

Partners in Palo Duro Canyon Foundation
Issue No. 45

On the Edge!



Foggy Morning

Photo by David Townsend

Editor's note: Joseph Allen, Park Superintendent, has been out of office for several months due to surgery. Assistant Park Superintendent, Thomas Milone, has contributed to this issue of *On the Edge!* Superintendent Allen will return to duty soon. We are thankful for Superintendent Allen's recovery.



Thomas Milone

Your Eyes May Play Tricks on You

The first time I stopped at the CCC Overlook, everything else stopped as well. Speaking with guests from around the world, we hear different ways people try to describe or express what they see; for me the apt description is “stunning.” Everything stops when I look across the canyon.

The distance and landscape seem to play a trick on my eyes. I know what is far away and what is close. I know what the trees and rocks look like when I stand nearby. I know how tall the canyon walls are. Yet, I am mesmerized. Facts no longer matter and facts cease to have effect. It's not because I don't want them to or that I can't rationalize what I am seeing; I simply allow myself to be stunned.

Palo Duro Canyon is currently sitting atop the list of Texas State Parks in visitation for the year, and I believe this is due in no small part to the “trick” played on my eyes. The Canyon brings happiness, it brings wonder, it brings—well, it brings guests.

There is another side to this, however. When we find guests on a closed trail and they say they had no idea of the closure, or when someone complains that we should somehow overcome Mother Nature, because rain or ice is keeping them from getting to their cabins in the Canyon, I don't believe they purposely ignore facts.

When guests give a bad review of the Park, because they had to wait in a long line to get in on a holiday weekend, or when they give negative reports, because inaccessible areas are truly not accessible, the guests are simply caught up in the trance of the Canyon and, if guided, can be a huge push for change.

Palo Duro Canyon is increasing its effectiveness in communication with new fiber lines between LE [law enforcement] offices, Maintenance Shop and current Headquarters. The Park is nearing the end of our preliminary designs for the new Headquarters, which will see an improvement in the check-in process. The much-needed pavement project has been completed in areas throughout the Park, which will help with visitor experience while also protecting our natural/cultural resources. And, to top it all off, we have had four rangers promoted already in 2023 and have started the hiring process for five new positions—unheard of in State parks. A lot of positive!

One of my favorite things about being at Palo Duro Canon is to see the reaction of people at the CCC Overlook—stunned as was I.

Now to the real question: do you think through their entrancement they saw the “Dogs must be on a leash” rule? ***Tm***

Editor's note: David Townsend, gallery manager, recently made his annual buying trip to New Mexico and Arizona. Accompanying David were Eddie Tubbs, Partners in Palo Duro Canyon Foundation president, board member Jeanna Lilley, and assistant store manager, Kati Hawkins. Following is Jeanna Lilley's account of the trip.



**Jeanna Lilley
On the Road**

This year's buying trip was, as always, fast and furious. We left Amarillo promptly at 8.00 am and headed west. We arrived in Albuquerque shortly after lunch and began our shopping. Kati Hawkins is new to the gallery, and that is one reason I went on the trip again this year. Several other Partners members were scheduled to go on the trip, but the timing didn't work out for them. David texted me and asked if I could go along and show Kati the "ropes." From now on, I will be reminding David and Eddie that I was the fifth choice for the trip. They will not live this one down.

Anyway, we began shopping and exploring all the many beautiful stores. There were purses, belts, and all the jewelry that a girl could want. If you know David at all, you know that he cannot stay still or in one place very long. So, we had to hurry in order to

sweep through the masses of goodies in the stores. After about forty-five minutes, David was getting antsy, so we wrapped up our shopping, left Albuquerque, and headed to Gallup, NM.

There is much beauty in the west, especially around Red Rock near Gallup. Traces of snow were still on the ground from a previous storm, and cold temperatures remained.

We scurried to eat dinner at our favorite, famous, restaurant—Earl's—known for allowing the local artisans to come around your table while you are eating to sell their crafts. This experience far exceeds the taste of the food (which is "yummy"). To experience Earl's is more than words can describe.

The Hopi Reservation was our next stop the following morning where we found ourselves disappointed. The First Mesa has several names, but the most widely accepted is "Walpi." Walpi was celebrating the "Oger Ceremony," and the tribal police would not allow us to enter. Since our local friends and artisans were attending the ceremony as well, we were unable to purchase from them as we were accustomed to do.

We moved on to Second Mesa, known as "Songoopavi." We normally indulge in eating amazing Indian Tacos at the restaurant, but the restaurant was closed because of a lack of water supply. To say the least, our visit to the Hopi Reservation was a bust. We did, however, eat some amazing Indian crisp at a little café in Keams Canyon.

On the last day of our trip, we enjoyed shopping and visiting with friends at a few

local shops in Gallup. From there we drove to the Zuni Reservation where we met with our long-time friends, the Owaleons, Gilbert and Lucy. Lucy and a few of her children met us with open arms and fried chicken for lunch. We exchanged stories of the last year and even met her new grandson. We always cherish the times we get to spend at Zuni. We have great love for the people there .

We delivered some clothing sent with us by Jerrie Howe (Board member) to give to the Owaleons. And a new project was created by Partners. It is hoped that the Zuni Project will be a huge success. Lucy was thrilled with the prospect of getting the items and will share them with the Zuni Community.

Our trip ended on Saturday, and we arrived in Amarillo safely. It was another treasured trip with great food, great fun, amazing fellowship, and unforgettable memories.

Thank you David and Eddie for picking me 5th. *JJ*



**Walpi
Hopi Pueblo on First Mesa**



**Bradley Kliemann
Park Interpreter
Over a Year at Palo Duro Canyon**

November 2022 marked my one-year anniversary as Interpreter at Palo Duro Canon State Park. This issue of the newsletter marks nearly a year and a half of service to the Park. During that time, I've had the chance to learn much about the area and the people who call it home. I have had the opportunity, as well, to have unnumbered personal growth experiences. I've also been able to carry out a personal mission of mine—to connect the people to the public lands we have in the State of Texas.

From my arrival in November 2021, a part of my position as Interpreter has, of course, been to lead programs for the public. These have taken the form of sit-down talks and tabletop programs, van tours, guided hikes, and everything in between.

Some of my favorite programs are our full-moon hikes once a month on the night of the full moon. These events always provide me an excellent way to share the magic of witnessing the full moon rise over the Canyon's walls with our visitors and to connect them to the ways cultures across time and space have used the moon to reflect their own lives. These hikes bring many visitors for their very first-time to hike or stargaze and be cognizant of what to look for. Many

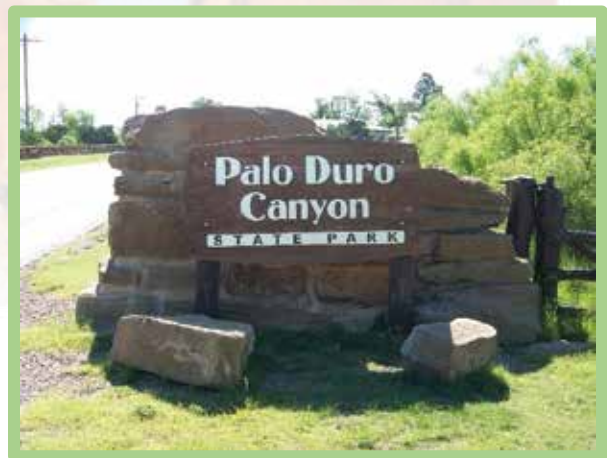
families have told me that these experiences are different from the more forested areas of the state or that these experiences have inspired them to come to the Canyon for more hikes during the day. Also, the experiences have changed the way their families will look at the moon. Hearing the gratitude and the impact my programs make on our visitors fulfills my mission and gives me concrete evidence that what I do here matters.

One of my proudest accomplishments during my time here has been the work I've been able to achieve with our local school groups. The connections I make with these children creates future stewards of Texas's public lands. Getting these children to care about places, such as Palo Duro Canyon, ensures its future preservation. This outreach to schools has included on-site field trips in the Canyon as well as my visiting the schools. The visits to schools are especially important to me. Many children I speak to have never been to the Canyon and likely may never visit the Canyon. Therefore, a part of my position is to bring a piece of the Canyon to these children, fostering the next generation of those who care for it.

Another part of my mission is to deliver my message to the underrepresented portions of our local population in the Amarillo area. One school at which I've been able to accomplish my mission is Mesa Verde Elementary. The school's students consist mostly of minorities and the area's growing refugee population. Knowing I'm helping to foster a relationship between these children and someone in uniform, regardless of what that uniform implies, is a big deal to me. I want these children to grow up knowing that someone in uniform has taken the time to speak to them and hear their questions at their level, that they are cared for as much as those in more affluent schools. I want these

children to know, regardless of their zip codes, that they are just as valued as stewards of our public lands as are any others. Fostering the next generation of Texans to be stewards of the land is a proud accomplishment for me as our state's demographics change.

My first year and a half as Interpreter at Palo Duro Canyon State Park has taught me much in terms of my role as an Interpreter and as a person. I've had many opportunities to create bonds with the people of Texas and to develop and lead programs at the Park for the public and for schools at their campuses. Through my work here, my mission of connecting people to the outdoors has taken the form of relationships and the "ah-hah" moments I see on the faces of visitors and schools. Knowing that I'm making a difference in the lives of the people who call the area home has been the most satisfying part of the job for me, and I can't wait to see what two years here has to offer. **Bk**





Ann Coberley

Please Lighten Up

I roam back over
the landscape of this day,
the second one absent the sun,
gray skies spitting snowflakes,
and the birdbath a block of ice.

Clouds have leaned in too close
with icy breath that frosts the trees,
whispering of Springtime,
as if I believed their frozen lies.

I can't shake a vague sadness,
An irrational conviction
that this season will never end,

that blue skies have left us forever
and the sun is losing interest.

Editor's note: Dr. Ann Coberley is on the
Board of Partners in Palo Duro Canyon
Foundation.



Carl Fowler

Drought

He lets the dry soil fall from his fingers
and raises his sun-seared hand to his chin.
A trace of despair on his face sadly lingers,
despair that has come with the hot, burning
wind.

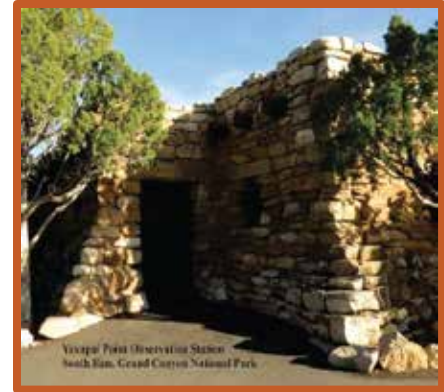
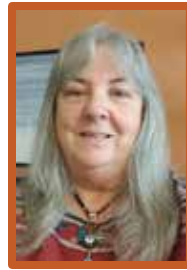
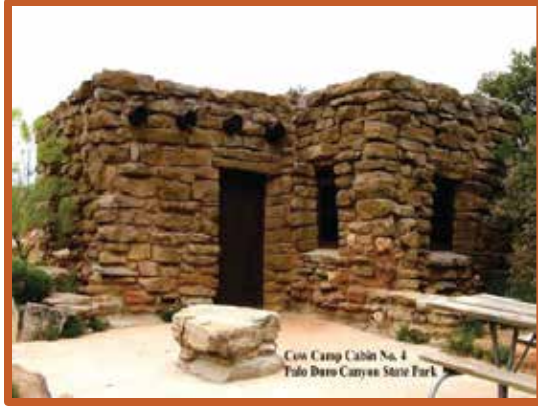
His eyes search the dusty horizon for rain
clouds,
knowing that nothing but heat waves are
there,
as the shifting, drifting, blowing sand shrouds
the fields once full and now bare.

The farmer looks down at the only life left in
all the waterless, barren ground.
A few stems of grass that by some secret theft
have captured the moisture still to be found.

A work-worn hand, rough and unsteady
takes hold of a living, thin green stem,
and with crushing fingers turns grass to
confetti,
and the farmer, heartbroken, begins once
again.

Editor's note: My apologies to the true poet.





Lisa Jackson

***Government Rustic* in Palo Duro Canyon State Park**

As they pass through the gates of Palo Duro Canyon State Park, visitors may notice the rustic architectural style present in the buildings and retaining walls. The National Park Service (NPS) employed this style, known as *Government Rustic* across the country in local, state, and national parks built by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Within the Canyon, CCC enrollees quarried native stone to create the rock structures that blend with the natural surroundings, keeping with the building policy of the first NPS director, Stephen Mathers. Mathers instructed that "...attention must be devoted always to the harmonizing of these improvements to the landscape." This policy also contributed to the below-grade construction of the three Palo Duro Canyon rim-top cabins and the El Coronado Lodge which holds the Canyon Gallery and Visitors' Center. As Park visitors drive towards the scenic overlook, they see these structures that were constructed to minimize obstruction of the Canyon view. The Cow Camp cabins reflect this policy as well.

At Palo Duro Canyon State Park, the structures blend in with the surrounding natural environment. The NPS regional architect, Herbert Maier, chose a more primitive version of *Government Rustic*, using the architectural style of ancient pueblo ruins as his ultimate influence. Prior to the construction of the State Park in 1929, Maier designed the Yavapai Point Observation Station on the South Rim of the Grand Canyon and embraced this style during the construction of the State Park cabins as well.

In the above photographs, note the remarkable similarity between the Canyon's Cow Camp No. 4 and a wall of the Yavapai Point structure. Both structures exhibit a compatibility to Mather's directive that structures needed to be ancillary to the beauty and features of surrounding landscapes. While the structures offer comforts for the visitor, they serve also the intent to minimally intrude upon what nature provided.

Editor's note: Lisa Jackson is on the Board of Partners in Palo Duro Canyon Foundation.





NON-PROFIT ORG
US Postage
PAID
Amarillo, TX
Permit No. 664

**Partners in
Palo Duro Canyon
Foundation
11450 Park Road 5
Canyon, TX 79015
806.488.2227**



**Partners in Palo Duro Canyon Foundation
Board Members**

**Eddie Tubbs, President
Jerrie Howe/Don Max Vars, Treasurers**

**Pebbie Comer, Vice President
Jeanna Lilley, Secretary**

Richard Douglas
Carl Fowler
Bailey Hess
Rodney Hess
Lisa Jackson
Cindy Meador

Eric Miller
Lea Nelson
Frannie Nuttall
Art Schneider
Carol Williams

On the Edge!

March 2023, Partners in Palo Duro Canyon Foundation, Editor: Carl Fowler