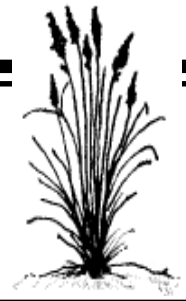

GHF NEWS



Grassland Heritage Foundation Newsletter

November 2007

GHF Holiday Party

Join the Grassland Heritage Board at our annual holiday party. If you've volunteered with any of our activities, want to get involved, are a member, or just want to learn more about the group, please come! Family members or guests are welcome, too.



Sue & Steve Holcomb's 26062 W 150th St, Olathe, Kansas
Sunday, December 2, 2007
4:00 pm to ????

We'll provide bison and chicken chili and will gladly accept contributions of fruit, veggies, cheese, crackers, drinks, desserts, etc.

Please call Sue to let us know if you plan to attend and what you'll bring, or to get directions, 913-856-4784 or email sholc2003@yahoo.com.

Kansas City Wildlands Red Cedar Christmas Tree Day

Saturday, December 8, 10-3, Shawnee Mission Park, Theatre in the Park entrance. For a \$10 donation cut your own tree, or choose from those cut by volunteers. Cedars are popping up everywhere in this fire suppressed area, so help nature and take home a native tree. Bring handsaws, rope, sturdy shoes, and gloves. Look for KC Wildlands signs. Contact Linda Lehrbaum, KCWL Program Coordinator at Linda@bridgingthegap.org, 816-561-1061 ext. 116.



Fond Farewell

We're sorry to announce that Dr Francis E (Pete) Cuppage is leaving the GHF Board. Pete has volunteered for many years in various capacities. From president, to lecturer, to groundhog, Pete has always been willing to roll up his sleeves and pitch in. Pete worked out at our Roulund-Wagner prairie a lot and had a way with the DR Field. It takes two of us to do what he used to do. We were lucky to have such an accomplished member of the board. Pete is a Professor Emeritus of Kansas University School of Medicine. He retired in 1995 after 25 years of service and has continued to be involved part-time. He has done extensive research and given countless lectures on the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the Oregon, California, and Santa Fe Trails, and on the effects of nutrition and medicine upon world exploration. Most of all, Pete is a good friend and we'll miss him.

And welcome to the new

This is the time of year we select a nominating committee and start working on board and office nominations. If you're interested in volunteering for the board that meets bimonthly, usually in Lawrence, please contact Andrea Repinsky, adheron@yahoo.com, or call the office, 913-262-3506.



Thank you

Kevin Bachkora for monthly accounting services

John Wright for leading us on his prairie

Brian Mathers for becoming a great Groundhog! He's been coming out to Snyder regularly and is a tireless worker.

Craig Freeman for hosting a meeting at the herbarium

Freestate Brewing Co. for allowing us to use the small meeting room

All the **Art for the Sky participants** (see next page)

The **Groundhogs** and **Frank Norman** for continuing to work at Snyder, even when the flowers aren't in bloom

The Fight Against Prairie Dogs Continues to Take Its Toll on Black-footed Ferrets

The US Fish and Wildlife Service has a proposal to reintroduce these endangered ferrets in Logan County, Kansas, but the fear of prairie dog proliferation is in danger of killing the plan before it starts. Hearings are scheduled for November 20 in Topeka to force poisoning of prairie dog colonies on landowners favorable to the ferret plan. While it will be too late to attend or to contribute to the public comment period, we should all take time to let Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks know that they should be against the poisoning. Many species dependent on these colonies are killed along with the prairie dogs. Ranchers who claim they are stewards of the land continue to treat prairie dogs as the ultimate pest, as does the state of Kansas. See more information at the Audubon of Kansas web site www.audubonofkansas.org. They have been working with the landowners on this project.

Squaw Creek Eagle Days

December 1-2, from 9:00am to 4:00 pm, the Squaw Creek National Wildlife Refuge will sponsor Eagle Days. Tours and eagle shows are available. As many as 250 eagles spend the winter here. If you can't make it that weekend, be sure to visit during December or January. This reserve is located 30 miles north of St. Joseph, Missouri near I-29 at Mound City. Exit 79, go west 3 miles on Hwy 159.

Call Squaw Creek at 660-442-3187 or visit www.fws.gov/midwest/SquawCreek/ Steve and I have been to see the eagles and snow geese--it's quite a sight!

Upcoming Events

December 2, Sunday, 4:00pm **Winter Party** at the Holcombs. Board members, members, and guests are welcome. Chili Dinner. 26062 W 150th Street, Olathe, Kansas. Contact Sue to let her know you're coming or with questions 913-856-4784 or sholc2003@yahoo.com.

February 2, 2008 **Annual Meeting** at the Kansas Biological Survey, 8:30am to 12:30pm, West Campus of KU. All members are welcome.

February 26, 2008 Frank Norman talk about Snyder Prairie at Topeka Sierra Club 7:00pm at Shawnee County Library

Groundhogs Prairie Maintenance, Snyder Prairie, **3rd Saturday** of each month, 9:00am. No Groundhogs in December. January 19, February 16, March 15.

Contact Frank Norman at fjnorman@sunflower.com or cell (785) 691-9748.

Douglas County Prairie Project Meetings, 7:00pm **1st Wednesday** of each month in Lawrence. Contact Andrea Repinsky at adheron@yahoo.com or call the office 913-262-3506 for details.

Grassland Heritage Foundation

The Grassland Heritage Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)3 membership organization dedicated to prairie preservation and education.

GHF News is published quarterly by Grassland Heritage Foundation. The GHF Office is located at 5460 Buena Vista, Roeland Park, KS. (913)262-3506

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Art for the Sky

The Regal Frittillary at Central Junior High, Lawrence, Kansas, was a smashing success! Conceptual artist **Daniel Dancer** was sponsored by the Jerry Taylor and Nancy Bryant Grant to produce a 150-ft Regal on the field using composted soil, hotel towels, leaves and their own bodies as paint. Over 500 students, faculty and onlookers participated in the event. My daughters and I were fortunate to have a spot on the field, where we represented parts of spots on the butterfly. Stan Herd was on site to help out as well. Channel 6News was there, and if you missed the broadcast you can still watch the video online next to



the Lawrence Journal World's article. I highly suggest that if you want to motivate people to join GHF, show them the video and tell them how we played a vital role in supporting this creation. I've told all my friends and family about it, and several of them have joined GHF, knowing that we are actively and creatively inspiring prairie conservation in the community. When people hear about this, they are extremely willing to support it. Rex Powell and I easily raised over \$1500 from community donations to buy the shirts for the event, and if we'd had more time, no doubt we could have raised more. Daniel has also given us a copy of a 15-minute DVD that can be found online in lower resolution. He



enjoyed working with us and hopes to return to Lawrence in the next year or two.

Check out "Butterfly Dreamz" on Google Video or look for links on the GHF web site

www.grasslandheritage.org

See T-shirt donors on page 2.

Other major contributors:

The City of Lawrence Waste Reduction and Recycling

The Eldridge Hotel

Lisa Clipsham (Assistant Principal of Central Jr. High)

Frank Harwood (Principal of Central Jr. High)

Mandana Ershadi-Hurt (Science teacher at Central Jr. High)

Margaret Springe (Parent)

The Lawrence Journal-World/Channel 6News
George and Judy Paley

Angie Babbit

A special thanks to Angie Babbit and Rex Powell who spent countless hours making this project happen.

Top-photos of Central Jr High students by Angie Babbit, Bottom-aerial photo by Daniel Dancer

Prairie Happenings

I asked the board to share with me their favorite things about prairie in fall or winter. Here are their thoughts.

Autumn on the prairie is a favorite time of year for me. I love the rich hues of yellows, oranges, and reds produced by the native grasses - especially little bluestem and switchgrass. Sumac is a vibrant red. Throw in all the asters and goldenrods that bloom in fall for more color. They tend to bloom into November. One of the best pluses is that the ticks and chiggers are gone. A final bonus I've had on fall hikes in the prairie is the wildlife. I encountered a family of sedge wrens this year, and last year I saw a short-eared owl.

Jeff Hansen

In the late fall I enjoy the prairie the most during walks in the early morning. It is quiet, clear, and you can still see your breath in the air. The tall grasses gently sway in the light breeze. I enjoy the crunch of the frost as I walk across the land. If I am lucky I will see a few deer grazing in the meadow. It is during these times that I reflect and think about my family and my life.

Steve Holcomb

Reluctance by Robert Frost

Out through the fields and the woods
And over the walls I have wended;
I have climbed the hills of view
And looked at the world and descended;
I have come by the highway home,
And lo, it is ended.

The leaves are all dead on the ground,
Save those that the oak is keeping
To ravel them one by one
And let them go scraping and creeping
Out over the crusted snow,
When others are sleeping.

And the dead leaves lie huddled and still,
No longer blown hither and thither;
The last lone aster is gone;
The flowers of the witch-hazel wither;
The heart is still aching to seek,
But the feet question 'Whither?'

Ah, when to the heart of man
Was it ever less than a treason
To go with the drift of things,
To yield with a grace to reason,
And bow and accept the end
Of a love or a season?

Suggested by *Craig Freeman*

I like the changing colors, from the summer hues of green to the yellows, browns, and auburns of the fall. The myriad flower heads dispersing their seeds, hinting at the promise of another spring greening, are also wonderful to see. Today, I remember the rustling of the grasses and wildflowers in the gusts of wind while keeping warm on a prairie walk.

Frank Norman

I like the way the muted color of the bluestem stands out in the brown landscape.

I like watching finches & sparrows hang on the heads of cone-flowers and sunflowers and eat seeds.

I like frost on the fuzzy heads of golden rods

I like watching marsh hawks flying just above the old stubble in corn fields.

And, mostly, I like the fact that all the chiggers are dead.

Mike Campbell

Waiting:

A dear friend of mine has a rich life, in part, because of what she doesn't do; choices to which she often says, "No." She is like the winter prairie, when on sunny days, one sees its above ground spectrum of browns and reds; but below ground its deep roots quietly wait for spring.

Rex Powell, Burton's Hollow

I like the way we start out in our coats and gloves and as the day proceeds, we peel off layer after layer. Out in the open, the sun beats down even in November or January. I hardly ever get poison ivy in the winter and have never found a tick in January.

Sue Holcomb

Prairie In Winter

Alone I drift across
the sleeping prairie meadow.

The air bites my lungs,
but I am not hungry
like the distant buck,
Who breathes in the
same cold winter.

Solitude and
The crunch of brittle-dry forbs,
The crystalline frozen fog on seed-heads,
That is the company I keep today.

Angie Babbit

Prairie in winter, what's not to like?
Wool socks, bright stars, and a crisp moonlit
hike.

My friends might like the absence of snake,
and a rock going "voopity voopity voopity"
across the frozen lake.

Andrea Repinsky



Ratibida pinnata, grey-headed coneflower (left) is a great plant to look for in winter.

The yellow petals fall off, the leaves shrivel, and the distinctive seed head has changed from grey to brown and back to grey. It remains on these 3 to 5 feet tall plants all winter, if the birds don't eat them. To be sure you've found this species, crush the head in your fingers. You should smell an spicy aroma like anise.

Drawing: Britton, N.L., and A. Brown. 1913. An illustrated flora of the northern United States, Canada and the British Possessions. Vol. 3: 474.

We depend on our members! Thanks to those who have contributed from September 2006 through November 17, 2007. This does not include in-kind contributions, lifetime members, or the volunteers who have contributed their time. Please check with Sue for any omissions or mistakes. GHF is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and gifts are tax deductible as allowed by law. The date above your label is when you last made a donation.

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Special thanks to new members since the September NEWS: Duane & Cosette Kelly, Jane Whittlesey, Roberta Hofer, Kellie Hogan, David Hoffman, Michael Babbit


Prairie preservation donations: Cynthia Miller, E Ruth Dunning, MD, Mel & Mary Cottom, and Joyce Steiner

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Give a gift membership to Grassland Heritage Foundation, donate to the scholarship fund, or donate to the Prairie

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See inside for the activities in which GHF is involved.

Return the enclosed envelope with your request and we will send a gift notice and mention in the next newsletter. All new members will begin receiving our quarterly newsletters.



Check out the web site www.grasslandheritage.org to make your donation online.