



THE DOCENT NEWS

Of The Tallgrass Prairie Preserve Docent Program



The Nature Conservancy

SAVING THE LAST GREAT PLACES ON EARTH

For the Volunteers and Supporters of the Oklahoma Chapter of The Nature Conservancy

APRIL 2007

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ROAD CREW, COOKOUT, & HIKE

—Dennis Bires

Prairie Road Crew, Cookout, and Hike - Saturday, May 12

The Tallgrass Docents' annual spring outdoor get-together will take place on Saturday, May 12, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. This is a docents-only event, though every docent is welcome to bring an outside guest.

The schedule:

10:00 a.m. to noon: Roadside cleanup around the Preserve. Meet at the Visitors Center for assignments and equipment.

12:00 noon: Cookout on the back lawn of the Ranch Bunkhouse. All food will be provided.

1:00 to 4:00 p.m.: Guided hike in the Pond Creek basin at the northern end of the Preserve. The hike will not be strenuous, but bear in mind there are no trails.

Docents who don't feel up to the cleanup and hike portions of the day are encouraged to come for the cookout anyway—a great opportunity to catch up with fellow docents,

and to meet our new ones. This event is always a great deal of fun.

TRAIL MAINTENANCE DAY

—Dennis Bires

This Thursday, April 19, is TRAIL MAINTENANCE DAY at the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve. Interested volunteers (not limited to Tallgrass Prairie docents) should assemble at the Preserve trailhead, just a quarter mile west of the Visitors Center, at 10:00 a.m. We will break for lunch from noon till 1:00, and finish the day at 3:00 p.m.

Some of our work will involve raking leaves and other storm debris from the wooded parts of the trail, so garden rakes, leaf rakes, and shovels will be useful. A few mushy sections could use a layer of gravel, and we could use an additional wheelbarrow for that job. And a couple of volunteers should walk the trail with hand clippers and a bow saw to clear any encroaching branches.

We expect fair weather and thousands of wildflowers in bloom on Thursday, so come out and have an invigorating good time.

THE PLOW THAT BROKE THE PLAINS

—Andrew Donovan-Shead



Tulsa Symphony Orchestra featured Virgil Thomson's suite THE PLOW THAT BROKE THE PLAINS in their program of music, Saturday March 24, 2007. Thomson composed the music to accompany the 25-minute, 1936 documentary film by Pare Lorentz. You can run the film on your computer by selecting a suitable option at this URL:

www.archive.org/details/PlowThatBrokeThePlains1

A summary of the movie is available from the wikipedia, here:



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http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Plow_that_Broke_the_Plains

A PAWHUSKA ICON

—Bill Rinehart

I make it a point to stop at Sally's Café in Pawhuska for breakfast on my way to the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve to fulfill my monthly docent commitment. Not only am I fed a good breakfast, but also I get to visit with Sally and some of her uniquely interest-



ing customers—many of whom have been regulars of hers for years.

Sally's Café to me is a true example of Americana and the owner-operator, Sally Carroll, is a respected community icon. This 90 year-old lady purchased her cafe in 1950 with a loan which she paid off over time. She worked at the restaurant for another owner a number of years prior to purchasing it. Sally has been in the restaurant business since she was 13 years old. Her first job was at Lazo's

Chili Parlor in Pawhuska. She was a student at the Catholic school at the time, but it was Lazo's where she first went to work and where she learned to make her signature chili.

Sally never takes a vacation and is one person who truly enjoys work. Work is what she does and work is what she lives for. Sally has been written up in the Tulsa World, has been interviewed numerous times by other media outlets, and is a friend to many, including Pawhuska's favorite son the late Ben Johnson, Jr.

Sally is thought of so highly in Pawhuska that she has served as Marshall of the town's Christmas parade and is an honorary member of the Chamber of Commerce. Last month the Chamber held its annual fundraiser gala and auction. Sally donated two dozen hot tamales, a quart of chili, and a chocolate pie. One dozen of her tamales went for \$150. She doesn't know what the other dozen or her chili and pie brought. Last year she donated chocolate pies, one of which was again sold for \$150.

Sally's Cafe is located at 614 Kiheka, on the east side of the street north of the Triangle Building. It is identified by a metal awning over the entrance and a lighted star in the window. The star was given to her by the Chamber of Commerce last Christmas. Her chili is a staple to many of her customers. Some even have it for breakfast with lots of crackers. She's mainly open for breakfast and lunch Tuesday through Friday, but says, "Don't pay any attention to the closed sign in the window on Saturdays and Mondays because I am usually there and will fix you breakfast." She's closed on Sundays, for sure.

I find Sally's cafe an interesting stop that gives me a great way to start the day. The sit-down counter and 10 stools provide an easy way to visit with other patrons. There is another stool on a side bench and a table in the back room to handle over-flow crowds. A broad collection of memorabilia adorns the walls and shelves of Sally's. There aren't many restaurants today that offer such an informal atmosphere. Sally is noted for her philosophical sayings. She recently told me, "There are some good people in this world and some not so good. I happen to know the good ones."

If Ben Johnson is Pawhuska's favorite son, Sally Carroll may well be Pawhuska's favorite



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daughter.

NEW DOCENTS TRAINED

—Dennis Bires

On March 24 and March 31, twenty-nine candidates completed New Docent Training, organized again this year by David Turner. This may be the largest new docent class ever—our records from the early days are not entirely complete. It is certainly an enthusiastic group of volunteers, who seemed thoroughly to enjoy both days of training, as did those of us who helped out. A sincere welcome to you all.

Thanks to everyone who got involved in our docent recruiting effort this year, and it was truly a team effort. Clearly our efforts paid off. Let's remember everything we did this year to generate interest in our program, and make it work as well or better again next year.

Each new docent will be serving one or more initial "apprentice shifts" at the Visitors Center alongside experienced docents. If a new volunteer signs up to work with you, please be sure he or she gets to do personally everything we do as docents: count cash, greet visitors, process credit-card transactions, fill out closing paperwork, turn out the lights and lock up. An experienced docent's advice during this learning-by-doing stage is more valuable than mere demonstration with the newcomer looking on.

Let's all go out of our way to make the following new docents welcome.

- David Anderson
- Curtis Booher
- Misty Brownfield
- Dixie Collins
- Richard Coutre
- Kip Cowan
- Jack Fowler
- Robert Hains
- Joe Hawkins
- Carol Ann Hayes
- Marsha Hayes
- Victor LaBrott
- Sandra LeMonnier

- Dan Martin
- Lloyd McGill
- Rod Mullinax
- George Neurohr
- Tanny Pekarek
- Judy Pulliam
- Dan Rucker
- Judie Reynolds
- Gerald Schneider
- Rose Schneider
- Melissa Scholl
- Debbie Scott
- Sarah Sheldon Walker
- Eulous West
- Nadine West
- Glen Witteman

INVASIVE PLANTS

—Van Vives

The Oklahoma Native Plant Society and the Oklahoma Biological Survey made a list of 1,191 plant species that are not native to this state. Most of the listed species are just identified as being non-native, but some are designated as being on the watch-list by law and some are banned by law. Those aliens on the watch-list that are found in reasonable numbers should be reported one of the organizations listed above. Species listed as banned by law cannot be legally brought into the state.

Let's look at the banned species first:

- Musk Thistle (nodding plumeless thistle)
- Purple Loosestrife
- Parrot's Feather
- Mosquito Fern
- Mediterranean Clone of Caulerpa
- Canadian Thistle
- Anchored Water Hyacinth
- Mud Mat
- Hydrilla
- Indian Hygrophilia



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- Water Spinach
- Exotic Bur-Weed
- African Elodea
- Asian Marshweed
- Dwarf Water Clover
- Australian Water Clover
- European Water Clover
- Paperbark Tree
- Cat's Claw
- Scotch Thistle
- Duck Lettuce
- Japanese Arrowhead
- Giant Salvina
- Wetland Nightshade

Note that most of the banned species are water plants. Some of these can clog a stream or pond, which adversely affects the fish life. Next are the species that are on the watch list:

- Alligator Weed
- Eurasian Water Milfoil
- Brazilian Waterweed
- Wild Taro
- Water Hyacinth
- Water Poppy
- Yellow Iris
- Water Primrose
- Brittle Niad
- Yellow Floating Heart
- Torpedo Grass
- Water Lettuce
- Common Salvina
- Dotted Duckweed
- Water Chestnut

Here are a few of the non-native species not on the banned or watch list:

- Mimosa
- Meadow Brome
- Poison Hemlock

- Chinese Lespedeza
- Kudzu
- Russian Thistle (tumbleweed)
- Mullein
- Russian Olive
- Yellow Sweet Clover
- Tall Fescue
- Wild Oats
- Yellow Bluestem (King Ranch Bluestem)
- Bachelor Button
- Chicory
- Bermuda Grass
- Queen Ann's Lace
- Flower of an Hour
- Common Barley
- Chinese Elm
- Corn Speedwell
- White Vetch
- Crimson Clover
- St. Johnswort
- Henbit
- Lantana
- Yellow Toadflax
- Horehound
- Catnip
- Poppy
- Kiss e Over the Gate
- Sheep Sorrel
- Bitter Dock
- Groundsel
- Sorghum
- Chickweed

ERRATA

—Andrew Donovan-Shead

At the Docent Reorientation, I misheard Dennis Bires and reported that "Irma Jean" had died, when in fact it was Imogen Amrine of Bartlesville. I apologize for the mistake.



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NO TRASH SERVICE

At the Visitor's Center there is no trash service, therefore please carry away your trash for disposal at home. White plastic kitchen trash bags should be available in one of the sink-unit cupboards, to replace filled bags in the waste baskets.

NEWSLETTER PUBLICATION

Deadline for submission of articles for inclusion in the newsletter is the 10th of each month. Publication date is on the 15th. All do-

cents, Nature Conservancy staff, university scientists, philosophers, and historians are welcome to submit articles and pictures about the various preserves in Oklahoma, but of course the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve in particular.

NEWSLETTER BACK ISSUES

Back issues of the Docent Newsletter, to October 2006, can be found in the two green zip-binders, stored in the Perspex rack by the file cabinet in the office of the Visitor's Center.

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