



Oxley Nature Center Newsletter

Volume 155

January/February, 2005

Attention Mohawk Park Users: Mohawk Park Masterplan Needs Your Input!

If you missed the Tulsa World newspaper article on November 29, 2004, you may have missed the new proposed master plan for Mohawk Park, of which Oxley Nature Center is a part. You can review this article on the internet at www.tulsaworld.com if you are a subscriber. The first public meeting regarding the proposal was held on November 18. The second public meeting was held on December 2. The meetings were chaired by Greg Warren, Data Resource Manager for the city. There were over 100 concerned citizens in attendance at the second meeting.

The city retains ownership of the lands that make up Oxley Nature Center, including the interpretive center, North Woods, Lake Sherry, prairies, forests, and marsh. It depends on the nature center's director, Eddie Reese, and the association (MKONCA, or "the Friends of Oxley") to provide input. This relationship has existed since before 1985, and allows the association to work closely with both Eddie and Mary Ann Summerfield, Parks Director for the City of Tulsa.

As the city embarks on the planning for development of Mohawk Park, with the establishment of such activities as a BMX bike track, skate park, disk golf, 16 soccer fields, a day camp, a dog park, and new park entrances, it is important that we share our thoughts with the planning committee that will ultimately decide on how best to make use of the funding that Vision 2025 has afforded us all. MKONCA has asked to be represented on the planning committee, and Mr. Warren has welcomed us. Either Dick Sherry or I will join Eddie at the committee meetings.

What can you do to help? Keep your eyes on the paper. More public meetings, specifically designed for your comments, will be announced

as plans continue to develop. Also, please share your opinions with your city, through e-mails, phone calls, or letters. Contact information can be found on page 3. The city wants to keep the needs and desires of the entire community in mind, but without input from all of us they will find it difficult to determine what we would like. It's your park, become involved!

Roger Slakey
President, MKONCA



The Steward

*I walk through the forest in wonderment
of the beauty and life that abides
in the boughs of the trees,
and the depth of the leaves
where the shyest of wildlife hides.*

*My steps fall silent on the forest floor
as I pause to appreciate nature's store
of renewable resource so rich and pure,
which I have the privilege to use and care for.*

*For those whose steps will follow mine
on this forest path one day:
I'll manage the resource to ensure
this beautiful legacy will endure,
and someone will know I passed this way.*

Brenda Wilkins

Nature Center Happenings

Closed:

**Saturday,
January 1
and
Monday,
January 17**

Happy Holidays!



OXLEY AND REDBUD HOURS:

The gates at Oxley Nature Center are open daily, with the exception of most City holidays, from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. At Oxley, you may park outside the gates from 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 p.m. to walk the trails even when the gates are closed.

At Redbud Valley Nature Preserve, the gates are open Wednesdays through Sundays, from 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. You may not hop the fence when the Nature Preserve is closed: on Mondays or Tuesdays, on City holidays, before 8:00 a.m., or after 5:00 p.m.

PROGRAM INFORMATION:

Call: 669-6644 to register or for more information about programs. Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult, unless otherwise stated. Programs that are wheelchair accessible are designated with the ♿ symbol. Programs with insufficient registration may be cancelled 48 hours prior to program.

Visit our website at "<http://www.oxleynaturecenter.org>".



Kid's Saturday Programs

\$2 for general public, free for members, all ♿



Discovery Club (Ages 3-5 years)

Each child accompanied by an adult, please.

January 15, 10:00-11:30 "The Forest Floor"
We will explore nature on the forest floor.
Sign-up begins Sunday, January 2.

February 19, 10:00-11:30 "Is Spring Coming?"
Let's look for signs and patterns of spring.
Sign-up begins Sunday, February 6.

Adventure Club (Grades K-2nd)

Kid's only, please

January 15, 10:00-11:30 "Animal Art"
Join us as we sketch the animals using the
bird feeder. Sign-up begins Sunday, January 2.

February 19, 10:00-11:30 "Caramelita Hunt & More
Nature Games"
Come search for the Caramelita critter!
Sign-up begins Sunday, February 6.



Astronomy Programs

\$2 for general public, free to members, open to all ages




Thursday, January 13, 7:00-8:30 p.m. "Saturn's Rings" We'll pick out the winter constellations and admire Saturn in the nature center's telescope. Dress warmly and meet at the circle drive on the east side of Lake Yahola. Sunset is 5:30 p.m. and moonset is 9:09 p.m. Sign-up begins Sunday, January 2.

Tuesday, February 8, 7:30-9:00 p.m. "A Short Moonth" Pick up a "moon-watching kit" tonight, and start your own moonth of observations tomorrow. We'll hunt planets and winter constellations tonight. Meet at the circle drive on the east side of Lake Yahola. Sunset is 5:57 p.m. and moonset is 5:36 p.m. Sign-up begins January 30.

Programs and Special Events

January

1 "Saturday Morning Birding" Ages: All 
Saturday 8:00-9:45 a.m.
Free registration not required

Oxley Nature Center itself will be closed today but we will meet at the front gate at 8:00 a.m. to go bird watching. Bring binoculars if you have them.

8 "Winter Wildlife Walk"  Ages: 5 & up
Saturday 10:00-12:00 noon.
\$2 for general public free for members

Take a walk on a winter's day and view the wildlife activities. Meet at Redbud Valley. Sign-up begins December 26.

29 "January Thaw"  Ages: All 
Saturday 1:00-2:30 p.m.
\$2 for general public free for members

This is the first of a series of programs based on the essays in "A Sand County Almanac" by Aldo Leopold. Winter is not a dead season. Much can be learned from studying animal signs, such as tracks, browse evidence, urine stains, scat, and tunnels. It is recommended that participants read "January Thaw" in "A Sand County Almanac" which may be found at the library or in Oxley's Nature Store. Meet at Oxley. Sign-up begins January 16.

Contact Information for MohawkPark

Mary Ann Summerfield, Director of Parks, City of Tulsa

E-mail: msummerfield@ci.tulsa.ok.us

Phone: 596-7870

Address: 1712 Charles Page Blvd
Tulsa, OK 74127

Greg Warren, Manager, Resource and Data Management, City of Tulsa

E-mail: gwarren@ci.tulsa.ok.us

Phone: 596-7878

Address: 1710 Charles Page Blvd
Tulsa, OK 74127


Eddie Reese, Director, Oxley Nature Center

E-mail: eddiereese@ci.tulsa.ok.us


Phone: 669-6644

Address: 5701 East 36 Street North
Tulsa, Oklahoma, 74115

February

5 "Saturday Morning Birding" Ages: All 
Saturday 8:00-9:45 a.m.
Free registration not required

Meet in the Oxley parking lot at 8:00 a.m. Bring binoculars if you have them.


12 "Making Suet Feeders" Ages: All 
Saturday 2:00-3:30 p.m.
\$5 for general public \$3 for members

What birds enjoy suet in the winter months? We will create our own suet recipes and feeders for you to take home and hang. Meet at Oxley. Sign-up begins January 30.

26 "Good Oak"  Ages: All 
Saturday 1:30-3:00 p.m.
\$2 for general public free for members

"There are two spiritual dangers in not owning a farm. One is the danger of supposing that breakfast comes from the grocery, and the other that heat comes from the furnace!"—Aldo Leopold
We will take a tree cross section and relate the characteristics of annual growth rings to our environment and our history. Have you ever used a tree saw? Meet at Oxley. Sign-up begins February 13.

Explore Oxley at Night

Registration required, \$2 for general public, free for members, all ages, 

Full Moon Walks

Monday, January 24, 6:00-7:30 p.m. "Wolf Moon"
Come along for the first full moon of 2004. We may not hear wolves howling but coyote song is a possibility.

Wednesday, February 23, 6:00-7:30 p.m. "Snow Moon"
The heaviest snows often fall during this month. We may do some tracking by the light of the moon.

Cold Nights Night Walks

Who or what will be out and about on a cold winter night? Come find out!

• Wednesday, February 16, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
Families and individuals only, please.

• Friday February 18, 6:00-7:30 p.m.
For groups of six or more.

The Return of Buckskin

What is buckskin? Many people today have no idea what it really is. Is it the leather that can be bought at a leather outlet? Not hardly. As the industrial revolution penetrated America, deerskins started to be tanned by the new chrome process. The chrome-tanned skins were weaker, didn't breathe, and responded poorly to washing and perspiration. But the chrome process made use of inexpensive chemicals and was easy to produce with the new machines.

Buckskin tanning is a labor-intensive process, lending itself to home-crafting rather than production in a factory. Buckskin is durable, soft, washable, and warm. A hand-made garment for many people all over the world for millennia, it breathes and stretches with your body, cuts the wind, and won't tear on briars. It is also environmentally safe. There are no toxic chemicals involved in the process. Historically, the brains of the animal killed were used to tan the skin taken from the animal. It was discovered that the substance responsible for the amazing transformation was lecithin.

Lecithin is a fatty substance found naturally in brains, egg yolk, soy beans and other plants. Lecithin powder can be purchased at grocery and health food stores. The other ingredient needed for the project is water and sweat.



Tanning Leather the Stoneage Way

Date: Sunday, January 16

Time: 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Ages: 10 & up, 

Tuition: \$25 for members, \$30 for general public

Using modern tools and ancient materials we will make velvet soft leather. Safe and low-tech, the hard work is worth the effort to produce this highly regarded leather. Meet at Oxley.

Preregistration is required.
Fee must accompany registration.

Aromatherapy for Beginners

Date: Saturday, January 29

Time: 10:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.

Ages: 16 through adult, 

Tuition: \$35 for members,
\$40 for non-members

Lunch: Bring your own sack lunch. Herbal tea and an herbal dessert will be provided.

How important is our sense of smell? Join us to learn how aromatic plants are used to enhance well-being. Research has proven the health-giving properties of different plant essences. In addition to being uplifting or relaxing, many herbs have antiseptic, disinfectant, and/or bactericidal properties.

We will spend the day exploring our sense of smell through hands-on projects. We will make our own incense from herbs, woods, and plant resins.



Choosing your own herbs or essential oils for their uplifting or calming properties will allow you to develop a personalized bath care product. It may be a lavender sugar scrub, a sage herbal rinse for dark hair, or fragrant bath salts.



Creating effective, non-toxic household herbal cleaners will allow you to live in a more earth-friendly home. Three primary ingredients, borax, baking soda, and vinegar, provide wonderful alternatives to harsh, toxic cleansers. When you add herbs or essential oils to boost cleaning power and fragrance, you make your house-cleaning chores more pleasant and safe.




Join us for this "scentsory" experience! Meet at Oxley. Preregistration is required. Fee must accompany registration.

Winter Art Classes at Oxley With Brenda Knapp

Capturing Nature's Textures in Pen and Ink

Date: Saturday, January 8

Time: 1:00-3:30 p.m.

Ages: 14 through adult, 

Skill Level: Mid-beginner through advanced

Tuition: \$12 for members, \$15 for non-members

This class will cover the basics of stippling, cross-hatch, and eyelashing techniques used in pen and ink. Students will work from a variety of textured natural subjects using these techniques. A supply list will be provided.

Kid's Winter Watercolor Workshop

Date: Saturday, January 22

Time: 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Ages: 8 through 13, 

Tuition: \$8 for members, \$10 for non-members

Kid's will learn how to paint bare trees, frozen water, snow, and other frosty scenes using watercolors. Supplies will be provided.

Drawing Winter Birds in Graphite Pencil

Date: Saturday, February 5

Time: 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Ages: 14 through adult, 

Skill Level: All

Tuition: \$12 for members, \$15 for non-members.

Students will learn how to take advantage of the delicate nature of graphite to capture soft textures within the birds' feathers. A supply list will be provided.

Kid's Drawing Crawly Critters in Charcoal

Date: Saturday, February 19

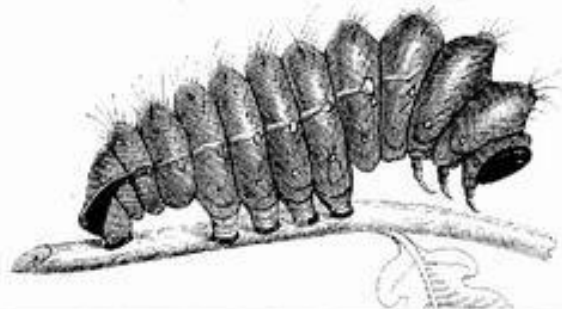
Time: 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Ages: 7 through 12, 

Tuition: \$8 for members, \$10 for non-members

Kids will have a chance to get messy drawing insects and other invertebrates at many times life-size with charcoal. Special attention will be given to accurate identifying details. Supplies will be provided.

Preregistration is required for all art classes. Fee must accompany registration. Sponsored by ONCA.



Geocaching for Beginners Workshop

Date: Saturday, January 22

Time: 8:30-11:30 a.m.

Ages: 13 through adult

Tuition: \$25 for members, \$30 for general public

Join us to learn how to play this high-tech treasure-hunting game! You may borrow one of the nature center's GPS receivers or bring your own. Dress comfortably for an indoor/outdoor class. Preregistration is required, and fee must accompany registration. Meet at Oxley.

For more information on geocaching, visit the website at www.geocaching.com.

Letterboxing for Beginners Workshop

Date: Saturday, February 5

Time: 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Ages: 5 through adult

Tuition: \$20 for members, \$25 for non-members

Letterboxing is a low-tech treasure-hunting game, whose players collect stamped designs. Participants will create a personal stamp (children can make a stamp without having to carve it). Then we'll go out on the trails hunting letterboxes. Preregistration is required, and fee must accompany registration. Meet at Oxley.

For more information on letterboxing, visit the website at www.letterboxing.org.

Habitat Management Update

by Eddie Reese

Since 1991 I have used fire as a management tool to manipulate the grasslands at the nature center. Without the availability of that tool, natural succession would have turned them into woodlands. They wouldn't be the almost mature oak forests that cover most of Mohawk Park but be crowded with pioneer succession trees like boxelder, elms, cottonwoods, and the like. It would be decades before there was any resemblance of mature forest. Biological diversity would be reduced by many species.

Young, first succession forest is beneficial to wildlife diversity, so we maintain that habitat elsewhere. In order to increase plant diversity, and therefore vertebrate and invertebrate diversity, we must maintain a constant disturbance in natural succession.

We will continue to do this using fire and haying at appropriate times of the year to promote diversity and as a deterrent to trees and exotic invasive plants such as fescue grass and honeysuckle. There is a lot of research, education, and planning that goes into a

prescribed burn and a prairie management plan.

So, I said all that to ask for volunteers to join our burn crew. There are opportunities for weather monitoring, photography, and actual front line involvement using flappers, sprayers, and rakes. We are in real need of help to conduct a safe and productive prescribed burn. This year we will burn as much as 25 acres, our largest burn to date. The amount we manage is larger now because we are managing parkland outside of the nature center that is critical habitat for species we want to protect.

If you think you would like to help out please call the nature center for more information.



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