

TALLGRASS PRAIRIE

Docent Newsletter - - - -



January 1997

This N'That from Mary McIntyre, Education and Outreach Coordinator

Happy New Year!! Wishing each of you the best in 1997!

Our December Docent Council meeting had a full agenda, which we accomplished. Much thanks to council members for their input. Your Council members and their positions for 1997 are:

Activities Coordinators - Iris McPherson, Carolyn Mathews

Gift Shop Manager - Sue Wheeler

Pawhuska Liaison - Stu Marshall

Recruiting Assistant - Liz Medley

Scheduling Assistant - Shirley Miller

Speakers Bureau Coordinator - Tom Clark

Trail Guide Coordinators - Marilyn Keefer and George McCourt

Training Coordinator - Dick Baker

Visitation Records - George Meyers

Workday Coordinator - Jan Holsomback

Member-at-Large - Bill Rinehart

Our January meeting will be held on Jan. 25 at 10 a.m., at the Tulsa office. Any docent is invited to attend, but please let us know that you are coming so we can open the door for you!

One item that we discussed at the Council meeting was a form for Self-Assessment. Most volunteer programs include an element which allows for assessment. You annually evaluate the program for me (thanks for returning your forms, by the way), but we have not yet provided an opportunity for you to evaluate yourself, what parts of your volunteering which you enjoy the most - or least - and how you can improve the job that you do for us. Some of you are going to be more comfortable with meeting visitors than others. That may be your strength, and if it is, we appreciate knowing about it. We also appreciate the reflection it takes for you to realize that is a strength, and consider how you can improve other parts of your work which you don't enjoy quite so much.

You will find a self-assessment form enclosed. Take a minute here at the end of the year to fill out this form and return it in the accompanying envelope. Make a copy to keep, or ask us to make one for you. If there is anything you would like to talk to me about, please call so we can set a time to discuss it. I think you will find this assessment work the effort. Copies of the form will also be available at the Gift Shop for you to fill out during the year after you have worked your shift.

Wishing you safe winter travels!!

Visitation - George Meyers

According to George, 530 visitors came to the Preserve in November, bringing our annual visitation number to 11,866 "signed-in" visitors. This is slightly down from last year's total of 12,272 at the end of November. In 1996, 213 visitors came from other countries, and a total of 3550 came from states other than Oklahoma. (A complete visitation summary for 1996 will be provided to all docents at the Re-orientation on March 15!)

Gift Shop Sales -

Sue Wheeler reports a sales total of \$2,168.25 in November, bringing our total for 1996 sales to \$35,791.07!! Congratulations. This compares to \$21,189.89 in 1994 and \$27,834.26 in 1996. From Nov. 1 to 22, the gift shop was open all days except Nov. 7! Thanks so much to all of you who contributed your time in November to keep the shop open!

Prairie News from Bob Hamilton, Director of Science and Stewardship, Tallgrass Prairie
Here's the latest news from Bob:

- * On Dec. 9 there was a prescribed burn of 290 acres on the East side of the Bison Unit.
- * The bison are grazing all over the unit, in groups of from 1 to 50, usually segregated by age and sex. There are 15 to 25 groups wandering around.
- * The ten bison purchased from Kansas are still in quarantine at the corrals. They will be retested for TB and Brucellosis in mid-January, then released if the results are still negative.
- * The cowboys have started work on a 4.5 perimeter fence for the next bison pasture addition (1500 acres) on the south side (old JRB pasture).
- * Bob says that it has been a nice, wet autumn!

Speaker's Bureau Training -

Any Docent interested in being a member of the Speakers' Bureau is invited to attend speakers training on Saturday, Jan. 25 from 1-4 p.m. at the Tulsa Office. In 1995 and 1996, Tom Clark reviewed our collection of slides and put together two wonderful slide programs, complete with "scripts" of factual information about TNC and the slides. One program focuses on the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve, the other on our efforts statewide. Come join the list of speakers we call upon to assist with talks to civic clubs, organizations, and even school classes. We'll review the slides and scripts, as well as handy tips about public speaking.

CALENDAR of UPCOMING EVENTS

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| Jan. 25 | Docent Council Meeting (a.m.) |
| Jan. 25 | Speakers Bureau Training (p.m.) |
| Feb. 8 or 22 | Docent Council Meeting |
| Feb. 12 | Tulsa recruitment event - details later |
| Feb. 20 | Bartlesville recruitment event, 7-8:30 p.m., Library |
| Feb. 25 | Pawhuska recruitment event - details later |
| March 8 | First spring workday |
| March 15 | DOCENT REORIENTATION, Pawhuska Sr. Citizens Center, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. |
| April 5, 19 | New Docent Training in Pawhuska and at Preserve, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. |