

TALLGRASS PRAIRIE

Docent Newsletter - - - -



May 1997

This n' That - Mary McIntyre, Education and Outreach Coordinator

Welcome to the 29 new docents who have completed training! This brings our docent force to 104 people! Each and every one of you is needed! With a crew this large, we can cover every day easily! Thanks for your time commitment!

During the months of May and June, new docents will work beside experienced docents. The new ones will be watching and learning, preparing to work alone in June, or sooner! While this training is being completed, there may be times when up to four docents are assigned to work one day at the preserve. Take time to get off by yourself and enjoy the beauty of the preserve on these days, as long as two of you are left in the office!

I want to thank all of you for being so great about signing up to work! Many have requested specific days of the month which makes it easier to fill in the calendar! However, sometimes several people request the same day. If you don't get your first request, please let Shirley Miller know if there are other days when you are available!

Twenty-six people completed the trail guide training held April 20!! This experimental program goes immediately into effect, with several school tours already scheduled for Wednesdays. On Saturdays, trail guides will be available to lead groups at 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. through May, with a possible change in hours with the advent of summer.

MAY 17 is a special training day! Mary Barnard Lawrence will give a talk on ranch history at 11 a.m.! Bring your lunch and your field guides and stay into the afternoon for wildflower identification on the trail. Please RSVP to 585-1117 if you plan to attend either session!

Looking ahead - Cowboy Reunion/Heritage Day is June 14th! We'll need extra docents to staff the gift shop, so sign up now!

Mary

Visitation - George Meyers

During the month of March, 912 visitors signed in at the Preserve! 270 visitors came from 37 states other than Oklahoma, and 59 visitors came from other countries! Foreign visitors came from Denmark, Ecuador, England, France, Germany, Ireland, Japan, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Russia, Spain and Switzerland. This brings our total visitation, so far this year, to 1491 visitors, up 29.5% over this time last year!

Our newest statistic being tracked, first time visitors, showed that during March 63% of the Oklahoma visitors were first timers, 87% of the visitors who came from other states were here for the first time, and 100 percent of foreign visitors were first-timers.

The majority of visitors come between 9:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m., Wed. - Sun.

Gift Shop Report - Sue Wheeler

March 16 through March 31, gift shop sales totaled \$3,133.50! What a great month! We are behind in April, and missed some great sales opportunities when tour busses were here and the shop was closed! Please make your shift and stay the entire time!

Help! I'm being buried in the yellow copies of the deposit slips! Remember, send BOTH the yellow and white copies to the bank. Leave the pink copy in the deposit book. Do not send me any of the deposit slips, please! Thanks!

A Note About Housekeeping Responsibilities: Royce Shieldknight, who cleans the headquarters building, does NOT clean the gift shop and office. We are to keep these rooms clean, and pack out trash when the cans are full or boxes empty. Please do your share to keep things neat and tidy!

Trail Guide Program -

Congratulations to the 26 docents who completed trail guide training! Thanks for your patience as we work the kinks out. TRAIL GUIDES PLEASE NOTE: You have a special calendar to fill in for your shifts! Send this calendar back to Marilyn Keefer at the noted address. Two guides are needed for each Saturday, with the numbers needed for scheduled school groups as listed under each day!

Notes from the Prairie -

Bison Calving has begun! As of April 20, about half a dozen little ones had been spotted. Over 200 are expected, so keep an eye out as you drive up to the Preserve!

Spring flowers are popping up all over! These can be seen very well on the nature trail, from Spring Beauties to Carolina Anemones and Wild Strawberries!

Regarding Prairie Chickens! - Sutton Avian Research center is conducting Prairie Chicken research on known preserve leks (booming grounds). These are all located off the main preserve roads. Please DO NOT tell visitors where to find the prairie chickens. We are only allowing special groups (with reservations) to view these birds at this time, and only when accompanied by a staff member. Your help is needed. Otherwise, the research is affected and the leks are in danger of being abandoned.

Scheduling - Shirley Miller

Thank you for your willingness to volunteer for empty shifts! The enclosed calendars are for May, June and July. If you are not already down for a work shift, please mark your first, and second choices for shifts on the calendar, and send them back in. We will let you know which date you will work just as soon as we can!

Reminder: PLEASE find your own substitutes when you have to cancel. We have missed a few tour groups already this spring, with no one there on an assigned day! ALSO - Please keep the shop open during the posted hours unless the weather is inclement. This is especially important on Saturdays and Sundays! We missed an afternoon tour group on a recent Saturday because the shop had closed early! We need you there! Thanks!

Docent Listing - Please review the enclosed list of docents to see if your entry is correct. If any information is wrong, please call the office at 585-1117 and tell Connie. She will correct the form and we will post a correction in the next newsletter. Thanks!

Trail Guide Calendar

4 month

Fill in when you can work and mail or call Marilyn Keefer; P.O. Box 547, Bartlesville, OK 74003; 918/333-7761. A minimum of 2 trail guides will work together on Saturdays.

Sundays will be scheduled only if only needs are met.

SUNDAYS or OTHER	WEDNESDAYS	SATURDAYS
	Apr 30 -Cleveland Interm. HS - 50 students 10 a 1. Barbara Bates 2. Judy Barto 3. Roberta Wherritt 4. Marilyn Keefer or Iris McPherson (docent duty) 5.	May 3 - Public Tours 10am and 2 pm 1. 2.
May 4	May 7 - Cleveland Interm. H.S. - 50 Students 10 a 1. Iris McPherson 2. Carol Redford 3. Laban Miles 4. Marilyn Keefer 5.	May 10 Public Tours 10am and 2 pm 1. 2.
Monday May 12 - Kenneth Cooper Middle School - OKC (will visit, tours are optional if we get guides) 1. 2. 3. 4.	May 14 - Bowring Schools - 40 students 10:30 am 1. Barbara Strahm 2. Roberta Wherritt or Judy Barto (docent duty) 3. Barbara Bates 4. Angela Rapp	May 17 Public Tours 10am and 2 pm 1. 2.
May 18	May 21	May 24 Public Tours 10am and 2 pm 1. 2.
May 25	May 28 - no tour scheduled 1. Van Vives (?)	May 31 Public Tours 10am and 2 pm 1. 2.
June 1	June 4	June 7 Public Tours 10am and 2 pm 1. 2.

June 8	June 11	June 14 Public Tours 10am and 2 pm 1. 2.
June 15	June 18	June 21 Public Tours 10am and 2 pm 1. 2.
June 22	June 25	June 28 Public Tours 10am and 2 pm 1. 2.
June 29	July 2	July 5 Public Tours 10am and 2 pm 1. 2.