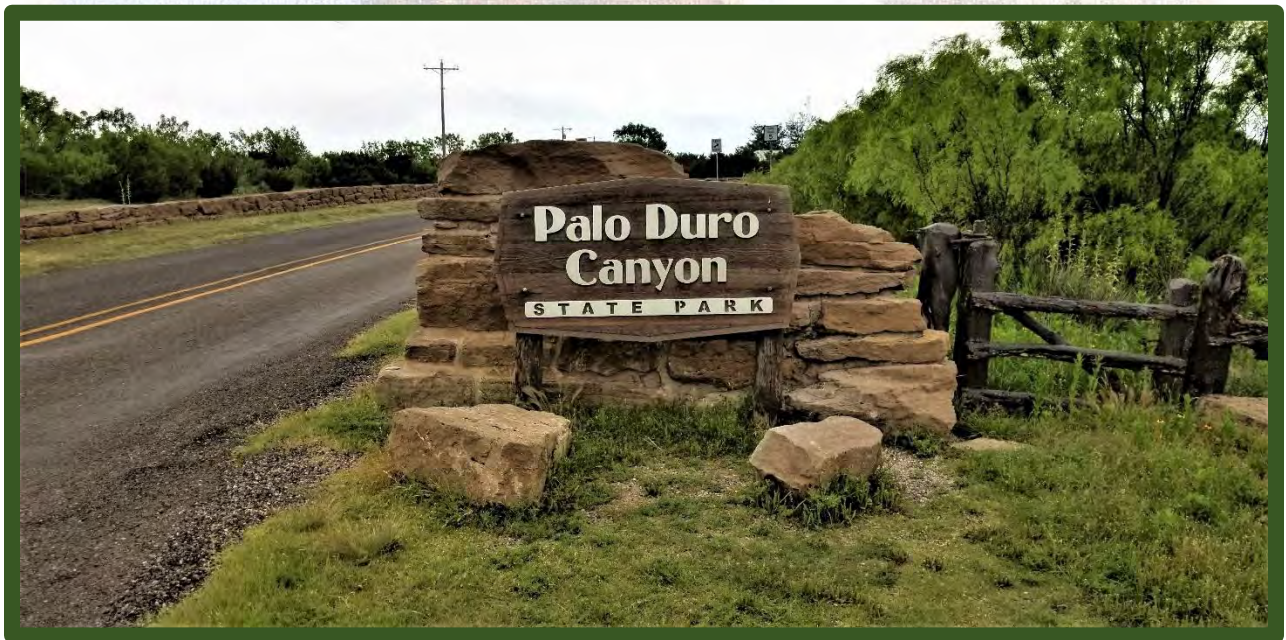


Partners in Palo Duro Canyon Foundation

On the Edge!



Welcome to the Grand Canyon of Texas

Photo by Editor

Canyon Gallery and the Visitor Center

By Carl Fowler

"Merci!" I exclaimed, thereby exhausting my entire knowledge of the French language. The young woman turned at the exit to the Canyon Gallery in the Visitor Center in Palo Duro Canyon State Park and curtsied, *"Merci beaucoup!"* she replied. And we both indulged in personal foreign relations by thanking each other.

Working as a volunteer in the Canyon Gallery/Visitor Center, I have many opportunities to indulge in foreign relations at a personal level. Many visitors from Europe, especially Germany, and other parts of the world, make Palo Duro Canyon State Park a part of their itinerary as they travel across America following the "Mother Road," Route 66, now replaced in most places by I-40. Even though I-40 does not follow the old Route 66 from Chicago to Santa Monica, California, as it once did, it traverses what seems to be the most popular segment, the route from Oklahoma City to Barstow, California. If traveling west to east, one departs the old Route 66 at Oklahoma City and ends in Wilmington, Delaware, instead of Chicago, passing through Amarillo both ways.

Just as their names are important to most people, most people are also proud of their countries and their towns (or cities), and, as I've discovered, their languages as well. When I was stationed in Germany in the 1950s courtesy of Uncle Sam and the U.S. Army, I was always gratified to hear English spoken by citizens of the countries I visited while on leave. Conversely, I could at times detect contempt from other citizens of the same countries when I could not speak their languages—and I did not blame them. A certain level of disrespect exists when one cannot speak the language of other countries when one visits, even though the native speaker may not be aware of his or her own feeling of being at least mildly insulted.

Having learned this, I try to show appreciation for our visitors and their native lands as well.

Fortunately, most of our visitors speak English—admittedly, some more so than others. If someone from Germany, Mexico, or even Scotland or Australia (one visitor from Australia told me that he spoke English with a funny accent) has difficulty communicating with me (and I with him or her), we can accomplish much by using impromptu sign language, making up the signs as we go along.

The most difficulty foreign visitors have is that of paying for an item. Many are confused with which coins represent what, and they simply lay their coins on the counter and rely on me to pick the correct ones. (I've done the same thing when visiting a foreign country.) I think most people are trustful of others.

If I have been to a country from which a visitor has come, I try to find a point of reference to which we both can relate. To do this is more than personal (foreign) relations, it is also fun. Often, a visitor speaks perfect English, even though English is not a native tongue. I asked one young man from Sweden where he learned to speak English so well. He said that he couldn't remember when he couldn't speak English, implying that English was as much a native tongue as Swedish. A woman who spoke perfect English surprised me when I asked where she was from, and she told me Sao Paulo.

I enjoy having conversations with our visitors from foreign lands, even if the conversations are sometimes disjointed and punctuated with the pointing and waving of hands.

I have discovered that most foreign visitors when leaving say, "Bye-bye." Being a native Texan, I'm used to "Goodbyes!" and "So longs!" as well as "See you later!" and I wonder at the "Bye-byes!" Is this a product of international television? Do the programs which advertise "instant learning," or something similar, teach this as the normal

English response for departures? I don't know, and it really doesn't matter.

I once had a visitor from Germany who told me that he knew more about Texas than I do. Since he was wearing a cowboy hat, cowboy boots, and a red bandana around his neck, I didn't dispute the claim. As he left, however, I made note of the fact that he didn't say "Adios, Partner!" Instead, when I said, "Auf Wiedersehen!" he said, "Bye-bye!"

And I think that's about as perfect as foreign relations can get. *Cf*

(Note: To volunteer for the Visitor Center and Canyon Gallery, contact David Townsend at (806) 488-2506. Email: partners@midplains.coop.)



**Joseph Allen, Park Superintendent
And Hannah**

Palo Duro Canyon Interns

This month starts all kinds of things anew at Palo Duro Canyon SP. This year we have two paid interns learning all about state park operations and helping around the Canyon. Emily Scott and Lexi Hamous are both WT Wildlife students who also have a history of

volunteering at the Park. These ladies will be busy over the next few months learning things like interpretation, park maintenance, park business operations, natural resource management, and Park operations management. I hope you all get a chance to greet these two stewards over the summer. *Ja*

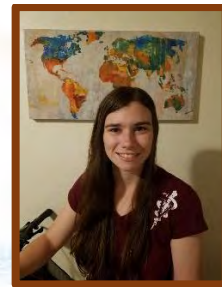


Photo Supplied

My name is Emily Scott, and I am a senior at West Texas A&M University studying for a degree in Wildlife Biology. I grew up in Mason, a small town in South Texas. I moved to Canyon, Texas, to attend school. While growing up, I was a member of FFA and 4-H clubs where I bred and showed rabbits and goats. While in elementary school, I started showing horses and, in high school, competed in horseback archery.

I love to swim, do stand-up paddleboard, and snorkel. These activities led me to have a passion for the outdoors and wildlife which I continue to enjoy.

My career goals, currently, are to work in a state or national park or zoo. While in this internship, I hope to learn more about working within state parks and to gain insight and knowledge to further my career. *Es*





Photo Supplied

Hi, my name is Lexi Hamous. I am a second bachelor student at West Texas A&M University. I am currently studying wildlife biology and will be graduating in December. I received my first Bachelor's degree at Oklahoma State University in Animal Science. After OSU, I decided to attend Colorado State University and start my second degree in wildlife. Afterwards, I decided to transfer home and finish out my degree at WT.

My main interests are reptiles and educating the public about wildlife and natural resources. My career goal is to become a conservation biologist and work for either TPWD on NGO, such as the nature conservancy to perform research that will further the conservation of wildlife and natural resources.

With this internship I hope to gain more experience working with a natural resource manager and performing outreach with the public as an interpreter.

I am excited to see what this internship will have to offer and am so thankful for the staff that are here to help throughout the process.

Fun facts about me include the following: I have two dogs, a bearded dragon named The Bearded Lady, and a tri-colored hognose snake named Xeno (short for his scientific name *Xenodon pulcher*).

This is not my first experience with PDCSP. I was an intern this past semester every Saturday and helped with school programs. My favorite reptiles are snakes. **Lh**



Jeff Davis Assistant Park Superintendent.

Change

The floor of Palo Duro Canyon State Park is awash in color this spring. Indian Blanket, Bladder Pod, Tansy Aster, Blackfoot Daisy, and more Yucca blooms than I've ever seen strike broad brushstrokes of color across the scarlet and gold backdrop of the Canyon. This time last year, we were in the middle of a months-long drought. The grass was brown, the dirt was brown. Everything seemed to be brown. The one constant in our world is change, and this incredible Canyon is certainly no exception.

We have experienced a lot of change in our Park staff as well. Our superintendent has been here for about a year now. I've only recently taken on a new role as Assistant Park Superintendent. Our new Park Interpreter, Lindsay Pannell, has been with us for just a few days as of this writing, and we have two new interns who will be working and learning alongside us all summer.

All change can be scary—blustery gray skies that hold the possibility of a tornado, new staff with all the pitfalls inherent in any new relationship between people, the joy of spring colors, and the fear that accompanies it as we wonder whether we'll see another spring this beautiful.

Bur far more potent than the fear of change is the opportunity that change gives us.

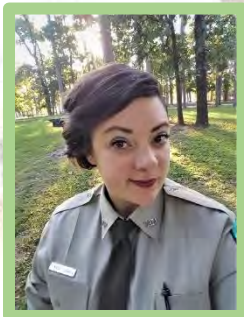
Our Park staff is larger, more enthusiastic, and harder working than ever before. Watching the staff flower into the people that we know they can be is possibly the only thing more beautiful than the Scarlet Gaura and Fringe Puccoon that dot the Canyon floor.

Whether you are a Park visitor, a volunteer, or a staff member reading this, you are a vital part of our mission of caring for this incredible Canyon.

I can't wait to watch you bloom. *Jd*



Tansy Aster



Lindsay Parnell
Photo Provided

Hello! My name is Lindsay Parnell, and I have recently accepted the position of Interpreter at Palo Duro Canyon State Park. For the past eighteen months, I served as interpreter for Inks Lake State Park in Central Texas on the

Llano Uplift amongst a riot of wildflowers and some of the oldest exposed rock in the state.

Before venturing south, I obtained an MA degree in history at our very own West Texas A&M University while working at Palo Duro Canyon as a customer service representative, maintenance assistant, and intern.

It was here in the Grand Canyon of Texas where I fell in love with nature and Texas Parks & Wildlife. Returning to this area feels like a piece of my heart is back where it belongs

I'm honored to return to the stark, windy wilds of the Llano Estacado and work in such a prestigious park as Palo Duro Canyon.

Lp

(Editor's note: To volunteer for the Park, contact either Jeff Davis or Lindsay Parnell at (806) 488-2727, ext. 2007. Email:

jeff.davis@tpwd.texas.gov .

lindsay.parnell@tpwd.texas.gov)



Sunset
Photo by David Townsend

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**Native American Art Work
Available in
Canyon Gallery**

Photo by David Townsend



Artwork Available in Canyon Gallery
Photo by David Townsend



Artwork Available in Canyon Gallery
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