



Association of Friends of the Wichitas

Monthly Bulletin February, 2008



Celebrate Winter Birds!

January Notes

*A bus plus! This year's eagle orientation tour filled a bus plus a van! A great group turned out on an almost perfect (weather-wise) day to go "In Search of Eagles" and find some, we did! Eagles at a distance and eagles just overhead. Donald Smith has generously shared some photos taken on the refuge with us. Unfortunately, in the electronic translation, the great Elk shots he took did not come through but the buffalo at the top of the page nearly got on the bus with us at Grama Lake. The eagle photo on the calendar made it easy to identify the "big bird" as an immature bald eagle because of the light markings under the wings, near the body and the yellow legs just visible. Since the orientation day the eagles have continued to be cooperative with all tours seeing both species. Reports are that one Bald Eagle perched at Grama and was there when the bus returned at the end of the tour---now just how much more cooperative can they be!

* The Frank and Mae Rush Award was presented this year to both Randy Hale and Nick Plata of the Refuge's Environmental Education Department. They are deserving recipients. Thousands of people, each year, are introduced to the "Wonders of the Wichitas" through them. Anyone who talks to the "kids" after they visit will know just how much of an impression these two guys make. I would bet they are among the most quoted folks on the refuge and probably in this part of the state!

UPCOMING EVENTS

*February each year brings a "time out" for the tours and a time to re-educate ourselves with a tech day. We usually have a potluck, but February 9th we are going to make you "work for your meal" by learning about and cooking in Dutch ovens, like the pioneers! FOW will provide the makings, Katherine will provide instruction, and attendee's will do the "work" and reap the rewards! Nobody has ever gone home hungry from a Dutch Oven class. We want to keep it that way so we need a tentative count. PLEASE call the VC at (580) 429-3222 and talk to Donna, call Donna or Katherine at home, or email us through the website and let us know if you plan on attending. We would like a count no later than February 1st. We would rather have too much than too little. Also, if you have a Dutch oven you would like to try out let us know and we will plan on a way to use it. When you call

in leave the dimension (diameter) of the oven so we can plan on using it to it's full potential. We have a shelter to cook in if needed so we will cook rain or shine!

The meeting will be held in the upper EE building that day due to a class being scheduled in the lower building. We will be able to go in the main building later in the day if you have not seen it or had a chance to view the mounts. It all begins at 10 AM, don't be late!

*History Tours are upcoming. Orientation is March 1st at the VC. It has a time change. It will leave at 2 PM sharp.

*There will be a recognition banquet for all active volunteers at the VC on March 1st at 6PM. If you have participated in tours, sales or other events in 2007 you will receive an invitation to attend...keep that date open!

*Field Trip grants are available for schools. They are \$50 grants to help with transporting classes to the refuge. Applications are available on the website.

General Information

*Uniforms for drivers, tour leaders and assistants are light blue "denim" type shirts. You may purchase a FOW patch for the sleeve and after you have completed 50 hours of service the refuge will provide a volunteer patch for the other sleeve. You will need to sign a volunteer agreement with Dana Mallow at the Visitor Center.

* If you are helping in any way on the tours you will be provided a nametag. Call Paula Irwin at (580) 355-6029 and she will order one for you.

OFFICERS

President: Orville Ducheneaux
Vice President: Donna Phillips
Treasurer: Helen Riley
Secretary: Katherine Hunt
Parliamentarian: Richard Jarrell

Visitor Center: (Lori Jones): 580-429-3222

Don't forget your membership card entitles you to a discount at the Visitor Center Bookstore. Show your card and get a discount on your bookstore purchases

FOW IS ON THE WEB!

A chance to "GO GREEN" is available the bulletin and calendar are on our website. I will notify members when the bulletin and calendar are available on the web. If you are interested in taking advantage of this please send us a message through: friendsofthewichitas.org