



5010 N JUGTOWN ROAD, MORRIL, ILLINOIS

THE TALL GRASS JOURNAL

Goose Lake Prairie Partners



Fall &
Winter 2015

Old Tyme Holiday Party

by Jackie Martin

The Goose Lake Prairie Partners hosted the annual party from 1 to 3 p.m. on Saturday, November 14 in the visitor's center of the Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area.

This event has been open to the public for 20 years. Before then, it was a way for the Goose Lake Prairie Partners to gather together before the Visitors Center closed for the winter months.

At the party, the center was filled with cookies, treats and hot apple cider, as well as tables for children and adults to make holiday crafts, but with one theme in mind: nature.

Goose Lake Prairie Partners member Becky Sipple and Beverly Mansfield of Goose Lake oversaw the crafts for the 2015 holiday event. They like to offer the same craft from the previous year, as well as a new one. This year's crafts, a wooden coaster and a wooden ornament with beads were inspired by a wind-damaged tree that had to be cut down. The wood was stored and aged with the bark intact for the past year in Becky's shed.

Jackie Martin, Chairperson for the event believes the event is attended by up to 75 adults and children each year because of the simplicity and old fashioned pace of the event. Everything is handmade of natural materials. The Christmas tree decorations and crafts are all made from corn husks, string, eggs and paper items similar to what people back in the 1830s would have had available.

Attendees such as George Dare and his family and Joey Stanley have been coming for several years. Their faces are a welcome sight at our event.

Susie Johnson President of the Goose Lake Prairie Partners presented the Volunteer of the Year award to Jackie Martin for her many volunteer years as the treasurer and purchasing agent for the group.

Norma Hedges, Purchasing Chairman for the partners was also given a gift for selling the most raffle tickets for the 2015 fundraiser. Thank you Norma.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and Prosperous 2016 as we close our service until April 2016.



2015 Holiday Tree

Decorated by Partners and guests, our tree is a beautiful sight in the Visitors Center.



Putting finishing touches on our tree



HOLIDAY PARTY PHOTOS

Picture Above: Guests and Partners enjoy each other's company and crafts during the event

Left: Homemade Goodies and Hot Apple Cider prepared by the Partners for the day



*Duane Snow, Site Superintendent
Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area, Heidecke Lake and Morris Wetlands*

Welcome Duane Snow!

Goose Lake Prairie, Heidecke Lake, and Morris Wetlands has a new Site Superintendent

In March, we were pleased to meet Superintendent Duane Snow. He began at Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area, Heidecke Lake State Fish and Wildlife and Morris Wetlands with fervor, hurrying to his new assignment and the Prairie Partners. We welcomed Supt. Snow to the park and to our monthly meetings.

Duane came to us from Sam Dale Lake where he was Assistant Superintendent. A graduate of Salem High School and Kaskaskia Community College, he began his career at Lincoln Trail State Park in 1993 as a Site Security Officer. In 1994 he became a Site Tech II at Steven A. Forbes State Park before his promotion to Sam Dale Lake in 2013.

Duane and his wife Donna of 32 years have one son Justin, a daughter Rachel and one granddaughter Anna Mae Belle. He has served as Cub Scout/Master for 10 years and Director for the Marion County Soil and Water Conservation District and Raccoon Water Board for 12 years. Other Director's positions include Gateway Water- 8 years and Iuka Park since 2012. Welcome Duane and family!

2015 Year in Review

by Susie Johnson, President

As we recall the events of the year, we remember that we began the year very nervous that our crafters would all arrive and that the weather would cooperate. Our fears were for naught, as we had a nice presentation of crafters for the 30th Annual Cabin Festival June 6th. We used our regular layout with all demonstrators out in the yard of the Cragg cabin along with the gift shop and our historical presentations. New to us was the American Mountain Man's hand-carved canoe and the lacemakers from the L.A.C.E Guild in Clarendon Hills, IL. The food tent, fundraiser sales, and wagon ride depot were all in and around the visitor's center along with the Quilting Bee supported by the Log Cabin Quilters of Minooka and the weaving demonstration.

In August, the 9th Annual Photo contest and exhibit featured 95 prints from 21 entrants, of which 23 prints were in the youth category. The Morris Camera Club supplied the judges and worked under the direction of President John Zappia. The winning entries were selected and the Partners placed them on display in the lobby of the visitor's center August 22nd and 23rd. The top entries are currently on display in the visitor's center and on our website.

The 18th Annual Prairie Day brought many people out to the park, including Exelon Dresden Station's own Robert Osgood who set up a booth and discussed nuclear power with the visitors. We thank Exelon for partnering with us for the event. Our major presenters were the Petersons with their **Incredible Bats** and their skunks, Baxter and Bella, who presented twice since the crowd was slow to gather at 10:00 a.m.; **Dave DiNaso's Traveling World of Reptiles** with 5 new specimens; **The Spoonman, Jim Cruise**, new to GLPP, livened up the group with his sing-along's and spoon rhythms; and then Dr. Sam Heads, also new to GLPP, who gave a presentation on amber. We learned that amber is fossilized tree resin (not sap). The nature plant rides with Judi Jacksohn, the gift shop, the food tent, then handout for the youngsters and the fundraiser were all wonderful activities.

The fundraiser drawing held at Prairie Day in the afternoon, for the walking stick, t-shirt, visor, plant book, water

lanyard and hiking bag kit was won by Leta Olewinski of Morris, IL. Norma Hedges of Morris sold the winning ticket. (See Photo) We ended the year with the traditional Old Tyme Holiday Open House November 14th.

Prairie Day 2015

The Winner of the GLPP Fundraiser was Leta Olewinski of Morris, IL. Prairie Partner Norma Hedges sold the winning ticket and the most raffle tickets for 2015. (See article on page 2)



The partners who took on the task of working the Center Desk on Saturdays this year report that they talked to many visitors and worked over 144 hours in the park. This team of 4 Partners enlarged to 7 by the end of the season. The Tallgrass Newsletter is circulated to many viewers on the website and to those visitors who sign the guestbook listing their e-mail addresses.

The Volunteer of the Year was chosen this year by Duane Snow, Site Superintendent and Susie Johnson, President. Jackie Martin



received a framed certificate and her name was added to the IDNR Volunteer of the year plaque in the Center.

The rag rugs sold in the Visitor's Center were woven by the Prairie Partners. Many hours were spent cutting jeans and fabrics into strips, and sewing them together in preparation of weaving the rugs on the center's 4-harness weaving loom.

With the updates on the website and on Facebook, friends and neighbors are reminded that Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area is ever present, ready for a hike, or a chance to enjoy a flower, a butterfly or perhaps a bird. Every trip to the park can present a new nature adventure.

All in all, 2015 was a very good year for the Prairie Partners. We worked with the new Superintendent and his staff very well to present our activities. It was fun to see our group grow with new Partners who bring many new abilities to our educational programs.



Above: President Johnson awards Volunteer of the Year to Treasurer and Purchasing Agent, Jackie Martin. She received a framed certificate and her name added to the IDNR Volunteer of the Year Plaque in the center.



Left: Norma Hedges receiving a gift certificate from President Johnson for selling the most tickets.

Left: Dr. Heads, educating our young Prairie Day guests on Amber.

September 19, 2016

9th Annual Nature Photo Show Winners

9TH ANNUAL NATURE PHOTO SHOW
WINNERS



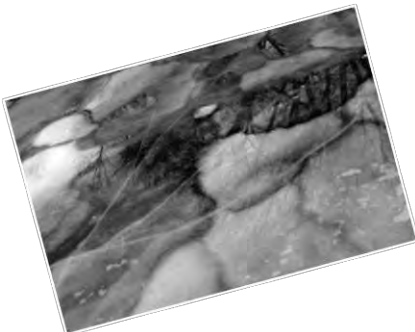
Best in Show and Best in Color - GLSPNA Burn 2015

By Rex Termain Braidwood, IL



Best of Black & White - Tools of the Past

Wendy Rossie, Morris IL



Prairie Partners Pick - There's a Boy in Our Washtub

Becky Sipple, Morris, IL

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For our 2016 10th Annual Nature Photo Show dates and Rulers visit our website at www.gooselakeprairie.org

Best of Youth - Ice Reflection

Olivia Koslo – Northbrook, IL

Viewer's Choice - LaSalle Canyon Waterfalls

Ron Hodgen, Morris, IL



The amateur photo contest is held every August at the Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area on Pine Bluff Road at Jugtown Road in east Grundy County. It is organized by the Goose Lake Prairie Partners and Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area staff, with a great deal of assistance from the Morris Camera Club. Photo entries are to depict the flora, fauna, and natural environment in the state parks in the state of Illinois. Ninety-five prints were submitted on Sunday August 16, 2015. Twenty three of these were submitted in the Youth Category. Participants were from Braidwood, Coal City, Crest Hill, Minooka, Morris, Kankakee, and Northbrook. Morris Camera Club supplied the judges for the event. The judges were Denise Rogers, Brittany Dettman, and Dr. Robert Engle. John Zappia, President of the Morris Camera Club, ran the judging. Competition was high as there were many good prints. Photos were on display in the Visitors Center at Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area off Pine Bluff Road near Morris, IL, on Saturday and Sunday August 23 - 24. This was the 9th year for the competition. We thank all the contestants for entering our contest.

WHY PRAIRIE MATTERS

by Doug Ladd

WHENEVER I AM IN A TALLGRASS PRAIRIE, I AM ASTOUNDED BY THE DIVERSITY AND COMPLEXITY SURROUNDING ME—uncounted

numbers of organisms, interacting at multiple levels, both visible and invisible to the human eye, above and below ground, shaping and in turn being shaped by the physical environment. To visit a prairie is to be immersed in the result of thousands of generations of competition and natural selection resulting in a dynamic array of diversity, which, collectively, is supremely attuned to this uniquely mid-continental landscape.



Taberville Prairie – north of Eldorado Springs, Missouri.

Here flourish long-lived, deep-rooted perennial plants annealed by the frequent Native American fires, searing summer droughts, frigid winters, episodes of intensive grazing and trampling, and rapid, recurrent freeze-thaw cycles that exemplify the Midwest. These plants in all their varied magnificence in turn support myriad animals ranging from minute prairie leafhoppers that spend their entire lives in a few square meters to wide-ranging mammals and birds that travel hundreds or even thousands of miles in a season.

Prairie matters beyond the

prairies themselves. Our grassland heritage is evident in all of **Missouri's landscapes.** Our original Ozark timberlands, also shaped by fire, climate, and water, have much of their flora directly descended from the grassland biome. Even our streams depend upon evenly apportioned groundwater discharge from healthy grassland systems. Here, an abundance of deep, fine roots and the resultant soil tilth create an insatiable sponge, absorbing and husbanding precious water. This water is released at measured rates to sustain the system. When native grass cover is lost, water runs off the land surface in a destructive torrent that rends the landscape parched shortly thereafter,

even as the runoff races southward, **carrying the region's fertility to** ultimately poison the Gulf of Mexico.

Prairie matters because here are the roots of our very identity

in this part of the world—a region where human history has been shaped by (and in turn shaped) our grassland heritage since the first people entered the landscape more than 10,000 years ago, following on the heels of the retreating ice sheets. Grasslands have disproportionately shaped our history and prosperity as a culture, becoming victims of their own success as society exploited the fertile prairie soils that were created by thousands of years of luxuriantly deep-rooted perennial vegetation. As one of the most productive and **diverse phases of the planet's** temperate grasslands was vanquished, America became the **world's breadbasket, reaping the** accumulated subterranean wealth of our grassland heritage.

This was the latest aria in the human agrarian opera that premiered some 14,000 years ago, with the opening stage being the birth of agriculture in the temperate grasslands of the Old World. Replayed on a varying theme during subsequent acts in Africa, Asia, the Americas, and elsewhere, the common chorus was the selection and improvement of grasses for food

Why Prairie Matters cont'd:

and forage crops, resulting in their dominance as direct and indirect providers for humanity's caloric needs. As a result, temperate grasslands are today the most endangered, least conserved of any terrestrial habitat on earth—and no temperate grasslands are more imperiled than our tallgrass prairies.

Prairie matters from a practical perspective.

We depend on these biological systems—prairies and associated communities—to sustain us as a people, meeting human needs through healthy productive soils, clean and abundant waters, pollinator reservoirs, flood and erosion prevention, and countless other amenities which, though largely taken for granted, can be prohibitively expensive to re-create once system integrity is lost. No organisms are better suited than our prairie vegetation for thriving in the unique conditions of this part of the world, without the constant fixes of water, fertilizer, and pesticides required by less adapted species.

Prairie matters because of its effect on us.

It defines us as a people and honors our history and heritage. Prairies give us a sense of place and identity. A crop field in Missouri looks like a crop field in Asia

or Europe. But our prairie heritage! Here is a uniquely American—indeed a uniquely Midwestern—phenomenon that has shaped and defined us as a people and a region. Our prairies are a living link to both the past and future. In this we should take pride and recognize the need and responsibility to achieve conservation through sustainable stewardship practices.

Prairie matters because of its role as part of the diversity of life on earth.

In the tallgrass prairie region of the Midwest is an ever-changing tapestry of more than a thousand species of flowering plants hued with the full array of the visible spectrum and beyond. Here is the ancient, haunting call of the prairie-chicken undulating across the landscape, to be replaced at sunset by stridulous love paeans resonating from subterranean concert halls of the prairie mole cricket. Here is the graceful chaos of the boldly patterned regal fritillary butterfly bouncing across the prairie breeze, a rapid flash of silver, black, and orange over the chromatically riotous palette of coneflowers, prairie clovers, poppy



mallows, wild indigos, and far more. All aspects of this natural diversity inspire wonder and lift the spirit in a celebration of the lavish and intricate lattice of life surrounding us.

Culturally and ecologically, this is the foundation of our

America! These prairies, the distillation of four billion years of life, are a unique entity found nowhere else in space or time. We have not treated our prairies well, even as we have reaped their benefits. To risk losing the few remaining prairie landscapes would be to permanently impoverish us as a people. Celebrate and nurture our prairies and their human and biological heritage. Steward them well even as we benefit from the richness and productive abundance bequeathed by this graminoid legacy. Our future success as a society will in part derive from the degree to which we recognize and fulfill our obligation to ensure our grandchildren and their grandchildren have the opportunity to interact with and benefit from these wondrous grasslands.

This essay originally appeared in the summer 2011 issue of The Missouri Prairie Journal, (Volume 32 No. 2, pages 4-5).

Left: A view of the prairie and the back of the Visitors Center at Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area

Goose Lake Prairie Partners, Inc

Special Events for 2016

Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area.

31st Annual Cabin Festival	June 4	10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
<p>See authentic pioneer crafts done by the Prairie Partners and Friends as they re-enact in authentic dress. Visit the Cragg Cabin history exhibit and prairie life presentations. Park your car in the visitor center parking area. Walk the trail to the Cabin or ride the wagon. Some demonstrators and vendors will have items for sale. The gift shop will be under the tent. The event is to celebrate cabin living and life in the 1830's. Location is in and around the Cragg Cabin north-north-east of the visitor's center.</p>		
10th Annual Nature Photography Contest	August 7 (Sunday)	Noon – 3:00 p.m. Accept photo entries.
	August 11 (Thursday)	6:00 p.m. Closed contest Judging in Auditorium.
	August 12 (Friday)	Partners Prepare exhibit.
	August 13-14 (Sat-Sun)	Exhibit Days during Center hours.
	August 14 (Sunday)	Exhibit Closes 3:30 p.m. -- 4:00 to 4:30 p.m. Photo pick up.
<p>The Nature Photo contest offers budding photographers a chance to display the best photographs from their many trips to state parks in Illinois this past year. While we would hope that everyone visits the GLPSNA for their entries, <u>photographs are to be taken in state parks in Illinois</u>. See our website for details. All activities are in the visitor's center.</p>		
19th Annual Prairie Day	September 17	10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
<p>The Annual Prairie Day celebrates the prairie environment at the Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area, 5010 N. Jugtown Road, Morris, IL 60450. It is in conjunction with National Prairie Week. Prairie Day began as an annual activity in 1997. It traditionally falls on the Saturday of the third full week in September. Other park amenities are open during the festival. Visit the butterfly barn, the picnic areas and play yards. Walk the trails and look into the Cragg Cabin. Profits from all events are used for future educational programs. Exelon Generation Dresden Station is sponsoring this event. Located in and around the visitor's center.</p>		
Natural Resource Tour	September 28-30 (3rd or 4th wk - date not confirmed)	9:00 a.m. - 2 p.m. (Project aimed at 5th Grade School Children.)
<p>Directed by the Grundy County Soil and Water Conservation District, this event is <u>closed to the public</u>. The Prairie Partners are responsible for the cabin history presentations to area schoolchildren. Activities happen in and around the Cragg Cabin and the visitor's center.</p>		
Annual Holiday Open House	November 12	1 p.m. - 3 p.m.
<p>We will be decorating the Christmas tree once again with homemade ornaments. If you would like to contribute to our tree, come join us. Children will make holiday ornaments in the visitor's center. Hot apple cider and homemade cookies will be served. Partners will be in 1830 period dress. Located in the visitors center.</p>		

Desk Service on Weekends Begins April 1 and Ends with Holiday Open House. ALL DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE. NO RAIN DATES WILL BE ASSIGNED.
Visit our website: <http://gooselakeprairie.org> & Like Us on [FaceBook](#).

The Tallgrass Journal
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Morris, IL 60450

Phone: 815-942-2899

We are on the Web.
<http://gooselakeprairie.org>



Are you Familiar with
IDNR Region 2:



Map courtesy of the
American Park Network

Illinois Department of
Natural Resources
Region II Office
2050 W. Stearns Rd.
Bartlett, IL 60103
847/608-3100

Do you use Google Earth?
Download [DNR Sites Overlay](#)
for Google Earth.

Take Only Memories.
Leave Only Footprints.
Thank You Very Kindly.



- | | |
|---|---|
| Buffalo Rock State Park & Effigy Tumuli | Illinois and Michigan Canal State Trail |
| Chain O'Lakes State Park | Kankakee River State Park |
| Channahon State Park | Mazonia/Braidwood State Fish & Wildlife Area |
| Des Plaines Fish & Wildlife Area | Moraine Hills State Park |
| Gebhard Woods State Park | North Point Marina |
| Goose Lake Prairie State Natura Area | Silver Springs State Fish & Wildlife Area |
| James "Pate" Philip State Park (Tri-County) | Volo Bog State Natural Area |
| Heidecke Lake State Fish & Wildlife Area | William G Stratton State Park |
| Illinois Beach State Park | William W. Powers State Recreation Area |

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In Illinois

Visit Our
State Parks.

Happy New Year!

I realize it has been a long time coming so I hope you enjoy this issue.

A lot has happened and our events were a great success. We will reopen the center in April, 2016. Until then we will be working behind the scenes planning events, making rugs and looking for new ways to educate you on our beautiful Prairie.

We hope you have a prosperous 2016.

Jackie Martin
Editor

We welcome hiking, photographers, naturalists, bird watching and pets on a leash. No motorized vehicles on park trails. Please stay on marked trails.