

Harlequin Happenings

Newsletter of the Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society
www.olympicpeninsulaudubon.org
Clallam County, Washington
A Chapter of the National Audubon Society
July-August 2007



To promote birding and conservation as community educators, volunteers, and stewards.

Gene Kridler

OPAS lost a friend and true hero when Gene Kridler passed away on May 14.

Gene was famous for many things. He earned four battle stars in WWII, he developed renowned wildlife programs for the US Fish and Wildlife Service in California, Oregon, and Hawaii, he banded over 100,000 birds in his lifetime, and he tirelessly crusaded for endangered species and other wildlife until his death at 87.

What a wonderful man Gene was, combining a warm smile with just the right amount of skepticism for anyone who stretched the truth. He properly lectured birdwatchers that seeing a rare bird meant nothing if bird populations weren't protected. In Hawaii he is remembered as the lone voice for wildlife in the early years of endangered species protection, an ardent conservationist who worked to make sure that birds, seals, and turtles had a say amongst the admirals, fishermen, and politicians.

We will miss Gene, and we give our sincerest condolences to Edna and her family. Gene was a role model, mentor, confidant, and leader who played a huge role in OPAS and its success. The best way to honor Gene is to fight for wildlife populations wherever they may be threatened.

The family requests that memorials be sent to the:

River Center Foundation Endowment Fund
P.O. Box 3007
Sequim, WA, 98382



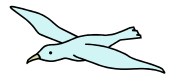
Gene demonstrating bird banding at River Festival.

Lavender Festival Puffin Sunset Dinner Cruises

Dates: Friday July 20, and Saturday July 21

Time: 7 to 9 p.m.

Cost: \$60



Join us for an early evening 2-hour dinner cruise to Protection Island where we expect to see Tufted Puffins, Rhinoceros Auklets, and other seabirds, as well as seals and other marine mammals.

The trips are on the 65-foot Glacier Spirit leaving from the John Wayne Marina in Sequim Bay.

Dinner consists of shrimp cocktail, party potatoes, baked salmon, Caesar salad, fresh baked bread and brownies.

Reservations can be made by calling the Dungeness River Audubon Center at (360) 681-4076. Limit 55. Proceeds from this trip support the Dungeness River Audubon Center.



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OLYMPIC PENINSULA

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Phone (360) 681-4076

Fax (360) 681-8060

www.dungenessrivercenter.org

President's Message

Bob Hutchison

BirdFest 2007 has come and gone, with record participation in nearly every facet. It was our best Fest ever, thanks to the dedication of the BirdFest steering committee led by Eftin Strong and staffed by OPAS members. Many thanks go as well for the timely efforts of numerous volunteers who stepped forward to carry out various tasks and duties during the event. At the time of writing this message, BirdFest has brought in over \$10,000.

Bird-a-thon this May provided a super day of birding for everyone who participated, and some near-record numbers. A total of 192 species were recorded, our second highest since 1994! Even though we weren't able to field a mountain party to Hurricane Ridge, or launch an offshore boat because of sea conditions, we still had 100 people in the field for a great count. And a special "hats in the air" cheer goes to Dave and Julie Jackson, who mustered 57 supporters of their 103-species day, for a grand total in excess of \$5,000 for the River Center. In all, Bird-a-thon has brought in over \$10,000.

During the summer, the Board will conduct its annual retreat, at which we assess where we are as a chapter, draft our program and budgetary goals for the coming year, and map out a strategy to get there and beyond. We will be giving careful consideration to the challenges created by dwindling National Audubon Society support for the River Center, which places an even greater burden of support on the local partners. We are optimistic that these challenges will stimulate new and imaginative ideas to develop added support from North Olympic Peninsula communities. Members are welcome to join this planning process and offer suggestions. If interested in helping, call or email the officers or board members. If you are a National Audubon-only member we encourage you to join the local chapter as well. All dues are kept locally to support the wonderful events held at the Center. Next year could be a watershed year for the River Center and for OPAS. Watch this space for developments.

OPAS begins this new fiscal year with a full slate of officers: President, Bob Hutchison; Vice-President, Sara-Ellen Rutkoski; Treasurer; Katherine Bush; and Secretary, Annette de Knijf. This is a great team, and it is backed up with strong and active committees in both Education and Conservation. A new member of our Board, Jim Richard, will assume the conservation chair position upon his return at the end of summer. We ask each of you to consider how you can help. We will provide training, orientation, and mentoring; but we need you to volunteer. Other Board positions are being developed, and every committee needs helpers. **OPAS is a volunteer organization and we need new volunteers to succeed.**

We also encourage you to participate in our summer programs. The River Center has a full slate of Summer River Talks, super field trips, and summer camps for kids. (schedule on page 7). Come and bring your summer visitors. Enjoy!

Upcoming OPAS Late Summer Field Trips 2007**Mary Mira****Hurricane Ridge & Obstruction Point***Date:* Saturday, July 7, 2007 *Cost:* Free*Leaders:* Bob Norton, Judy Mullally,*Features:* Birds of the sub alpine habitats of Olympic National Park. Kestrels, Blue Grouse, American Pipits, Horned Larks, Townsend's Solitaire, Hermit & Varied Thrush. Spectacular wildflowers and grand views are pluses on this trip.*Meeting place:* 8:00 a.m. ONP Visitors' Center, Race Road, south of Port Angeles. Plan to be out until mid afternoon.*Bring:* Optics, bird & wildflower guides, lunch, & sunscreen. Dress for inclement weather and possible snow on trail.*Further Information:* Bob Norton 360-928-3053.**Feiro Marine Life Center, Salt Creek & Tongue Point***Dates:* Thursday, July 12 & Friday, July 13, 2007*Cost:* Free*Features:* A look at marine ecosystems plus the best tide pools on the Olympic Peninsula. At the Marine Life Center learn what to look for in high, mid & low tide zones & get a close look at local animals & their adaptation to various tide zones. On Friday there will be a minus 3 tide at the Salt Creek area allowing exploration of intertidal life along the rocky shore which is usually under water.*Leader:* Shirley Anderson*Meeting place:* On Thursday meet at 3:00 p.m. at the Feiro Marine Life Center, City Pier in Port Angeles. On Friday meet at 8:00 a.m. at the parking lot at the east end of Crescent Beach.*Bring:* sturdy shoes, water, walking stick & binoculars. Field guides provided.*Further information:* Dungeness River Audubon Center 360-681-4076.**Methow Valley — CANCELLED***Dates:* July 27-29**Dungeness/Sequim Bays***Date:* Saturday August 11, 2007 1:00PM *Cost:* free*Features:* Catch early migration of shorebirds, also seeking the more infrequent visitors such as Ruff, Bar Tailed Godwit, Pectoral Sandpiper*Leader:* Judy Mullally, Dave Jackson*Bring:* lunch, water, optics*Meeting place:* 1:00 p.m. Dungeness Landing Park (Oyster House)*Further information:* Dave Jackson 360-683-1355.**Ocean Shores***Date:* Saturday –Sunday August 25-26, 2007*Cost:* Free; participants pay for own lodging & meals*Leaders:* Bob Norton and Judy Mullally*Features:* Migrating shorebirds of Grays Harbor and other Pacific Coastal spots. Rarities are always a possibility. Additional features include good food, coastal scenery, chance encounters with colleagues from around the area. Lodging is your choice, either motel or campground.*Bring:* Optics, lunch for both days, walking shoes, especially on beaches.*Meeting place:* 8:30 a.m. Saturday outside the Silver King Resort, 1070 Discovery Ave SW, Ocean Shores (approx. 5 miles from center of town).*Further Information:* Bob Norton 360-928-3053 or Mary Mira 360-582-0625.**Three-day Fall Cruises through San Juan Archipelago**

By Bob Hutchison

Join Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society this fall for a three-day cruise through the San Juan Islands. Two trips are planned, one for birding and one for sightseeing. The dates are October 1-3, 2007 for the birding cruise; the second, October 8-10, 2007 for the sightseeing cruise.



We depart from John Wayne Marina aboard the Glacier Spirit (well known from our many cruises around Protection Island), cruise to Roche Harbor Resort for the first night, tour various sites on San Juan Island, cruise onward for a mid-day visit to Sutia or Matia Island for a walk-about and lunch, and then on to Rosario Resort on Orcas Island. The following day, we will take a motor coach ride up to the top of Mt. Constitution, and then cruise back home again to John Wayne Marina, with a close look at Smith Island for birds and marine mammals.

Watch for further details on our web site www.olympicpeninsulaudubon.org this summer.

Don't miss it!

Bird Sightings

Bob Boekelheide

Other than unusual birds seen on the OPAS Birdathon, I've received numerous reports of good birds over the last two months.

For the second year, Barb Blackie found Parakeet Auklets off La Push while doing seabird surveys for the Olympic Coast Nat'l Marine Sanctuary. On 6/1, she spotted at least 10 Parakeet Auklets 10-20 miles offshore. What the heck are these Alaskan seabirds doing here in June? Coincidentally, Ryan Merrill found 56 Ancient Murrelets between Ozette and Shi Shi Beach on 6/5, along with a Horned Puffin and 50 Tufted Puffins. He then discovered 600 Cassin's Auklets near Cape Flattery on 6/6. On 6/7, he spotted a pair of Ancient Murrelets with a chick near Tatoosh Island, more proof that Ancients might be breeding along the Olympic coast. While visiting La Push, he watched a Green Heron at the marina on 6/13.

Drew Wheelan, during a Marbled Murrelet survey off Port Angeles on 6/14, spotted 2 Tufted Puffins about 4 miles north of Ediz Hook, perhaps from the Protection Island colony. On 5/11, the day before Birdathon, Terry Noyes watched a Brown Pelican land in the Nippon Paper lagoon in Port Angeles, where it unfortunately did not remain for our Birdathon.

Assuming it's the same bird, the Long-billed Curlew first seen at Dungeness Bay on 5/5 by Scott Atkinson is still there, spotted by Bob Boekelheide with 22 Whimbrels and a Marbled Godwit on 6/23. Scott Atkinson found the only Semipalmated Sandpiper of the spring, one bird a Graysmarsh on 5/6. Also at Graysmarsh on 5/6, Ann Winskie discovered the only Chipping Sparrow reported this spring.

John Bridge, while hiking in the snow at Deer Lake on 5/5, found one male and two female Barrow's Goldeneyes rafting on the lake. Are they nesting there?

Carl and Sue Christensen report that

Short-eared Owls are regular this spring in fields near Marine Drive in Dungeness, suggesting that they're breeding in the area this year. Eurasian Collared-Doves are becoming a local fixture, as Russell Rogers found one near Sequim High School on 5/28, and Steve Mlodinow and Brad Waggoner spotted as many as three in Dungeness on 5/20. The same day Steve and Brad watched a Parasitic Jaeger from 3 Crabs, and located a Bank Swallow amongst the swallows at Helen's Pond.

It's Golden Eagle time at Hurricane Ridge. Hank and Raedell Warren saw an immature flying over the Lillian River south of the Ridge Visitor Center on 5/23 and 5/25. When you drive the Obstruction Point road this summer, keep your eyes to the sky for eagles. The Late Spring Migrants class from the River Center sighted an adult N. Goshawk in the upper Dungeness on 6/14. Goshawks nested in that area in the mid-1990s; perhaps they're nesting this year. The same class found 2 Townsend's Solitaires near 3 O'clock Ridge, and, even though they didn't find a pure Hermit Warbler, they did find a Hermit-Townsend's hybrid with the bright yellow face of a Hermit but the yellow breast of a Townsend's.

Gregory Houghton reported a N. Mockingbird at his home between Sequim and Port Angeles on 5/18, where it was hunting for food. Dave and Julie Jackson found a birdy spot on 5/8 up Blue Mountain Road, where they located 2 Townsend's Solitaires. Bob Iddins continued to see Western Bluebirds at his home near Carlsborg during May, where they must be nesting nearby.

For the second year, a male Baltimore Oriole has appeared in Clallam County, as Don Schafer reported one visiting his bird feeder in west Port Angeles on 6/18 and 19. As usual, I grilled him to make sure it was not a more likely Black-headed Grosbeak, but he carefully described special field marks like orange in the

tail and a distinct sharp oriole bill, so it sounds convincing. Melissa and Dave Coughlin spotted a beautiful male Lazuli Bunting at their feeder near Carlsborg on 6/1. This species usually shows up somewhere in Clallam County every spring or early summer, but it's always a treat to have one appear at your feeder.

Steve Mlodinow and Brad Waggoner found a singing male Com. Grackle at Dungeness on 4/22, apparently a first for Clallam County. It remained in the area until at least 5/5, last seen at 3 Crabs. In addition to the Yellow-headed Blackbird on the Birdathon, Russell Rogers spotted another female near 3 Crabs on 5/24, and a first-year male showed up at Shelley Smith's home near Carlsborg on 6/3.

Red Crossbills attack! On 5/25, Brenda Spandiro spotted a male Red Crossbill feeding another at her home near Sunland. Then, in early June, Red Crossbills, whose last sizable eruption occurred around Sequim in 2002, began arriving in big numbers, with 250 seen on the 6/6 Wed AM birdwalk at RR Bridge Park. They continue to be present near the end of June. Curiously, the flocks in early June included juvenile birds, suggesting they had bred this year.

Thank you for your sightings! If you see or hear anything unusual, please call Bob Boekelheide at 681-4076 (email at rivercenter@olympus.net) or Bob Norton at 928-3053 (email at norton36@olypen.com).



Western Wood Pewee on Nest

Photo taken by Bob Hutchison during OPAS' recent field trip to the Yakima Valley. Wish you were here!

Conservation Matters

Sue Chickman

Strong Interest in our Active Conservation Committee

We now have 11 Conservation Committee members addressing environmental issues in Clallam County, Washington, and sometimes, nationally. Recent activities:

- Sent comments to Washington Department of Ecology on changes to statewide toxic cleanup standards.
- Sent comments to Washington Department of Ecology opposing the reauthorization of net pen salmon aquaculture facilities permits.
- Sent a letter to Congressman Dicks requesting budget funding for forest road decommissioning.
- Attended a DNR public meeting for Olympic Experimental State Forest land planning.
- Sent comments to USFWS on the proposed new staff offices at the Dungeness Refuge, including recommending green building methods and energy-efficient designs that would help offset the impacts on global warming.
- Added five new Purple Martin

nest boxes to the pilings at the 3 Crabs pier (there are now 13 boxes).

- Conducted another field trip to the Sadie Creek area (west of Joyce) where a proposed County shooting range continues, despite the surrounding foot-deep wetlands and Marbled Murrelet activity nearby.
- Currently reviewing the proposed options for Elk management in Sequim and preparing comments for the Northern Spotted Owl Recovery Plan.
- Continuing preparations for hosting the Audubon Council of Washington's fall conference that highlights a strong conservation theme: "Restoring and Protecting Washington's Natural Areas."

It is gratifying that local Audubon conservation interest is strong, thanks to a talented committee dedicated to OPAS's mission of promoting birding and conservation. Have a wonderful summer and please do at least one thing to help protect wildlife and their habitats. (Let us know what you've done!)

River Center is fully funded for FY 07-08!

By Bob Hutchison

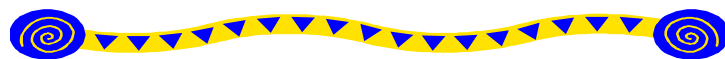
Once again, a generous, local, anonymous donor has challenged the Dungeness River Audubon Center's supporting partners – OPAS, the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, and the River Center Foundation – to meet a fifty thousand dollar fundraising goal in order to receive an equal matching grant. And once again, the partners have succeeded in this challenge.



To all our volunteers and River Center staff, thank you for a job well done. However, the greatest thanks go to all our members, who have given their time and money to support not only OPAS' mission of education, conservation, and stewardship, but also the Dungeness River Audubon Center's high-quality programs in education, classroom visits, school field trips, summer camps, and so much more.

Congratulations to everyone involved!

751 McComb Road, Sequim WA 98382 360•681•2827
www.mccombgardensnursery.com
Escape To Our Gardens



Don't forget to check the OPAS website
(www.olympicpeninsulaudubon.org)
for late-breaking news and updates about meetings, field trips and more!

Harlequin Happenings

Bird Feeding Precautions Urged to Stem Bird Disease

Recent reports of sick or dead birds at backyard feeders has prompted the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to recommend that people temporarily discontinue bird feeding for three weeks or take extra steps to maintain feeders by washing them (and bird baths) daily with a 10% bleach solution.

Salmonellosis, a common and fatal bird disease caused by the salmonella bacteria afflicts species such as finches, grosbeaks and pine siskins that flock together in large numbers at feeders and transmit the disease through droppings.

The first indication of the disease is often a seemingly tame bird on or near a feeder. The birds become very lethargic, fluff out their feathers, and are easy to approach. People who handle birds, bird feeders or bird baths should wear gloves and wash their hands thoroughly.

Hawk Watch International (HWI)

Join HWI Conservation Science Director, Dr. Jeff Smith, for a 9-12 day trip this October to Veracruz, Mexico. Witness first hand the world's largest concentration of migratory raptors at the Veracruz River of Raptors project sites in central Veracruz. In addition, you will tour a rich variety of habitats to observe 250-300 or more other bird species, myriad butterflies and wildflowers, visit some of the famous archaeological sites and museums of the region, and sample some of the wonderful seafood and other cuisine characteristic of the region.

Visit www.hawkwatch.org, or call 1-800-726-HAWK, Ext. 101 for more information.

July-August 2007

Homer Frazier Intern Wins at International Science Fair

Ashiyah Cays, a Homer Frazier Intern for OPAS and a sophomore at Sequim High School, won a first place award at the International Science and Engineering Fair for her project entitled "Biodiesel Fuel from Surf Diatoms." This is the most prestigious science award ever won by a Sequim High School student. She won first place from the U.S. Army in the Energy and Transportation category, second place in the Grand Awards, took home \$4,500 in savings bonds, and will even have an asteroid named after her. OPAS helped sponsor her project by purchasing equipment and paying a stipend during her research. Some have recommended she get a patent for her process, which converts oils from diatoms into biodiesel. Great Job!



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Federal Recreation Lands "Share the Experience" Photo Contest

Open until December 31st, 2007. First place prize is a 2008 Ford Escape Hybrid vehicle, plus a 5 day trip for 4 to a Federal Recreation site of the winner's choosing! Contest details, rules and regulations can be found at www.sharetheexperience.org.

Choose a Realtor Who Shares Your Conservation Values

I'll make a \$300 contribution to OPAS in your name for every commission I earn that results from OPAS members selecting me as their realtor, or referring me to friends or acquaintances who select me as their realtor. I want to share my success with OPAS! Just give me a call!

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John L. Scott
REAL ESTATE

Dungeness River Audubon Center Summer Schedule

located at Railroad Bridge Park, 2151 West Hendrickson Rd, PO Box 2450, Sequim 98382

*Hours: Tuesday through Saturday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Sunday noon to 4:00 p.m., closed on Monday.**Contact the River Center at 360-681-4076, or email rivercenter@olympus.net for more information, or to register for sessions.**Pre-registration is encouraged .***Bird Walks**

Date: Every Wed. morning; Time: 8:30 to 10:30 a.m.

Meet at the River Center for a weekly walk to see and hear the birds of the lower Dungeness riparian forest.

Saturday Work Parties

Dates: Jul. 7, Aug. 18, and Sep. 15

Time: 9 a.m. to noon

Please help keep RR Bridge Park looking bright and beautiful! Fresh donuts and drinks provided!!

Dungeness River Management Team

The group who oversees the management of the Dungeness River, meets monthly at the Dungeness River Audubon Center, second Wednesday of each month, from 2 to 5 p.m.

Natural Science Study Group

Dates: 2nd Mon. each month, Jul. 9, Aug. 13, and Sep. 10, Time: 10 a.m. to noon.

This adult discussion group focuses on the most interesting aspects of the natural world that affect the north Olympic Peninsula, including climate, weather, rivers, geology, botany, and wildlife.

Septics 101

Dates: Tue., Jul. 24, 6 to 8 p.m. (also Wed., Aug. 29, 6 to 8 p.m., and Wed., Sep. 26, 6 to 8 p.m.) The Clallam County Environmental Health Division teaches homeowners how septic systems work and what must be done to keep systems in good working condition. You must pre-register for this class by calling 360-417-2258.

Summer River Talk – The Mastodons of Sequim

Date: Sat., Jul. 14; Time: 2 p.m.

Imagine digging a pond in your yard and finding a 14,000 year old mastodon that was killed by early humans. This happened to Clare Manis Hatler, whose Sequim property provides some of the earliest evidence of humans in North America.

Migrant Shorebirds and Gulls I

Date: Three Thurs., Jul. 19, 26, and Aug. 2

Time: 9 to 11:30 a.m.

Cost: \$30 for River Center partners, \$50 for non-partners. (If taken as a continuation with the August class, \$55 for both classes for members, \$80 for non-members). Learn the identification and natural history of shorebirds and gulls. Includes field trips to local habitats. Limit: 16. Please pre-register.

Summer River Talk—Lavender Festival Bird Walk

Date: Sat., Jul 21; Time: 8:30 a.m.

If you're tired of crowded lavender fields, join us on a relaxing bird walk through the riparian forest by the Dungeness River. Bring your binoculars and bird books to

see what feathered beauties we can find.

Salmon and Stories by the Bay—Lavender Festival Northwest Native Dinner

Date: Sat., Jul. 21; Time: 6 to 9 p.m.

Cost: \$40 per person

Experience Northwest Indian stories, food, and culture at the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe's beautiful community center overlooking Sequim Bay. Sign up for dinner at the Lavender Festival website, www.lavenderfestival.com.**Summer River Talk – Fossil-fuel-free Birding Year and Protecting the Arctic**

Date: Fri, Aug. 3; Time: 7 p.m.

Malcolm Booth-Royd, a 15-year-old student from the Yukon Territory, is biking around North America this summer with his parents on a fossil-fuel-free birding year. Come hear their stories about their bicycling and birding adventure.

Summer River Talk – Native Plants and Noxious Weeds of the Dungeness River

Date: Sat., Aug 11; Time: 2 p.m.

Join a habitat biologist from the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe to learn about the native plants of our area and efforts to control invasive weeds along the Dungeness River.

Migrant Shorebirds and Gulls II

Date: Three Thurs., Aug. 30, Sep. 6 and 13

Time: 9 to 11:30 a. m. (times may vary each week depending on tides).

Cost: \$30 for River Center partners, \$50 for non-partners. See Migrant Shorebirds and Gulls I for details.



Visit BirdNote

8:58 a.m.

Mon-Fri

Future Events**OPAS Monthly Meeting**

Date: Wed. Sep. 19; Time: 6 p.m. potluck dinner, 7 p.m. meeting September's speaker is Mary Peck, award-winning local photographer and conservationist.

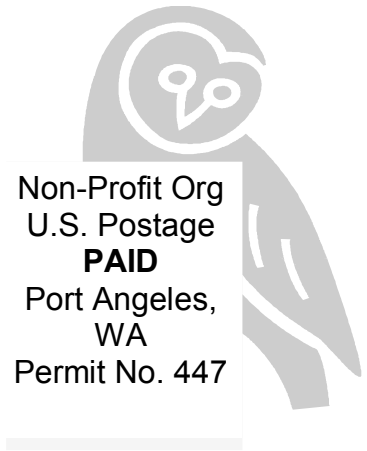
Beginning Bird Seminars

Date: Six Tuesdays, Sep. 18 to Oct. 23; Time: 7 to 9 p.m. Cost: \$40 for River Center partners, \$60 for non-partners. Seminars include basic bird identification, bird feeders, birdhouses, field guides and manuals, and birding optics Limit: 16 people. Please pre-register.

Harlequin Happenings

Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society
P.O. Box 502
Sequim, WA 98382
(360) 681-4076

Returned Service requested



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION **NAS Code Y087XCH**

Date: _____

Let OPAS be your one stop Audubon membership manager. Just check one of the boxes below. Please make your check payable to OPAS and mail with this form to Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society, P.O. Box 502, Sequim, WA 98382.

- Local OPAS Membership**, includes subscription to the *Harlequin Happenings* bi-monthly newsletter (\$20.00);
- Combined Local OPAS and National Audubon Society Membership**, includes subscriptions to the *Harlequin Happenings* & Audubon Magazine: \$40.00 initial membership, \$55.00 renewal for persons under age 62; \$35.00 initial membership and renewals for seniors and students; or

Name _____ Phone (____) _____

Address _____ E-Mail _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Under age 62? Yes _____ No _____

Master Card or Visa payment, Card Number/Expiration Date _____

Authorized Signature _____

Check this box if you would like to be contacted concerning volunteer activities at the River Center