

Pfeiffer Nature Center and Foundation

PO Box 802
Portville, NY 14770

Phone: 716.933.0187
Email: info@PfeifferNatureCenter.org



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

Non Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Permit #5
Portville, NY



Winter Ecology Walk
@ Lillibridge
February 5

Snowshoe Blitz
@ Lillibridge
February 12

Indoor Explore – Fur,
Skulls, Tracks & Scat @
Office
February 17

Indoor Explore—
Looking for Spring
Buds
@ Office
March 10



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.

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

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

**JOIN US FOR OUR WINTER SNOWSHOE BLITZ!**

Ready to head out and enjoy the outdoors in winter? If you can walk, you can snowshoe! Snowshoeing is a fantastic way to explore the beauty of the winter landscape. Join Pfeiffer Nature Center and Paths, Peaks, & Paddles for their **Introduction to Snowshoeing**, Saturday, February 12 from 10 AM – 2 PM.

Instructors from Paths, Peaks, & Paddles will properly fit you in a pair of snowshoes followed by practice of the simple techniques to get around. Then it's off to the woods to enjoy a 30-minute winter wonderland walk!

Snowshoeing is a great sport for the whole family! We provide the

snowshoes—you bring your sense of adventure.

The event will be held at Pfeiffer Nature Center's Lillibridge property at 1974 Lillibridge Rd, Portville NY. The program fee is \$5 for adults and \$3 for children under the age of 10. The fee includes snowshoes, instruction, walk, and cocoa. Trip operates rain or shine unless conditions are unsafe. For more information or to register contact Pfeiffer Nature Center at 716-933-0187.



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.

# The Ovenbird

Pfeiffer Nature Center and Foundation

WINTER, 2011

## John Muir: The Father of the National Parks

*"How glorious a greeting the sun gives the mountains!"* A typical quote from John Muir, one of the country's pre-eminent conservationists, this simple sentence exemplifies how Muir viewed and honored the natural world as a place of beauty and grace.

John Muir, often called "Father of the National Parks," was a true activist. Born in 1838 in Scotland, Muir's family emigrated to Wisconsin when he was 11. Over the next six decades of his life, Muir travelled throughout the United States, exploring wilderness areas. As the country was growing, forests, swamps, and other natural areas were seen by most as places to be used to help build industry. Muir felt differently.

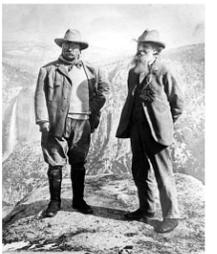
His dedication to nature started when Muir was a young man. In 1867, Muir had a life changing experience. While fixing machinery, the tool he was using slipped and stabbed him in the eye, causing him to lose sight in both eyes. When his eyesight returned a few months later, he felt reborn and vowed to spend the rest of his life in the sights that had been denied him, basking in the view of unspoiled forests, mountains, and lakes.

After he recovered, he spent much of his time traveling. The first trip Muir embarked upon was a 1000-mile walk from Louisville, Kentucky to Savannah, Georgia. Shortly after, he moved to the West Coast, spending three years living in a cabin in Yosemite. Muir wrote, "We are now in the mountains and they are in us, kindling enthusiasm, making every nerve quiver, filling every pore and cell of us."



As the years passed, Muir used his skills as an inventor, botanist, glaciologist, naturalist, writer and activist. He dedicated most of his adult life to

informing others of the importance of appreciating and preserving the glorious natural habitat of the Earth, specifically in America. He believed that the wilderness would soon be just a memory unless something was done to preserve it. Muir published articles about the importance of preservation in *Century Magazine*, leading to Congressional action. Ultimately, Muir's relationship with President Theodore Roosevelt was the most influential, leading to the establishment of millions of acres of national forests and national parks, including Yosemite National Park, Sequoia National Park, the Grand Canyon, and the Petrified Forest. (More information and photos can be found at the National Parks Service John Muir National Historic Site. <http://www.nps.gov/history/museum/exhibits/jomu/>)



Teddy Roosevelt (left) & John Muir

In 1892, Muir was one of the founders of the Sierra Club, where he was president, guide and inspiration for all the members. The Sierra Club, whose purpose was to make nature more accessible, has since become one of the most important conservation organizations in the U.S.

John Muir eventually settled down in Martinez, California with his wife and two daughters. He died of pneumonia in a Los Angeles hospital in 1914, the last place Muir would have liked to spend his final days.

Muir has been gone for almost 100 years, however, he still is one of America's most influential naturalists and conversationalists. He wrote at least 10 major books and countless journal and newspaper articles. His writings continue to inspire naturalists, and his arguments continue to support preservation of natural areas. Many details of his life and work are covered in Ken Burns' respected PBS series *The National Parks: America's Best Idea*.

**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.](#)

## From the Director: Inscribed Muir Books Donated



The extended Pfeiffer family continues to be supportive of the Nature Center. Douglas Pfeiffer, great nephew of Timothy & Eleanor Pfeiffer (parents of our founder, Wendy Pfeiffer Lawrence) has generously donated several books written by renowned naturalist John Muir.

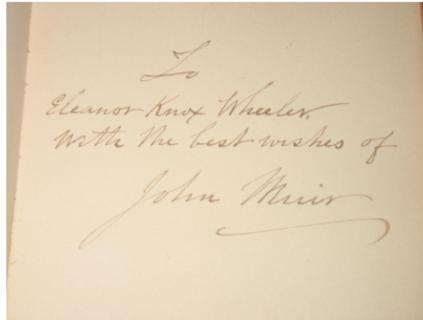
Not only did Muir write these books, he personally inscribed them to Eleanor.

In 1968, as a young man visited Uncle Timothy and Aunt Eleanor in Portville, and came across *The Yosemite*, one of Muir's books, in their extensive personal library. Already a Muir admirer, Douglas was stunned to see an original signature inside. Upon inquiry, Eleanor related a trip that she and her family made to California when she was a young woman, sometime between 1912 and 1914. She attended a Muir speech, and met this renowned author after the event, obtaining his autograph in this first edition book at that time. Timothy interjected that Muir had given Eleanor a set of six of his books as a wedding present. (Timothy

and Eleanor were married in 1914, shortly before Muir's death at age 76.) Each of the six books is individually inscribed to Eleanor Knox Wheeler by John Muir.

Remembering how much Douglas had admired Aunt Eleanor, John Muir, and the books, Timothy passed on these seven books to Douglas after Eleanor's death in 1969. Forty years later, Douglas is generously gifting them to the Nature Center. Four of these seven books are first editions, but what makes them particularly rare and valuable is the inscriptions and Muir's signature. He did not autograph many items, and anything with his signature is highly prized indeed.

In recognition of the unique nature of this gift, the Board of Directors has appointed a committee to study the best use of this valuable resource. It is most likely that we will find a way to publicly display the books, combined with programs about Muir and his remarkable preservation legacy. Ultimately, the books will probably be sold, generating income for our endowment fund and operations.



(Continued on page 7)



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.

## Seasonal Stirrings & Nature Notes

**January** ~ Fresh, fluffy snow absorbs sound waves, thus creating that eerie winter silence. When snow hardens, however, it actually reflects sound waves, making the sounds of a nibbling hare or a creaking tree even clearer to the ear.

Mid to late January is when extreme cold freezes the greatest amount of land in the Northern Hemisphere—around 20.5 million square miles of it!

**February** ~ Porcupines stay active all winter. They emerge at night to eat tree bark and the bones of dead animals (for sodium). Belly hair & a dense layer of fat keep them nice and warm—and attract predators. Birds fluff up their feathers to provide extra insulation while roosting. Shivering is their primary means for increasing heat.

The winter sky has some of the brightest stars visible from Earth. Of the 12 brightest stars visible, 7 shine in winter: Sirius, Capella, Rigel, Procyon, Betelgeuse, Aldebaran, & Pollux.

**March** ~ During winter, honeybees can keep their hive just as warm as it is the rest of the year. They retain heat by constantly alternating positions between the core & the outside of a tight bee cluster. By shivering, they are able to warm up, expending energy gained through the consumption of honey.

## Yes, I'd Like to Become a Member of Pfeiffer Nature Center

### 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



## From the Director (Cont.)

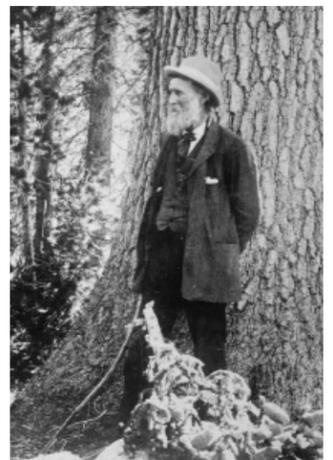
(Continued from page 2)

In giving the gift to the Nature Center, Douglas Pfeiffer said, "It is my belief that this fortuitous connection through Muir's autographed books should be passed on for the benefit of the Pfeiffer Nature Center...The [Nature Center's] mission and activities reflect John Muir's teaching and writings about conservation, his desire to teach others about nature, and to inspire all of us to preserve it for future generations. One of my favorite John Muir writings is from one of his undated journals. 'I



only went out for a walk and finally decided to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in..'" Pfeiffer concluded.

I agree with Muir's sentiments; I often find my time outdoors, particularly in the woods, as a time of simultaneously giving my self to the wonder of the natural world and finding my center, my core, my foundation.



I am thrilled with this gift, and very grateful to Douglas for his generosity. The Nature Center will continue to do our best to live by Muir's principles.

Appreciatively,

Peg Cherre

## Thank You To Our Financial Supporters

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

September 10 – December 15, 2010

Jack & Jennie Blumenthal  
 Bruce, Gloria, & Charity Burton  
 Varma Childs  
 Steven Cipolla  
 Christopher & Edythe Anna Clapp  
 Albert Cousins  
 Anne Dusenbury  
 Riley Ellison  
 Tyler Ferguson  
 Tony & Carol Gallo  
 Rick & Nannette Giberson  
 Beverly Giles  
 Joe & Cecily Higgins  
 Jackie Hoyt  
 Barbara Johnston  
 Jack & Marcia Kelly  
 The Freeman/Kelley Family  
 Colleen Kent  
 Megan Kent  
 David Kindzia  
 Erick & Marianne Laine  
 Joe & Betty Leo  
 West & Christine Long  
 Carolyn Lyons  
 Cynthia Lyons  
 Randy Martin  
 Nina McMullen  
 Shelby Middaugh  
 Edna Northrup  
 Savannah Parker  
 Doug & Betsy Price  
 Ed & Jerry Reisman  
 Betty Rutterman  
 Richard & Barbara Scott  
 William I. Shelp  
 Ken Shields  
 Mark Shields  
 Rod Silliman  
 Troy, Jeremy, Jesse, & Jordan Spehar

### A Heartfelt Thanks to Our Generous Donors

Lois Stives  
 Gary & Elizabeth Swetland  
 Velma Tanner  
 Steve & Donna Teuscher  
 Bill & Theron Teuscher  
 John Van Hoff  
 Edith Walker  
 Paul & Mary Lou Wood  
 Abbott Welding  
 Anonymous  
 Both, Branch & Hendrix  
 Laurie Branch  
 CARES, Inc.  
 Margaret Cherre  
 Community Bank, NA  
 Cutco Foundation  
 First Presbyterian Church of Portville  
 Haskell Valley Veterinary Clinic  
 INDECK  
 Marcia Storch  
 Olean Area Federal Credit Union  
 Olean Medical Group  
 Judy Patton  
 Paul Brown Dodge, Jeep & Kia  
 Douglas Pfeiffer  
 Pleasant Valley Greenhouse & Nursery  
 Potter Lumber Company  
 Ried's Market  
 Southern Tier Arthritis & RH  
 All of our Wreath Buyers  
 Eleanor Austin  
 Dorothy Burrell  
 Peg Cherre  
 Jon Eshelman & Family  
 Mark Eshelman & Family  
 Lynn Irving & Family  
 Anna Kilpatrick

*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.



### 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

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.

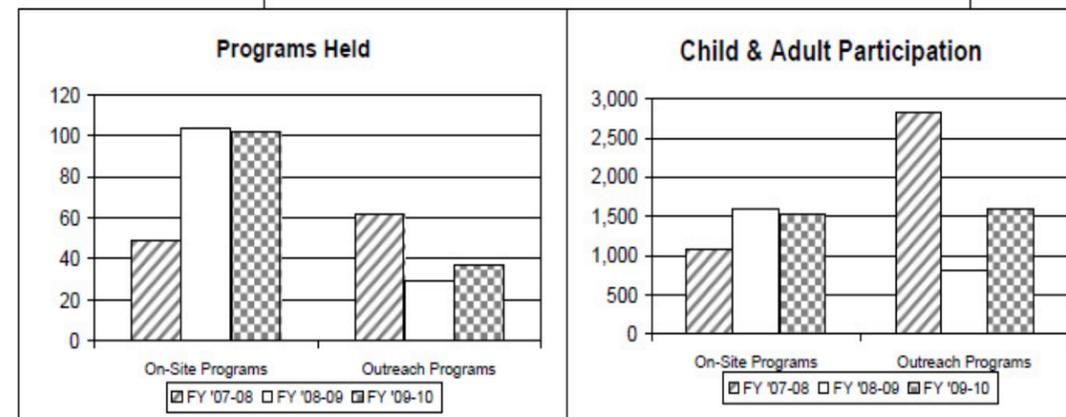
Gifts of any size may be made to the Nature Center to honor or memorialize relatives, friends, or pets. With no minimum donation, this option provides giving opportunities for all.



## Pfeiffer Nature Center Annual Report

July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010

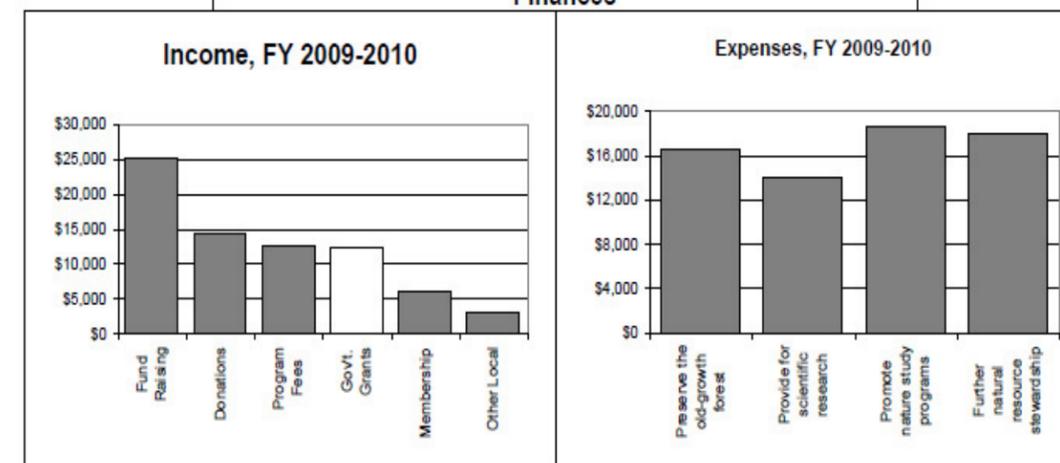
### Nature-Based Educational Programs



### Key Highlights and Mission-Based Accomplishments

- Completed our Accessible Interpretive Trail, providing forest exploration opportunities for people with mobility impairments
- Became part of County's GeoTrail with a cache on Eshelman property, and established a multi-stage geocache on Lillibridge property
- Developed over a mile of new trails on Eshelman property, bringing visitors willing to take a challenging hike past huge boulders left by glaciers
- Served 1,000 school students in our Adopt A Tree program!
- Continued streambed research project with St. Bonaventure University Biology Department faculty & students
- Removed decaying outbuilding on Lillibridge property, improving sight and safety
- Revamped our website, making it more user-friendly and informative
- Revised trails for Woods Walk & Trail Run, bringing more than 125 runners and walkers into the woods

### Finances



## Wonderful Winter Activities

As winter finally settles around us in Western New York, it is tempting to want to snuggle by the fireside with a good book and avoid going outside at all cost. However, there are some wonderful calorie burning activities to help us enjoy this season of snow and cold. (Calories are calculated for someone weighing 155 pounds, and doing the activity for an hour)

### 1. Shovel (422 calories)



It is a necessary chore but it is also a simple way to exercise if you stay warm and stay on top of the

snowfall. Shovel frequently, so the snow does not pile up too high and know you can call in a plow truck for the heavy, wet stuff that sometimes pounds us.

### 2. Ski (493 calories, downhill; 563 calories, cross-country)

Skiing can be a wonderful activity to do with a friend and enjoy the nice wooded scenery, as well. If you are new to the sport of downhill or cross-country, many local ski resorts offer lessons and rental packages for beginners.



### 3. Snowboard (433 calories)



If you like skateboarding, winterize that activity by stepping onto a snowboard. Bring a friend along on for those long chairlift rides and enjoy the winter snow together. As with skiing,

many local ski resorts offer lessons and rental packages.

### 4. Snowshoe (563 calories)



Many running enthusiasts dash through slush and road salt, but a growing number are strapping on

snowshoes for their winter runs. You can also use them to experience the solitude of hiking through the snow-covered woods of our Lillibridge or Eshelman Properties. Pfeiffer Nature Center is having a Snowshoe Blitz on February 12 from 10 am until 2 pm. We will be working with Paths, Peaks and Paddles to fit you with snowshoes and give you a lesson on how to move around.

### 5. Sled (493 calories)



My mind is full of memories of spending the afternoon sledding with all my friends at the local sledding hill. We would stay until we could not

feel our toes or fingers. It did not matter how many times we had to climb that hill, the feel of wind in our faces and the rush of adrenaline as we made our way down was worth the climb. Create some memories of your own and enjoy this age-old pastime. Some local ski resorts offer tubing, but just remember you will not burn as many calories since you are not climbing back up that hill.

### 6. Skate (387 calories)

Skating is another relaxing winter activity you can enjoy indoors or outdoors. So grab your family and head to a local rink.



### 7. Snow Hiking (270 calories)



Just walking in the snow is a perfectly fine way to stay active in winter. Remember that our trails at Pfeiffer Nature

Center are still open and we offer nature hikes on the first and fourth Saturdays of the month. Obviously, dress warmly and choose boots that provide traction.

### 8. Snow Play (422 calories)

Once you have gone to the trouble of bundling yourself, you may as well engage in some outdoor fun. Gather your family to build a snowman or make a snowman family.



If making snow angels and building snowmen seems too clichéd, muster your troops to create a snow fort instead and stage a friendly snowball fight.

So bundle up and head outside! Moreover, remember all those calories from the Christmas cookies and candy can melt away as you head out and enjoy the winter weather.



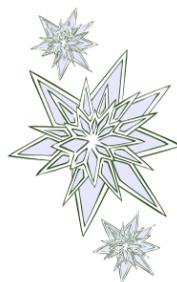
## Can You Help? We Need...

Aquatic Collecting Net—D Frame

Replacement Sweep Nets Muslin 16" Diameter (2)

Replacement Sweep Nets Poly Mesh 14" Diameter (2)

Snowshoes



## Thank You to Our Dedicated Volunteers

We would like to thank Amy Robinson and her Girl Scout troop from Bradford for visiting us for a nature walk to learn about trees and insects. The girls had a wonderful time exploring the Lillibridge property looking for different insects and leaves. They were even able to find a few salamanders.



We want to thank Mark Baker for leading an Owl Prowl for us in September. Mark brought four of his birds for us to see and learn about. All who attended enjoyed watching the birds and listening to Mr. Baker share his wealth of information about owls and raptors.



We are grateful to Jim Lee of Lee's Wine and Beer Supplies in Olean for recommending Jim Lord to lead our Introduction to Brewing class that was held in October. Mr. Lord lead seven attendees in creating a beginner's brew of beer on a sunny fall day. It was a very informative time and all who

attended enjoyed sampling some of Jim Lord's home brews.

Our thanks go out to Joellen Beatty and Mary Monterville for helping prepare for the Pumpkin Carving Festival at Lillibridge. Thanks for braving a cool fall evening to help set up and tear down for the event.

Thanks to Peg Cherre for leading a holiday centerpiece decorating class. Seven ladies attended and had a wonderful time learning to create a beautiful holiday centerpiece for their home.



Our big fund raising event in November is our wreath sale. A big thanks goes out to everyone who helped sell and get the word out about our wreaths. We are also grateful to everyone who helped us decorate at Pleasant Valley Greenhouse and Nursery. Friday's decorators included JoJo Pingitore, Kathy Bess, Tina Bailey, Shana Hurby, Sarah Wigster, Melissa Decker, Lynne Knowles, Tonya Reisman, Laura Shields,



June Eaton, Roberta Baker, and Reann Ehman. On Saturday we had help decorating from Alice Frost, Joanne, Colleen Kent, Wendy Brand, Martha Nenko, Theresa Schueckler, Vicki Schmidt, Charlene Granger, and Punkie Sinsieou. Sarah Larson, Carol Bradley, Judy Patton, Sue Stevens, Marcia Storch and Peg

Cherre were there both days to decorate. We also had some help decorating from some St. Bonaventure students; Evan Barraick, Moe Mazyferro, Jimmy

Burton, Katelyn Metera, Andy Zalar, Shelby Walters, Cody Clifford, Mary Dimatteo, Rebecca Gunning, Alyssa Lombardi, Danielle Antonelli, Sarah Southwell, and Courtney Robinson.

We want to thank Barbara Johnston, Vicki Schmidt, and Velma Tanner for helping with office work and mailings.

We would like to thank Trish Bohan for her donation of a hardcover copy of Peterson's Field guide to Wildflowers.

### Pfeiffer Nature Center & Foundation

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Reann Ehman, Naturalist  
Kaci Anderson, SBU Intern

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