



# The Nature Center Stream

SUMMER

The Seasonal Newsletter of the MK Nature Center

2014



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Dave's Two Cents	2
Volunteer Tour Guides	3
Bird Day Collage	4
Fifth Grade Memories	5
Volunteer Spotlight	6
Great Blue Heron	7
Earthfest	8
Idaho Gives Biomark	9
Volunteer Spotlight	10
Donations Plant Sale	11
GK-12 Farewell	12
Thank You Donors	13



## Pollinator Garden Buzzes with Activity

*Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, MKNC*

Just two years ago most of the native plants in the pollinator garden were planted. This year, the place looks like a fireworks show. Ground nesting solitary bees are buzzing around, pollinating, of course, but also making holes in the dirt mounds....and sealing them up in the afternoon. Did you know there are no colony nesting bees native to Idaho? Honey bees are poor pollinators of native plants, and while most of us know little about native bees, they are the ones doing most of the hard work out there.



Of course we all know why pollination is important. Seventy-five percent of the food we eat is made possible by pollination! Plants don't produce fruit and seeds without a little help!

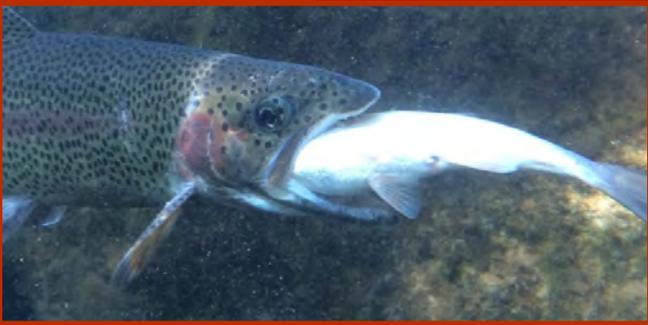




## Dave's Two Cents

**Getting Over Rainbow Trout** *Dave Cannamela, Superintendent, MKNC*

Yes, rainbow trout are pretty and popular and easily recognizable and the most noticeable fish at the Nature Center (and probably the world), but there's more to Idaho native fish fauna than rainbow trout. And by the way, rainbow trout are not native to all of Idaho. There are about 40 native Idaho fishes and you can see most of them (some stuffed however) at the MKNC. You will see live mountain whitefish, largescale and bridgelip suckers, redbase shiners, and chiselmouth minnows thanks to our fisheries friends at the Bureau of Reclamation. The Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) crew samples Lucky Peak and Arrowrock Reservoirs primarily as part of their bull trout management and research efforts. Their "by catch" adds to the diversity of fish fauna here at the MKNC. They take the time to contact us and transport live fish to us a few times each year. We thank them for enabling us to educate people about the "less glamorous," little-known or unknown, but still very interesting and important native fishes of Idaho.



*Two of the three chiselmouth minnows survived. This was not one of them! This photo was taken just after the BOR arrived and we dumped in some new fish. A special thanks to our BOR friends: Dmitri Vidergar, Tony Parra, Trevor Watson, and Shawna Castle from the BOR. Additionally, Ryan Newman, Mark Arana, Ryan Hendrick, Gretchen Fitzgerald, and Stacey Carlson.*



Redside shiner 5"



Mountain whitefish 10-12"



Chiselmouth 9"



Largescale sucker 11-14"

*Illustrations courtesy J. Tomelleri*

# Volunteers Save the Day

*Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, MKNC*

During any given year, nearly 10,000 people come to the Nature Center and participate in one of our educational programs. Staffing these programs can be challenging, with most of the demand occurring between April and July. Training volunteers to help with tours has not yielded many committed, skilled volunteers in the past. Guiding a program takes a lot of energy, skill, knowledge, patience and flexibility. I tell prospective guides that tours are 70% group management, and 30% content and 100% enthusiasm. So, as you can imagine it is hard to find volunteers that work at a 200% level.



This year, we lucked out. Three Master Naturalists approached me with interest in guiding tours. After observing many tours and reading through tour material, they jumped in and pretty much made our tour season the best ever! With a couple of BSU graduate students and 2-3 volunteers, along with MKNC Staff, we are quite a team! With a guiding staff of 7, we smoothly accommodated groups of 115 students + parents this season.

In addition, we were able to use their volunteer hours this spring as match for \$2,000 extension of a Forest Service grant we acquired last year! A huge thank you to Margit Donhowe (pictured above), Bronwyn Myers, (pictured to right) and Barb Recla for the hours worked at 200%.



## BSU's Interns Teach This Summer

*Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, MKNC*



For the second summer, we are hosting two BSU secondary science teacher students at MKNC. Luckily, we have Christen Sapnas (pictured left) for a second year in a row. Christen is an enthusiastic teacher and is loved by the kids. She has mastered all our programs and is now creating new programs, writing lesson plans and leading the troops. Pictured left, Christen is showing preschool students from Parkside School an owl pellet.

We also welcome Meghan Henry (pictured below) Meghan has had a crash course in Nature Center teaching and basic daily craziness. She is ready to lead the hundreds of groups booked this summer.



This internship is part of the Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship Program sponsored by the National Science Foundation. Administered at BSU through their IDoTeach program, this program aims to produce more STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) teachers in Idaho. Thank you to the NSF and BSU for the opportunity to interact and work with these great students.

*MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection*

# Thank You Bird Day Volunteers!



Volunteers are the backbone of all our public education events. We thank all the International Migratory Bird Day volunteers for their hard work staffing stations, helping set up, greeting visitors and teaching the public about birds. 2014 Bird Day volunteers: Jamie Wade, Deniz Aygen, Kevin and MaryPat Barr, Stephanie Bayless, Don Brigham, Susie Carlson, Sarah Chasin, Corrine Christ, Jon Dudley, Renee Frazier, Amanda Gailbreath, Carolyn and John Greener, Erika Hale, Karah Harrold, Kevin Harrold, Rilee Harrold, Joyce Harvey-Morgan, Ray Heady, Katie, Lance, Tim and Tricia Hebdon, Ayla and Greg Kaltenecker, Carole Kanizar, Patrick Kohnke, Jessica Polluck, Renee Maher, Diane Miller, Cheryl and Fred Minkler, Anne Moore, Glenn Mouser, Bronwyn Meyers, Sue Norton, Eric Owens, Dale Parsons, Larry Ridenhour, RL Rowland, Doug Rose, Gerrie Satz, Arleen Schaeffer, Joe and Sheila Shulleeta, Jennifer Smith, Megan Smith, Sandra Sweet, Liz Urban, Jamie Wade, Carol Wike, Dave Wike, Sarah Wilcox, Judy Wojcicki, Alan Wylie.

*MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection*

# What do Kids Remember about MKNC?

Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, MKNC

At the Nature Center, we do a lot of programs. We also get a LOT of thank you cards. It's always a treat to get a package from a school and just sit for a few minutes looking at the drawings and deciphering the handwriting to learn what kids remember about the Nature Center. This batch comes from a 5th grade class who came over from Nampa. Thanks to our grant with the Boise National Forest, the program was free for them.

"Many of our students rarely get to spend time in nature, so I am glad that we have this resource so close to home."

-5th grade teacher

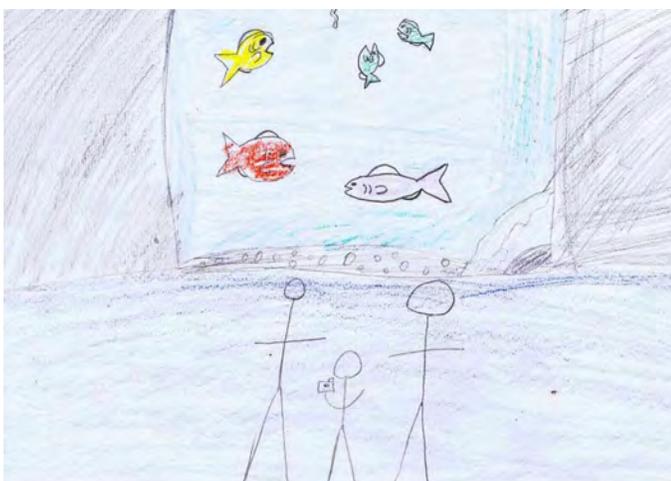
"You encouraged me to hold a worm for the first time. It kept going in between my fingers and gave me the shivers, I really wanted to scream a little."



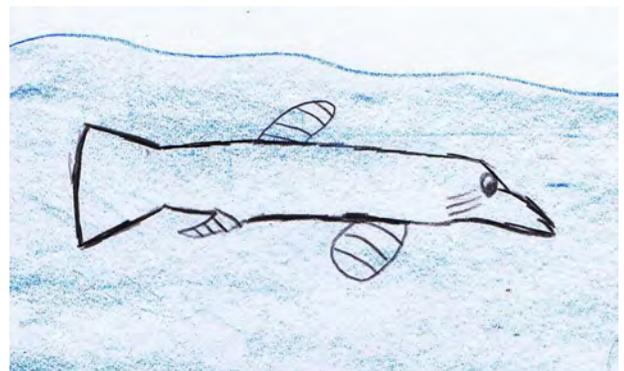
"I hope I can work there some day and if I do it will be the coolest job ever."



"Thank you for taking me and my friends into the river it was cool to find mayflies, slugs, and freshwater shrimp. So, thank you it was fun and now I look at nature in a different way."



"I love fish and fishing, it's so cool seeing fish."



"Thank you for the tour. It was very cool. The part that I liked was seeing the big sturgeon. I remember seeing the owls and the deer."

*MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection*

# Donations of All Shapes and Sizes Help

*Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, MKNC*



Mary Boyer (IDFG) came over one day to deliver several boxes of new forks and spoons! Several years ago, the Nature Center bought a set of 65 plates and silverware for events, potlucks and parties. Over the years, the supply has dwindled to a mere set of 20 or so. Mary said the spoons and forks were on sale and cost next to nothing. But it is donations like these... essential little things we need every day that helps the Nature Center keep rolling. Thanks for keeping us in mind, Mary, while shopping at the restaurant supply company.



## Volunteer Spotlight

*Jessica Gordon, Volunteer Coordinator, MKNC*



Valentine's Day brought a nice surprise to the MK Nature Center this year and her name is Abby. She is an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student at Sage International School. As part of their program, students have Fridays off from classes to contribute to local organizations. Abby has certainly contributed to the MK Nature Center in the past few months. She is always pleasant and willing to help in whatever capacity is needed from week to week. We are glad she came to us!

She is determined to achieve and receive an IB (International Baccalaureate) diploma from the Sage International School. The IB programs are to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, work to create a better and more peaceful world. At 13 years old, she has some big goals! She wants to help the world by studying to become an environmental lawyer and, of course, devote time to her family. When she is not reading, biking, playing soccer, practicing the piano or violin, she spends much of her summer time at her grandparents' ranch in Utah.

Thank you Abby for striving to be your best, always coming in with a smile on your face, and volunteering at the MK Nature Center!

*MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Flower Connection*

# Icons

*Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, MKNC*

Nearly 25 years ago, a large snag (dead tree) was placed on the highest point in the Nature Center grounds... an iconic tower that was honored in our logo. All the surrounding trees have grown up around it and it is leaning at such an angle, so that today, no visitor can see it from the Nature Center paths. The other icon in our logo, the Great Blue Heron, has remained! Just last week, during a tour with 2nd graders, my group was able to see a Great Blue Heron catch a fish, wave it around, and swallow it whole and alive!! And of course my favorite heron memory (and one I tell to many visitors) is the time I was leading a class down the hill to the Shelter Window and we saw a Great Blue Heron standing on the bench, tapping his beak against the window at the rainbow trout! We just sat down and laughed and watched until he figured it out and flew over the window and fished from a log.

Heron are inspiring examples when teaching about adaptations. It is so easy to show students physical and behavioral features that help herons survive in their habitat. Just about anything on the body of this bird can help a 2nd grader understand the concept of form and function! Sticky pads on the feet, feather color, length of neck and legs, shape of beak! Don't forget the statue-like ability to wait patiently and silently for a treat.

As Aristotle said, "In all things of nature, there is something of the marvelous." Herons are no exception! Herons are known as fish eaters, but they will eat anything; frogs, mice, gophers and even crayfish! Large "owl pellets" sometimes marveled at are actually GBH pellets! Herons can hunt during the day or night, due to the large number of rod-like photoreceptors in their eyes (like owls).



Heron mostly nest high in trees with other herons (rookery) but sometimes on the ground or solitarily on a structure. Males and females partake in an elaborate courtship routine that includes nest building. Pairs are mostly monogamous during a breeding season, but choose new mates each year.

Despite its name, heron feathers are not blue with pigment (there is not blue pigment in any birds' feathers), but instead has feather structure such that light refracts a bluish tint. But like I tell my classes, "wouldn't you rather be a Great Blue Heron than a Great Grey Heron?"

Volunteers

- Marylee Hale
- Bronwyn Meyers
- Joe Shulleeta
- Sheila Shulleeta
- Judy Wojcicki
- Julie Steele
- Carole Kanizar
- Sara Focht
- Mary Smith
- Jamie Wade
- Amanda Laib
- Edna Vizgirdas
- Ilyse Sakamoto
- Jessica Sokolowski
- Nicole Ryan



# Earthfest 2014

For the second year, MK Nature Center hosted an educational event on the same day as the Native Plant Sale (April 26th). The day also happens to fall during the UNPLUGGED week, where agencies and organizations host events to get kids outside. This year was a huge success, thanks to the Boise National Forest, Bogus Basin Snow School, and Sagebrush-steppe Chapter Master Naturalists!



Most of the Earthfest volunteers were 2014 members of the Sagebrush-steppe Chapter of the Idaho Master Naturalist Program. Marylee Hale greets children at a fur and antler table (upper right corner). Pictured to the right, Julie Steele and Carol Kanizar help kids cast plaster tracks. Below, kids dig through compost for worms.

## Sustainable Glassware Comes to Gift Shop

Sue Dudley, Wildlife Educator, MKNC



My latest sustainable find, brought me to a local company that not only makes a great product but has huge benefits for our community.

Usful Glassworks Company starts with discarded wine, liquor, beer and soda bottles and repurposes them into beautiful glassware. Their on -the-job training program gives second chances to women and men coming out of corrections, refugees, at-risk youth, low-income seniors and our homeless. Their mission; “one person and one bottle at a time. We help people with employment barriers find jobs through our glass repurposing program.”

Here are some inspiring facts about the company:

- \* 111 participants have graduated from Usful’s job training program since 2008
- \* 70% of the participants go on to find jobs
- \* Usful company has quadrupled production since 2008
- \* 60 thousand bottles were cut in 2012 alone
- \* The number of participants doubled from 2011 to 2012

If you have any questions about this product, please call Sue Dudley 287-2900 or email [sue.dudley@idfg.idaho.gov](mailto:sue.dudley@idfg.idaho.gov).

*MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection*



Jessica Gordon, Volunteer Coordinator, MKNC

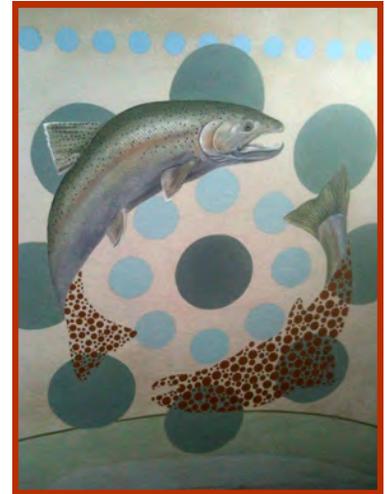
**\$782,862 • 7,500+ donors • 12,300+ donations • 1 day**

Idahoans came together to celebrate the causes they care about on Thursday, May 1, 2014.

The second year of the online one-day giving campaign was a great success! Over \$780,000 was donated to nonprofits across the state to support the work they do in their communities.

Although the MK Nature Center is operated by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, the enhancement of the site and educational programs would not be possible without your support. Thank you for your help and encouragement throughout the year and especially for your donations during Idaho Gives. Together we raised \$4,650 in one day. Help us continue the momentum by sharing your stories, experiences, memories of the MKNC. Bring a friend with you and visit, attend one of our annual educational events, like and follow us on Facebook.

The MK Nature Center staff would like to extend our sincere appreciation to Dean and Retta Park, Founders of Biomark, Inc. located in Boise. We also thank Tony Sandor, Director of the Boise Legacy Constructors Foundation. These people donated sizeable donations on May 1, and their donations were matched by their respective companies/organizations.



*The Alpine Lake Mural is only one example of what we can accomplish with your generosity... what is next?*

*Your support inspires, empowers, and enables us to continually promote the MK Nature Center mission.*



## Annual Numbers



July 1 marks the beginning of our fiscal year, so it is always fun to look back and review how many students we served over the previous year. In fiscal year 2014, the Nature Center provided 293 educational programs to 9,370 people. We taught 44 unique programs, the most popular (89 programs) being the signature Nature Center program, the *Streamwalk*. Fifty programs this year were provided for free thanks to the Boise National Forest Service Grant that helps kids get outside.

*MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection*

# No Sign of Slowing Down

*Sue Dudley, Wildlife Educator, MKNC*

You'd think when you reach your 80's you would start slowing down. Not Ray Heady, he just wanted to volunteer more. His desire to be more involved in his community lead him to the MK Nature Center.

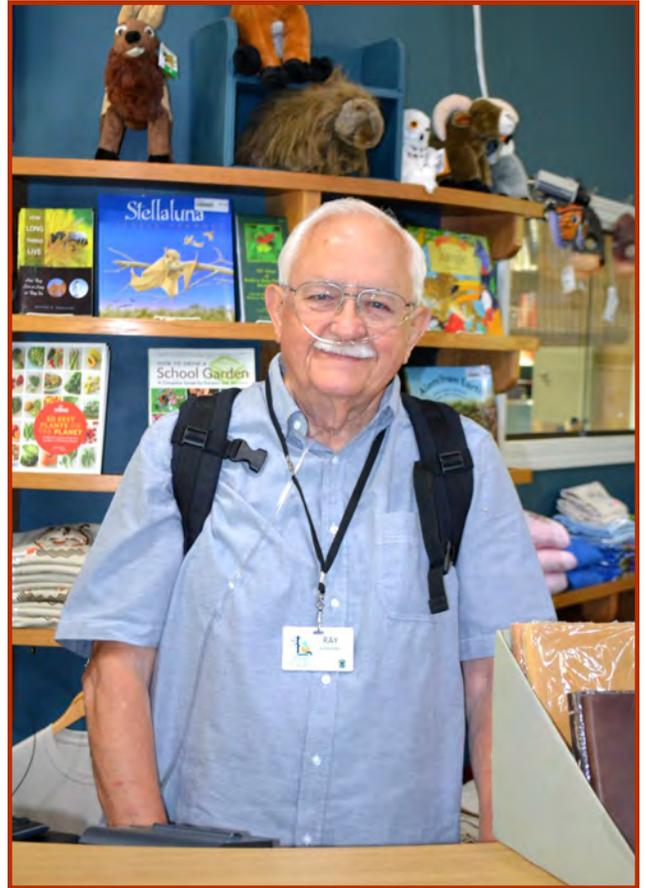
Growing up in Idaho gave Ray a huge playground in which to explore and boy did he take advantage of it. Back in the day, he helped his dad (who was an Game Warden for IDFG) trap beaver, seine for fish, and catch birds for the state fair. He has hiked the Pacific Crest Trail, climbed many other mountains, and cross country skied in Oregon & Washington. He also loves fishing and bird hunting. All this time outdoors gave Ray a great appreciation for the countryside, leading him to be a volunteer for many different groups, such as Master Gardener, Advanced Master Gardener, Golden Eagle Audubon, Boy Scouts of America, Parks & Recreation's Tree Steward Program, Meals on Wheels, McCall Hospital, and the Guardianship Program.

Ray was in the Army and worked for trucking company as Chief Clerk and Auditor. He has owned his own machine business for small engine and generator repair, managed the McCall Senior Center, and did maintenance on an 80 unit time-share business.

This guy doesn't mess around when it comes to his hobbies either. Ray is an excellent photographer, birder, gardener, wood carver, painter, and knife maker. He likes to attend gun shows where he sells his knives and guns. He also collects US coins prior to 1900's.

But if you asked Ray he would say the most important part of his life is his lovely wife Peggy and their three children, Paulete, Teresa, and Mike.

So it is safe to say we hit the jackpot when Ray decided to come to the Nature Center to volunteer twice a week as our visitor center host/gift shop person. He has become a part of MK Nature Center family and we are lucky to have him!



# Cookie Proceeds Help The MK Nature Center

*Sue Dudley, Wildlife Educator, MKNC*



Every year Silver Sage Girl Scout Troop 519 uses a portion of their cookie proceeds to donate to a deserving cause in their community. Cooky Wilcox and Linda Skidmore, leaders of the troop, were looking for a place in the community that would be a good fit for the topic they were studying. This year, “Wonders of Water.” Mindi Lacy, one of the mothers, had been to the MK Nature Center many times with her children and loved the place. She couldn’t think of a better place for the girls to experience how water is very important, not only to people, but to animals and their habitats as well.

The Nature Center became the recipient of \$165 worth of crafts and educational supplies that will benefit our education programs and events.



*Thank you Silver Sage Troop 519!*

*Pictured left to right: Cooky Wilcox (leader), Claire Bowman, Aleah Skidmore, Katie Phillips, Savannah Wilcox, Ella Deasy, Emily Lacy, Sofia Strickler, Ainsley Skidmore, Lindy Skidmore (leader)*

## Rain Doesn't Slow Native Plant Enthusiasts

**Idaho Native Plant Society Plant Sale, April**  
 hosted by the MK Nature Center, sponsored by the Pahove Chapter of INPS

We had to go “under-cover” this year because of the rain. Despite that, we had another extremely successful spring plant sale. The majority of plants sold quickly, the weather was right for planting, and now more native plants are in the landscapes of the Treasure Valley and beyond. Proceeds benefit INPS Pahove Chapter and the MK Nature Center. The plants benefit native pollinators, wildlife and our loyal plant sale customers.

Thank you to all of the volunteers from the Nature Center, INPS Pahove Chapter, and Sagebrush-steppe Master Naturalists.

*MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection*

# GK-12 Program Comes to an End

*Sara Focht, Wildlife Educator, MKNC*

For the past 4 years, the Nature Center has had the opportunity to host BSU graduate students as members of our education team. This nation-wide program is coming to an end. As we reflect back, we are now looking at a collage of close friends who have made the MK Nature Center a better place. They have taught literally tens of thousands of children and adults and brought their scientific expertise, energy, and good humor to the Nature Center.

We are so grateful to Karen Viskupic, Jim Belthoff, and Dave Wilkins (BSU) and the National Science Foundation for including the MK Nature Center as a partner in this program. Together we have learned so much, laughed, taught, sweat, and befriended these bright young scientists and they have changed our Nature Center for

the better. How will we manage without them? We are working on that.



Jamie



Amanda



Tate



Yozora



Michelle



Micah



Brian



Keith



Elyse

- 2011**  
Micah Scholar  
Brian Stark
- 2012**  
Yozora Tadehara  
Keith Carter
- 2013**  
Elyse Begnoche  
Michelle Laskowski
- 2014**  
Jamie Wade  
Tate Mason  
Amanda Laib

*MK Nature Center - Your Face-to-Fish Connection*

# Thank You For Supporting What We Do!

These individuals and businesses supported the MK Nature Center between April 1 and June 30th, 2014. Donations come in the form of cash or in-kind material donations.

Boise Legacy Constructors Foundation, Inc.

Bruce Ackerman  
Barbara Balance  
Elyse Begnoche  
Dale Berman  
Tamara Berman  
Mary Boyer  
Donald Brigham  
Klaus M. Brown  
David R. Butzier  
David A. Cannamela  
Madeleine Cannamela  
Alessia Cantaboni  
Gwynne L. Chandler  
Crystal L. Christensen  
Janet Conley  
Summer D. Crea  
Barry & Amie Devine  
Margit L. Donhowe  
Mary Dudley  
Sue Dudley  
Sean and Liz Finn  
Catherine Fischer

Adelaide M. Fisher  
Robert C. Foss  
Amanda B. Fox  
Rhonda Goldston  
Jessica Gordon  
Heidi Hagman  
Maria Halbertstadt  
Erica Hale  
Joyce Harvey-Morgan  
Ray & Peggy Heady  
Amandah T. Heald  
Sara Hegerle  
Dianne Hough  
Jody Hull  
James Jameson  
Lynell Jutila  
Joan M. Kelley  
Sharon Kiefer  
Lynn Kinter  
Phyllis Kochert  
Amanda C. Laib  
Ron Lopez  
David Lulkin  
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Karen Ogden  
Dean Park  
Patty Rowan  
Donald Peters  
Doug Rose  
Jim Ryan  
Anthony J. Sandor  
Christen S. Sapnas  
Arleen Schaeffer  
Silver Sage Girl Scout Troop  
Dorothy A. Snowball  
Lindsey Solterbeck  
Eileen Potter (Starbucks)  
Julie A. Steele  
Mike Stefancic  
Laurel D. Wagner  
Rebecca Wagner



*Just a few things the Nature Center does: (clockwise starting in upper left) Nature arts and crafts, native plant gardens, captive native birds, educational programs.*





Rebecca Wagner (MKNC) took this photo in late June, just outside the office window. By financially supporting the Nature Center, you help us maintain wildlife habitat for animals like these fledgling screech owls and wildlife viewing opportunities for visitors.

To Donate to the MK Nature Center, fill out the form below, enclose your check, and mail to  
MK Nature Center, PO Box 25, Boise, ID 83707.

## F R I E N D S   O F   T H E

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# MORRISON KNUDSEN NATURE CENTER

Individual Memberships:	
<b>\$10</b>	Mayfly
<b>\$25</b>	Sagebrush
<b>\$50</b>	Gopher Snake
Family Memberships:	
<b>\$100</b>	Mink
<b>\$250</b>	Mule Deer
<b>\$500</b>	Great Blue Heron
<b>\$1,000</b>	Chinook Salmon
<b>\$10,000</b>	White Sturgeon

Name(s)		
Address		
City	State	Zip
E-mail Address		
Phone Number		

**Members receive\*:**

- “The Stream” E-newsletter
- Invitations to Nature Center events
- Invitations to “Friends Group Days”
- On-site birthday party options
- Free souvenir penny
- **Sagebrush Level and above:**  
15% discount at MKNC gift shop

*\* Fees/restrictions may apply.*



Today’s Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- New Membership (\$ \_\_\_\_\_)
- Renewal Membership (\$ \_\_\_\_\_)
- Check here to receive a donation receipt.

**Make checks payable to MK Nature Center**



[fishandgame.idaho.gov/MKNC](http://fishandgame.idaho.gov/MKNC)

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Dave Cannamela 208.287.2902 [david.cannamela@idfg.idaho.gov](mailto:david.cannamela@idfg.idaho.gov)

