

Partners in Palo Duro Canyon Foundation



On the Edge!



CROSSROADS (The Indian and the Cowman)

The geological history of Palo Duro Canyon goes back a million or so years. The human history of Palo Duro Canyon in which the names of Quanah Parker and Charles Goodnight are inextricably woven goes back approximately one hundred thirty-eight years beginning with the Battle of Palo Duro Canyon in 1874 in which Col. Ranald Mackenzie (Bad Hand MacKenzie)

overpowered Comanche, Kiowa, and Cheyenne to end the Indian wars in Texas. (However, Quanah wasn't at this battle.)

Thousands of pages have been written about Quanah and Goodnight, so what is left to write about which hasn't been written about before? The answer: Nothing! Nevertheless, perhaps a word or two can be squeezed in among the myriad of other words floating around in libraries and private collections. We will give it a try.

Within three years after the 1874 battle, Goodnight established the first ranch in the Texas Panhandle in Palo Duro Canyon. In 1878, a group of Comanche Indians led by Quanah were allowed to leave their reservation in Ft. Sill, Oklahoma, to hunt buffalo—except no buffalo were left to hunt. Travelling to their former campsite in Palo Duro Canyon, they found Goodnight and his cattle, two of which Goodnight allowed the Indians to butcher, a tradition that continued for several years. This was the beginning of the friendship between the Comanche and the former Texas Ranger.



A few hundred yards from the entrance to Palo Duro Canyon State Park on the south side of the road is a twenty-three foot leaning arrow, one of many which mark the trails which Quanah followed when he was leading his tribe across the plains. The arrow was created by artist and sculptor Charles Smith. The arrow is on private property but follows approximately the trail

as defined by The Texas Historical Commission.

The arrow, in addition to being a symbol of the trails followed by Quanah, may represent as well the path which led him from the Indians' Road to the White Man's Road, appropriately this arrow marking the place near where the roads came together.

A video available in the Canyon Gallery Gift Shop/Visitor's Center entitled "White Man's Road" is partially narrated by Quanah's grandson, Baldwin Parker II, and Quanah's great grandchildren, Ardith Parker Leming, Don Parker, and Ron Parker. The video portrays, at times, Star House, located in Cache Oklahoma, the home of Quanah. Cache is on the Comanche Reservation near Ft. Sill where Quanah, his mother, Cynthia Ann, and baby sister Prairie Flower are buried. Several books narrating the life of Cynthia Ann Parker are available in the Gift Shop.



In a letter from Quanah to Goodnight, written in January 1911, Quanah tells Goodnight that he has moved his sister's remains to the Ft. Sill Cemetery to be buried next to his mother. He also asks Goodnight to help him with settling his mother's property. He ends the letter by saying, "I am going to bring some old Indians to your place and see your buffalo and make old Indians glad." By this time, at the insistence of his wife, Mary Ann,

Goodnight had a small herd of buffalo on his ranch, protecting them, realizing that the buffalo were in danger of becoming extinct. This herd is now at Caprock Canyons State Park. (The letter can be seen in the Saints Roost Museum in Clarendon, Texas.)

The Victorian house in which Goodnight and Mary Ann last lived has recently been restored and is a dramatic contrast to the first place in which Goodnight lived when he moved his cattle to Palo Duro Canyon from Colorado. (The Victorian house was restored and is maintained by the Armstrong County Museum located in Claude, Texas.)



A replica of the Goodnight dugout, which has recently been rebuilt, can be seen in the State Park.



The graves of Goodnight and Mary Ann are in the Goodnight Cemetery, east of the town limits. A sign points to the cemetery.



Definitive accounts of both men can be purchased in the Gift Shop: J. Evetts Haley's biography, *Charles Goodnight*, and S.C. Gwynne's, *Empire of the Summer Moon*, provide in-depth studies of these two larger-than-life men, lives as large as the State of Texas. And, you can find as well the skulls of a buffalo and a longhorn, appropriate icons of the Indian and the cowman and the history of Palo Duro Canyon.



TO VOLUNTEER FOR GIFT SHOP

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FOR PARK

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Cory Evans, Park Superintendent

The “Special Event” Season

We have just wrapped up our unofficial “special event” season here in Palo Duro Canyon State Park. October seems to be the time of year that brings out the crowds for a variety of outdoor recreational activities. As we know, the summer months are the most active here at the Park, with families out of school, *TEXAS* in full swing, and scores of summer vacationers from around the country enjoying the Park. September seems to be a month in which everyone is back to their school routine and we see visitation to the park slow for a bit.

When October rolls around, visitors for a variety of reasons, stream into the Park once again. It seems that with average high temperatures in the ‘70’s, Cottonwoods turning gold, and a slower pace than during the summer, that the Park beckons to be visited. This October we had over 18,000 guests come through the gates. Some of these are “snow birds” or “winter Texans” making their way south for the winter. Many are local folks just enjoying the beauty that is in their backyard, but a large number are visitors seeking some of the more non-traditional ways to enjoy the outdoors.

October in Palo Duro Canyon State Park is a time when guests can enjoy everything from a challenging 50 mile trail race, to viewing classic cars, to enjoying a laid back morning watching hot air balloons rise from the Canyon floor to drift lazily over the rim. October is “special event”

time in the Canyon. It is always good to see visitors experiencing the Canyon for the first time, and these events help draw in those visitors who might not otherwise make the trip to the Park.



On that note, Texas State parks will soon begin working on two initiatives to encourage some additional, non-traditional ways visitors can experience the parks. The Texas State Park Explorer Program and Arts In Our Parks will be two programs in which the parks will serve as a venue for visitors to experience their interests in a unique setting. The Texas State Park Explorer Program will focus on engaging family activities to encourage learning about park resources through attendance in interpretive programs and site visits. Arts In Our Parks will use parks as a backdrop for connecting people to the parks via a variety of artistic programs ranging from photography to creating writing. Please stay tuned as these programs are developed and launched in the coming months.



I would like to take the opportunity to wish everyone a safe and happy Holiday Season. As we enter 2013, I look forward to seeing everyone out at the Park enjoying some of these events.





Bernice Blasingame
Park Interpreter

When asked by the public what I do, I reply, “I am the Park Interpreter.” The next question is, “What language do you interpret?” Most of the time I say, “Texan!” and that usually gets a laugh, but what exactly is a park interpreter?

There are many words to describe an interpreter: “preservationist,” “guide,” “memory maker,” “teacher,” “facilitator,” “park ranger,” “spokesperson,” “inspirer,” “helper,” “naturalist,” “story teller,” “historian,” “docent,” “bathroom locator,” and “revealer.” When I look at this list, I ask myself, “Am I really any or all of these people? Do my stories reveal the history of the Canyon? What about my guided hikes? Do they show my passion for the flora/fauna of the Canyon? When conducting programs for all the school trips that come, am I really a teacher and spokesperson?”

It is my mission to create memories for my audience that will inspire them to return and even bring someone else due to the positive experience they had. Have they had an “Ah ha” moment? If I do what I have been trained to do as a Certified Interpretive Guide, then, “yes,” all of the above has occurred. The following is a quote by William Carr: “Not having an interpreter in a park is like inviting a guest to your house, opening the door and disappearing.” I hope no one can say that about Palo Duro Canyon State Park.



Frannie Nuttall, President



The President's Perspective

We have enjoyed a tremendous year, and I am proud to report the Park is buzzing with activity and projects that have been on hold for so long. The primary function of Partners in Palo Duro Canyon Foundation, Inc., as you know, is to provide the Park with any necessities that are unable to be met through the state budget. The proceeds from the sales at the Canyon Gallery Gift Shop allow Partners to have the funds available to meet those needs. For the year 2012, Partners was able to purchase the following items for the Park:

Six hundred feet of rappelling rope for the Canyon Volunteer Fire Department which assists in rescue operations in the Park.

Half of a temporary exhibit at the Panhandle Plains Historical Museum commemorating the role of the CCC in developing Palo Duro Canyon State Park in the 1930s.

Funds for the development of an Equestrian Center, a plan of the Park's for many years. Partners has committed \$7,000 for the project, which includes pipe for the pens. Glen Campbell has been working on the project for a number of years and serves as liaison between Partners and the Park.

Installation of a bench as a memorial to Dr. Fred W. Rathjen, one of our inaugural members, historian, past president, educator, and avid volunteer. Cindy Meador chaired the project and has done a tremendous job.

Funds for the construction and installation for a second building at Headquarters to assist in checking people into the Park and moving them through the gates quickly.

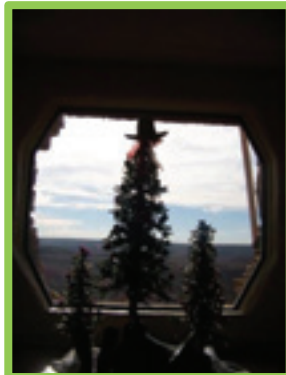
A four-wheel-drive Polaris rescue vehicle with seating for six and seat restraints for safety.

The financial support provided to the Park through the purchase of these items is \$30,000.

In addition to the above acquisitions were the purchase of interior furnishings, an entire industrial kitchen, and a state-of-the-art audio/visual system for the Mack Dick Pavilion, the money coming from an endowment fund started by Partners a number of years ago. The total gift from Partners for the Pavilion was approximately \$175,000.

We have truly been blessed with fabulous volunteers who work tirelessly to make it possible for Partners to give to Palo Duro Canyon State Park hours of service by the Board, years of fundraising parties, and volunteers working untiringly in the Visitors' Center, on the trails, and behind the scenes to make your organization the envy of every state park manager. Thank you for your time, your support, and your effort.

Palo Duro Canyon State Park is the jewel of the Texas state park system.



Partners Party, November 2012
with Young Country Band
Mack Dick Pavilion



Photos and Collage
By
Jim Hester



A Cowboy's Christmas by Jack Sorenson,
Partner of Partners

Merry
Christmas
And
Happy
New
Year

Partners welcomes Daniel Norman to the Partners Board of Advisors

On the Edge

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Editor; Carl Fowler***

