

Partners in Palo Duro Canyon Foundation
Issue 43

On the Edge!



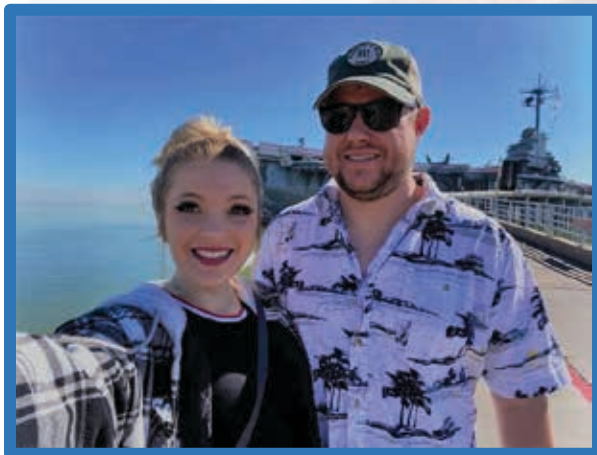
Evening Sunset
Photo by Eddie Tubbs



**Joseph Allen
Park Superintendent**

I think everyone knows how bittersweet it was to see Jeff and the Davis family leave us in January. We all miss them and are happy to see Jeff grow into the Dinosaur he always wanted to be. The last eight months have been a whirlwind of recruiting, and I am happy to say that we have selected our new Assistant Park Superintendent.

Please help me give a warm welcome to Thomas Milone and his wife Morgan and daughter Kylie. *Ja*



I grew up in Ft. Worth, Texas, where I learned my love for the outdoors—hiking, hunting, and fishing. After high school I knew that I wanted a career that would have a positive impact on these natural resources;

so I went to Texas A&M in Galveston and obtained a degree in Marine Fisheries. I started my career at Lake Somerville State Park as a CSR, and it did not take me long to fall in love with Texas State Parks. I have been their Assistant Office Manager for the last four years.

I bring a love for the outdoors of state parks and new adventures. I officially started my position at Palo Duro Canyon State Park at the beginning of August and will be starting on the 18th.

Joining me is my amazing wife, Morgan, and our daughter, Kylie. Morgan has supported me in my treks across Texas, and Kylie will soon be the terror of the streets starting on the 18th. Haha!

My hobbies have not changed much over the years. I still hike, hunt, and fish whenever possible. Just add some friends, family time, and board games, and you’ve got me.

I am excited to meet everyone and provide support however I am able. *Thomas Milone Tm*

The Palo Duro Canyon State Park team is very excited to welcome Thomas Milone, Morgan, and Kylie to Canyon. *Ja*



Sara Reed and Jenny Ni

Archaeological Researchers

Hi, all! We are Jenny Ni and Sara Reed, and we will be doing archaeological research at Palo Duro Canyon State Park and its vicinities from August to October this year. We are both very excited to be in the Park and in the general Texas Panhandle area and are grateful for the welcome we've received.

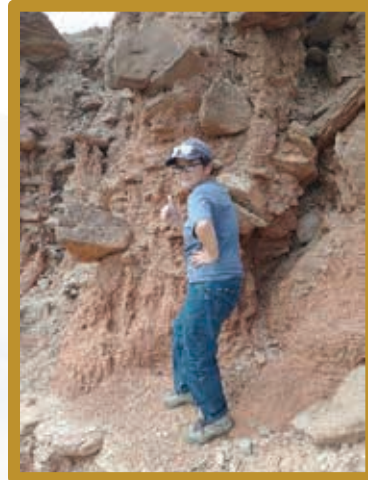
Jenny is from New Jersey and Sara is from Oregon. We are both alumna of Barnard College in New York City. Sara graduated this past May (Congratulations!), and Jenny is currently an archaeology PhD student at Columbia University who is working on her dissertation project here at Palo Duro Canyon.

We got interested in archaeology on a field project in northern New Mexico where we now have been working for four seasons. There, we have participated in rock art surveys in the Rio Grande Gorge and excavated Spanish Colonial middens, and this year we have collaborated with a local pueblo on surveying their lands. While in New Mexico, we noticed the influence of people from the Plains in the Gorge archaeologically, such as the use of Alibates flint and Plains style rock art. This emphasized to us the need to explore the connection between northern New Mexico and the Southern Plains.

Here in Palo Duro Canyon, our research focuses on the deep history of this unique landscape and its significance to the various peoples that have called it home. Jenny is interested in the archaeology of Native peoples, how their political practices can be seen through rock art, and the changes in these practices with the adoption of the horse. Sara is interested in the archaeology of landscapes and how people experience them.

In her free time, she climbs mountains in Oregon.

We are formally documenting sites for the Park service and will also be exploring new areas of interest. We would love to hear more about possible sites; so if you see us around, please chat with us. ***Jn; Sr***



Sara Reed



Jenny Ni





Lisa Jackson

The CCC and Palo Duro Canyon

When the Civilian Conservation Corps came to Palo Duro Canyon during the summer of 1933, the United States was in the midst of the Great Depression. As one of his first plans to ease the burden of this financial crisis, Franklin Delano Roosevelt created this unemployment relief program.

The U.S. Army constructed camps across the country for war veterans and juvenile males to live in for work nearby doing various tasks, such as reforestation, firefighting, and creating parks. As a benefactor of this program, Palo Duro Canyon had a total of seven different companies that worked to build Palo Duro Canyon State Park from 1933—1937. In all, the CCC employed well over one thousand men at the Canyon.

As one drives through Palo Duro Canyon for the first time, the slope and hairpin curves from the rim to the canyon floor may elicit some trepidation. Think of those early visitors during the 1930s, driving down a steep gravel road with canyon walls on one side and an unprotected sheer drop on

the other. After the men cut the road down into the canyon through rock, they eventually laid quarry stone to form the low, protective walls now along the open side of the road.

In a story told by a fellow CCC enrollee, one juvenile experienced a harrowing trip to the bottom. George Melton explained. “I know, one time we had an ol’ kid driving a dump truck and he let that thing get loose; and he goes out of gear—up on top—when he was coming down with a load, and he had a run-a-way. Luckily, he made it. I don’t know how, but he did.” (As told to Dr. Pete Peterson, former WTAMU history professor and Partners member.)

What could have easily been a disastrous story, more than likely, became one of legend. Imagine a story of how a young driver rode a runaway truck all the way down that narrow gravel road with tight, hairpin curves no protective walls—and one who lived to tell his tale! *Lj*

Editor’s note: Lisa Jackson of WTAMU is an authority on the CCC and is on the Partners board.

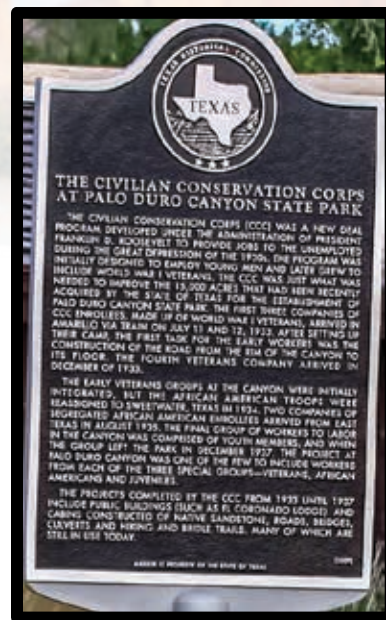




Photo Courtesy of Lisa Jackson
Photo taken by Thomas Meador 1933—1935
Men from the Veteran companies



Closer Look





Bradley Kliemann
Park Interpreter

Editor’s note: The following is a follow up to Art Schneider’s article in the June issue of *“On the Edge!”*

The Importance of Dark Skies at Palo Duro Canyon

Palo Duro Canyon State Park preserves not only beautiful views of the Canyon but also pristine naturally dark skies at night. While it may be easy to hone in on the views our state park preserves during the day, nightfall can make things a bit more tricky. However, with one look up from the ground at night, a whole new world emerges from the Canyon floor for our visitor’s eyes. These naturally dark skies seen over Palo Duro Canyon are just as important as the layers of our geology or our wildlife we see in the Park but is oftentimes overlooked when discussing the natural resources protected by the Park.

As any nighttime visitor to the Park can tell you, Palo Duro Canyon hosts night skies that are nothing to sneeze at. Views of stars, the moon constellations, and even the Milky Way are commonplace here.

On the Bortle Scale, Palo Duro Canyon is rated a 4. In other words, plenty of stars are on display here, but we do receive light pollution from the city of Amarillo to the northwest. Our sister state parks, Caprock Canyon and Copper Breaks state parks are a 2 on the scale. However, with a few changes, Palo Duro Canyon, and even towns like Canyon and Amarillo, can become dark sky havens.

One thing we can do to promote the improvement of our night skies is to educate the public about the importance of night skies. Every month, our Interpretive Services team in Austin comes up with a monthly theme for interpreters across the state. For the months of August and the start of September, we celebrate Darky Sky and Astronomy Month. Here at Palo Duro Canyon, that theme has seen me implement a dark sky touch to existing programs and add new programs to educate the public on the importance of night skies. One of my favorite programs to lead this month has been my “Night Safety Hike,” which teaches participants 7 steps to ensure a safe and enjoyable hiking experience after the sun sets on our Canyon’s fluorescent walls.

Palo Duro Canyon is a safe haven of dark skies, but visitors and even our staff often overlook this important resource. While we may not have the darkest skies in the state, we can take steps to ensure our naturally dark skies remain unpolluted. We can do this by educating the public on the importance of naturally dark skies and becoming advocates in our communities. It is of the utmost importance we preserve what darkness we do have so that we do not lose the quickly lost resource of pristine night skies. **Bk**





MOA Meeting

Representatives from Partners and Parks and Wildlife met recently to discuss the Memoriam of Agreement between the two entities. The meeting was beneficial for both, and each discussed their concerns with the other.

The meeting concluded successfully with better understanding by each concerning their roles in working together for the benefit of Palo Duro Canyon State Park.

Photo by Eddie Tubbs



Beautiful Morning



Foggy Morning

Mornings with David Townsend

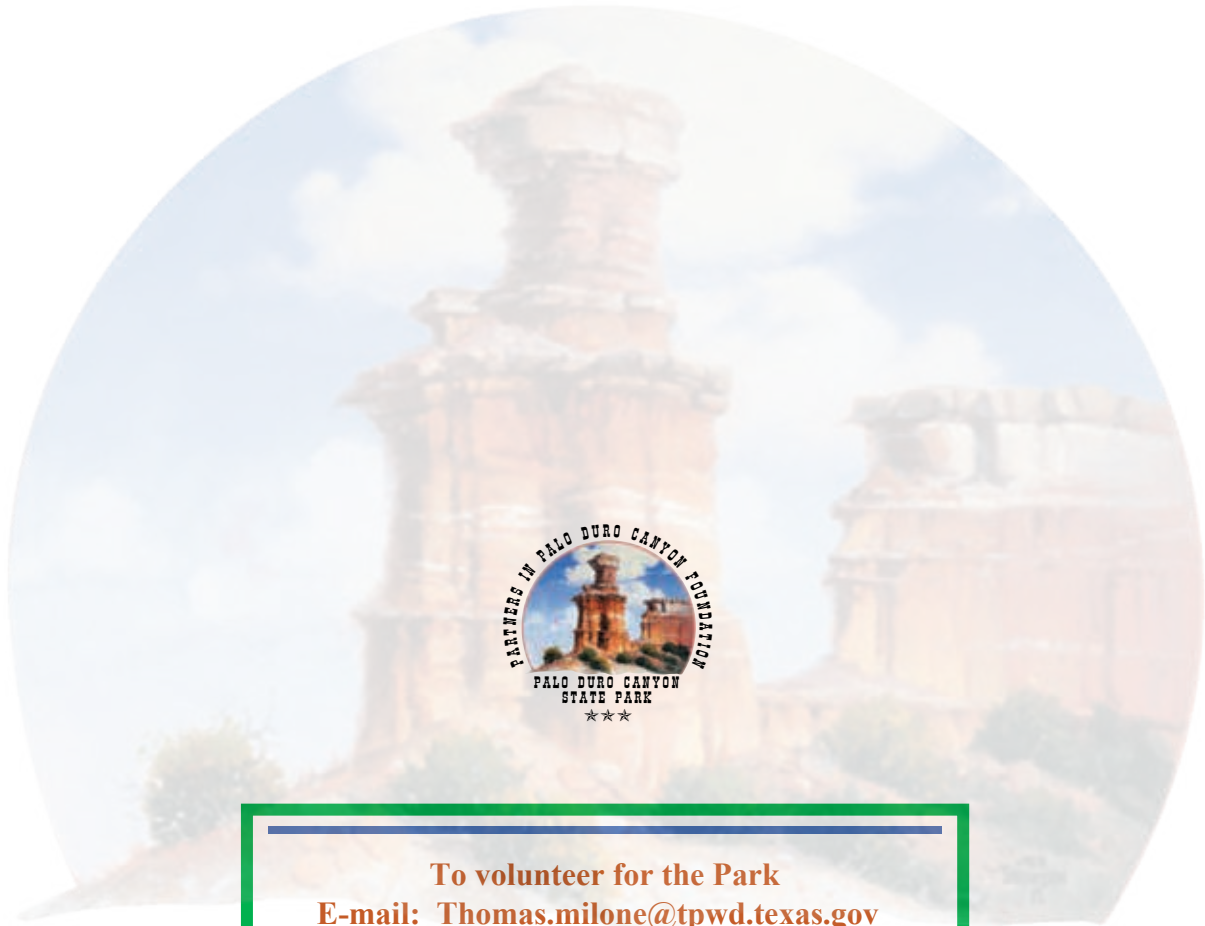


**Late Afternoon Hike with
Eddie Tubbs**



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To volunteer for the Park
E-mail: Thomas.milone@tpwd.texas.gov
GREATLY NEEDED!
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On the Edge!

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