

**EVENTS****Seed Cleaning Party for GHF's  
Leadplant Prairie Restoration**

Saturday, January 11, 2020  
1:00 –3:00 PM  
Lawrence Public Library  
707 Vermont St., Lawrence

**Seed Cleaning Party for Free Seed Library  
Hosted by Kaw Valley Native Plant Coalition**

Wednesday, January 15, 2020  
5:00 –7:00 PM  
Lawrence Public Library, Meeting Room C  
707 Vermont St., Lawrence

**Kaw Valley Eagles Day**

Saturday, Jan. 18, 2020  
9:00 AM – 4:00 PM  
Free State High School  
4700 Overland Dr., Lawrence

**Jayhawk Audubon Society Bird Seed, Feeder,  
and Book Sale**

Saturday, February 1, 2020  
10:00 AM – 1:00 PM  
Douglas Co. Senior Services  
745 Vermont St., Lawrence

**11<sup>th</sup> Annual Kaw Valley Seed Fair**

Saturday, February 8, 2020  
9:00 AM – 3:00 PM  
Douglas County Fairgrounds  
2120 Harper St., Lawrence

**Grassland Conversions, Lost Connections**

The world has been changing rapidly, but the changes are such that most of us aren't aware of what has changed or what is missing. Land use changes have been hard to track often resulting in long lags in reporting. Recently, the urgency of knowing what is happening in real time has resulted in more rapid updating providing us with a better measure of conversion rates each year. The impact of the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) on land use was a shocker. The publication of a report entitled "Plowed Under" by Faber et al. in 2012 indicated that nearly 24 million acres, an area nearly the size of Indiana, had been converted from one land use classification to another from 2008 through 2011. Subsequently, Lark et al (2015) showed that 77.7 % of that acreage involved the conversion of grassland to cropland. Another report from the Lark team in 2018 indicated that over 10 million acres of grassland had been converted to crops from 2008-2016. The Plowprint Report by the World Wildlife Fund in 2018 indicated that another 1.7 million acres were converted to cropland in 2017. The bottom line is that grasslands are being lost at an average rate of more than a million acres per year. What is less clear is how much habitat is being lost to development in grasslands. It's probable that these losses are also in the range of a million acres a year. Further, some losses may not be accounted for. In many areas in the Midwest, growers have reduced the distance from the edge of the field to the edge of the road, leaving only low diversity grass-filled margins.

The loss of grasslands signals that we are not only losing birds, but also pollinators, monarch butterflies, small mammals and the raptors and other predators that feed on them. Further, without the pollinators, we will lose both plant and insect diversity further eroding the connections that sustain these ecosystems.

To counter our destructive tendencies, there is a strong movement to restore habitats both broadly and for specific species. The challenge is massive. To keep pace with the annual rate of loss, we need to restore more than a million grassland acres a year. That requires dollars, seeds, locations, boots on the ground and more. Can we maintain or even increase that rate of restoration? Surely, we can. Will we, is the question.

—Dr. Orley "Chip" Taylor



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

**GHF News is published three times a year by Grassland Heritage Foundation.  
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### **GHF Officers**

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## **A Note from the President**

It's that time of year again, when we have to take a pause from sharing our love of prairie and figure out how to get other people to support us. Asking for money is not my strong point. But I do love the prairie and Grassland Heritage Foundation. I've been involved with this group for over 20 years. I went back to college as an adult and majored in Environmental Studies with an Ecology emphasis. When I graduated I was already in my mid-forties and needed to figure out what to do with the education I'd acquired. GHF owned the Prairie Center at that time. After attending a spring burn, my husband and I got involved with the Groundhogs and we've been active since.

We'd love it if everyone reading this would take time from their busy lives and get involved in the activities of GHF. We always need prairie maintenance volunteers, plant sale workers, helpers at community events, board and committee members, program speakers, walk leaders, and people willing to share whatever expertise they have. Even a few hours once or twice a year would help us achieve our mission of prairie education and preservation.

But, we know many of you live too far away, are too overly committed, or for other reasons just can't participate. For you, we'd love to receive a donation as



*Michigan lilies from the former GHF office garden*

a sign of your support. We realize that not very many people have thousands or even hundreds of dollars to contribute. Every little bit helps. Our newsletters cost us around \$5 per person to mail out for the year. (Thank you to those who choose to receive the digital version.) We have expenses every time we sponsor a program, for rental, speakers, handouts, refreshments, etc. We pay real estate taxes and insurance on our properties and pay for all the expenses of maintenance. We have sponsored college scholarships for prairie research the last several years thanks to generous donors. Our Director of Outreach keeps us in touch with what is going on with other organizations sharing our mission, public institutions whose actions effect prairies, and with many opportunities to educate adults and children about our native prairies. Even though this is a part-time contractor position, expenses for education and outreach are one of our major outlays.

So, we're asking you to please take the time to send what you can as a donation to GHF. You can use the form in each newsletter, the envelope enclosed in December, or donate through the GHF web site: [www.grasslandheritage.org](http://www.grasslandheritage.org). We love those of you that contribute every year, but would love to see new donors. Many of you are receiving this newsletter because you have expressed interest in our programs. Help us out by providing some financial support. All donations are considered membership in Grassland Heritage Foundation. Help us increase our membership and our effectiveness. Thank you to all of you who took time to read all this, and we hope to hear from you.

Sue Holcomb, President    sholc2003@yahoo.com    (913)856-4784

## Thanks to Frank Norman and Kim Bellemere

We're sorry to announce that our long-time outreach coordinator, Kim Bellemere, is leaving us at the end of December. We wish her the best as she begins work with Friends of the Kaw, our effective advocates for the health of the Kansas River. We know that they are lucky to have her.



*Kim accepting appreciation from Helen Alexander for support of the Free State High School prairie*

Kim joined us in the spring of 2010 as education coordinator, setting up the Rolling Prairie Learning Labs and planning Prairie Appreciation Day at Snyder Prairie. Kim has been our public face and voice, responding to inquiries and requests for prairie information and resources.

GHF has been able to reach thousands of people thanks to Kim's tireless work. She taught children about prairie ecology, grassland animals and conservation at fairs, festivals, parades, and library and zoo events in Topeka, Lawrence, the Kansas City metro, and beyond. She organized well-attended workshops for adults on prairie ecology and restoration, native plant gardening, and the effects of climate change on the prairie. She organized walks and art work-

shops such as plein air painting with Louis Copt. Winston Churchill once famously placed a job advertisement for a prairie manager using the stirring words "I have nothing to offer you but blood, toil, tears, and sweat." How remarkable it is to find someone willing to undertake such a task for even one year, let alone well over a dozen. How unfortunate when you must bid farewell to that remarkable person. It is with great reluctance, but also appreciation and understanding that GHF announces the Frank Norman is stepping down as our property manager.

One thing we'll definitely miss is the level of professionalism Frank brought to our management efforts. Before we hired Frank, we had mostly relied on a sort of 'hey gang, let's put on a show' enthusiasm that was sincere, but didn't always cut the mustard. Frank got us to plan and to keep records and to really think about what it would take to

Much of our education and outreach program's effectiveness has been due to Kim's ability to develop partners such as Jayhawk Audubon, Kansas Biological Survey, Douglas County United Way, Outside for a Better Inside, KU Center for Sustainability, City of Lawrence, neighborhood associations, Free State High School, the KU Native Medicinal Plant Research Garden, the Topeka Zoo, Prairie Band Pottawatomie and the Douglas County Conservation District for the Go Native Series of talks and tours of prairies.

Kim helped GHF support our mission by obtaining grants and donations from sources such as Cans for the Community, Bess Spiva Timmons Foundation, Kansas Volunteer Commission, The Merc's Change for our Community, and the Elizabeth Schultz Environmental Fund. She initiated our first plant sale fundraiser at Earth Day in 2013. It has since grown to a much larger event with an added fall sale at the Cottin's Hardware Farmer's Market, helped by a wonderful group of volunteers that return each year.

While working with GHF, Kim pushed the board to embrace new ideas, programs and strategies. She is incredibly active in the environmental community not only in Lawrence, but in the broader two-state area. Kim's work to establish the Kansas Women's Environmental Network and the Kaw Valley Native Plant Coalition has led to our community of participating organizations to become stronger. She is currently finishing up work on two soon-to-be-released publications.

We look forward to working with Kim as a conservation community partner, and we will endeavor to continue her programs, partnerships, and energy.

maintain the Snyder and Leadplant as prairies. We could see the difference as the tree line receded and more prairie appeared.

*Continued, p. 5*



*Frank, as willing to lead a walk and talk about plants as he was to burn, saw, and lop.*

# Grassland Heritage Foundation Annual Report

## Education Report

Events tabled – 8

Events/Presentations Hosted or Participated in – 15

Individuals Contacted through Events – 1,100-1,200

Garden Workdays Hosted – 8

Volunteers – 33

It was another busy year at GHF! We hosted three days of native plant sales, hosted our third year of native plant gardening workshops, and hosted events at the new GHF property, Leadplant Prairie.

The year kicked off with a fun and interesting presentation on native bees by Daphne Mays. The presentation, co-hosted by the Jayhawk Audubon Society, provided a great prelude to the native gardening workshops we hosted in Eudora, west Lawrence and Baldwin City.

In June and October, we went to Anderson County for walks and seed collecting at GHF's Leadplant Prairie and Paintbrush Prairie, owned by GHF board member Gary

Tegtmeier. The purchase of Leadplant has opened the door to several potential new partnerships that we can't wait to see grow. Chief among them is our work with Thrive Allen County, our co-host of the October seed collecting event at Leadplant and Paintbrush Prairies.

In the spring and summer, we joined partnering organizations in Topeka for two fun events – the Love Your Mother Earth Day outing at the Mulvane Art Museum at Washburn University and the Topeka Association of Museum Educators' Night Out at the Kansas Museum of History.

Some great new activities are on the horizon for GHF. Our most exciting - the manual on prairie restoration and native plant gardening that we've been writing with Douglas County Extension and the Kansas Rural Center will be published. A launch event planned for August 2020 will include walks, educational materials from contractors and vendors, and a presentation from a very special guest.

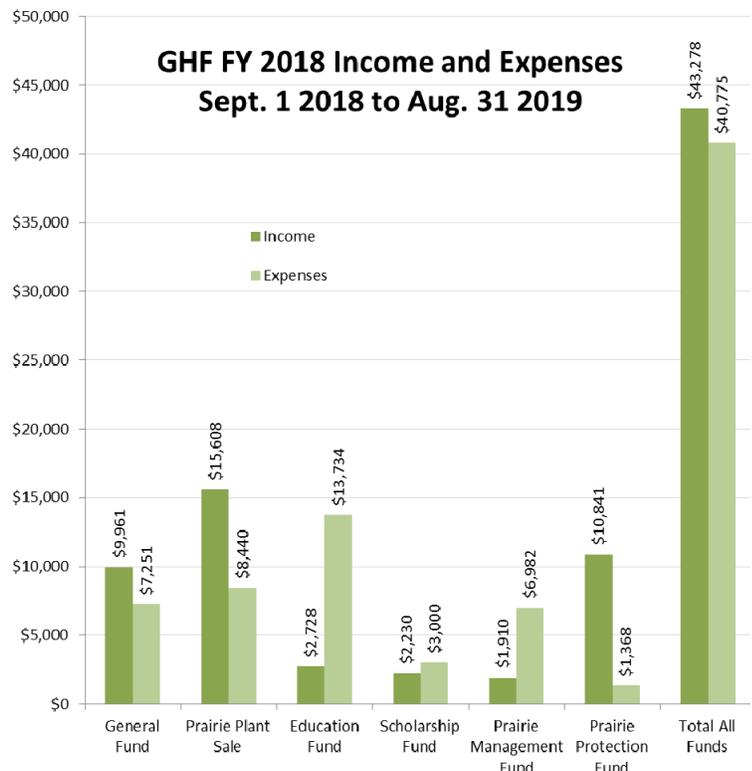
Thank you for your support in 2019! We're looking forward to another great year and can't wait for you to join us!

## Financial Report

The 2018-2019 fiscal year began with a concerted effort to replace the money in the Prairie Protection Fund that we spent to purchase Leadplant Prairie. While it was nice to receive donations from many, we still have a long way to go to be prepared for the next project. The spring 2019 plant sale was our most successful yet in terms of plants sold and money raised. Last fall's plant sale was successful and is also included in the amount shown in the chart. Our Prairie Protection Fund was also boosted by the generous donations made in memory of Rex Powell, a long-time member of the GHF Board of Governors.

The expenditures include amounts that were specifically designated to certain funds by donors. Extra money in the Education budget allowed us to sponsor native plant workshops, prairie preservation/climate change talks, and the Restoration Guide project. We awarded three \$1,000 scholarships to graduate students for research projects and we plan to continue in 2020.

Prairie Management includes our property manager expenses as well as an independent contractor who has been working at Snyder Prairie. The General Fund expenses include our property taxes, newsletters and postage, storage rental, insurance, web site expenses,



and the purchase of some new equipment for field work.

Reserve funds are currently being held in certificates of deposit.

## Management Report

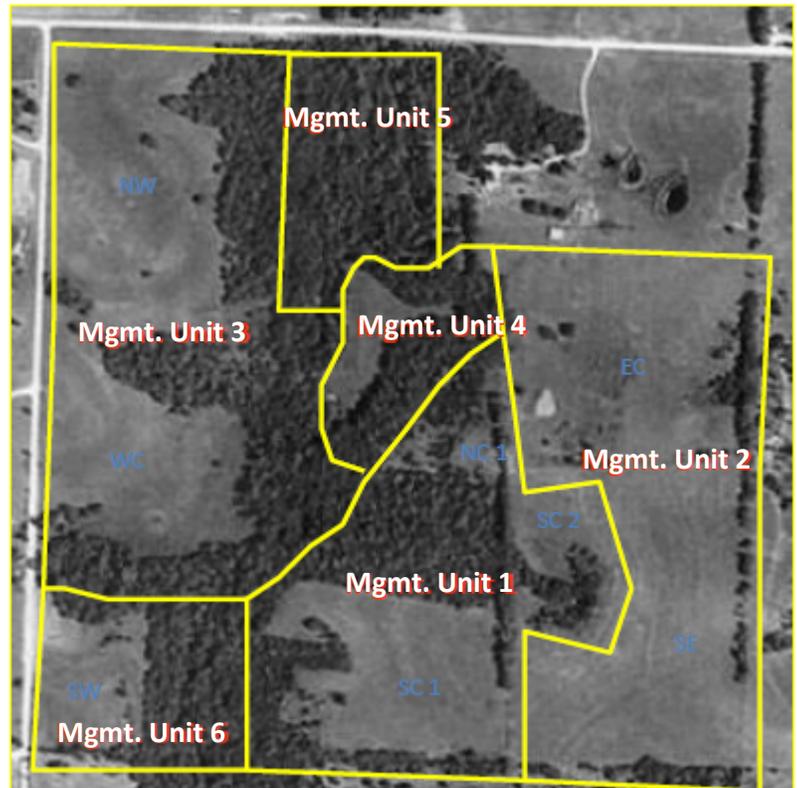
In 2019, management of woody vegetation and problematic invasive species continued at Snyder Prairie. Two sub-contractors sprayed sericea lespedeza throughout management units 1, 2, and 3. Dense woody vegetation was removed with a skid-steer-mounted brush mower in management units 3 and 1, as well as in limited areas of management unit 2. We conducted burns in several areas including units 1, 3, and 6. Areas conducive to haying were mowed and baled by a subcontractor. The Groundhogs volunteer management crew was successful at eliminating most of the remaining red cedars on the property that were not addressed by the timber stand improvement (TSI) project.

Patchy yet expansive areas of woody brush remain throughout Snyder, and the threat of sericea lespedeza coverage expansion is very real. Aggressive management activity will be needed in the coming years, and is planned to continue in 2020 with subcontractor labor.

In the future, with the departure of Frank Norman as our Groundhogs leader, the gatherings may continue in a different form or schedule. If you're on our Groundhogs email notification list, you won't miss any updates. Contact [grasslandheritage@gmail.com](mailto:grasslandheritage@gmail.com) to join the list.

Frank Norman and Courtney Masterson led a walk at the dedication of our new Leadplant Prairie on June 15. At maintenance visits, GHF board members and volunteers cut and discarded teasel heads, sprayed sericea, trimmed and removed crown vetch, and dug up Johnson grass. Wet conditions allowed us to pull teasel by hand. Also, the site was hayed in July. We met with Trent McCown, manager of the Prairie Spirit Trail, to discuss potential collaboration.

### MANAGEMENT UNITS OF SNYDER PRAIRIE



## Thanking Frank Norman

*continued from p. 3*

Beyond planning, Frank put in the hard work needed to turn words and lines on a map into reality. Winston wasn't kidding when he talked about sweat and toil, and Frank was out tromping through the tall grass in all seasons putting in the necessary hours of cutting, dragging, digging, and spraying. That much work around sharp tools and prickly trees always results in a little blood, too, but I never did see Frank cry except sometimes when the Steelers lost.

We won't just miss Frank on a professional level. There are the many personal touches he brought to the job. My personal favorite was his gleeful cackles on burn days, as he raced about setting new things on fire. It was always a fun guessing game watching him disappear into the billowing smoke and wondering where he would re-emerge.

Despite his appetite for destruction, Frank also had a gentler side which he revealed in the tender solicitude with which he treated volunteers on Groundhog days. I've always appreciated his reaction when I got a chainsaw stuck in a cedar. It was a bit embarrassing, and Frank could see I felt bad. Instead of laughing, he quickly got a second saw stuck in the very same tree, just to make me feel better.

Frank's departure is our loss, but we can certainly understand why he might want to spend less time wading through chigger-filled tall grass in July. If you see him around, maybe buy him a beer to tell him thanks for all his hard work. And also ask him about the Red Cedar Debacle because, if you haven't heard it already, it's a great story.

- Mike Campbell, GHF Secretary

# Thank You to Our Supporting 2019 Prairie Partners

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Mike & Elizabeth Stoakes  
Al & Linda Storms  
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Chip & Toni Taylor  
Gail Hill Teach



**We are sad to say goodbye to our friend and longtime GHF board member Rex Powell. We send special appreciation to all of you who sent donations in his honor and memory. These gifts will help protect the prairie he loved so deeply.**

Reid Nelson  
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Dale Nimz  
Stan & Sandy Noland  
Frank Norman  
Melissa Parsons  
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Travis Weller  
Tori Willmon  
Kathy Witherspoon  
Ron & Joyce Wolf  
Nancy & Doug Yost  
Anonymous donors

**We depend on your contributions!** Please help GHF protect prairie by sending your donation today.

The date of your last contribution is printed above your name on the mailing label.

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Your contribution will be placed in the general fund unless you designate your donation for:

\_\_\_ Rachel Snyder Memorial Scholarship Fund

\_\_\_ Prairie Protection

\_\_\_ Education Programs

\_\_\_ Prairie Management

**Membership renewals and donations  
can also be sent to GHF online at  
[www.grasslandheritage.org](http://www.grasslandheritage.org)**

**Thank you to . . .**

Roxie McGee for presenting during the September Native Plant Workshop

Courtney Masterson and Mike Campbell for helping plan and lead the Paintbrush and Leadplant seed collecting events.

Sue and Steve Holcomb, Roxie McGee, Megan Withiam, Ken Tillery, Bitsey Patton, and Mike Campbell for volunteering at the Fall Native Plant Sale.

Cottins' Hardware Farmer's Market for hosting the Fall Native Plant Sale

Thrive Allen County for co-hosting the October Seed Collecting at Paintbrush and Leadplant Prairies event.

Kevin Bachkora for accounting services

**Special Donations****Land Management Fund**

Ted Abel, Myron Leinwetter (in honor of Frank Norman), Dean &amp; Lisa Goodell

**Prairie Protection Fund**

Morgan Barrett, Pierre &amp; Marie L'Heureux (matching gift from Dominion Energy), Byril J. Sanders

**Scholarship Fund**

Elizabeth Marshall

**Gifts in Memory and Honor**

In Memory of Rex Powell: Ann Simpson, Joyce and Ron Wolf

Gary Tegtmeier in honor of Frank Norman and Kim Bellemere for their years of work with GHF

**Welcome to New Members**

Ann Davin, Jennifer Delisle, Dean &amp; Lisa Goodell, Morgan Barrett, Alex Eddins

**Don't miss an event or announcement!**

**Do we have your email address?  
Send it to : [grasslandheritage@gmail.com](mailto:grasslandheritage@gmail.com)**

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## Collecting New Seeds and New Friends on the Prairie

The people spreading out across Leadplant Prairie on October 26 may have looked a little odd as they bent low over the brown, dead stalks, carefully clipped the dry and crumbling flower heads and dropped them in paper bags. In fact, these people represented two important and exciting milestones for GHF.



The 8 seed collectors, ably lead by GHF Board Member and ecologist Courtney Masterson, were participating in the first volunteer workday at our new property, Leadplant Prairie, in Anderson County. We actually started the morning just down the road at the Paintbrush Prairie, a private grassland owned by another GHF Board Member, Gary Tegtmeier. We collected over a dozen different species between the two plots including ashy sunflower, pitcher sage, and a variety of asters. Many of the seeds will be

spread back out at Leadplant to help fill in bare spots created when we remove non-native invaders like johnson grass and crown vetch. Some of the seeds were also shared with Thrive Allen County.

Thrive Allen County is a rural health advocacy organization based in nearby Iola. Their efforts have included creation of an extensive series of bicycle trails, both on roads and at the Lehigh Portland site, a 100-acre green space located at an old cement plant. Our collaboration with Thrive Allen County gave us access to their extensive volunteer network in the area and a share of seed they had collected on their own property. In exchange, GHF shared seeds from the more diverse collection of plants on our prairies.

On Saturday, Jan. 11, we'll gather at the Lawrence Public Library from 1—3:00 PM to clean seeds for restoration at Leadplant Prairie. On Jan. 15, Kaw Valley Native Plant Coalition hosts a seed cleaning event from 5—7:00 PM at the Lawrence Public Library to stock the free seed library housed there. It's a fun way to gain familiarity with the plants and to share native plants. Contact Courtney Masterson at [for.the.prairie@gmail.com](mailto:for.the.prairie@gmail.com) for more information.