

July 2003

# THE DOCENT NEWS

Published by the Tallgrass Prairie Preserve Docent Program

Distributed to Volunteers and Supporters of the Oklahoma Chapter of The Nature Conservancy



## What's Blooming? - Van Vives

The prairie is going through a transition period as far as wildflower blooms are concerned. It is between the late summer and early fall season.

By far the most prominent flower in bloom is the ironweed. It is everywhere!



*Ironweed*

Also prominent is blue vervain, a member of the verbena family.



*Blue Vervain*

A flower prominent around the Scenic Outlooks is the wild petunia.



*Wild Petunia*

If you look in the right places you will find wild bergamot.



*Wild Bergamot*

Halfway to the first step on the west trail you will find some pitcher's clematis still in bloom.

You will find patches of blazing star on the west side of the bison loop in low areas.



*Pitcher's Clematis*



*Blazing Star*

Do you get the feeling that the prairie is in a purple/blue phase? Well, there is some yellow to be seen. There are the compass plant, the gum weed, the rosinweed, and the sunflower. If you want to pick out the compass plant, look at the lower (basal) leaves near the ground. The compass plant has large, deeply lobed leaves, with small upper leaves. It won't be long before the early fall blooms will be showing up.



## Visitation Notes - George Meyers

1357 visitors signed-in during June, a decrease of 2.6% from June 2002. The downward trend we have been experiencing is slowing. Visitation is down 19.2% for the year-to-date compared to 2002. There were 528 visitors from 42 other states, with Texas (56), Kansas (40), Georgia (33), Florida and Missouri (30), Louisiana (27) and Washington (23) heading the list. 56 visitors came from 13 other countries: Norway (13), England (10), Holland (8), Venezuela (7), Canada (5), Czech Republic (3) and Denmark, Germany, Philippines and United Arab Emirates (2 each). 770 Oklahomans visited the preserve.

Friday and the weekends were the most popular days to visit as 65% of the week's visitors came on those days. 82% of the visitors came between 9:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. 64% of the foreign visitors were first timers along with 80% of other state visitors, and 52% of Oklahomans. More Oklahomans are revisiting for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> times.

The visitor comments indicate that they enjoyed their visits. "Primal. Awesome. WOW!", "The preserve is great to see!", "Thank you, TNC", "Rivers of

wind", "Lots of dicksissels, enjoyed very much", "America at it's best", "Summer solstice - saw a prairie chicken", "We came to see Wildfire, our adopted bison", "It rocked my socks", "Muy bonito". "Beautiful" beat "Great" 4 to 3, with "Wonderful" a poor third. There were also a number of "Nice", "Interesting", and "Awesome".

On checking up, I found that our 100,000<sup>th</sup> visitor, either Preston or Mary Arnold from Bartlesville, signed-in at 4:00 p.m. on May 19<sup>th</sup>. To date through June, we have had 101,952 visitors sign-in. This includes 31,110 visitors from other states, 3,106 from other countries and 67, 710 Oklahomans.



## Gift Shop Sales Summary

\$10,696.31	June 2002
\$ 7,884.35	June 2003
\$28,869.73	Year-to-date 2002
<u>\$22,244.71</u>	Year-to-date 2003
<b>&lt; \$6,625.02 &gt;</b> Year-to-date decrease in sales	



## TGP Docent Contacts

### Program Coordinator

**Jerry Wagener**

(918) 742-2566 - home

(918) 636.6361 - cell

[Jerry@Wagener.com](mailto:Jerry@Wagener.com)

### Tour Coordinator

**Dick Baker**

(918) 747-2495

[Dbakertul@aol.com](mailto:Dbakertul@aol.com)

### Docent Scheduler

**Kara Morgan**

(918) 272-9433

[morgan1477@aol.com](mailto:morgan1477@aol.com)

### Newsletter Coordinator

**Kim Hagan**

(918) 494-8892

[kimhagan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kimhagan@sbcglobal.net)

### New Docent Recruitment

**June Endres**

(405) 356-9645

[Ridgetree@worldnet.att.net](mailto:Ridgetree@worldnet.att.net)

### New Docent Training

**David Turner**

(918) 333-7864 - home

(918) 661-4287 - work

[drenrut@aol.com](mailto:drenrut@aol.com)

### Reorientation and Kickoff

**Don Bruner**

(580) 237-4199 - home

(580) 213-9217 - work

[dbruner@groendyke.com](mailto:dbruner@groendyke.com)

### Docent Awards

**Monica Murray**

(918) 587-3701 - home

(918) 556-5327 - work

[monica.murray@oden-ins.com](mailto:monica.murray@oden-ins.com)

### Nature Room

**Doris Mayfield**

(918) 743-6922

[dbmayfield@mindspring.com](mailto:dbmayfield@mindspring.com)

### Workday Coordinator

**Dennis Bires**

(918) 341-3908

[dennisbires@lycos.com](mailto:dennisbires@lycos.com)

## Interesting Visitors - Van Vives

On July 21<sup>st</sup> we had members of the Barnard family visiting the TGP. Keenan Barnard (Horace Barnard's grandson), his wife, Starr, their daughter, Hilary Barnard Ruttenberg, and her husband, Mitch Ruttenberg, came to the prairie to take a tour of the Headquarters building. Keenan has interesting accounts of the life on the Chapman-Barnard Ranch since he worked and lived there. He wanted to show and convey to his daughter and her husband what life was like on the ranch.



*Keenan Barnard and Family*

On July 13<sup>th</sup>, there was a similar visitation. There is a picture in the Headquarters building of Ernest Mounts, a cowboy who worked for Chapman and Barnard. His grandson from Ponca City came to the TGP to show his three children where their great grandfather lived and worked. He recounted stories that had been conveyed to him and he wanted very much to pass on to them some of the history of the old west.

Earlier in the month a married couple from California came to visit the TGP. He is a recently retired college professor and his wife is a high school teacher. He was born and raised in Oklahoma. He taught English and his interest is in local folklore, accounting for many of his travels. He told me he would be delighted to have a job as a docent at the TGP. His wife told him that that was not impossible and that perhaps he should come back to Oklahoma next spring and take the docent training. He thought that was a great idea since they might come back to Oklahoma to live when his wife retires.

There was a couple with their young daughter visiting on the 21<sup>st</sup> that were very interested in the TGP. They were from Kentucky and he is a professor at Moorhead State University. I noticed that he was particularly interested in the bison and seemed to be well informed. He said that he had read for several years about the Tallgrass Prairie and has wanted to visit it for a long time. He collects books and information about bison and their place in history. He said that he has wanted to write a novel about bison. They are spending their summer traveling and visiting preserves and old forts. The day before they were digging crystals at the Great Salt Plains.

June Endres wrote me about one of her days at the gift shop. She had visitors from Germany that must have taken 100 pictures. There were three little children from Louisiana to whom a greater gift couldn't have been given than to see all those wild bison. They were three feet off the ground. A lady from Wisconsin said that the TGP must be the best-kept secret in the United States. She walked the trails and bought a pair of those expensive bison wool gloves because she raises sheep and spins her own wool to make various things. She was entranced with the softness of the bison hair.



## Gift Shop Closing Reminders

**Please be sure to.....**

-  **Lock the cash drawer and place the key in the cupboard.**
-  **Lock BOTH LOCKS on the front door.**
-  **Check to be sure that the Headquarter door is locked, too!**
-  **Put the Docent Keys back in the mailbox in the shed.**

## THE OILMEN

- Jenk Jones

### Part V of a VI Part Series

Of all the elements that comprise the story of the Osage, oil may be the most intriguing. Here, as mentioned before, began the fortunes of Frank, L.E. and Waite Phillips, J. Paul Getty and E.W. Marland, Harry Sinclair and Bill Skelly, H.V. Foster and Josh Cosden, Tulsa's Zarrow family and Alf Landon among the many who struck success in the Osage.

Traces of oil long had been noted in the area, including slicks on creeks, oil seeps and tar springs. The Osages' first oil deal was with the Indian Territory Illuminating Oil Co., which was given rights to all drilling in the Osage Nation for 10 years beginning in 1896. Under the terms, ITIO had to find oil within 18 months and couldn't go six months without drilling or the lease would be terminated. The next year Oklahoma's first commercial producer was hit, the Nellie Johnstone beside the Caney River in what is now Johnstone Park in Bartlesville. During its lifespan it would produce more than 100,000 barrels of oil. More wells were successfully drilled on the Cherokee side of the border with the Osage Nation. The ITIO, which had financing problems and was under pressure to find oil on Osage lands, eventually subleased drilling sites and the pace of exploration accelerated. In 1906, the western part of the Osage Nation was thrown open to competition, with the ITIO retaining rights in the east. All of the county was open for

bidding after 1916, just in time for the greatest years of the Osage boom, triggered by demands of World War I and the postwar growth in automobiles.

To get a sense of how the oil business exploded in the Osage, there were about 6,000 barrels produced in 1900, more than 11 million in 1914. The Osage boom and the vast leap in the number of automobiles coincided remarkably well.

This huge output increase reflected not only exploration and production but also transportation. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Santa Fe Railroad reached Bartlesville, allowing movement of oil by tank car. Within the first six years of the new century pipelines expanded into the Osage, linking its oil production to distant refineries and distribution systems.

Then in 1920, Marland brought in the North Burbank Field. The impact on the Osage is almost beyond comprehension. The great North Burbank Field was 39 square miles when completely outlined and has produced more than 300 million barrels of oil. Other Burbank fields have added another 100-million-plus. Peak production was in 1923 and 1924. One lease sale in March 1924 saw six of the winning bids each exceed \$1.5 million, merely for the right to drill on 160 acres. The highest bid at that auction, an all-time record, was \$1,990,000, and the one-day total \$10,888,000, another high mark. Sometimes

it wasn't the big bid that succeeded. Marland once bid \$2,000 for a quarter-section and took \$2 million out of it.

Handling the prolific discoveries often was hectic. When gushers came in, earthen dikes were used to hold the oil until storage tanks could be built. In 1901, Prairie Oil and Gas constructed one of the world's largest tank farms near Ramona, in Washington County just east of the Osage line; you can still see some of the encircling dikes just east of U.S. 75. That area, with 222 earthen tanks, and a smaller one farther north near Copan, had a combined capacity of more than 11 million barrels.

Although the collective fields with Burbank in their names were Osage County's largest concentration of oil riches, there was more oil produced in the county outside the Burbank than in it. The numerous oilfields of the Osage have produced some 1.3 billion barrels of oil since the whole business started, along with 165 billion cubic feet of natural gas. During the height of the boom from 1919 to 1928 more than \$202 million was paid to the tribe in oil and gas royalties, bonuses, interest and land rentals. The highest price for oil was \$3.50 a barrel in 1920. We're talking dollars with a purchasing power of many, many times that of today's dollar. Osage head rights went from \$385 per person in 1916 to \$12,400 just seven years later. Although production slumped sharply in the 1930s, due both to natural factors and the Depression, water flooding and

(Continued on page 5)

(Continued from page 4)  
the fracturing process post-World War II brought another rush of production countywide. Boosted by the sharp increase in oil prices following the Mideast crisis in 1973, head rights were worth more than \$26,000 each in 1980, although the real value in terms of 1923 dollars was less than that of 60 years earlier. The value of oil produced in the county in 1983 alone was \$297 million, with another \$18 million provided by gas. Over the years some 42,000 producing oil and gas wells were drilled in the county, although virtually all those still active are stripper wells producing less than 10 barrels per day. They still manage to produce some 11,500 barrels per day on average, with sale value in 2002 of \$105 million.

The Osages learned a good deal about oil leases over the years. Their 1896 package with ITIO called for the tribe receiving 1/10<sup>th</sup> of the value of oil at the wellhead and \$50 for every gas well completed and used by the company, plus Osages had free use of natural gas. By the time of the great oil boom, the tribe received not only the rich lease prices but 1/6<sup>th</sup> royalty on leases producing less than 100 barrels per day and 1/5<sup>th</sup> on those with more than 100 barrels.

The Osage fields were an oilman's dream. The oil was a high grade, with a good conversion to gasoline ratio. It was easily refined, with a very high percentage of kerosene. It was free of sulfur and asphalt. And it came from several thick producing sands at relatively

shallow depths. Frank Phillips used it to produce an aviation gasoline that he proclaimed the best around. He used it in the Woolaroc, his airplane that won the Dole Derby in 1927, the first plane to fly from California to Hawaii. Of the eight planes entered, one crashed on takeoff, three limped back to California, two disappeared at sea and only two made it to Hawaii. Thirteen people, crewmen and would-be rescuers, died in the venture. The victory brought Phillips 66 great publicity.

Life in the oil-boom towns was colorful but hardly comfortable. Vice and violence were common, along with rotgut bootleg whisky. Lawmen, when available, sometimes were as bad as the criminal element. Towns were horribly crowded; housing was at a premium, and many men slept in theater seats or under pool tables. Chicken coops or boxcars might suffice as family housing, or "shotgun" houses hurriedly thrown up and providing minimal shelter from either cold or heat. Getting mail was iffy, with transient workers using general delivery. Schools and medical treatment were in short supply. So was food, either in groceries or lunchrooms. Lumber had to be hauled long distances, and animal feed for wagon teams was hard to obtain. Roads and town streets were dust or mud. Drinkable water was scarce and often expensive. There was a lack of telephones, and fire, explosions or tornados could devastate towns.

Although the TGP is not a major oil producing area, it still has more than 100 active wells and has produced six million barrels of oil and nine billion cubic feet of gas since drilling started there. Some 320 wells have been drilled within preserve borders, 65% of them productive.

From 1907 to 1928, Oklahoma was first or second in the nation in oil production in 21 of those 22 years. Much of that came from the Osage.



**Save a Tree – Receive future copies of *The Docent News* electronically!**

Beginning next month, you will select how you receive your copy of *The Docent News*: Hard copy via snail mail or electronic copy via e-mail.

To receive future copies via e-mail, please send a short message to Kim at [kimhagan@sbcglobal.net](mailto:kimhagan@sbcglobal.net) stating your desire.

If you prefer to receive a hard copy, simply sit back and wait for your next issue!

A courtesy reminder will be sent to all docents with known e-mail accounts, but don't delay, act now, decide your preferred reading format and e-mail Kim today if you want to receive e-copies starting with the August issue!



**Tallgrass Prairie Docent Signup for:**

**2003-08-01**

**enter docent ID**

(all lowercase, no spaces)

trail guide       remove

[Cancel signup and return to Calendar](#)

**Figure 2:** Enter your docentID and check the box in front of trail guide or remove, if appropriate. When done, click on the Submit Signup button and you're all set!

## OKLAHOMA CHAPTER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<p><b>2003 August 16</b></p> <p>For further information and reservations, call (918)585-1117</p>	 <p><b>Wild Brew 2003</b> at the Air Conditioned Expo Square in Tulsa!</p> <p>A casual event offering the opportunity to sample domestic and international beers and ales from outstanding microbreweries, as well as signature dishes from Tulsa's finest restaurants, while dancing to the beat of the Mid-Life Crisis Band.</p>
<p><b>2003 October 3</b></p> <p>For further information and reservations, call (405) 858-8557</p>	 <p><b>Wild Spirits 2003</b> at Coles Garden, 1415 NE 63rd St. (across from Cowboy Hall of Fame) in Oklahoma City!</p> <p>A casual event offering the opportunity to sample domestic and international beers, ales and wine from outstanding microbreweries, as well as signature dishes from Oklahoma City's finest restaurants.</p>



## TNC Oklahoma Chapter Preserve Updates

### Tallgrass Prairie Preserve

- Bob Hamilton

Approximately 80 vehicles caravanned through the preserve for the Osage County Cattleman's Association annual ranch tour on June 14<sup>th</sup>. The driving tour heads out from Pawhuska each year in a different direction, stopping at a handful of ranches while the participants listen to a prerecorded description of the ranches played on the local AM radio station. The first stop on this year's tour was in our Hubble pasture on the south end of the preserve. A 15 minute radio piece described our cattle patch-burn research project with OSU.

A presentation titled "Restoring Heterogeneity on Tallgrass Prairie: Applying the Bison-Fire Model to Domestic Livestock" was given at TNC's All-Science Conference in Duluth, MN by Bob Hamilton.

All 5,910 yearling steers were removed on schedule, with our lessee loading the last cattle on July 19<sup>th</sup>.

The replacement of ½ mile of fence damaged by the May 8<sup>th</sup> tornado has been completed. Our fence-building crew is

now finishing up some new pens on the north side of the bison corrals, then it's back to work on more perimeter fence.

Our 3-4 man spray crew continues their hunt and destroy mission focused on sericea lespedeza. Since early June, our spot-spray crew has swept approximately 4,000 acres for this problem plant.

Hay meadows were cut and baled on the south end of the Osage Ranch, northwest of the HQ, and the field south of the HQ. This hay will be used to feed the bison while they are being held in the corrals during roundup. Hay yields are generally down in the region, likely due to the cool and wet start of the growing season.

The construction of the new Tallgrass Prairie Ecological Research Station made a big leap during the past month. All the structural steel was erected and the floor slab was poured. The Stucco House remodeling continues to move along, with the new east bedroom and bathroom insulated and sheet rocked.

New Tallgrass arrival! Congratulations to Carmon and Joe Bob Briggs on the birth of their daughter, Jenny Beth, on June 16<sup>th</sup>. Jenny Beth

will have her sister Josey, age 8, to show her around the Tallgrass. Joe Bob is our Ranch Hand that lives in the white house just north of the Bunkhouse at HQ.



### Pontotoc Ridge Preserve

- Jim Erwin

We have been doing lots of mowing and weed eating on our trails and burn lines, and spot spraying sericea. While this is the off season for doing prescribed burns, we have been working with our neighbors to get ready to do their fall burns and making sure their burn lines are prepared. At Pontotoc Ridge Preserve we are getting started on our 1½ mile ADA trail, which we hope will be completed sometime this fall. We are also going full steam ahead with the cross timber ecoregional plan which is hoped to be completed by June, 04. In the past two months we have had close to a hundred people visit the preserve looking at everything from birds and butterflies, to shooting stars, and some come to just have a picnic lunch.



## Nickel Preserve - Chris Wilson

As we move through the height of the flowering period for many of the late-summer prairie species, we are beginning to think about seed collection. Our goal is to maximize species diversity in our restoration plantings. To do so, we need to collect as much seed from as many species as possible. We will once again be having volunteer seed harvest days this fall. Additionally, we're requesting help from individuals to help us find and collect local seed from off the preserve.

To ensure the genetic integrity of our restorations, we want to limit our sources to the Oklahoma Ozarks. Please let us know if you know of good spots for native wildflowers. These could be prairie remnants, roadsides, cemeteries, railroad right-of-ways, or other locations where native wildflowers are growing. We'd like to establish a small network of volunteers that work independently to collect seed from such places. Call or email me at [cwilson@tnc.org](mailto:cwilson@tnc.org) if you're interested in helping us out.

We always welcome assistance from anyone with the desire to help us maintain our wildflower gardens around the headquarters building. The weeds don't ever give up. Weekdays are best, but anytime you'd like to

come over would be great! Look for our schedule of fall workdays in the next issue.



## Western Oklahoma - Chris Hise

On a picture perfect Saturday in late June, five members of the Oklahoma Chapter's Board of Trustees accompanied staff on a field trip to a potential new Conservancy project site in western Oklahoma. Mr. and Mrs. Larry Nichols, Mrs. Judy Kishner, Mr. John Groendyke, Dr. Jenny Hendrick, and Mr. Bruce Benbrook spent the morning touring the scenic property along the Canadian River in Ellis County. The trip was organized to familiarize board members with the site, which is been designated as a priority for protection in the *Packsaddle / Antelope Hills* conservation area of west-central Oklahoma.

The interest and dedication of the Oklahoma Chapter's Board of Trustees is a vital part of the Conservancy's successful work in our state. We would like to thank these individuals for their continued commitment and support. Special thanks also to Chapter staff Tim Grogan and Keven Virgilio for assisting with the trip, and to Tallgrass Preserve Director Harvey Payne for making the *long* drive from Osage County.



## TNC Preserve Contacts

### Tulsa Office

State Director

**Tim Grogan**

(981) 293-2929

Director of Operations

**Eileen Jobin**

(918) 293-2920

Director of Philanthropy

**Deirdre McArdle**

(918) 293-2912

Director of Environ.

Affairs

**Grant Gerondale**

(918) 293-2922

### Oklahoma City Office

(405) 858-8557

Assoc. Dir. of

Philanthropy

**Kevin Virgillio**

Land Protection Specialist

**Chris Hise**

### Tallgrass Prairie Preserve

(918) 287-4803

Preserve Director

**Harvey Paine**

Director of Stewardship

**Bob Hamilton**

### J.T. Nickel Family Nature & Wildlife Preserve

(918) 456-7601

Preserve Director

**Chris Wilson**

### Pontotoc Ridge Preserve

(580) 777-2224

Manager

**Jim Erwin**

August 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					<u>1</u>	<u>2</u> Beverly Atteberry
<u>3</u>	<u>4</u> Dean Johnston Mary Ellen Johnston	<u>5</u> Jeanna Cooper	<u>6</u> Stuart Marshall	<u>7</u> Deana Brewster Dennis Brewster	<u>8</u> Don Baird Larry Myers	<u>9</u> Don Bruner TG Phyllis Connally
<u>10</u> Barbara Bates	<u>11</u> Maureen Forsythe Steve Forsythe	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u> Dave Dolcater	<u>14</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>16</u> Marilyn Clarke Phyllis Connally John Fisher TG
<u>17</u> John Boxall TG	<u>18</u> Loretta Vives Van Vives	<u>19</u> Hugh Selman Peggy Selman	<u>20</u> Kim Hagan	<u>21</u> Irene Ward Phillip Winslow	<u>22</u> Irene Ward	<u>23</u> Van Vives TG
<u>24</u> Nicholas Delgrosso	<u>25</u> Neil Garrison Pat Jaynes	<u>26</u> Jim Walker	<u>27</u> John Boxall	<u>28</u> Bill Rinehart	<u>29</u> June Endres	<u>30</u>
<u>31</u>						

Sep 2003

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<u>1</u> Barbara Bates	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>6</u> Beverly Atteberry Van Vives TG
<u>7</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>9</u> Kim Hagan	<u>10</u> Dave Dolcater	<u>11</u> Deana Brewster Dennis Brewster	<u>12</u>	<u>13</u> Don Bruner TG

Check the web site for up to the minute schedule information  
[http://oklahomanature.org/OK/tallgrass\\_volunteers.html](http://oklahomanature.org/OK/tallgrass_volunteers.html)