

PARTNERS IN PALO DURO CANYON FOUNDATION



On the Edge!

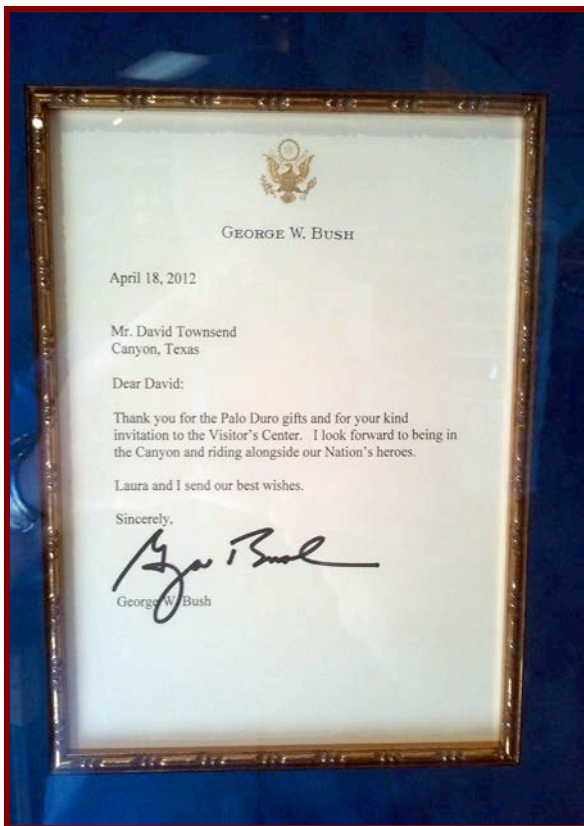


Photo by Erika McGee

Letter

The letter to the left is in response to a letter by David Townsend to former President George W. Bush prior to Mr. Bush's appearance and participation in the Bush Center Warrior 100K in Palo Duro Canyon State Park. A copy of David's letter is placed behind this frame.

(You may view the letters in the Canyon Gallery Gift Shop.)



**Letter from President Bush
To
David Townsend**

Meet David Townsend

David Townsend's great grandmother on his mother's side was born in a tepee in Indian Territory, Oklahoma, as a member of the Choctaw tribe. She became the wife of a Cherokee. His mother's great grandfather on her father's side was from Northern Georgia and was a member of the Cherokee Nation as well. As a result, David has Indian blood coursing through his veins and is recognized by the State of Georgia as Cherokee. And then he married Debbie, who is Choctaw and Sac Fox.

As you can see, David's attraction to Native American art and culture is as much inbred as acquired. If you should visit his office in the Visitor Center in Palo Duro Canyon State Park and examine the merchandise in the Canyon Gallery Gift Shop, you will see what I mean.

While in the Gift Shop, you may want to watch *White Man's Road*, a DVD about Quanah Parker which contains a Comanche dance. If you watch closely, you will see David dressed in Comanche tribal wear dancing to Comanche drums with a rattle in hand. David, as you may have guessed by now, is manager of the Canyon Gallery Gift Shop in the El Coronado Lodge Visitor Center. The Gift Shop is operated by Partners in Palo Duro Canyon Foundation, Inc.

David does not claim to be an expert Comanche dancer, but his qualifications as store manager are extraordinary, and he has demonstrated his expertise in numerous ways since taking over the store management after Maggie Johnson, who began and developed the store, retired in April 2010.

Prior to accepting the position of manager of the Gift Shop, David owned and operated the Kokopelli Indian Gallery in Canyon, Texas, for nine years, across the street from the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum. He lived his early life on the Navajo Reservation in Arizona where his father helped build the mission, Broken Arrow Chapel, in Bitahocsee. The mission replaced the Navajo Hogan in which the family worshipped before the mission was built.



David Townsend
Photo by Jim Hester

It was during these early years that David continued to develop his strong admiration for and love of Native American people and their cultures. He still has close ties to many friends on the Navajo, Hopi, and Zuni reservations and over the years has developed contacts, as well, at several New Mexico pueblos, including Acoma, Jemez, and Santa Domingo. He has been invited to sacred Navajo Yei Bi Chei ceremonies by his friend, medicine man Sherman Woody of Church Rock, New Mexico. He has been honored also to attend and to participate in the Quanah Parker sweatlodge ceremonies at Star House (the home of Comanche Chief, Quanah Parker) in Cache, Oklahoma, and is a member of the Quanah Parker Society.

To his great honor, he has recently been adopted into the Parker family by Quanah Parker's great grandchildren, Ardith Parker Leming (husband Glen), Don Parker, and Ron Parker. He joins the other adopted brothers, Paul Davis and Chuck Waltrip

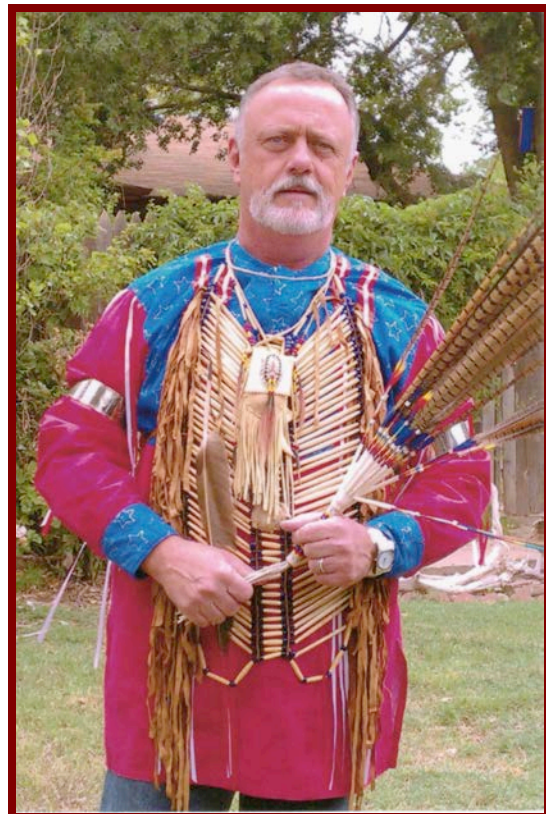
David is also an artist. He has studied at the Art Students League in New York while living in Manhattan. He has won numerous awards, including top honors at national painting exhibitions at Woodstock School of Art and other competitions in New York. Several art establishments, as well as private and corporate collections in the Southwest and along the eastern seaboard, contain David's work. Several of his works have been published in limited edition prints. *Journeys with Georgia*, a book published in 2010 by California author Nikita Bowlin, includes some of David's work. The book traces the geographical steps of artist Georgia O'Keefe. Locally, he has won a first-place ribbon as best display at the Western Collectibles Show. Space does not allow noting other awards which David has attained.

David's artistic techniques are described in detail in the Gift Shop along with several of his paintings. He has painted murals in private homes and municipal buildings in the Amarillo area and paints consignment pieces as well. He is presently working on a 4' by 6' print, a portrait of a plains Indian, to be displayed on the east wall of the Mack Dick Pavilion in Palo Duro Canyon State Park. The print will complement the print by Jack Sorenson above the fireplace on the west wall of the Pavilion.

David's knowledge of southwestern Native American culture, his contacts on the various reservations, and his profound knowledge of Indian

arts and crafts provide him and Partners unique access to the works of several artists whose jewelry, pottery, and paintings are represented in the Canyon Gallery Gift Shop. He sells cowboy stuff as well, such as hand-crafted knives, belt buckles, and old working ranch spurs and equipment. Mexican folk art, such as pottery from Mata Ortiz, a village in northern Mexico, is also offered. Mata Ortiz pottery is widely sought by collectors.

Stop by the Visitor Center, visit the Gift Shop, and meet David Townsend. He'll be delighted to welcome you. However, don't invite him to speak at your organization or fund raiser. He would do an okay job, but even artists don't enjoy everything.



David Townsend in Comanche Regalia

Photo by Debbie Townsend

Resource Management **by** **Cory Evans**

The Texas Parks & Wildlife Department mission statement begins by declaring, “To manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas. . .” This mission is a vital part of what we do at Palo Duro Canyon State Park. Sometimes in the day-to-day operation, it is easy to lose sight of the importance of focusing on the natural and cultural resources that surround us. Striking the balance between public use and resource protection has always been a challenge. Every decision that we make strives to maintain this balance. Cultural sites, such as The Battle of Palo Duro Canyon, natural features like the delicate ecosystem at South Cita Creek, or the critical habitat of the Palo Duro Mouse are just a few examples of why our mission statement is so vital. Precious gems, such as these, are abundant at Palo Duro Canyon State Park. It is our obligation and duty to ensure that the resources of our park are protected. As we move forward with plans to open up additional acreage, resource protection and management has to be at the forefront of our minds.

In 2013, a research and education facility will be opened that will greatly enhance our understanding and knowledge of the abundant resources of Palo Duro Canyon State Park. This facility will be the Gilvin Environmental Education Center located on the Canonicita property. The Gilvin home and ranch was purchased by TWPD in 2002 with the primary goal of utilizing the facilities as an environmental education and education center. TPWD purchased the ranch from the Amarillo

Area Foundation who graciously provided an endowment for the renovation and operation of the facilities. Initial renovation of the facility was begun in 2002; however, in recent months the project has been reevaluated and plans are now in place to have the facilities completely remodeled and opened for use by 2013.

I am very excited about the potential for the Gilvin Environmental Education Center and the partnerships it will create with various institutions of higher education as well as independent scientists and researchers. The primary function of the Center is to provide a research and learning environment. There is much of this park that has yet to be surveyed or investigated. Knowledge of the resources is the only way to ensure we manage them properly. Over the coming years, the research and knowledge gained will only further our understanding and commitment to our mission statement here at Palo Duro Canyon State Park.



Cory Evans, Park Superintendent



**Views of Palo Duro Canyon's Cita
Canyon from Canoncita Ranch House**

**Palo Duro Canyon
Bernice
Park**



**Outdoor Classroom
Blasingame
Interpreter**

The spring months always bring many schools into Palo Duro Canyon State Park. The schools come for two reasons: educational and recreational. From April 1 to May 25, 3,361 students visited the Canyon. Of those 3000+ students, the Park provided programs for 2,067. Of course, this number does not include the many teachers and parents who accompanied the schools. These programs could not have been accomplished without the help of volunteers from the Panhandle Texas Master Naturalist Chapter. We attempt to serve as many schools as we can with educational programs.

The Canyon is a wonderful outdoor classroom, and the more students we can accommodate, the more future conservationists we are training. Many of the students have been to the Canyon before for recreation, but until they come with a school, they do not realize what a wonderful resource we have and the part they can play in preserving it.

One mission of state parks is to provide interpretive programs for schools as well as for the public. That is my job, and the month of June is filled with opportunities to learn about the Park as well as to learn the programs being presented—from guided hikes to interactive programs on the porches of the new Mack Dick Group Pavilion. We strive to get the word out about the importance of preserving this beautiful canyon and the part each visitor can have in accomplishing that goal.

Come on out and learn why Life's Better Outside.



Interior of Mack Dick Group Pavilion

President's Perspective by Frannie Nuttall

Everyone is excited that the Mack Dick Pavilion is open for use at the park. And we are thrilled that Partners played a large roll in completion of the Pavilion.

Partners' Board appointed a committee to work on the interior of the Pavilion and utilize the money that we have been raising for the facility to furnish the interior. The committee consisted of Lea Nelson, Ann Coberley, Don Max Vars, George Hamontree, David Townsend, and me. We met several times to discuss the plans, layout furnishings, and perform other necessities. We decided to make the large room comfortable with sofas and chairs that families could enjoy during family reunions and then could be moved to the walls when there is a wedding or conference.

In addition to the layout for the large room, we planned the commercial kitchen arrangement and equipment list and tables and chairs for conferences and meals and outdoor seating.

David and I were the only two able to go to the World Trade Center during the Dallas Market in January. We were able to acquire all furnishings, including artwork from Texas artists. The kitchen equipment was bid from Amarillo companies with Golden Light winning the bid. The equipment was ordered and installed by Plains Builders, the Pavilion builder. We visited with Jack Sorenson to acquire a piece of artwork for the area above the mantle over the fireplace (see picture preceding page). Jack donated a print enlarged to six feet by four feet and framed. The picture is gorgeous. Jack wants it to hang for a couple of years. If no damage occurs to the print, he will replace it with

an original. What a wonderful gift from our dear friends Jack and Jeanne Sorenson. Jack is the official artist for Partners and donates all paintings created for Partners.



Frannie Nuttall

Many of the furnishings were in place for the opening dedication and for the Wounded Warrior weekend; the few straggling pieces arrived the last week of May.

We now have a full industrial kitchen that is the talk of the caterers that have already used it. We have seating in the entry and three seating areas with leather sofas and chairs and specialty coffee tables. We have an antler table, a copper drum table with lid, and a round longhorn table to adorn our collection. The outdoor furnishings include rockers, tables and chairs at bar height, and chairs at standard height for the outdoor cooking area. We have seating around the fireplace, as well, and patio seating to enjoy the spectacular views of the canyon.

You must check out the longhorn sofa in the entry and the longhorn painting in the men's room (sorry ladies) and the rodeo queen painting in the women's room (sorry men). The last

piece of art is a large commissioned painting from David Townsend to be placed on the back wall to complement Jack's painting over the fireplace. This painting is special and should be finished by the fall.

The last addition Partners made to the Pavilion is a state of the art audio/visual system for conferences and weddings which is easy to run and requires minimal supervision. The major portion of the system is under lock and key.

The work was a daunting task. I hope you will be proud when you see what you, as members of Partners, have added to the Mack Dick Pavilion in Palo Duro Canyon State Park. It was a wonderful opportunity to make our

Pavilion comfortable and inviting, like a home away from home.

Partners is planning a party for our membership to enjoy this facility early in September. Watch your mail in August for the invitation. I look forward to seeing each and everyone of you there.

TO VOLUNTEER FOR GIFT SHOP

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TO VOLUNTEER FOR PARK

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On The Edge!

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