



## President Recaps 2005

During 2005, programs at the McNary NWR Environmental Education Center were cut back because of limited funding available from grants and from the Mid-Columbia River Wildlife Refuges Complex. Our Centennial Blanket sales supported most of the activities, but our regular supporters did make contributions, including Yakima Audubon & RR&GC. At the end of the year we received financial support from Battelle and Rotary. Our volunteers carried the education programs almost to the point of exhaustion. We were unable to handle all the requests for classes. Maintenance and new planting of the Shrub Steppe Demonstration Program was also a major activity. Greg had a crew doing Teepee repairs and also added another layer of tules. He also had projects from BSA that have improved viewing of waterfowl in the pond.

We welcomed a number of new volunteers and said goodbye to others. The Lewis & Clark activities took a lot of work and had professional staff and our volunteers split between the two locations. It was great to see the turnout and the interest in our programs.

We are at the end of the special Refuge Centennial Blanket sales. At the time of this writing there are five blankets available. If you are interested in buying one, please contact me at [jwm1@att.net](mailto:jwm1@att.net). Owners of over five hundred blankets have a keepsake to treasure for a lifetime. Thanks to those who worked the promotion and sales.

The Complex Staff relocated to 3250 Port of Benton Blvd in Richland in October. Contact information is elsewhere in this newsletter. Construction of a Refuge office building and new parking for the Ed Center should be finished by next fall. A new shop has been finished and is in use. The drawings for a new Environmental Education Center proposed for

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Looking Ahead

by Gary Hagedorn, Project Manager

Planning and design continue for the new administrative building at McNary headquarters. The building is scheduled to be completed by August 2006. It will serve as the office for Mid-Columbia River Refuges staff, with a small conference room. A complimentary new Education Center is scheduled to be added in 2007. The new site plan for McNary will include new parking areas for bus traffic and staff parking.

The Comprehensive Conservation Plan continues on schedule. The goal is to have a draft plan completed by February.

The severe drought conditions through this summer have greatly impacted our ability to flood wetlands. Toppenish Refuge remains largely dry.

## Thank You, Sunrise Rotary

Sunrise Rotary of Pasco, Burbank, and Kennewick was treated to a PowerPoint presentation on McNary Education Center this past December.



Shannon Hays-Truex and Paula Clark gave an accounting of outdoor classes during past school years. They pictured school children hands-on science activities, the native plant garden, and other achievements of our volunteers.

Rotarians opened their hearts and presented McNary with nearly one hundred dollars to further those programs.

## Hurray For Leonardo's Taxidermy Shop



American Wigeon

Two mounted birds were added to the McNary-Audubon taxidermy collection when Nancy LaFramboise took work in to Leonardo's Taxidermy shop in Yakima last month.

An American Wigeon and a Mallard are two ducks donated by Gary Leonardo. They now are on view at the Education Center.

Further Leonardo's generosity was noted at several Second Saturday events when visitors had the opportunity to handle a bear claw and a cougar claw, and to process a scrap of deer hide. While these items have considerable monetary value, the educational value to the Education Center is immeasurable.



Mallard



Another duck on display in the Education Center is this Old Squaw.

## President's Message (cont'd)

*(Continued from page 1)*

construction in 2007 are available for review. Planning for removal of existing facilities is ongoing with a limited budget.

The education program presented in conjunction with local schools is the major focus of our activities. The people involved work very hard to maintain a first-class program that has the respect of the teachers, as shown by requests for registrations. The work done by our volunteers can not be praised enough. We switched our appreciation dinner to a breakfast in the hope of getting a larger group. Refuge staff did the cooking and cleanup and the volunteers enjoyed the food. Those working on the Shrub Steppe Program are receiving area attention and assistance; it looks great.

My hope for 2006 is that we can maintain our high standards and all activities with our significant reduction in income. We thank the people and groups sending in memberships and donations. We are developing presentations for community groups to generate additional funds. I look forward to my next annual report and hope that it will show that Friends of Mid-Columbia River Wildlife Refuges maintained all the programs and started some new ones.

'Thank you' to every one for all your work and support!

FLYWAYS is published quarterly by Friends of Mid-Columbia River Wildlife Refuges, 311 Lake Rd, Burbank, Washington. FLYWAYS development, printing and distribution costs are underwritten by Friends with no government funds

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## A Look Back To The 1950s



The view in this photograph looks westward over McNary Pond where the Environmental Education and McNary NWR offices are located. The surface area of the pond has been diminished by aggressive growth of phragmites, a large reed with an attractive seed plume. The Russian Olive trees also thrived and obscure the water from view by hikers along the chipped trail.

Lake Road crosses the pond in the foreground. To the left is Maple Street crossing US-12 and continuing west into downtown Burbank. Maple Street is no longer accessible from that highway nor is the street towards the center that appears to proceed to the pond's edge.

The Snake River crosses from right to left and joins the Columbia River at the point of Sacajawea State Park. To the right, the stationary bridge handled two-way traffic high enough to accommodate most commercial and recreational water craft. It now has two lanes westbound with another bridge carrying two lanes of traffic eastbound. The bridge to the left still operates for the railroad with a center section that can be raised to accommodate river traffic.

A roadside kiosk is all that remains of the Ainsworth town site on the west side, established in the 1880s for workers building and repairing the Northern Pacific railroad.

At the top of the photo, look for the humble Tenth Street bridge, since replaced by a lofty cable bridge. Beyond that is the Blue Bridge, requiring fresh blue paint every now and again; no other color will do.

How many of our readers grew up in this rural area before McNary dam was built and raised the water level?

Contact Mid-Columbia River Wildlife Refuges management staff at the new location:

3250 Port of Benton Blvd

Richland, Washington 99354

Phone: 509-371-9212

Gary Hagedorn, David Linehan, Arthur Shine,  
Howard Browsers, Sherrie Burns, Becki Palleberg

# Birding At McNary NWR

with Chris Simonen

On a cloudy cold wintry day in January 2004, a play unfolded in front of three bird watchers as we were taking in the fresh winter air. The ponds were frozen over except for a small melted depressed area where two Canada Geese were bathing. Flying overhead and landing on the ice were about 7000 geese and 100 mallards.



Northern Harrier

In the middle of the ice field was a Northern Harrier standing and foraging on a dead bird (probably a goose).

Soon a Red-tailed Hawk came flying in to take over and have its share. This didn't last long when an adult Bald Eagle circled low over the scene. The Red-tailed Hawk flew up in defense but was out-maneuvered in the air by the eagle and was chased off. The eagle came back and finished the meal. On



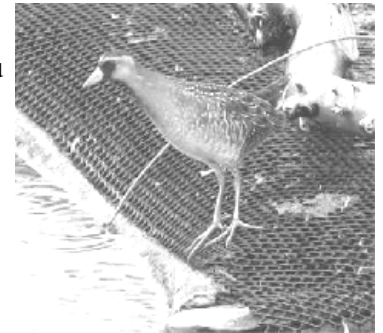
Red-tailed Hawk



Bald Eagle

a winter day, perhaps you'll witness some interesting events as you are strolling along the paths at the refuge.

Meanwhile at home, please keep your bird feeders clean and free of bacteria. Wearing rubber gloves, start by using an old toothbrush to scrub stubborn debris. Then fill a pan of warm water and a tiny amount of bleach. Put 9 parts water to 1 part bleach. Soak your feeder in the solution for 3 minutes. Remove the feeder and let it dry. Refill to keep your birds happy and coming back. Do this once a month or as often as you see it needed.



Sora rail seen on raft from bird hide in September

## Outdoor Activities To Be Emphasized In Legends Class

Construction of a building for Mid-Columbia NWR staff to replace the McNary NWR office will begin in March. This will require a temporary detour of school buses around the grain bins toward the Bird Hide. Logistics will be determined upon arrival of school groups for unloading children and returning to Maple Street.

Legends class for Columbia Elementary school children will also begin in March. This year's curriculum will consist almost entirely of outdoor activities. A school bus will deliver the enrolled students to McNary Bird Hide for two hours of activities. Parents are required to pick the children up at five p.m. at the Education building on Lake Road. The parking lot by the office building will not be open for parking as that is the area of construction. Parents are asked to watch for notices from Principle Yale and sign permission for their children if they agree to their participation.

By March many spring flowers will be in bloom in

the native plant garden and along the chip trail. Russian Olive announce their blossoms by their scent and before long the Siberian elms and Maple trees will shower seeds by the bushel.



## Blanket Salutes National Wildlife Refuges

Pendleton Woolen Mills manufactured 538 special blankets to celebrate the First Century of National Wildlife Refuges. The proceeds fund the Education Center. Region One designed the special blanket and Friends of Mid-Columbia River Wildlife Refuges took on the daunting task of selling one for each refuge designated by Congress in those one hundred years.

One blanket graced the McNary NWR Education Center but did not just sit around to be touched and aahhed over in the display room. The blanket traveled. It appeared at Friends meetings in Washington D.C. It hitched a ride with NWR staff to Hawaii. It attended the Pelican Island celebration in Florida. It met Teddy Roosevelt on the American Queen, a reproduction of the old time sternwheeler. It met Mark Twain in St. Louis, Missouri, and continued up the Mississippi River to Refuges

in Iowa, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. It spent hours at local fairs around the Tri-Cities and relished every loving touch it received.

Symbolism of the design embraces the rising sun in the Atlantic, travels across wetlands, forests, prairies, and mountains completing the journey with the setting sun in the Pacific. The spiritual significance lies in the heart of each

beholder, where unique life experiences transcend design to evoke a special personal translation.



The Centennial Blanket glided around the ballroom on Naomi's umbrella at the 2003 Friends Conference in Washington D.C. It was touched by many of the attendees and was delighted at the attention and resulting sales received.

## Second Saturday Events Listed For 2006

January 14 - Dive, Rescue and support services  
February 11 - Owl pellets, look inside  
March 11 - Native plants and wildflowers  
April 8 - Come fly a kite  
May 13 - Songbird migration  
June 10 - Safe from drowning  
July 8 - Butterflies  
August - Ducks Unlimited Greenwing Day  
September 9 - Our friends the bats  
October 14 - Celebrate wildlife Refuge Day

November 11 - C'mon to our house - local official  
December 9 - Hunting and waterfowl migration  
Substitutions may be made when special presenters are available. Suggestions for presentations are welcome.

The Education Center is open to the public on Second Saturdays. Teachers and special groups are urged to visit the Education Center.



## Second Saturdays Featured Varied Activities In 2005

Second Saturday activities provide a special incentive to visit McNary NWR Education Center at 311 Lake Road in Burbank. Here's a recap of Second Saturday activities in 2005. See Page 5 in this *Flyways* for a list of Second Saturday events scheduled in 2006.

- January 8 was snowed over and the event canceled.
- On February 12 Art Shine gave an accounting of owls and their habits and of nests in general.
- March 12 brought the Richland Storytellers to the Center with tales of magic and creation.
- Paula Clark, Jean Zack, and Murrell Dawson educated April 9 visitors about wild flowers and naughty weeds with photos, slides, and a demonstrative walk.
- May 14 was the day to observe migrating songbirds. Kathy Criddell gave a humorous accounting of her birding trip in Australia.

- Slides of North American bats and the video "Myths and Reality" from Bats International were shown on June 11.



Herpetologist Gary Lentz shows adult female Desert Night Snake at July's Second Saturday

- Herpetologist Gary Lentz took the visitors for a nature hunt along the trail.
- Artist Margo Fox stayed on deck and instructed beginning artists on how to sketch from nature on July 9.



GreenWings make wood duck boxes on August 13

- Ducks Unlimited brought a range of activities from duck banding by biologists to duck calling, dog obedience, gun safety, taxidermy, and wood duck nest building on August 13.

• Lloyd Barkley and archaeologist Thomas Bailor from Umatilla Confederated Tribes brought tools of Native Americans September 10, much to the delight of boys who got to demonstrate the



Boys choose a spear to throw with a Native American tool called an atlatl

atlatl, a tool used to extend the range of spears in hunting.

- Machinery of the Refuge was shown on October 8, the fire truck and water hose were the favorite on the special Refuge Day.

- November 12 was a day for Art in Nature hosted by Paula Clark for successful artists and those who "wanna be." Artist Margo Fox provided advice on how to incorporate nature in sketching.



Artist Margo Fox

December 10 brought gifts from Battelle through Team Battelle MEECe and the "For the Love of Giving," a program where some wishes of not-for-profit organizations were fulfilled. Three hundred seventy dollars were gifted to the Education Center.

CBC and Heritage College and Scout groups make a point of visiting on Second Saturdays to have access to the display of mounted birds in the Center. Trails, bird hide, and deck scopes are always available at McNary Refuge but access to the Center requires presence of a volunteer, who is not always available on other days. This may be a niche for you to fill. Think about it. Call 543-8322 and let the Center know you are available.



Walla Walla Homelink group on a March hike

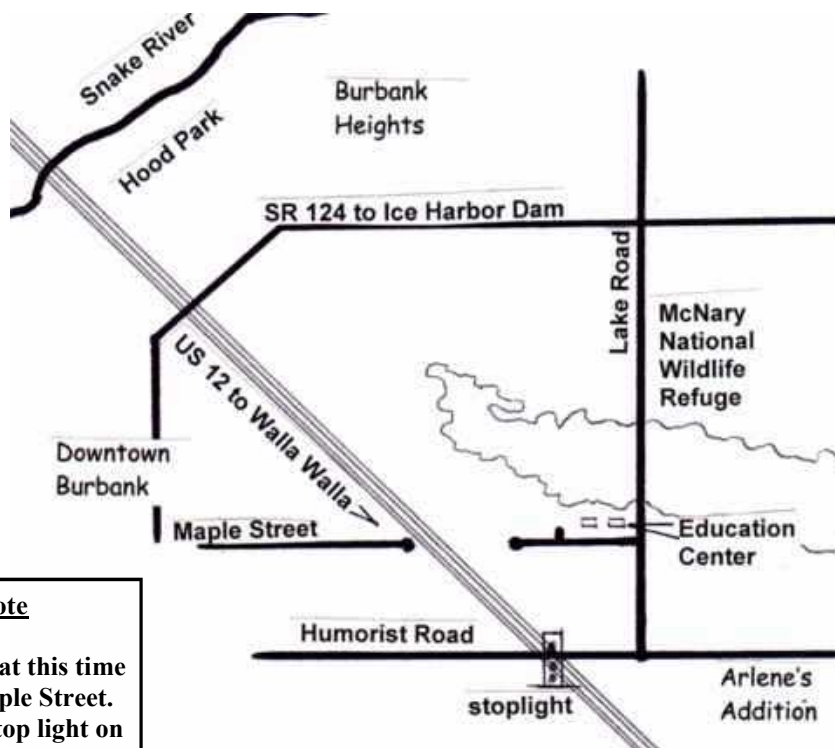
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or nsherer@att.net  
Web site: www.nwrmcnary.org

Non-profit Postal Rate  
US Postage paid  
Permit No 1  
Burbank WA 99323

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Come To A Special Event  
On The Second Saturday Every Month



**Please Note**

There's no access at this time from US 12 to Maple Street. Turn at the new stop light on SR 124 toward Waitsburg, proceed one mile, and turn south on Lake Road to the McNary NWR Education Center.

Friends Of Mid-Columbia River Wildlife Refuges  
311 Lake Road, Burbank, Washington 99323  
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