



The Bear Claw

The Sandia Mountain Natural History Center Newsletter

The mission of SMNHC is to work within New Mexico communities to develop an ecologically literate citizenry.

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS

SMNHC is Nationally Unique

In 1967, a year before Edward Abbey's *Desert Solitaire*, his seminal work on the southwest environmental movement, the Albuquerque Public Schools' Outdoor Classroom opened. The environmental movement that exploded in the 70's was in its infancy, but the Albuquerque Public Schools saw the importance of outdoor education and became a leader.

Over 40 years later, this bright idea is still going strong under the new name Sandia Mountain Natural History Center. The SMNHC is still a leader as one of only a handful of environmental education centers in the country that is owned by a public school district. Additionally, the relationship between APS and the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science makes this center truly one of a kind.

Each year the SMNHC serves over 14,000 people and counting, as well as over 40% of all fifth grade students in New Mexico at no cost. The lessons taught at the SMNHC about the environment

and the role humans play are way too important to let economics get in the way. This free programming that specifically meets educational benchmarks for fifth graders, is just one more thing that sets the SMNHC apart.

A quick "Google" search of environmental education centers, reveals a world of great but expensive programs. On average, comparable programs cost \$8 -\$10 per student not including transportation costs. Our state government and APS should be applauded for their foresight and commitment to the SMNHC.

-Paul Mauermann

People Served at the SMNHC:
From July 08 - Dec. 08 :
over 8,000!



Big Changes this Fall at the Center

Some exciting things have changed this fall at the SMNHC. Amy White has returned to teaching and hit the ground running her first day back - we're happy to have her. The SMNHC has become its own division within the NMMNHS, which has brought about a lot of exciting changes.

One of the biggest is a new position, which will be opening in the near future. Additionally, Hollis Gillespie has been hired as the new director of the NMMNHS and will start in mid January. APS has recently gone through a restructuring and the TLS

department is now known as the Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Dept. or CIA.

And finally, the SMNHC has some new gear this year with jackets, vests, and hats that all have our new logo. Lots of things have changed for us and we expect to see more in the near future, so stay tuned.

Gift Ideas for the Holidays



Brand new

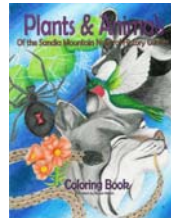
SMNHC green
Baseball Caps just \$15

Also our
Stickers 2 for \$1



Great for bottles, vehicles or anywhere

Coloring Books \$1



20pg of plants & animals that is fun & educational

Also consider for the holidays

Donating to the center in someone's name!

In the spotlight...



A huge thank you to all our volunteers for all their time and hard work. We could not have come this far and so successfully without their help. They have contributed everything from trail work, building maintenance, to coming with us around New Mexico on outreach. As well as, assistant teaching and following on the ecology hikes, developing field guides, and creating bug collections. And our newest volunteer, Eric Parthum, designing our upcoming new brochure and poster!

If you would like to join us and volunteer here at the SMNHC, call us at (505) 281-5259, see you soon!

COOL FACT:

TURKEYS & THE NM WHIPTAIL LIZARD CAN REPRODUCE ASEXUALLY. THE TURKEY'S OFFSPRING ARE OFTEN SICKLY AND NEARLY ALWAYS MALE!

For orders call (505) 281-5259 or for donations; make checks payable to: New Mexico Museum of Natural History & Science Foundation and send to the address below.

Thank you ahead time for all your interest and generosity!

The Sandia Mountain Natural History Center (SMNHC) is a natural history and environmental education facility located on the east side of the Sandia Mountains in Cedar Crest, New Mexico. The SMNHC is owned by Albuquerque Public Schools and operated by the New Mexico Museum of Natural History and Science.



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