

The Docent News



For Tallgrass Prairie Preserve Docents

January/February 2001

I hope that this combined January / February issue of the Docent News finds you well, and that you survived the – holiday season once again!

Calendar

February

- 15 Stillwater Recruitment (6:30 - 8:30)
- 20 Bartlesville Recruitment (6 - 9)
- 22 Tulsa Recruitment (6 - 9)
- 27 Ponca City Recruitment (7 - 8:30)

March

- 1 Pawhuska Recruitment (4 - 6)
- 3 Docent Reorientation Training Day
- 31 Docent Training Day

April

- 28 Docent Training Day
- 29 Trail Guide Training Day

Visitation – November

from George Meyers

WOW!! Visitation has taken a nosedive. In 2000 we will have the lowest number of visitors in our seven years that we have been keeping records. 438 visitors signed our register in November, down 52.5% from November 1999, and by far the lowest November we have ever had. 19 foreign visitors from 8 countries signed in, Israel (5), England (4), France (4), Sweden (2) followed by Australia, Holland, Mexico, and China (1 each). 173 visited from 29 other states with Texas and Arkansas (19 each), Illinois (12), Louisiana (10), New York, California and Kansas (8 each), heading the list. Finally a visitor from Puerto Rico came to the prairie. 245 Oklahomans signed in. 74% of the foreign visitors were first-timers, along with 86.7% from other states, and 41% of Oklahomans.

More visitors came on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Again, mid day was the most popular time to visit, as 81% visited between 11:30 and 3:30.

For the year we have had visitors from 38 foreign countries, and 48 states and the District of Columbia. Hawaii and North Dakota are still to be heard from.

Comments were very favorable. Delighted to see the bison and impressed with the Preserve. "Great", "Excellent", "Wonderful vistas", "Old Okie from Shidler" followed by "Daughter of Old Okie". "Got a lot of flavor, Y'all". "Kudos to Nature Conservancy". Docents are doing a great job in interesting the visitors in the Preserve and Nature Conservancy as a number commented that they plan to return.

Visitation – December

Only 93 visitors signed in during December, down 76.5% from December 1999 and by far the lowest month we have ever had. 15 foreign visitors from 4 countries signed in, England (7), Canada (4), Sweden and Germany (2) each.

(more)

35 visited from 12 other states with Ohio (7), California and Vermont (6) each, heading the list. 43 Oklahomans signed in. 27% of the foreign visitors were first-timers, along with 37% from other states, and 19% of Oklahomans.

For the year we have had visitors from 38 foreign countries, and 48 states and the District of Columbia. Hawaii and North Dakota are still the no-shows.

For the seven years we have kept records we have had 78,579 visitors sign in. This breaks out as 76,360 from the 50 states (52,604 from Oklahoma) and District of Columbia, 19 from two U.S. Possessions and 2,200 from 98 foreign countries or entities.

Gift Shop News

The Gift Shop sales:

5,511.90	November 2000
<u>0.00</u>	November 1999
5,511.90	Increase in Sales
928.90	December 2000
<u>0.00</u>	December 1999
928.90	Increase in Sales
57,906.43	2000 Year to Date
<u>52,448.54</u>	1999 Year to Date
5,457.89	Increase in Sales

Recruitment Events -

Please note the scheduled dates on the calendar. You are welcome / and encouraged to attend the event for your area. Please notify *MARY COLEY* that you plan to be there. The 'event committee' may need your help. We hope to see you in February.

116 Docents Return!

After tallying the returned surveys and phone responses, we have a total of 116 returning docents this year! It is great to have so many of you with us again. I'm looking forward to working with you for another year at the Tallgrass Prairie.

Recruits!

Each year we rely on you, our docent team, to advertise our program and recruit your friends and acquaintances. Please take time to talk about the program with these folks, and then provide *MARY COLEY* with names and addresses so that she can make contact and sign them up for training. Thanks!

Scientific American

Mark Feb. 6, 2001
on your calendar!

A film crew from Scientific American Frontiers recently spent hours on the Preserve both during the roundup (Oct. 25) and again on Nov. 9. The crew included host Alan Alda. The result of these shootings (plus footage shot by our own Communications Coordinator Grant Gerondale prior to their visit) will be an 18 minute feature on the Preserve. This is the longest segment on one story that they have aired in 11 years as a program. Their 63-year-old camera man (from Holland) stated to Harvey that in all his years of filming, "this day (Nov. 9) is the most memorable." Quite a statement from a veteran "shooter". Don't miss this program!

Winter Shifts

The Visitors Center is officially closed for the months of January and February. Projected open date for spring is March 7th (following the March 3rd re-orientation training). Check the boxed calendar in this issue for docent recruitment dates and training dates this spring.

Prairie News

- Several more panels are under production for the new kiosk at the trail parking lot.
- 6 controlled burns conducted totaling 1,115 acres from Nov. 27 to Dec. 8th.
- The bison are in small groups through the winter.
- They are very wooly; young animals very playful on extremely cold mornings.
- The cowboys are outfitting the 5-ton military truck with 1,200-gallon sprayer capacity for burn program.
- We need volunteers for the April clean up, especially in burn patches containing oil production.
- 3rd Annual Christmas Bird count held on Dec. 30th.
- The plants are probably same, but are under snow.
- Nine birders counted 52 species (low due to snow cover and no open water).

Third Docent Council Meeting Feb. 10.

All docents are welcome to attend the third and final winter meeting of the Docent Council on Feb. 10 from 10 a.m. to 12 noon at the Tulsa office. Please call 585-1117 for directions and to let us know you are coming.

Reorientation Set

Plan NOW to attend the Docent Reorientation event on March 3. This annual re-training provides you with updates on the preserve, as well as a chance to hear from several outside speakers about topics of interest. The agenda for the event is included in this newsletter.

IN THE EVENT OF UNCERTAIN WEATHER, this is the procedure to find out if we are still having re-orientation. Mary Coley will leave a message on HER voice mail line at the office. You can access this private message by calling the office number, 918/585-1117, then when the voice prompt tells you that you can leave a message "if you know the extension of the party...." Put in extension 22. You should hear Mary Coley's voice and a message about the reorientation event. In the event of cancellation, all materials will be sent to you. A back-up training date is not available this year.

PLEASE return the RSVP card that you will find stapled to this issue. We provide lunch for you on March 3! In addition, the training room will be equipped to handle the number of people we are expecting, so please RSVP!

MORE Docent Awards -

In a clerical oversight, some of those who worked on the new Prairie Road Crew were not credited with a docent shift for each time they served with the crew. Those who should have reached a new service level and been recognized were:

Ray Kelley (4 and 10 shifts), Jim Neel (4 shifts), and Jean Wagener (4 shifts). Congratulations! Your awards will be presented at Reorientation!

HEADQUARTERS Nominated for Historic Register

After years of work by Liz Medley, the application to include the Chapman-Barnard Ranch Headquarters on the National Register of Historic Places is now complete. The application will be considered for approval at the January 18th meeting of the Review committee. More later !

2001 Docent Reorientation

Saturday, March 3

8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Pawhuska Senior Citizens' Center

(yellow building behind Police Station on West Main)

- 8:30 a.m.** Registration, coffee and reunions
Pick up your REVIEW of 2000 – handouts on visitation and sales
- 8:45 a.m.** **Welcome, introductions and presentations**
- 9:05** **What's Happening - the Update! Panel Presentation**
Harvey Payne, Preserve Director, Tallgrass Prairie Preserve
Bob Hamilton, Preserve and Bison Management
Mary Coley, The Nature Conservancy (state/USA/world)
- 10:00** Questions and Answers for Panel (submit during presentations)
- 10:30** Gift Shop Preview – books and more
Ann Whitehorn, gift shop manager
- 10:45 a.m.** Break (scheduling, liability releases)
- 11 a.m.** **“Geology of Osage County” Neil Suneson, Oklahoma Geological Survey, Norman, OK**
- 11:45 a.m.** Catered lunch (provided by TNC) - scheduling, liability releases, work station on closing procedures.
- 12:30 p.m.** **“Ranch/Tallgrass Prairie History” – Mary Barnard Lawrence, Tulsa, OK**
- 1:30 p.m.- 2:15 p.m.**
“Old and New Floral Friends” –Kim Shannon, TNC Oklahoma Staff (Tulsa)
- 2:30 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.**
“Birds of Osage County” –Dan Reinking, Sutton Avian Research Center, Bartlesville, OK
- 3:15 p.m** Final door prize.