



Annual Fall Meeting

Sunday, September 26, 2021

Join us for the following events:

4:00 pm – Friends of Konza Prairie Annual Meeting – HQ picnic tables
We'll hear from the directors of KPBS and KEEP about updates and plans for the future

We'll recognize our 2021 Konza "Rock Star" awardees and Kansas Master Naturalist graduates

We'll have a retrospective on the 50th Anniversary of KPBS and the 25th Anniversary of KEEP

5:00 pm – Free Bison Burger BBQ – on the Hulbert Center patio

6:00 pm – Tours of the KPBS bison area begin
Tours will be in school buses and masks are required

Research Education Conservation



Fall 2021

CALENDAR OF FALL EVENTS



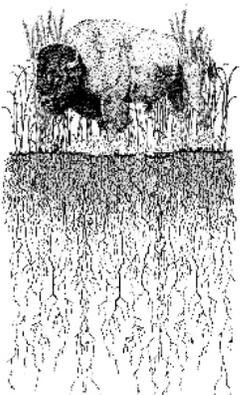
September 19 - Konquer the Konza Time:
10k - 7:30 am, 25k - 7:30 am

2021 Visions of the Flint Hills Art Show - opening night Friday, October 1, 5-8 pm

The Friends of Konza Prairie is thrilled to be partnering with Buttonwood Art Space in Kansas City for another year of "Visions in the Flint Hills"! This art show and event is a major fundraiser for FOKP and it takes the support of many to make it happen! We are very happy to be back in person (with masks!) for our opening reception on Friday, October 1 from 5-8pm at Buttonwood Art Space (3013 Main Street, Kansas City, MO). Our juror, local Manhattan painter Clive Fullagar, selected 158 original works of art for the show as well as several "Best In Show" awards which will be revealed on opening night! Work will be on display at Buttonwood through December 16, but can also be viewed and purchased online at:

<https://buttonwoodartspace.com/show/2021-visions-of-the-flint-hills>

A big thank you to these area businesses and individuals for sponsoring the 2021 Visions of the Flint Hills: WTC, Dianne Shumaker, The Trust Company, Bayer Construction, ACME Local, Native Lands LLC, Burnett Automotive, Ladybird Diner, Flint Hills Wisdom Keepers, and Pathfinder.





KPBS Director's Report John Blair

Dear Friends of Konza Prairie,

Summer is winding down, students are back in classes, and the very hot August days we've been experiencing will soon give way to cooler autumn weather. In many ways, this summer marked a return to more normal activities at the station. Many researchers and students that were unable to travel during the 2020 "summer of COVID" returned to Konza this year to continue ongoing research or to initiate new studies. In fact, we hosted researchers from more than twenty-five different universities and agencies this summer! We also led multiple field tours for interns and students from other universities and organizations, and provided interviews for local and regional media outlets.

All in all, it was a very busy and productive summer. Of course, this level of activity would not have been possible without a dedicated and efficient staff and the K-State faculty and graduate students who volunteer to lead tours and assist new researchers with finding their way around the site. We also had a very successful Wildflower Walk at the beginning of the summer with over 200 people coming out to learn about prairie plants and enjoy the view from Butterfly Hill. Thank you to the FOKP members and Konza Prairie docents that helped organize and run that event.

Upcoming fall activities on Konza include the FOKP annual meeting, the Visions of the Flint Hills event, and the annual meeting of scientists and students involved in the Konza Prairie Long-Term Ecological Research program. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of Konza Prairie and the 25th anniversary of the KEEP program (!) which will be highlighted at the FOKP meeting. Fall operations at the station are underway, including mowing and haying the many miles of fireguards needed for prescribed burning next spring and preparing for our annual fall bison roundup. We had over 100 bison calves born this year, so it will be a busy couple of days as we record weights and provide individual IDs for these new arrivals.



I want to thank you, our FOKP members, for your support of the station's research, education, and conservation activities over the past year. As always, please feel free to contact me (jblair@ksu.edu; 785-532-7065) with any questions or concerns about Konza.

Dr. John Blair
University Distinguished Professor
Edwin G. Brychta Professor of Biology

Looking Back and Going Forward –

It's 50 years for Konza and 25 years for KEEP! That's a history worth celebrating and remembering. I've been privileged to be a part of Konza for about 43 years as a minor scientist and it's been one of the more wonderful aspects of being a KSU faculty member--both for the fabulous research facility and for the remarkable faculty who have and are making the research program here world-class.

I've been grateful to help with the KEEP program as a docent for the last 11 years since I retired, and for most of its 25 years as a subject educator for docents on aspects of water in the ecosystem. It's been my privilege, too, to be your president of Friends of Konza Prairie.

It is wonderful to participate with all of the great people who make all aspects of Konza successful and that includes all of you who are Friends. I believe participating is important to know the value of this great program. I hope you will remember the past of Konza as we celebrate and even more, I hope you will find ways to make its future even brighter and more valuable to everyone. Thank you for your membership and support.

FOKP President Jim Koelliker





Monarch Migration!

September is a magical time here at Konza. The school groups will be back this year (but restricted to just outdoor activities and no indoor labs) and the grass will be tall and beautiful. This beautiful time of year also brings us the autumn migration of Monarch butterflies.

Right around the 2nd week of September we begin to see the first waves of Monarchs. We'll see one here and there, oftentimes they'll be quite high up in the sky, soaring over without stopping. Others will land and nectar on a flower and then quickly leave. The number of butterflies that we see increases each day

until right around the time of the Konquer the Konza trail race, which is always the 3rd Sunday in September. THAT is the typical peak of the Monarch migration.

Last year we saw thousands of Monarchs! They were simply everywhere. They especially favored the goldenrod blooms that were abundant in the bison area. The heaviest areas of butterflies were on the south end of the bison area next to the fence. That is where the goldenrod was plentiful and, seemingly, where the Monarchs could fuel up before lifting off to head south on their journey to Mexico.

Monarchs migrate north from Mexico early in the spring. These butterflies are the same ones that migrated south through Kansas the autumn prior. These butterflies will mate, lay eggs (on any milkweed they can find), and die. Their offspring will hatch, feed, pupate, and migrate further north. This repeats 4 – 5 times with the last generation of Monarchs turning around and heading back south to Mexico in August.

Some Monarchs are already passing through our area as they migrate but the numbers will gradually increase as those from the furthest north finally reach us. An interesting fact: generations 1-4 live only about 4 weeks, generation 5 (the migratory generation) will live up to 9 months. It's a fascinating cycle!

Get out to the prairie in September and find some goldenrod; that'll be your best chance at seeing some Monarchs on their way to Mexico.



2021 Wildflower Walk Sets Records

This year's FOKP Wildflower Walk was held on Sunday, June 6th. That seems like a long time ago, but we haven't had a chance to tell you how the event turned out! We had a RECORD turnout of over 200 people attend!

We were very close to running out of volunteer tour guides, but fate was on our side and we ended up having just enough guides to accommodate all of the groups. The weather was gorgeous, and the flowers were lovely. We do have some "thank you's" to share:

Tour Guides: Earl Allen, Nancy Calhoun, Don Garwood, Darren Gunderson, Shelly Gunderson, Mike Haddock, Garry Harter, Hallie Hatfield, Chod Hedinger, Retta Kramer, Courtney Masterson (who was exceptionally charming when we conscripted her to lead a group), Dick Oberst, Terry Olson, Jeff Taylor, Brad Williamson, and Carol Williamson.

Traffic and Parking: Jim Koelliker, Jeff Petersen, Mike Jones, and Hallie Hatfield (another conscripted volunteer to help here before she led a tour group)

Tickets and Merchandise Sales: Marcia Rozell and Leslie Wren (who learned a whole lot in a very short period of time!). Huge thanks to Marcia for her ingenious idea to set up the merchandise table outside where folks could actually see the goods for sale. We sold far more than we had previously.

Thank you to everyone who helped and who visited – we appreciate you!



50th Anniversary of KPBS and 25th Anniversary of KEEP

The Konza Prairie Biological Station (previously Konza Prairie Research Natural Area) officially came into existence on December 30, 1971, upon the filing the deed of ownership of 916 acres of native tallgrass prairie in Geary County. Since that time, much has changed, with the most obvious being the addition of 7,220 acres (the Dewey Ranch) in 1977 and 480 acres (Thowe land) in 1979 – bringing the site to its complete 8,616 acres by 1979.

KPBS is dedicated to a 3-fold mission of research, education, and prairie conservation, and it has succeeded in this mission admirably. Notable among its successes are:

- \$90 million in extramural research funding – including funding from the National Science Foundation as one of the original 8 programs (since 1980) dedicated as a Long-Term Ecological Research (LTER) site.
- Production of >1,900 scientific publications related to research done at KPBS.
- Over 300 M.S. and Ph.D. students have been produced from the KPBS research program.
- Formed research partnerships with: National Ecological Observatory Network, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Geological Survey, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, among others.



The Konza Environmental Education Program (KEEP) began formally in November 1996 with the hiring of Dr. Valerie Wright. The docent/volunteer program had been in place for some time but was under the general guidance of the Friends of Konza Prairie, the KPBS director, and professors within the KSU Division of Biology.

With the hiring of Dr. Wright came the Summer Teachers' Workshop, which trained teachers in the new Schoolyard LTER activities, and a more formal program of scheduling regular school groups.

Since November 1996 KEEP has:

- Welcomed over 75,000 students from school districts as far east as Kansas City and as far west as Salina. In normal times KEEP welcomed between 2,000 – 3,500 students annually.
- Trained over 100 area teachers on the SLTER (Schoolyard Long-Term Ecological Research) activities available with KEEP during the Summer Teachers' Workshop.
- Trained 358 docent volunteers to assist with the school groups visiting Konza Prairie.



The KPBS Staff:

Director John Blair, Ph.D.
Assistant Director Eva Horne, Ph.D.
Administrative Asst. Barb Van Slyke
Director of Education Jill Haukos
KPBS Project Manager Jim Larkins
KPBS Burn Coordinator Patrick O'Neal
Environmental Educator

The Friends of Konza Prairie (FOKP) promote the interests of Konza Prairie Biological Station as they pertain to its mission of Research, Education and Conservation. Membership in FOKP is open to all individuals, groups and businesses that share an interest in the common goal of supporting the Konza Prairie Biological Station.

For FOKP membership and general information, call 785-587-0441, or visit the Konza Environmental Education Program (KEEP) website at: <http://keep.konza.ksu.edu> Also, see the back of this issue for a membership form.

The FOKP Executive Board:

President Jim Koelliker
Vice President Brian McCormack
Secretary Lucas Shivers
Treasurer Noah Busch

The FOKP board members:

Josh Brewer
Noah Busch
Retta Kramer
Brian McCormack
Marcia Rozell
Lucas Shivers
Jeff Watson
Jerrod Wesfahl
Kelly Yarbrough

Ex-officio and Honorary members

The Nature Conservancy- Rob Manes
KPBS Director- John Blair
Director of Education- Jill Haukos
KSU Foundation- Trevor Jueneman
Historian- Joe Gelroth
Honorary Board Members- Stormy Kennedy and Valerie Wright



Susan Adams:

“I have been in this community for 20 years and am continuously learning and growing through opportunities and experiences in the region. I believe in the fabulous work that happens at the Konza and am excited to be an additional voice and connection to others. Currently, I serve as the Director of the Flint Hills Discovery Center. I recently served on the Flint Hills Regional Leadership Board and currently on the Kansas Museum Association Board. My husband, Mitch and I have two adult children (Shelby & Shane) and one grandchild.”



Tawnie Larson:

“The Konza Prairie is one of my favorite places on earth and I would be honored to serve FOKP to support education and other programs to ensure the future of Konza Prairie’s natural resources remains an active part of education for students of all ages. I am the Project Coordinator for a USDA-NIFA grant that serves farmers and ranchers with disabilities, based in the Biological and Agricultural Engineering Department at KSU. I can apply my skills in marketing, event planning, outreach, and education to assist FOKP. I was born and raised in Manhattan and graduated from both MHS and KSU; and I am a member of the 2020 KEEP docent class.”

Congratulations to the Graduating Class of Kansas Master Naturalists 2021

The Kansas Master Naturalist program, administered by KSU Research and Extension, provided training for participants on the following topics with local experts:

- Interpretation – with Amber Myers
- Geology & Soils – with Matthew Kirk
- Ecology – with John Blair
- Weather & Climate – with Jesse Nippert
- Entomology – with Greg Zolnerowich
- Ichthyology – with Pat Silovsky
- Mammalogy – with Andrew Hope
- Ornithology – with Chuck Otte
- Botany – with Jeff Taylor
- Herpetology – with Eva Horne

We thank our experts for generously sharing their knowledge and enthusiasm on their topics – we all learned so much from our time with you.

Participants receive 40 hours of training and then donate 30 hours of volunteer service to complete the requirements as set forth by KSU Research & Extension. These new Master Naturalists are now eligible to volunteer at over 50 different locations throughout Kansas to share their information with others.

Congratulations to the following new

Kansas Master Naturalists:

Jan Butin	Don Garwood	Jacque Staats
David Duncan	Mike Jones	Ken Stafford
Kurt Foley	Terry Olson	Leslie Wren

KEEP Now has a Bison Hide!



A big “thank you” to Mike and Connie Butler for their donation of a full-sized tanned bison hide! We’ll use this in our education program where we know lots of kids will be thrilled for the chance to feel real bison hair. This item will have many years of service and we are very grateful. Thanks Mike & Connie!

Friends of Konza Prairie
Kansas State University
Division of Biology,
116 Ackert Hall
Manhattan, KS 66506-4901
785-587-0441
#308



MISSION

Konza Prairie Biological Station (KPBS) is a native tallgrass prairie preserve owned by The Nature Conservancy and Kansas State University and operated as a research station by the Division of Biology. The Friends of Konza Prairie (FOKP) promotes the interests of KPBS as they pertain to its mission of research, education and conservation.

Bison & Bluestem is published by the Friends of Konza Prairie

New and Renewing FOKP Members

Thank you all for your support of the Friends of Konza Prairie!

Members who have newly joined or renewed their membership since the last issue of the Bison & Bluestem include:

Theresa Albrecht
Victoria Appelhans
Burnett Automotive
Kary Bloom
BBN Architects Inc
Rosemary Burroughs
Jan Butin
William Carter
Randolph Chapman
Sabrina Charles
Jane & Randall Cobb
Katherine Colburn
Mary Cottom
Ethan Denson
Flint Hills Discovery Center
William & Cathy Drobny
Miriam Edelman
Edwin & Casee Eisele
Caleb Fabrycky
Amy Fish
Heather Forster
Bess Spiva Foundation
Emma Balsinger Foundation
Karen L Wells & Dan Francke
Joselyn Gallardo
Carol Garbacik
Richard & Judy Glowiak

Capstone Development Group LLC
Haines Family LLC
Richard Hartman
Ray & Heike Hauck
Mary Hellmer
Daniel & Susie Higgins
Deirdre Hoff
Phil Howe
Tom Hulbert
Sue Carolyn Hunt
John Hunter
Dylan Isaacson
Jack & Gail Kasl
Carol Kennedy
Rajiv Khosla
Dalhoe Koo
Don & Laurie Kurtz
Monica Laronda
James & Jodi Lemley
Bruce & Lia Lowrie
Brian & Heather McCornack
Brenda McCrady
Taylor McFall
Louis & Michelle Meng
Jaime Mercado Calderon
Jan & Gerad Middendorf
Dr. & Mrs. Duane Miksch

Landon Ochsner
The Larry O'Neill Family
Civic Plus
Diane McClenny-Post &
Edward Potter
Jayson Prentice
Kyler Reith
Bill & Linda Richter
Dustan Ridder
Angela Riedel
Hunter Rose
Don & Judi Schultz
Tami Scott
Rollin & Donna Sears
Holly Serk & Thomas Einck
Anna Shats
Chelsea Shrack
Kristin Taylor
Rodney & Judith Taylor
Bruce & Mindy Thierolf
Jim & Beth Turtle
Cindy Vadakin
Mary Vanier
Keith & Sheri Westervelt
Jerrod & Amy Westfahl
Ryan & Rebecca Zecha