

Tribute



Photo courtesy Joe Ford

Ann Ford
1949-2010

Ann Ford was a local member of Prairie Plains for many years, and faithful and generous SOAR supporter (along with her husband, Joe Ford). She lost her long battle with cancer on July 5th. Her bright and courageous spirit will be greatly missed by her family and many friends.

(Sarah Bailey, continued)

the summer of 2009 assisting Kansas State University post-doctoral students with research on grasshoppers at Konza Prairie.

Sarah worked for AmeriCorps from September, 2009 until this August, in projects involving the environment, photography and community service for elementary and middle school students. We are very pleased to have her on board!

Prairie Plains Link
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Prairie Plains Resource Institute is an educational land trust incorporated in 1980 as a non-profit, 501(c)(3) tax-exempt membership organization based in Aurora, Nebraska.

MISSION:
Maintaining and restoring Nebraska ecosystems - Creating opportunities for education, research, stewardship and community development.

Link Editor & Layout
Jan Whitney

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Approaching Events

Saturday, September 11th:
Bader Park Walking Tour
9:00 a.m.
Early Fall Flora



Mike Bullerman



Saturday, October 2nd

Enchanted Evening
Olson Nature Preserve
7:00 - 9:00

Featured speaker is Nancy S. Gillis from the Neihardt Center in Bancroft, presenting "The Voice of Native American Women."
For details: Paul Hosford, paul1pwh@yahoo.com.

THANK YOU to:

- Amanda DeBoer and The Color Field Ensemble for their concerts benefiting Prairie Plains (see photo);
- Scott and Cale Jones and Mert Griffith for assistance with summer labor (with extra thanks to Scott for greenhouse wall construction);
- Nelson Winkel, Nanette Whitten, Natalie Goergen, Steve Winter and Cy Bullerman for seed harvesting;
- Nancy and Randy Ruppert for hosting the last board meeting; and
- all Ann Ford memorial contributors.

(See also SOAR acknowledgements in the SOAR supplement to this *Link*.)



Soprano vocalist Amanda DeBoer (in yellow sweater) and the Color Field Ensemble presented "Plainsong Festival: A Concert of New Works Celebrating Nebraska" on July 9th in Omaha and July 10th in Brownville. Contributions benefited Prairie Plains Resource Institute. Bill and Jan Whitney (diagonally behind Amanda) from Prairie Plains attended the Omaha event.

The second annual "Plattemobile" Tour, held August 6th, highlighted Platte Valley sites near Sutherland, Hershey, North Platte and Cozad. The day was spent investigating native grassland management, river invasive species control, irrigation and power generation and the rich history of the area. The group also enjoyed sharing stories and great meals. For more information on this tour: jheaston@tnc.org



Bill Whitney



Bill Whitney

Prairie plains Link



Amy Jones

Sioux County Ranch Trek
June 11-13

It was a wet and chilly weekend for the annual gathering of members at the ranch, but no one dared complain about rain in the high plains! The land was green and the hills were rock gardens showing off an abundance of blooming native flora. There was a break in the precipitation for Saturday morning's ranch tour - an exploration of Guadalcanal Memorial Prairie - so it was a very enjoyable outing. Two dozen trekkers attended the tour; our numbers grew to around 100 for the barbeque Saturday evening, this time held at the Harrison VFW.

Scenes of the tour, top shot & down: Headwaters of the Niobrara River; Long-billed Curlew, the cliff where occasionally Golden Eagles nest; and an example of the wildflower show.

newsletter
of



Summer, 2010



Jeanne Dill



Amy Jones



Amy Jones



Ranch Trek Attraction: High Plains Homestead

Ranch Trek Saturday afternoon is a time to get out and explore the rugged landscape of northwestern Nebraska. A trio of attractions, located northwest of Crawford, is Toadstool Park, the Hudson-Meng Bison Kill site and High Plains Homestead, an old west cow town. Its Drifter Cookshack, a restored log cabin with homestead era furniture and cowboy collectibles decor, offers up some mighty serious grub - including unbelievable pies baked right there every day.

Cam & Cale Jones appreciating the pie, and a bison calf born just as the Joneses were strolling around the Homestead.



Amy Jones



Amy Jones



Amy Jones



Mike Bullerman

Greenhouse

Above left - Amy & Jan finally got fed up with Mike, Bill & Scott and threw them in jail. Actually, these hard-working dudes were building a wall for the new greenhouse on the south side of the Blue Barn at Griffith Farm. The end result is pictured above right, along with the newly poured floor.



Mike Bullerman

The construction is part of a new project involving greenhouse construction, seed building improvement and a greenhouse growing internship (note new intern on next page) and is made possible by the State Wildlife Grants Program (supported by the Nebraska Game & Parks Commission and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service), along with matching funds from the Hamilton Community Foundation. It will enable us to enhance certain restoration sites with seedlings of rarer or more difficult to establish species such as prairie violets, and boost our restoration program to a higher level and capacity.

The wall also solves the problem of the open space that had allowed birds and other critters (such as Chuck - above, right - who was re-located) easy access into the barn where seed is stored.

Farewell to Adele

Intern Adele Phillips assisted with prescribed burning, seed harvesting, fencing (see *May Link*) and Education Center campus planning from April through mid-July. Her internship was cut short, however, with notice that she was awarded a Fulbright Graduate Research Fellowship for a year of self-directed study in Japan. Last summer, Adele graduated from the MIT Graduate School of Architecture and Planning with a Master's degree in architecture. Her work in Japan will include rural policy and planning research at Keio University and hands-on work with a group of rural villages to restore their natural watershed and reintroduce diversified agriculture.

Member Spotlight: Chris Helzer

The name Chris Helzer is well known in the conservation community in Nebraska, as he is Director of the Eastern Nebraska Project Office of The Nature Conservancy, located in Aurora. It's a familiar name to subscribers of *NEBRASKAland* as well; Chris's writing and photos appear regularly in the magazine (check out this year's July & August-September issues for his "Losing Our Pollinators" and "How Spiders Hunt.") And his book, *The Ecology and Management of Prairies in the Central United States* (University of Iowa Press, 2010) has been making headlines throughout the region.



Amy Jones

Chris Helzer presenting a session on dragonflies at SOAR 2010.

Chris is also a long-standing active Prairie Plains member and regular SOAR presenter. He provided the program for our annual meeting this year (January 16th), a slide show highlighting the biodiversity of two Prairie Plains preserves, Lincoln Creek Prairie and Griffith Prairie. Considering his TNC work, writing, photography and time with family - including three children - we are especially grateful for Chris's contribution of time and talent to Prairie Plains. Enjoy this small sample of his favorites from Griffith Prairie: Ragwort, Goatsbeard and Chorus Frog.



Mike Bullerman



Mike Bullerman



Mike Bullerman

Prairie & Wetland Restoration

The summer months were filled with seed harvesting all over central and eastern Nebraska, in preparation for an anticipated full schedule of plantings next year. From left, harvesting ragwort and penstemon seeds amidst a large patch of blooming spiderwort at a site near Silver

Creek; an Upland Sandpiper observing the harvesters at the same site; and our latest acquisition, a 1983 Gleaner L3 combine. The addition of this machine (we now have a combine fleet of two) will greatly improve our grass seed harvest capacity this fall and beyond. By the end of the year, we will be processing around 200 native prairie and wetland seed species to include in several different high-diversity mixes.

Introducing Sarah Bailey

Sarah began her internship with Prairie Plains on August 17th. Her duties include all aspects of the restoration program, with emphasis on greenhouse work. She will also gain outdoor education experience through SOAR and other related Institute activities.

A 2009 UNL Biology and Environmental Studies graduate from Lincoln, Sarah brings relevant and impressive experience to her new position. She contributed to research for the Nutrient Network, a global research cooperative, while studying grasslands at UNL's Cedar Point Biology Station in 2008, and spent



Mike Bullerman

Sarah Bailey, 2010-11 Intern . . .



Mike Bullerman

. . . has her hands full!

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