.

Gifts may be made specifically to our sugar bush expansion project. We will plant sugar maples on our Eshelman property annually. While donors will not be able to identify “their” tree, they will have the benefit of knowing that their gifts provided a source of ongoing income. Maple seedlings are \$35 each.

Gifts of any size may be made to the Nature Center to honor or memorialize relatives, friends, or pets. With no minimum donation, this option provides giving opportunities for all.

**We hope you’ll make a gift soon!**



## Nature - It’s Good for What Ails You

Does the fall and winter weather find you feeling blue? Do you seem to lack energy and enthusiasm for things you enjoy during the warmer weather? Do your children behave better in the summer than they do in the winter?

If so, Pfeiffer Nature Center may be just what the doctor ordered!

In the last decade, studies done in the U.S., Japan, Sweden, England, and elsewhere have documented the health benefits of time spent outdoors in natural environments. It’s obvious that you’ll improve your physical health if you walk more, but did you know that spending time outdoors will also improve your attitude? Being in nature also enhances a feeling of well-being and reduces stress, anxiety, and depression in both children and adults. It’s also documented that spending time in wild, outdoor areas can improve concentration, social skills, and mental agility. Green environments have also been shown to boost our natural immune systems and lower blood pressure.

Hike our trails, come to our programs, learn how to enjoy the outdoors all year round with Pfeiffer Nature Center.

**Go outside—  
you’ll feel better!**

## Top 10 Reasons to Buy a Wreath from Pfeiffer Nature Center

10. Nature Center wreaths are made from regionally-grown greens (fir or boxwood), requiring minimal transportation - they’re not only green, they’re *green*—supporting a regional economy and reducing carbon footprints.
9. The regionally-grown wreaths will be beautiful on your front door well into the new year.
8. The Nature Center’s decorated wreaths come with a beautiful bow, hand-tied by our volunteers.
7. Our decorated wreaths are artfully graced with all-natural decorations — pine cones, rose hips, dried flowers and seed heads, feathers, nuts, and more.
6. Most of our decorations are gathered and dried in Cattaraugus and surrounding counties, although some of our more-distant friends help us gather flowers, cones, and seeds from more southern locales.
5. Dozens of volunteers enjoy getting together the weekend before Thanksgiving design and decorate hundreds of wreaths, admiring each other’s handiwork and creativity.
4. You’ll select from hundreds of gorgeous wreaths, choosing one that will look just right on your door.
3. When you pick up your wreath (from 1-4 pm on either on either Friday 11/26 or Saturday 11/27, at Pleasant Valley Nursery), you can buy a poinsettia, cyclamen, other gorgeous plant, or even pick out your Christmas tree!
2. Picking up your wreath is a great excuse to avoid distant shopping malls on Black Friday, giving you one more reason to shop locally.
1. Your purchase helps support Nature Center programs, workshops, hikes, and more!



Call 716-933-0187 or use this form to place your order.  
Quantities are limited!

### Pfeiffer Nature Center Wreath Order Form

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Wreath Order

| Wreath Description     | Price | Quantity | Total    |
|------------------------|-------|----------|----------|
| Decorated Fraser Fir   | \$32  | _____    | \$ _____ |
| Decorated Boxwood      | \$43  | _____    | \$ _____ |
|                        |       |          |          |
| Undecorated Fraser Fir | \$27  | _____    | \$ _____ |
| Undecorated Boxwood    | \$38  | _____    | \$ _____ |
|                        |       |          |          |
| Order Total            |       | _____    | \$ _____ |

#### Select a payment option

- \$ \_\_\_\_\_ enclosed with order **OR**
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will mail a check to the Nature Center office by 11/25/10 **OR**
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will pay for my order via credit/debit card. Please call me at \_\_\_\_\_ for my card number **OR**
- \_\_\_\_\_ I will pay for my order (check or cash) when I pick my wreath up at Pleasant Valley Nursery.

Send orders and make checks payable to:  
**Pfeiffer Nature Center**  
P.O. Box 802  
Portville, NY 14770

4 **Pfeiffer Teams Up with SBU for Freshman Service Day**

On Saturday, August 28<sup>th</sup>, Pfeiffer Nature Center teamed up with St. Bonaventure University (SBU) for the first annual Freshman Day of Service through SBU's Center for Community Engagement, under the leadership of Larry Sorokes. "SBU's Center for Community Engagement leads a variety of integrative educational, service and volunteer activities to promote a culture of Franciscan service to others."

There were several other agencies in the community that participated in this day of service, including Canticle Farms, the Warming House, Cattaraugus Community Action and the Allegheny River Valley Trail. The Day of Service was a way for many of the SBU freshman to complete required service hours for University 101, a required class for all incoming freshmen at the University.

Pfeiffer was lucky enough to have seven freshmen from SBU on-site at our

Lillibridge Property for a service project, where we had two projects underway. Two of the SBU students, Gabrielle Weir and Pat from Bona Buddies, worked with Jeff McMullen on a book sorting project, while the remaining five students, Greg Fraughnan, Anthony Watts, Aditya Rao, Daulton Sherwin, and Anthony Shoff, worked with Mike Ermer, Nick Vaczek, Mike Canada, Carol Bradley and Joellen Beatty on another.

The larger of the two projects included



the demolition of a small shed just off one of our trails and the removal of debris. The dilapidated building was a safety hazard and needed to be removed. The Pfeiffer volunteers and SBU students completed a full demolition of the shed and removed two flatbed trailers worth of debris from the site. While there is still some wood that needs to be removed, the majority of it was taken away by Mike Canada to be burned. Mike Ermer took the glass, metal and other recyclable debris to the transfer station.

"Everyone was working together seamlessly. The Bona's students really seemed to enjoy the demolition aspect of the project," said Joellen. "Mike Ermer also brought apple cider and donuts from Cummin's Cider Mill as refreshments for the volunteers, which was a wonderful surprise." We hope to work with the SBU Center for Community Engagement on more projects in the future. For more information on the CCE, please visit [www.sbu.edu](http://www.sbu.edu) and search for the Center for Community Engagement under Campus/Spiritual Life.

**The Seedy Truth (Con't)**

*(Continued from page 1)*

increases the chances of the seed landing in a place where it can germinate and grow into a new plant. Besides wings, some seeds have "parachutes" that allow them to float great distances on the winds. Dandelions, Cattails, and Milkweed all use "parachutes" or fine hairs attached to their seeds to help their seeds move. On a breezy day you might be able to

see these seeds floating through the air in the meadow on our Eshelman property.



that seeds are dispersed, which is through explosions. Touch-Me-Not, also known as Jewelweed, is a prime

One of my favorite plants from childhood demonstrates the fourth way

example of this type of dispersement. I can remember spending hours of my childhood playing with this plant. In the fall, their seed pods swell up and become tight. Then with the slightest touch they explode, sending seeds flying everywhere. These seed pods were always great fun to touch and feel. You never knew when they might explode!

*(Continued on page 7)*

**Can You Help? We Need...**

Aquatic Collecting Net—D Frame

Replacement Sweep Nets Muslin 16" Diameter (2)

Replacement Sweep Nets Poly Mesh 14" Diameter (2)



Periodic help maintaining our property: mowing meadows and open trails, clipping encroaching plants/branches, removing fallen trees from trails, etc.

5 **Thank You to Our Dedicated Volunteers**

We would like to thank Dave Michie and the Portville Boy Scouts for their help with clean up at this year's Woods Walk.

We want to thank Linda Poelma of the Cuba Library, Tammy Kokot from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Library in Almond, and the Bradford Library for inviting us to present our nature literacy program to their students and patrons. This year's theme was water and the children had fun learning about the water cycle and examining multiple water creatures.

We are grateful to Bob Waltz and Joe Schueckler for fixing the lawnmower and keeping the lawn around the pavilion beautifully mowed all summer long! Roy Griffin did a marvelous job of brush hogging the fields around the pavilion. We are also grateful to Carol Bradley for looking after the cabin for us and making sure that it looks wonderful for our visitors. The Reisman family (Jeff, Tonya, Matt, Austin, & Justin) have been working hard all summer long on keeping the Eshelman Property looking great.

Our thanks go out to Francis Shields for his donation of the ginseng botanical pressing and a two year subscription to New York Conservationist. Both of these items will help in our education of the public through our monthly programs. Mr. Shields also offered his guidance on a recent walk to explore ginseng growth.

We are saddened to hear of the untimely passing of Martha Bohan and

are grateful for her recent donation of a flower book.

In July we had a great day with the NYS Forest Owners Association (NYFOA) and Cooperative Extension's Master Foresters (MF). These two groups worked together to hold an information refresher course at on our Lillibridge Property. Thank you to Bob Wood, Brian Bullock, and Mark Witford for organizing this event.

After refresher course, Brain Bullock, Nick Vaczek, Joe Schueckler, Bob Wood, Kim Sherwood and Susan Avery hiked up Thorton Thruway to measure and core a Tupelo tree. The data has been entered in the Champion Tupelo and NYS Big Tree Registry and we think we will have a Champion Tupelo. Thanks to everyone who helped with this event.

Another big event that happened in July was Fantastic Forest Fun. Many volunteers spent the day with 42 children and their chaperones from various summer programs throughout the county. It was a day full of bugs, hiking, tie dying, painting, bottle rockets, and water slides. The children had a wonderful day learning about nature and exploring the Lillibridge property. A big thanks goes out to all our helpers who ran programs and assisted with activities: Vicki Schmidt, Lisa Mulherin, Sue Stevens, Tina Stevens, Joellen Beatty, Marcia Storch, Joyce Ermer, Colleen Kent, and Steve Kellogg.

August brought mushrooms and a wonderful walk led by Chef Garrett Taylor. Thanks to Chef Taylor for adding his expertise to the walk and sharing his knowledge with the twenty-one folks who attended this event.

Thanks to Bill Shelp for leading a slimy walk through the Lillibridge Property in search of elusive salamanders during our Sala'Meander program. We had twenty-four participants, which included many children and their parents. It was a joy to see the children exploring the forest and discovering salamanders.

A big thank you goes out to Paul Frey and Dan Martonis of Cattaraugus Property Appraiser and GIS Offices for helping us create new trail maps based on GPS coordinates and the topography of the area.

We are thankful for the gloves and wreath decorations that were donated by Polly Duggan.

And last but not least, a big thank you goes out to everyone who helped orient the new naturalist to her position here at Pfeiffer Nature Center. Thank you to Joe Schueckler, Jeff McMullen, Tonya Reisman and her boys for showing Reann Ehman around the different properties. We are grateful to Nick Vaczek and Sue Stevens for sharing their information on the history of Pfeiffer, as well as information on the cabin and the pavilion on the Lillibridge Property.



**Pfeiffer Nature Center & Foundation**

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[www.PfeifferNatureCenter.org](http://www.PfeifferNatureCenter.org)  
[info@PfeifferNatureCenter.org](mailto:info@PfeifferNatureCenter.org)

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