

The Docent News



For Tallgrass Prairie Preserve Docents

May 2000

Visitation - March

from George Meyers

"583 signed the register in March, down 7.2% from March, 1999, and the second lowest March sign-in since 1994. 17 foreign visitors were from Canada, Holland, Bel-larusse, Mauritius, Nepal, South Africa, Kazachstan and Sweden. 150 visited from 29 other states with Kansas (37), Texas (20), Arkansas (13), Illinois (12) and California (9) heading the list of states. 416 Oklahomans signed in. 88% of the foreign visitors were first-timers, along with 80.7% from other states, and 50.5% of Oklahomans."

"More visitors came on Saturday (31.8%) followed by Sunday (24.5%), Tuesday (20.5%) and Monday (20.0%). 70.4% of visitors came between 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. with another 21.2% coming after 3:30 p.m.

Comments were favorable "Great", "Beautiful", "En-joyed the openness and quiet-ness", "Very unique". Several were excited about seeing the bison and other wildlife. With good weather and spring coming, we can hope for more visitors."

Wildflower / Hike Day!

from Mary Coley

Check the calendar! Satur-day, May 6, is our annual Spring Wildflower Training at the Preserve. Kim Shannon, of our registry/conservation staff, will be on hand to show you what's blooming and teach you some Botany. Plan to meet us at **9:30 a.m. at the headquarters parking lot** for a morning hike on the trail. Bring water, and your lunch, and dress appropriately for the weather. (Remember that Kim has put together a notebook with information about Spring and Fall flowers, listed by a description of the plant, the date the plant bloomed last year, and a line drawing. This notebook is available in the Visitors Center.)

After lunch, at **1 p.m.**, we will depart from the head-quarters parking lot to make a short drive part way to **the Waterfall**. We will be hiking cross country after parking. (Harvey assures you that we will find it this year.) Expect the unexpected! Be prepared with water, energy food, field guides, cameras, and so forth.

The hike will last approxi-mately three hours. It's sure to be a good time!

(All hikers will be tagged with radio telemetry devices so we can't lose you.....)

Mary

Calendar

May

6 Wildflower Identification (9:30 a.m.) Hike (1:00 p.m.)

16 Prairie Road Crew

June

10 Annual Meeting - Tahlequah

16 Prairie Road Crew

30 Gift Shop Inventory

July

8 Summer Docent Meeting and Social at Preserve

Gift Shop News

The Gift Shop sales:

80.75	January
127.50	February
1,871.18	March
\$2,079.43	Total

Prairie Road Crew

from Dick Baker

How about joining the PRAIRIE ROAD CREW? 22 Docents did at the Reorientation Meeting! The PRC will be responsible for picking up the roadway trash at the Prairie throughout this year. We will Work scheduled days (the next being Tuesday, May 16, more to be scheduled soon), from 9am – 3pm, welcome your friends / guests (car pool, when/where possible), receive “Docent credit” for our labor, enjoy being a part of the Prairie from a new perspective.....from the bar ditches. No Experience Needed. We will provide training and equipment. For more details, call Dick Baker at (918) 747-2495

New Docent Training Update

At this time, it looks like we will be adding about 52 new docents to the program this year! The new docents will complete their training this weekend (April 29) at the preserve. About 38 of them will also be attending trail guide training on April 30, to prepare for participation in that program. New Docents will then be scheduled for their “intern shift”, so be ready to assist a new docent-in-training the next time you serve. A complete listing of all active docents will be mailed to you in May.

Prairie News

By Bob Hamilton

- Installed concrete in-ground storm shelters at 3 staff residences this spring.
- Last spring burn was April 14. Conducted 18 controlled burns on 15,000 acres. Wildfire in April burned east part of bison unit – inholding lessee fire escaped.
- First calf seen on March 16, 2000. Probably about 100 by mid April.
- Starting to separate based upon calving status. Older bulls still in all-male groups.
- The bison are starting to shed their winter coats.
- The cowboys are finishing up set of new bison loading pens at south end of preserve – Kevin Cho-teau’s House.
- We need volunteer to: Corral Painting
Trash clean-up
- This year we have had plentiful spring rains.
- Many turkeys seen this spring. Gobbling heard from headquarters. Flock seen several times in Stucco house yard.

THANKS A MILLION FOR THE ROADSIDE TRASH CLEAN UP. MAKES THE PRESERVE LOOK SO MUCH BETTER.

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New Ideas ?

from Mary Coley

Because of the addition of this many new docents, we will be able to begin thinking of additional ways that the docents can serve at the prairie. I am hopeful that we will have at least two people covering every day, with a third person assigned to serve as a trail guide most days of each month.

The Prairie Road Crew is one new project that Dick Baker has started. If you have ideas for additional docent projects, please let me know. Possibilities for expansion are unlimited. Some new committees will be formed at the Trail Guide training, related to education days at the Preserve this summer and fall. We also need people to help with publicity for the Trail Guide program, and to give school programs. Any other ideas? Let me know!

You've Got MAIL

Do you have an email address? If you'd like it included on the Docent Roster, drop me an email at mmcintyre@tnc.org. This is my new email address and reaches me at the office. My old email address, mmcint2415@aol.com, now reaches me only at home!