

2018 Visions of the Flint Hills

What: Visions of the Flint Hills – art show that benefits the Friends of Konza Prairie
Where: Buttonwood Art Space – 3013 Main Street, Kansas City
When: Tuesday, October 2 – Friday, November 16
Special Event: Friday, October 5th – reception for artists, supporters, and FOKP members

The “Visions of the Flint Hills” is a unique art show at the Buttonwood Art Space in Kansas City, opening on Tues., Oct. 2, and running through Fri., Nov. 16. The Visions show features the beauty of the Flint Hills and supports the Friends of Konza Prairie at the same time.

Artworks that represent a variety of media (paintings, photographs, jewelry, sculpture, fiber and mixed media) are submitted for potential inclusion in the art show in July and August.

Those that are chosen are displayed and are available for sale to show visitors, with 50% of the sale income going to FOKP.

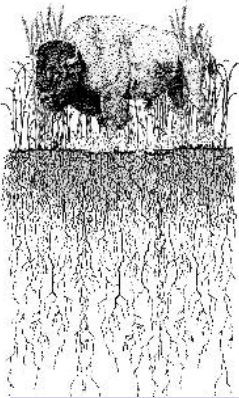
On Friday, Oct. 5, join us for a reception for artists and art enthusiasts in which FOKP officers will be present, as well as this years’ honorary chairs: Dave Kendall and Laura Mead.



Jim Hoy, honorary chair, and Karen Hummel, co-chair



Visions co-chairs Diane Barker and Karen Hummel



Research Education Conservation



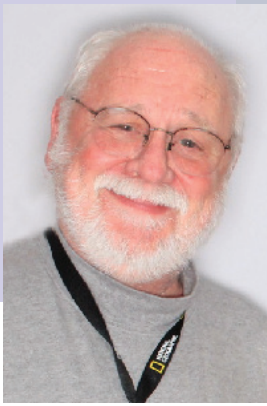
Upcoming 2018 FOKP & KEEP Events



Sept. 23- Sunday, 7:30 a.m. “Konquer the Konza” trail race 10k & 25k
For more information go to:
<http://manhattanrunningco.com/konquer-the-konza-25k-2/>

Sept. 30 - Annual Meeting and Potluck
4:00 p.m. Meeting
5:00 p.m. Potluck & Bison BBQ
6:00 p.m. Bison Loop Tour

Oct. 2- Nov. 16- Visions of the Flint Hills Buttonwood Art Space in Kansas City
Oct. 5- Reception for artists and art enthusiasts and FOKP officers



FOKP President
John Harrington

Reflections from Southwest Washington

At the end of the Spring 2018 semester, I officially retired from Kansas State University. However, I am still an active professional with ongoing grants and several graduate student advisory committees. So, I much prefer the label 'Emeritus Professor' rather than retiree. My wife, Lisa, and I took advantage of the fact that I no longer need to be in the classroom and moved to Kelso, Washington.

Having moved away, I am provided with an opportunity to reflect on what the Flint Hills and the Konza have meant to me. It was always nice to be able to reconnect with nature during drives in the Flint Hills or hikes in the tallgrass prairie

that enabled a transition away from the day-to-day rat race.

During my career at K-State, I was fortunate to bring a few famous human-environment scholars on a short tour of KPBS. My favorite stop was near the top of a hill along the Bison Loup to get that expansive view of the seemingly non-human impacted regional physiography while looking north toward the Kansas River Valley.

Studying the tallgrass prairie taught me a few things about the nature of the environment. One is about the value of subtle, but nevertheless dramatic, change. The sea of grass is not all the same and an experienced eye can enjoy pronounced topographic and seasonal differences. Knowledge about how species survive and co-exist in this stressful environment only adds to an ability to 'read' the landscape. Knowledge provided by my geomorphological and soil science colleagues assisted in my reading, and my eyes sure do like the color of little bluestem in autumn.

Learning a bit about our accumulating biogeographic and ecological knowledge of the tallgrass region got me to realize that the old concept of plant succession toward a regional climax assemblage needed to be modified for an environment that continues to be quite variable on a decadal or longer time scale (e.g., multi-year droughts or much wetter periods). I did a bit of climate classification work to document that the climate of Manhattan does not fit nicely into one category, rather, individual years can be in one of five different classes in the Köppen classification scheme, which is used to classify climates around the world.

Those natural swings of environmental forces are now being pressed by the imprint of human actions. What are all the trees doing here? Archival resources, including old landscape photography, has me understanding (to some extent) how much the look of the tree-infested prairie today differs from the past. Vistas with a nearly treeless sea of grass are much harder to find today.

It has been an honor to serve the Friends of the Konza Prairie as a member of the Board for the past two and a half years. It is really rewarding to be around people who care about Konza. Elected representatives on the FOKP Board are trying their best to manage a limited pool of resources to maximize awareness of the prairie and assist with K-12 student education regarding the nature of the prairie. Members of the FOKP should feel really good about what our friends group is able to accomplish.

John Harrington, Jr., johnharringtonjr@gmail.com, Independent Scholar



Dewey Ranch from 1938, provided by Jill Haukos



June 2016 by John Harrington



NEW DIRECTOR OF KPBS

Dr. John Blair
 University Distinguished Professor
 Edwin G. Brychta Professor of Biology,
 Associate Director for Faculty Development

More about John in our next issue of the B&B.

<https://www.k-state.edu/biology/people/tenure/blair/>

FOKP Board of Directors

FOKP Board Officers:

President - **John Harrington**
 President-elect - **Cydney Alexis**
 Treasurer - **Shelly Gunderson**
 Secretary - **Allie Lousch**
 Historian - **Joe Gelroth**

FOKP Board Members:

Chris Bailey
 Noah Busch
 Kelly Carmody
 Donna McCallum
 Cindy Quinlan
 Lucas Shivers
 Ken Stafford

If you're interested in joining the FOKP team, please contact Lucas at lshivers@hotmail.com

Judd Patterson

Judd Patterson, a premier photographer, shared his travels at the Cure for Cabin Fever in January. Judd showcased his photos and told stories of global travels where he has captured nearly 25% of all birds worldwide. "My journeys have introduced me to a diverse and complex world, and triggered a quest to understand and protect unique ecosystems and their inhabitants," Judd said.

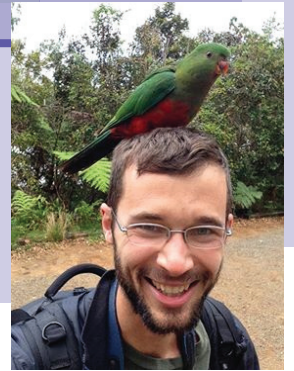
Judd currently works for the National Park Service with the South Florida/Caribbean Inventory & Monitoring Network. His photography reaches back to a Kodak 110 film camera he used in grade school. "While my equipment has evolved over time, the underlying mission has remained: to observe, preserve, and share glimpses of our spectacular natural surroundings," he said.

Growing up in Kansas, Judd learned to love wide open spaces. He attended Kansas State University, where he completed a Bachelor's in Biology and a Master's in Geography and spent a lot of time at Konza. "The often-subtle beauty and seasonal changes of the prairie provided me with endless photography opportunities and allowed me to develop a strong appreciation for nature's soul-healing grandeur," Judd said.



He said his deepest peace comes when he is immersed in nature, whether that is walking through waist-high prairie grasses or scrambling over a treeline in the mountains. "I strive to capture compelling images as a way to share nature's beauty with others," Judd said. "May there always be natural scenery and wildlife with the power to take our breath away."

He continues to pursue nature photography to promote environmental education and conservation and for the sheer joy of being outside. Judd remains highly motivated to capture images of threatened species and habitats in order to play a role in ensuring their future.



Calendar Update:

Thanks to the FOKP Calendar Committee: Jeff and Patti Watson, Joe Gelroth, Ken Stafford.

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Please join us with your membership by calling 785-587-0441 or visit <http://keep.konza.k-state.edu/fokp/index.html>

Pick up your copy at Flint Hills Discovery Center or Claflin Books and at any FOKP event.



Front cover preview: The purple cone flowers, *Echinacea angustifolia*, of June fill the prairie with color. The heads are important nectar sources for pollinators, staging areas and hiding places for predators. Long into fall and winter, the seed heads add décor among the grasses. Barb Van Slyke, photographer.



From the Stone House

Director of Education - Jill Haukos

Regal Fritillaries – Survivors

In the wild, flexibility can be a key to survival. Species that tolerate a broad range of conditions and aren't particularly picky about where their food comes from are those organisms that can withstand the vagaries that are common in today's environment. We all know and recognize these ultimate survivors: coyotes, raccoons, mallards, house sparrows, and roaches.

The opposite may be said for the pure specialists of the natural world; organisms that cannot tolerate wide changes in their habitat or their food base. These organisms are usually the first to disappear after catastrophic floods, drought, fire, or infestation. Their inflexibility is their ultimate weakness.

Then there are species that surprise us. The regal fritillary butterfly (*Speyeria idalia*) really shouldn't be around anymore. It's a tallgrass prairie specialist; which right there tells us that it should be in great peril, right? Common numbers that are thrown around indicate that between 96 to 99% of the original tallgrass prairie is gone and much of the remaining parcels are small and scattered.

ANY species that relies upon the tallgrass prairie ecosystem should, by default, be in trouble. But the regal fritillary survives and my anecdotal experiences at Konza Prairie indicate that this species of butterfly can be reliably found in the summer months. How about this one: during this summer teachers' workshop we saw between 10-15 regal fritillaries in one day!

So our tallgrass prairie specialist seems to be doing something right. Research from Kelsey McCullough that was done at Konza and at Fort Riley is providing some insight into how this particular butterfly is surviving in a diminishing tallgrass prairie. Some specifics: the regal fritillary is non-migratory and has one set of eggs each year; males emerge in late May (with peak emergence on June 19), mating occurs soon after emergence in May-June, with females postponing egg production until late August – early September.

The host plants for regal caterpillars are a variety of violets (*Viola spp.*), but eggs may be laid just about anywhere. Eggs hatch in about 25 days and the 1st instar larvae emerge and soon enter a winter diapause (dormancy or suspended development) and re-emerge in early spring. Larvae feed on the host plant for 6-7 weeks and then pupate for 2.5-4 weeks.

With regal fritillary larvae re-emerging in the spring to feed on violets, one would naturally surmise that they would be vulnerable to spring fires. Indeed, researchers for many years assumed that regal caterpillars were killed by prescribed burning and advised against it in management plans.



Photos by Jill Haukos



However, Ms. McCullough's research found living, active, foraging regal larvae present in recently burned sites. Her research found that larvae were able to detect the heat from oncoming fires and moved to sites (under rocks, for example) that provided enough cover to protect them from the relatively rapid and cool fires.

Regal fritillaries are tallgrass prairie specialists with limited flexibility, but they are managing to maintain a fragile existence, with surprising tenacity, on what little tallgrass prairie remains. To see regal fritillaries, make plans to walk the Konza Prairie nature trail in the month of June.

WHAT MOTIVATED YOU TO BECOME A KONZA PRAIRIE DOCENT?

When I graduated from K-State with a degree in wildlife biology, the Konza Prairie was only a plan; not yet a reality. That was not a huge concern of mine since I had already decided to go to grad school in a different field. Two days after I graduated, I was married and three months later we moved out of state for the next 42 years.

Seven years ago, I retired from a business career in a manufacturing industry, and we moved back to Kansas. I had not worked one day as a wildlife biologist, but I had always loved the outdoors, appreciated nature and enjoyed learning more about it.

In part, my motivation for becoming a docent was a selfish one. I wanted to personally experience the Flint Hills as much as possible and to learn all I could. I also was hoping to pass on some appreciation and passion for the outdoors to the students that visit.



Photo by Jill Haukos

WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR INTERESTS AND HOBBIES?

I started playing racquetball almost 40 years ago, and I still try to play three times a week. In the fall and winter, racquetball is often derailed by bird hunting. Hunting with our granddaughter and our lab is always fun regardless of the results. Spring and summer involves helping my wife with her butterfly gardens. We often give away black swallowtail chrysalis to friends, family and kids of all ages.

I am a board member of the Lawrence Quail and Upland Wildlife Federation and also spend time improving the wildlife habitat on property we own in Douglas and Coffey counties. We are avid KSU football and basketball fans and I am an officer in the Lawrence Area Catbackers. As a change of pace, I volunteer once a week at the Evel Knievel museum in Topeka. Between and during all of that, we love to spend time with our two grandchildren.

WHAT HAS BEEN THE BEST PART OF BEING A VOLUNTEER AT KONZA PRAIRIE?

The best part of being a volunteer on the Konza is the interaction with the people I meet and what I learn from them. This includes not only the students that come to visit, it includes other docents, KEEP staff, teachers, bus drivers, burn crew staff and volunteers.

I learn something new and exciting from someone each time I visit the Konza. Upon returning to our home near Lawrence, I immediately share what I've just learned with my wife and friends who are not always as excited as I am about this new information.

WHAT BRINGS YOU THE MOST JOY IN YOUR LIFE?

I believe you should be able to enjoy every day. For me, part of that is to expect to have fun at whatever you are doing. Being retired, living in Kansas and being a docent make it easy to fulfill that expectation.

We remember Ann Murphy



We are very sad to note the passing of Master Docent and long-time FOKP board member Ann Murphy. Ann was a member of the 2005 Docent Class- a large group (24) of folks that also included Nancy Calhoun and Dru Clarke. Ann was the Program Chair for FOKP for many years and worked to ensure that events such as the June docent potluck, September bison BBQ, and the January soup event all went off without a hitch.

Ann was an incredibly warm and kind person who enjoyed welcoming the new docents and encouraged their passion for Konza. Ann loved the hands-on activities and regularly signed up to help with the Stream Geomorphology. She also loved to lead groups on guided hikes of the Nature Trail and Butterfly Hill. She regularly attended new docent training and was there in March for the docents of the 2018 class. We will miss Ann very much.



Photos by Jill Haukos

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New and Renewing FOKP Members

Thank you all for your support of the Friends of Konza Prairie!

Members who have newly joined or renewed their membership since the last issue of the Bison & Bluestem include:

Little Bluestem

Scott Bean
Josh Brewer
Julie Daicoff
John Dietrich
Michael Donnelly and Jackie Macdonald
David and Connie Farmer
Robert Frederick Vetter
Charles Given
Daniel Gross
Colleen and Kent Hampton
Dan and Carolyn Harden
Kathleen Hoss-Cruz
Gary and Cindy Jeffrey
Marc Johnson
Susan Johnson
Tim and Sharon Keane
Frank and Joan Mosier
Martha Ann Olson
Jane Powell and Jonalu Johnstone
Paul Rosell

Donna Scheele
Malcolm Strom
Ron and Chris Wilson
Fred and Kathryn Wilson

Big Bluestem

Rosemary Burroughs
Jason and Tina Cade
Vicki Clegg and Bert Biles
Herb and Sharon Dillon
Stacy and Lowell Kohlmeier
Gary Mignano
Dennis and Monika Riordan
Barbara Lynne Roberts
Tom and Barb Van Slyke

Flint Hills

Hank and Eileen Ernst
John and Retta Kramer
Alan and Joan Smith

Prairie Chicken

Auntie Mae's Parlor
Forrest Chumley and Barbara Valent
Duane and Cindi Dunn
Mark Hulbert and Merideth Tomlinson
Janice and Leland Reitz

Bison

Karen Hummel

