

Partners in Palo Duro Canyon Foundation

On the Edge!



Richie Owaleon

Zuni Eagle Dancer

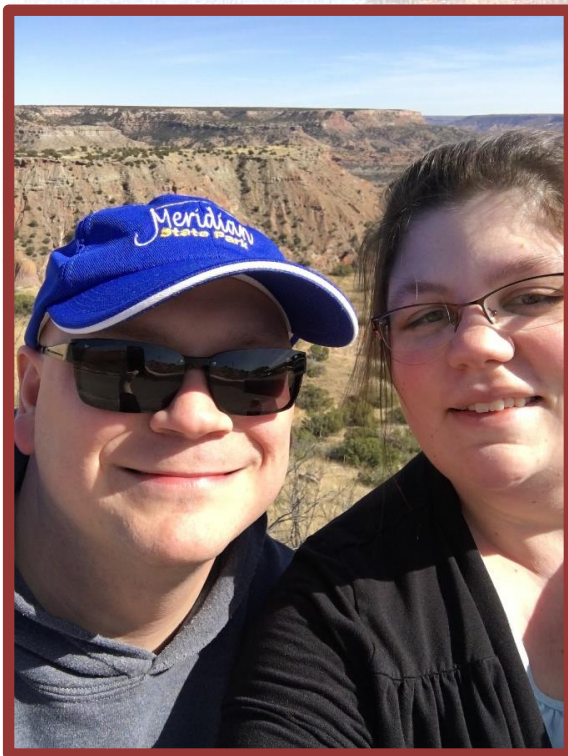
Photo by David Townsend

Owaleons

Once again, the Owaleon family from Zuni Pueblo in New Mexico visited Palo Duro Canyon State Park in June 2018. Gilbert and Lucy Owaleon, with son Richie and grandchildren, performed Zuni ritual dances at the Visitor Center. And, once again, visitors to the Park enjoyed the performances that many would not often have an opportunity to witness and participate in.

We hope this performance becomes an annual tradition, a unique tradition, that few state parks have the opportunity to enjoy.

Cf



**New Park Superintendent
Joseph Allen and Hannah**

A Little about the A-Team

by
Joseph Allen

First off, I'd like to say how excited my family and I are to be here with everyone at Palo Duro Canyon State Park. The road here started a long time ago.

I was born in Tennessee but graduated high school in Peru, Indiana, because my dad was in the Air Force. After graduation, I completed a degree in wildlife biology at Ball State University. While there, I worked a bit at Mississinewa Lake as a seasonal maintenance ranger. Next, I moved all the way to Fargo, North Dakota, where I completed a master's degree in Environmental and Conservation Science. I also spent some time teaching, first as a National Science Foundation Fellow and then at a Tribal Community College in Fort Totten, North Dakota. Soon after, I was hired as an Assistant Park Manager and Park Police Officer for North Dakota Park and Recreation.

While working as a park ranger in North Dakota, I met my wife, Hannah, and we were soon married. Daniel came first and was a regular junior ranger around the park. Murdock came next. He can't yet fly helicopters, but his life story is full of adventure already. And last came Henry, who is about as close to baby jack-jack from The Incredibles as a kid can get—I think. It was after Henry came along that Hannah and I decided it was time for a change. We wanted to bring the kids back to the South.

We were so excited when we got the call that I had been chosen to manage Meridian State Park in Meridian, Texas, in the fall of 2016. Hannah and I never imagined what a wonderful park family we

were joining there. In just a short time, Meridian won Park of the Year, 2017, for the Mighty Region 5. And shortly thereafter, I was selected to join the amazing team here at Palo Duro Canyon. Thank you all for the warm welcome. I look forward to working with everyone to make PDCSP the next Park of the Year. ***Ja***



Daniel, Murdock, and Henry Allen



Jeff Davis
Park Interpreter

Kathy Church **by** **Jeff Davis**

For Kathy Church, Friday, July 13, 2018, started like many other days before. She and her dog, Delilah, went for a hike at Palo Duro Canyon State Park. Kathy spends a lot of time at the Park, since she moved to Canyon in February of this year. In fact, Palo Duro Canyon is on the short list of reasons why Kathy chose to make Canyon her home. Since then, many hours have been spent in the Canyon hiking and picking up litter. She is what we'd call a regular, and we love having her here to help.

Although Kathy arrived at the Park that day in her stick-shift pickup—skillfully operating the clutch with her left foot as usual, she would leave the Park in the back of an ambulance, wondering if she would be able to drive her pickup again.

After hiking the Rock Garden Trail from the Canyon floor to rim and hiking another mile or so on the rim, she started back down the trail. Suddenly, Delilah spotted a bright turquoise Collared Lizard darting across the trail. As dogs do, the eighty-pound Plott Hound took off after the lizard and took Kathy off a small cliff with her.

Of course, Kathy wasn't thrilled at the severely broken leg she found herself with. Her knee was completely destroyed, and both lower leg bones in her left leg were shattered. In fact, she said, "This was the first bone I broke that I could hear."

But Kathy is very thankful for many things, including the fact that Delilah wasn't hurt. Kathy was only one-tenth of a mile from the top of the trail which allowed her rescue to happen in only twenty-five minutes,

and she didn't fall into anything sharp or venomous, such as a cactus or rattlesnake. However, that was as far as luck would carry her.

Seneca said that "Luck is what happens when preparation meets opportunity." In Kathy's case, the "good luck" of surviving her mishap in Palo Duro Canyon was due largely to her own preparation. With a bad injury, succumbing to heat stroke is a very real possibility. But Kathy was ready. Her thirty-year law enforcement career, including many years doing search-and-rescue operations in California, had prepared her for situations such as this.

She was wearing sturdy hiking boots. Her shirt and pants were long, and her shirt was brightly colored for visibility. In her pack were first-aid supplies, ample amounts of water, and her emergency whistle. That whistle may have saved her life that day. She used it to make the international emergency sign for distress (three evenly spaced blasts) which is how she was found by another hiker.

Many hikers explore the Canyon's trails in flip-flops, with little water and with nothing but the contents of their pockets. If such had been Kathy, the outcome might have been very different.

We can't control much of what happens to us. Kathy couldn't control what happened to her on the trail that day. But we can control how we prepare for a hike and how we react to a bad situation.

Be like Kathy. BE PREPARED! *Jd*



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Contact David Townsend

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Honor your family and friends with a tribute gift, a memorial, or a gift in your will or living trust as a simple and rewarding way to support Partners in Palo Duro Canyon Foundation's purpose to maintain and improve Palo Duro Canyon State Park.

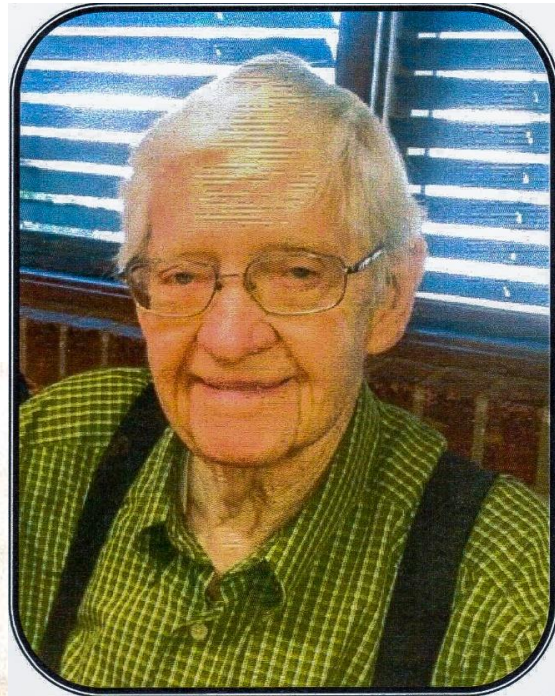
Our mission is to ensure the future of Palo Duro Canyon State Park by preserving and protecting its economic, aesthetic, and environmental worth for future generations; to enhance the quality of educational, interpretive, and recreational opportunities of the Park, to recruit and organize volunteers for the perpetuation of Palo Duro Canyon State Park, and to solicit, receive, and administer gifts, memorials and endowments for the benefit of Palo Duro Canyon State Park.

For further information, please contact Frannie Nuttall: E-mail: frannien3@gmail.com; Phone: (806) 433-5533.



Estate Bequeathed to Partners

Recently, a sizable portion of the estate of a local resident was bequeathed to Partners in Palo Duro Canyon Foundation. The funds will be used, as are all funds raised by Partners, to assist the State Park with non-budgeted needs. Please note the "Planned Gift" column above. *Cf*



Tommy Nisbet

Tommy Nisbet, longtime member of Partners and member of Partners' board, stepped "gently into that good night" on August 2, 2018, to join his wife, Mary Lou, who preceded him a year earlier.

Tommy was secretary and volunteer coordinator for Partners for many years. He has been missed by all board members since medical necessity required that he retire from the board a few years ago.

"Rest high on that mountain," Tommy. Regards to Mary Lou.



Gallery Visitors
by
Carl Fowler

It was a normal day. No! No day is a “normal day” in the Visitor Center/Canyon Gallery.

The middle-aged couple entered the Visitor Center one day in July. After looking at the books, the jewelry, the pottery, the books again, they looked toward Mary, my wife, who happened to be volunteering with me that day.

“Do you have anything on “Texas?” asked the woman. A strange request, since nearly all books in the Gallery are about Texas. Somewhat perplexed, Mary pointed to the book shelves. “There!” she said.

“No, I mean, “Texas,” the play.

“I don’t think we have a book only on “Texas,” replied Mary. “Where are you from?” she asked, wanting to continue the conversation.

“Oh, we’re from the Dallas/Ft. Worth area, but we went to West Texas State and danced in “Texas.” “I teach dance at Texas Wesleyan University, but I was at TCU for a while. This is my husband. We both danced in “Texas” and wound up married.

My head spinning from all the Texases (I’m not sure that’s a word), I asked, “Can you still remember the dance numbers?”

“Sure,” she said. “Come!” She motioned to her husband. He moved beside her. They both threw out their arms, took a stance, and burst into one of the singing/dance numbers from the play. I’m certain that if there had been enough room, they could have actually performed the dance for us.

Yes, the other Gallery visitors stopped to look and listen; and then they clapped along with Mary and me when the duo reprised a number from the 1974 version of “Texas.”

I have to hand it to Mary. She is very good at getting people to talk to her. It is likely the couple were hoping to find a book containing their halcyon days at the University (now West Texas A&M), possibly with pictures of themselves performing. Whatever the reason, however, Mary and I were glad they came— as would you if you were a volunteer.

The motto of Texas Parks and Wildlife is “Life is better outside.” It’s also quite good inside when working as a volunteer in the Visitor Center/Canyon Gallery.

We need volunteers. Not only is the work rewarding for a variety of reasons, but it is entertaining as well— although not often so theatrical as a personal performance. Still, you never know! You also get a sizeable discount on the merchandise. Think about it. *Cf*



Storm over Sorenson's Point



Sunset over Sorenson's Point

**Images Courtesy of Jim Livingston
Jim Livingston Gallery**



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