

# The Ovenbird

Pfeiffer Nature Center and Foundation

FALL, 2013



## UPCOMING...

**TAKING WREATH  
ORDERS THROUGH  
NOVEMBER 8th for  
pick up before or just  
after Thanksgiving!**  
*Pages 6-7*



## NURTURING NATURE IN CHILDREN

**PORTVILLE LIBRARY  
NOVEMBER 2  
11-12:30 PM**  
*Page 5*



## SNOWSHOE BLITZ

**LILLIBRIDGE RD.  
JANUARY 11  
NOON-3:00PM**  
*Page 5*



## 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.](#)



## PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE

It is hopefully common knowledge among our members and readers of *The Ovenbird* that our American Chestnut log cabin is listed in the National and State Registers of Historic Places. You may not be aware that we have a long-range plan of getting the cabin used much more regularly, of potentially making it available for rentals.

Preserving the cabin from deterioration and improving its usefulness requires a multi-year improvement process, as well as routine, ongoing maintenance. Thanks to funding from the Cattaraugus Region Community Foundation, the Mahar Family Fund, the F.T. and Anna C. Manley Family Fund, and individual donors, last summer we put a new roof on the cabin.

This summer we completed stage two of that project, reshaping the land around the cabin to improve drainage. We were able to accomplish this huge task with the help the L.C. Whitford Company and SUNY Aflred. Whitford loaned us equipment, and Bill Bigelow, Assistant Professor in the Building Trades Division, supervised his senior year Heavy Equipment students in operating a bulldozer, front end loader, and backhoe to move many tons of soil and put in a drain.

Students also manually lifted all the flagstone on the south and east sides of the cabin, then used a laser level and hand tools to reshape the front entrance area so water would drain away from our kitchen door. We're still working on doing some leveling and placement of stone on the walkway approaching the cabin.



The next phase in improving the cabin is making our bathroom functional *and* handicapped accessible. Once again generous donors have made this vision a reality. Here you see Ron Sutton, Senior Vice President at Key Bank, presenting a check for \$5,000 to Pfeiffer donor and volunteer Dan Schmidt. This grant will be added to an award of \$12,000 from an anonymous donor to really do the bathroom right! We're putting in grab bars, a wheelchair accessible sink, on-demand water heater, and more. The project also includes removing a small non-load-bearing wall, widening a doorway, finishing a room that will be the entry point for the bathroom, and building a ramp for our main entrance.

Although the real thing will be much warmer and more in keeping with the style of rest of the cabin, this artist rendering can give you some idea of what the completed bathroom will look like. A contractor should be working away at it by the time you read this newsletter. We'll be excited to show it off in person in the spring!



## From the Director

### BE SURE TO GET THE NAME OF THE MAN WHO HELPED JOE WITH THE SIGNS THAT HE WANTS IN THE VOLUNTEER THANKS!

#### Humans as plants

We all grow where we're planted. Some are like annual plants – they stay for only a brief time, one or two flowering seasons, before they move on. Some are like perennial plants, able to claim and hold their territory for years, maybe decades, before they succumb to invasives, lawn mowers, or repeated inhospitable conditions. Others are like trees, bending in the wind, withstanding the winter, here for the duration. We won't live for ever, of course, but we'll likely have a much longer impact than the first two groups. And if we band together with others of our kinds – hoo wee! We're almost undefeatable!

All kinds of plants are essential to a healthy ecosystem, providing critical food and shelter to other life forms. All kinds of people are essential, too, even the ones that sometimes make us want to weed them out of our lives.

Although we're still in the teenage years of our life, Pfeiffer Nature Center celebrated our 15<sup>th</sup> year in September. Like teenagers, or young trees, we're still stretching our branches, finding our place in the forest. We want to make sure that we'll eventually become one of the old granddad trees, maybe even a NYS Champion Tree like our Tupelo.



Margaret Shulock lives in Friendship, NY. Her "Sticks" cartoons can be seen in the Olean Times Herald. She'll be sharing the Nature Center's booth at the Portville Arts, Craft & Antiques Show (see back cover) with her calendars & note cards.

How do we make sure that we're still standing for future generations, that we remain important to the community? By heeding the words of our friends, our supporters, and the wise among us. By reaching out to new audiences, using new communication tools. By developing new programs and offering them in new locations. By listening to the messages carried on the wind, the words of the rain, the lessons of the winter.

I recently read an interview in *The Sun* magazine (June 2013) with John Elder, an author and long-time environmental studies teacher at Middlebury College in Vermont. Among other things Elder said, "I continue to discover more and more within a smaller and smaller radius of home."

Elder has an interesting view of wilderness, considering it not a place, but a process, one in which everything—people, plants, animals, rocks—is a part. Nothing is stable, everything changes. A historical look at the hillsides that surround us are a case in point. Fully wooded in the late 1800s, mostly clear cut just decades later. Now many of the hills have regenerated, overtaking farmland that was left untended. Forests have succeeded meadows, water and wind have changed the course of rivers and streams, wetlands have moved of their own or by the hand of man. It is all part of the reality of life.

Later in the interview Elder said, "We need people to appreciate nature where they live, so they'll see the importance of preserving it everywhere."

I think the Nature Center embodies both of Elder's quotes. We're encouraging people to really learn about where we live, to understand the importance of a wildflower or a tree in their own backyard. Only once we care about that single tree can we expand out thinking to the rest of the county, the state, the country, and the globe.

Settling my roots for the winter,

Peg Cherre



**Our Yubadam Road property is closed to everyone except our previously approved, permit-holding hunters from October 1 through December 17. Return to our hiking trails on December 18.**

## Sneak Peek

Although it's only October when this issue of *The Ovenbird* goes to press, we've been hard at work planning for 2014 for months already. Staff and volunteers have collaborated to develop our program calendar for the coming year — and we have some surprises in store.

Our 2014 program calendar is based on themes, broad concepts you can follow through this year and beyond. They include Muses of the Forest, Naturalist 101, and Family Time.



You'll have a chance to sample topics as varied as insects and dance, brewing and astronomy. We'll also be offering a variation on our hugely popular 2013 Exhale series.

Program dates, times and details will be up on our website in the next few weeks, as well as our online registration form. Be sure you're on our email list (see page 4 to sign up) and you'll get an electronic notification of all upcoming events.

You won't want to miss any!

## Now's Your Chance

Susan Avery has decided to move on, finding other opportunities to share her talents with the world. As a result, we have an opening for our Nature Program Coordinator.

This is a part-time paid position, with lots of support and encouragement. There's plenty of opportunity to dig into the world of nature, marketing, and public relations, bringing the Nature Center further into the world of social media and expanding our reach to whole new audiences.



Primary responsibilities include developing, implementing, arranging, and marketing educational programs for the Nature Center.

Sound intriguing? **Act quickly!** Send your resume to [director@pfeiffernaturecenter.org](mailto:director@pfeiffernaturecenter.org).

## A Poetry Interlude

For now particular reason that I can determine, my mind has been wanting poetry lately. I've decided that, like the little mouse in Leo Lionni's picture story book *Frederick*, I'm storing them up for the coming cold months. I've decided to share a few with you. The first was written by a friend of mine, the next two by friends of the Nature Center as part of or in spirit with our June poetry workshop. They are reprinted with permission from the authors. The last is in the public domain.

### Oregon sidewalk Friday morning

By Pat Sorbini

Her eyes, clear and yong  
and sadly hopeful:  
I will write you're a poem  
to keep me warm.  
"compassion" I asked  
for there had been so little  
that morning  
and I could still taste  
the tears on my tongue.  
She repeated, compassion,  
and bent to her tiny typewriter  
on the sidewalk  
before her.  
I only have two words she said  
when I came back.  
I should have asked her what they were but  
I pressed folded bills into her hands  
and told her I would be back  
but now I want the two words  
because maybe  
just maybe  
that's all it takes  
all it needs  
to pierce your heart.

### Yellow in Season

By Pat Malachowsky

Yellow is a rose  
planted in my garden  
just because it is  
Mom's favorite.  
Yellow is a sunbeam  
warm as toast  
shining through  
a large pitcher of  
ice-cold lemonade in summer.  
Yellow is the  
end of summer squash  
melting in the pan  
of sugar and butter.  
Yellow is a maple leaf  
caught at its peak  
in autumn.  
Yellow is a quilt  
of sunflowers  
nestled on a winter's  
featherbed.  
Yellow is a canary  
singing from its heart  
in spring.  
Yellow is jonquils  
reminding us it's Spring  
after a hard winter.

### Nature's Wonder

By Edith Walker

Snow on the hemlocks is melting  
Falling in droplets like rain  
The winter is nearing its end  
I walk. I observe. I enjoy  
Drawn in to a sense of oneness  
Cares, like the snow, begin melting  
Lifting the weight from the boughs.



### Dust of Snow










By Robert Frost

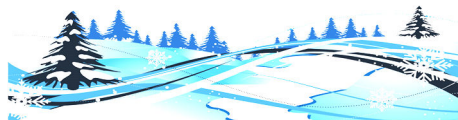
The way a crow  
Shook down on me  
The dust of snow  
From a hemlock tree

Has given my heart  
A change of mood  
And saved some part  
Of a day I had rued.



## 4 Ten Ways to Share Nature With Children

-  **Make a Date with the Moon** - A monthly journey outside to look at the full moon.
  -  **Spritzing spider webs** - Discover the architecture behind spider webs by misting them with a light spray of water from a spritz bottles.
  -  **Leaf number search** - Find and identify leaves with one to ten points and beyond.
  -  **Shadow search** - Use chalk to trace a shadow on the sidewalk, come back later to see how the shadow has moved and learn why.
  -  **Animal tracks** - Locate animal tracks in the dirt and cast them in plaster.
  -  **Outdoor sculpture** - Follow sculptor Andy Goldsworthy's lead and create sculptures using only materials found in nature.
  -  **Shape search** - Find common shapes (square, circle, triangle etc.) in nature
  -  **Color search** - Identify colors of the rainbow found in nature.
  -  **Bird song** - Listen for a bird call and attempt your own imitation.
- .... and visit Pfeiffer Nature Center!**



Courtesy of *Take a Child Outside* and the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences. For more information and additional activities to engage children in nature, visit [www.takeachildoutside.org](http://www.takeachildoutside.org).

**No matter what happens at the Federal level, Pfeiffer Nature Center is here for you. Hike our trails, come to our programs, marvel at our ancient trees and huge boulders, enjoy all that we have to offer!**

**DON'T MISS OUT!** If you receive *The Ovenbird* but aren't also receiving our e-News, you're missing a lot! E-News is sent out 2-4 times per month with the latest information about upcoming programs, events, nature happenings, & opportunities, including details on how you can join in the fun. Four easy ways you can start getting e-News:

Point your smart phone to the QR code - click & you'll automatically be brought to our sign up page **OR**



Go to our website, [PfeifferNatureCenter.org](http://PfeifferNatureCenter.org), scroll to the bottom of the page and click the Get our e-News button **OR**

Send us an email, [programs@PfeifferNatureCenter.org](mailto:programs@PfeifferNatureCenter.org), and we'll get you signed up **OR**

Give us a call, 716-933-0187, with your email address and we'll do the rest.

### **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

### **Pfeiffer Nature Center & Foundation**

Administrative Office:  
14 S. Main St. Portville NY 14770  
Mailing Address:  
PO Box 802 Portville NY 14770  
716.933.0187  
[www.PfeifferNatureCenter.org](http://www.PfeifferNatureCenter.org)  
[info@PfeifferNatureCenter.org](mailto:info@PfeifferNatureCenter.org)

### **Staff**

Margaret Cherre, Director  
Open, Naturalist

### **Board of Directors**

President: Colleen Kent  
Vice President: Mike Ermer Secretary:  
Pam Dominsky  
Treasurer: Kathy Elser

### **Board Members**

Jason Burt	Chris Scott
Ray Valeri	Rob Walk
Ann Feightner	Ted Georgian
Steve Potter	Christine Walden
Ryan Michelle Wilcox	

### **Honoray Board Members**

Carol Woodin	Judy Patton
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## Upcoming Programs

### Nurturing Nature in Children ~ Animal Adaptation in Winter

Portville Library ~  
Sat., Nov. 2, 11- 12:30 PM

Everyone has lost a mitten. What's a loss for you may be a boon to the animals that find it. This parent-and-child program includes exploring nature's treasures and a craft.



We'll start the morning with Pfeiffer Nature Center staff reading the picture-story book The Mitten. This classic Ukrainian folk tale revolves around how animals escape from the cold in a lost mitten and the fun that ensues when the space gets too crowded. Will the animals cooperate with each other so everyone wins?

After the story we'll do some hands-on exploration of nature treasures and create nature crafts. Our activities will help children understand how animals adapt to harsh winter conditions.

When it's cold outdoors, kids will warm quickly to exploring our animal artifacts and creating winter crafts.

This program has activities that parents do *with* their children, so children should be accompanied by an adult. For parents with children ages 4-9. Indoor Program. FREE!



Register for all of our programs online or call us at 933.0187.

### Snowshoe Blitz

Lillibridge Road ~  
Sat., Jan. 11, 2014, noon-3:00 PM

If some of the old-timers are right, we're in for a cold & snowy winter.

It's true: if you can walk, you can snowshoe. But how to get started? What kind of snowshoes should you buy, or even rent? What size? Do you need poles? Will you be waddling like a duck and throwing out your tricky hips & back?



Those are some common questions of potential new snowshoers. We'll allay your fears, fit you with snowshoes, and Nature Center staff will take you on a 30-45 minute guided winter walk on our preserve.

## Fall Nature Notes ~ LOOK TO THE SKY!

Every once in awhile we lift our gaze from the flora and fauna of the earth's surface to the sky and the source of all life's origins.

This fall Comet ISON will traverse our sky giving ample opportunity to ponder the amazing bigger picture of life! Billed as the comet of the century, it should become increasingly brighter and easier to see with the naked eye as it approaches *perihelion* (the point in its orbit that is closest to the sun—there's your new word for the day) on November 28<sup>th</sup>.

The comet was discovered in September 2012 by Russian astronomers and as a "sungrazer" - travelling to within 700,000 miles of the sun. As such, it is expected to provide a fantastic view "as bright as the moon and perhaps visible during the day" according to NASA. Or maybe it will be burned up by the sun and fizzle out. It's too soon to have confidence about which prediction will be true.

As of early October, ISON could be viewed with a telescope in the constellation Cancer at a magnitude 11. The lower the magnitude number the brighter the object is in the sky. An unaided eye should see it when it reaches a magnitude of about 6.

Here are some potentially significant viewing dates:



**October 16** ISON passes just 2 degrees NNE of the bright star Regulus, making a great "guidepost" to pin it down with binoculars.

**November 5<sup>th</sup>:** ISON crosses from the astronomical constellation of Leo into Virgo.

**November 22<sup>nd</sup>:** ISON crosses into the constellation Libra.

**November 28** ISON reaches *perihelion* or the point it is closest to the sun.

**December 26** ISON will be at its closest point to the earth at 64.2 million kilometers. How close is that? No too much. The moon at *perigee* (or nearest to the earth) is about 363,104 kilometers away and the sun is about 150 million kilometers from the earth. No need to fret about colliding worlds this fall.



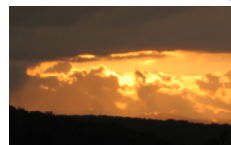
Take the great advice of noted stargazer Jack Horkheimer - "Keep Looking Up" -and enjoy this once in a lifetime experience.

For more information:  
[www.earthsky.org](http://www.earthsky.org); [www.nasa.gov](http://www.nasa.gov);  
[www.space.com](http://www.space.com)

## Thank You to Our Dedicated Volunteers

For months now, **Vicki Schmidt** has been a boon to the office, helping to keep Peg at least semi-sane. Vicki comes in weekly and does whatever needs doing. She's updated our database, sent out membership reminders, installed printers, organized bow makers for our wreaths, cleaned, and much, much more. THANKS, Vicki.

Our 15th Anniversary Sunset at the Cabin was a remarkable success, thanks to a large cadre of volunteers. The cabin got a thorough cleaning from **Ray Valeri,**



**Casey Ensell, Don & Janet Ast, and Angela Cousins.** Next up were the

people who strung lights, arranged furniture, moved tables, and otherwise set the ambiance: **Sue Stevens, Ryan Wilcox, Ann Feightner, and Vicki Schmidt.** Then came the musicians, **Jon Tomerlin & Megan Taylor,** and the makers and donors of that *delicious* artisan wine, **Ray & Vicky McKinney and Mike & Diane Canada.** Those who brought yummy food are too

numerous to mention individually, starting with **Cuba Cheese Shoppe** and including most **Board members.**

Want to spend some time with great folks? Call us and volunteer!

## Thank You To Our Financial Supporters

### New & Renewing Members

July 1—October 15, 2013

Stephen Andrea  
Doug & Betsy Cashing  
Albert L. Cousins  
Angela Cousins  
Bob & Barb Fairbanks  
Kathy Hanley  
Andrew & Kathleen Hasselberg  
Richard E. Heiser  
Mr. & Mrs. Helmuth Jacobi  
Paul Kaduc  
James & Mary Anne Kirkpatrick  
Randy Martin  
Mary Marvin  
Julia McAndrew  
Ronald Pollock  
Corinne Potter  
Doug & Betsy Price  
Ed Reisman  
Kathy & Don Ross  
Betty Rutterman  
Joe & Theresa Schueckler  
Linda Schummer  
Maureen Sheahan  
Ken Shields  
Mark Shields  
Karl & Anita Shuey  
Jeremy, Jesse, & Jordan Spehar  
Troy Spehar  
Sprague's Maple Farms  
Gary Swetland  
Bill & Theron Teuscher  
Steve Teuscher  
Preston Van Curen  
John Van Hoff  
R. Gregg & Cinda Warner  
Bob Weber  
Daniel Wilson  
Paul & Mary Lou Wood  
James & Helen Worth  
Shawn & Heather Wray

### Donations

July 1—October 15, 2013

Allen's Wine & Liquor  
Anonymous  
Ask Design Jewelers  
Donald & Janet Ast  
Birds & Bees Pest Management  
Mike & Diane Canada  
Mike & Judy Chiariello  
Citizen Printing House  
Maureen Cox  
Cuba Cheese  
Kathy Grandusky  
Virginia Hemmerly  
Tim & Sue Houseknecht  
Hilda & Helmuth Jacobi  
F.T. & Anna C. Manley Memorial Fund  
Martin Studio of Photography  
Ray & Vicky McKinney  
Nationwide Insurance  
Olean Open MRI  
Karen & Dana Perrigo  
St. Bonaventure University  
Dan & Vicki Schmidt  
Hank & Marcia Storch  
Garrett & Megan Taylor  
Jon Tomerlin  
Wayne Paving & Gravel

### In Memory Of

Skip Eaton by Peg Cherre  
Jeff Gross by Corinne Potter  
George Cowles by June Eaton

*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 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!**

## Dressing Up for the Holidays

Want a quick and easy way to welcome guests to your home during the holidays? Do just two simple things:

1. Order a beautifully decorated Pfeiffer Nature Center wreath and hang it on your front door.
2. Put a single string of lights on your porch railing.

Bam—you're done! It's brilliant and elegant. Understated simplicity is the new model, replacing conspicuous consumption in these challenging financial times. If you use LED lights, you're also 'greening' your home in more ways than one.

Pfeiffer Nature Center's wreaths are

very easy on the environment as well as a treat for the eyes. All of the Boxwood and Fraser Fir that form the base of the wreaths are gathered regionally, traveling only minimal distances to Olean. Our decorated wreaths are dressed with all-natural adornments, from pine cones to winterberry, teal to dried flowers, locally gathered by dozens of volunteers. You can

choose to include a generous hand-tied bow if you like, one that you can save and add to your railing decorations for next year.

You can pick up your wreath at Pleasant Valley Greenhouse & Nursery on the following dates & times:

Fri, Nov. 22: 1-3PM  
Sat, Nov. 23: 10AM-noon  
Fri, Nov. 29: 1-4PM  
Sat, Nov. 30: 1-4PM

Pick one of the 1st 2 dates and bring a wreath as a gift to your Thanksgiving hosts



Boxwood Wreath



Fraser Fir Wreath

All wreath orders must be received by November 8—don't miss out! Order online or clip & mail the form on the next page.

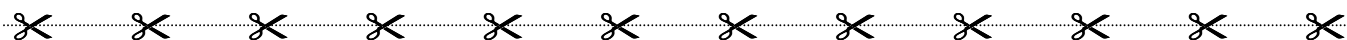


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All members receive a subscription to *The Ovenbird*, our quarterly newsletter, delivered to your home.

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.*

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



NAME:		DATE:	
STREET ADDRESS:			
CITY, STATE, ZIP:		PHONE:	
<b>WREATH ORDER ~</b>			
<b><u>Wreath Description</u></b>	<b><u>Price</u></b>	<b><u>Quantity</u></b>	<b><u>Total</u></b>
Decorated Fraser Fir	\$34		
Decorated Boxwood	\$45		
Undecorated Fraser Fir	\$29		
Undecorated Boxwood	\$40		
Hand Tied Bow	\$3.50		
	<b>Order Total</b>		
<b>SELECT A PAYMENT OPTION ~</b>			
	I have enclosed the following amount with this order ( _ \$_____ ) <b>OR</b>		
	I will mail a check to the Nature Center office by 11/20/13 <b>OR</b>		
	I will pay for my order (check or cash) when I pick my wreath up at Pleasant Valley Nursery		

**Pfeiffer Nature Center ~ P.O. Box 802 Portville, NY 14770**



Pfeiffer Nature Center and  
Foundation

PO Box 802  
Portville, NY 14770

Phone: 716.933.0187  
Email: [info@PfeifferNatureCenter.org](mailto:info@PfeifferNatureCenter.org)  
Facebook : Pfeiffer Nature Center



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

Non Profit Org.  
US Postage  
**PAID**  
Permit #18  
Olean, NY  
14760

Or Current Resident



**Hours of Operation**

**Office, 14 S. Main St.  
Portville:**

Generally Tuesday & Thursday  
mornings; 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](http://www.PfeifferNatureCenter.org)  
716-933-0187**

**WE'LL BE THERE!**

Join Peg and the volunteers at  
the newest fall holiday event  
offered in Portville.

Portville Central School will  
be hosting a holiday Arts,  
Crafts & Antiques Show on  
November 9 & 10.

The Nature Center will have a  
booth where you can order  
your holiday wreath, hand  
decorated by our great  
volunteers using dried natural  
flowers, seeds, and  
collectables gathered locally.  
No orders will be taken after  
the show, so don't miss out!



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