



Oxley Nature Center

January/February, 2014

Volume 219

First Day by Donna Horton

Oxley Nature Center: New Hours!

- The Interpretive Building will be open Tuesday through Saturday, 10:00 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. and **will be closed on Sundays and Mondays.**

- Gate and parking lot is open daily, 8:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. except most City holidays.

- Hiking trails are accessible during Mohawk Park hours, 7:00 a.m.- 9:00 p.m.

Redbud Valley Nature Preserve is closed:
all Mondays and Tuesdays.

- Open Wednesday through Sunday, 8:00 a.m.- 5:00 p.m. Hiking outside of these hours is not allowed.

- Interpretive building is open Wednesday through Sunday 11:00 a.m.- 3:00 p.m.

- Closed most City holidays.

** Closings:

Oxley Nature Center and Redbud Valley Nature Preserve:

** Wednesday, January 1, and Sunday, February 23 through Wednesday, February 26.

Program information:

- 918-669-6644

- Oxley@cityoftulsa.org

- Website at "<http://www.oxleynaturecenter.org>".

Mailing address:

Box 150209, Tulsa, OK 74115

*Register for classes 48 hours in advance, some classes need supplies and have limited enrollment.

- Children under 12 must be accompanied by an adult unless otherwise stated.

- Most programs are stroller/wheelchair accessible.

Where were you on November 4, 1983? It was my first day on the job at Oxley Nature Center. The 3-day regional workshop of the Association of Interpretive Naturalists, our professional organization, had just ended at Sequoyah State Park, my former place of employment. Instead of attending the workshop being held at "my" park, I had been busy with the move to a new place.

I still got to see everyone. They all stopped by Oxley Nature Center on the way home. Oxley had just been starting up when Oklahoma had last hosted the regional workshop. *Everyone* wanted to see the newest facility in six states. I stood at the desk greeting fellow professionals all day, answering questions like, "How many acres do you manage here?" and "What is your annual visitation?" with "I don't know, let me find out for you." The only question I could answer off the top of my head that day was, "Well, how long have you worked here?"

Looking back through thirty years here, I see the strengths of Oxley Nature Center and its relationship with Tulsans. The first named must be the Friends of Oxley Nature Center. Unwavering in their support, they have sent staff members to training. They have raised more than a million dollars over the years for much-needed expansions, repairs, and renovations. **Keeping your membership current helps keep Oxley Nature Center strong.**

The volunteer program is a tremendous asset. There is no way the tiny paid staff could do all that needs to be done. They lead tours, work on the trails, staff the front desk, and so much more. Even more importantly, the volunteer staff provide energy and enthusiasm. They recharge the batteries of everyone around. **Think about putting in some hours if you can.**

The friendly, generous, caring people of Tulsa are another factor in Oxley Nature Center's success. You love this place as much as the staff does. I see it every day. Share that. **Tell others what you like about Oxley Nature Center.**

Oxley Nature Center is fortunate in its paid staff. I can say that now, because I retire on January 1, 2014. The City has a treasure in the people who work for you, both the full-timers (now down to 3 people) and the seasonal staff (4 part-time positions). It's time to bring the paid staff back to full-strength, replacing the empty office manager position, my empty senior staff naturalist position, *and* restoring full-time staff naturalist positions lost in 2009 and 2010 lay-offs.

My position might not be filled. Lately the City has simply divided the work load among the remaining staff. **Write your City councilor and Mayor Bartlett.** Your emails and letters carry much more weight than staff requests. If each office received 5 or more letters in support of Oxley Nature Center, perhaps the budget makers would rate the employees who are stewards of 1000+ acres (one fifth of the City's property) as highly as police and fire.

Thirty years ago, Oxley Nature Center was the most cutting edge facility in the nation. Today it is barely hanging on, with the help of you and the Friends and the volunteers. It is remarkable what is done with "very little." Just imagine what could be done with "enough." Give this staff "abundance," and they'll put Tulsa on the map.

I have loved being one of your Oxley naturalists. Thank you for everything you have shared with me through the years. Now it's my first day again. Maybe I'll see you on a trail!

Nature Center Happenings

New Closures for Oxley Nature Center

Due to staff reduction and the City of Tulsa hiring freeze, we will be making some changes in our schedule in the new year.

Beginning in January, 2014, the **Oxley Nature Center Interpretive Center will be closed on Sundays and Mondays.** It will also be necessary to cut some of our programs. We do not look forward to doing this!

We apologize for any inconvenience.

Please bear with us during this time of hardship.

We appreciate your support!

Conference Closure Dates

Oxley Nature Center and Redbud Valley Nature Preserve will be **closed February 23-26th** while staff attend the National Association of Interpretation Region VI conference in Guthrie, Oklahoma.

Volunteer Round-up in February

Oxley Nature Center is sponsoring a volunteer round-up on **Thursday, February 13, from 10:00-12:00 noon or 7:00-9:00 p.m.** Join us to learn about the many different volunteer opportunities we have to offer.

We will have question and answer sessions, staff and volunteer staff to visit with, and refreshments.

Have you got some time to share? Consider joining us, we would love to meet you!

A joy shared is a joy doubled -Goethe

Visitor Center Host

Do you like to greet visitors and interact with the public? Join us at Oxley for a training session from 9:00 a.m.– 12 noon.

In addition to discussing guest services and phone protocol you will also learn how to make sales in the gift shop. Lunch will be provided.

Donna Horton Retires After 30 Years

Join us **Saturday, January 18**, at Oxley Nature Center from **1:00-3:00 p.m.** to celebrate Donna and the service she has given to so many over the past years. We'll be serving light refreshments and telling stories. Please do bring your favorite story about Donna! This is a come and go event, and everyone is welcome.

I looked up 'retirement' in my thesaurus. Besides saying "to go to bed" and "seclusion", it also says "to withdraw from active life". I'm thinking they don't know our Donna one little bit ...

Volunteer Luncheon and Awards Celebration

Volunteer and Oxley staff, families, and friends celebrated our fall season with an awards luncheon December 14. We gathered to honor our volunteer staff and share a meal. We love this time to get together to visit with one another!

Several volunteers reached significant milestones:

5 Year Award: **Kristie Shreve, Kim Shannon**

15 Year Award: **Chloe Oney**

20 Year Award: **Tom Clark, Phyllis Stroud**

30 Year Award: **Jacques LaFrance**

Our volunteer staff serves Oxley in many capacities. With their dedication, hard work, and enthusiasm, we are able to maintain our trails and acreage, reach the public with programs, and accomplish so much more.

We owe them our utmost gratitude. Thank you!

Volunteer Naturalist Training in March

Who is a Volunteer Naturalist? It could be you! Do you enjoy being outdoors sharing the experience of nature with others? Try our Volunteer Naturalist training in March.

During training you will become familiar with our trail system as you explore the varied prairie, wetland, and forested areas. We emphasize leadership skills and interpretation methods.

Upon completion of training, you will join other naturalists, each guiding a small group of visitors on weekday, evening or weekend tours. If you are 18 or older, please call for more details about the training schedules.

No previous experience is necessary.

Programs and Special Events

January

4 “Saturday Morning Birding” **Ages: All**
Saturday **8:00-9:45 a.m.**
Free **registration not required**

Join us for birding at Oxley.
Bring binoculars if you have them.

8 “Basket Guild” **Ages: 13 to Adult**
Wednesday **6:00-7:00 p.m.**
Free **registration is required**

This will be an organizational meeting for a basket-making class that will meet once a month at Oxley.

14 “Natural Babies, Nature in Winter”
Ages: 1 to 5 only -with caretaker
Tuesday **10:30-11:30 a.m.**
\$2 for general public **Free for members**
 registration is required

What do plants and animals do when the weather turns cold? What do you do? Meet at Oxley.

15 “Full Wolf Moon Walk” **Ages: All**
Wednesday **7:00-8:30 p.m.**
\$2 for general public **Free for members**
 registration is required



Will we hear the songs of wolf's cousins carried on a cold winter's night? Meet at Oxley to find out.

19 “Geology Walk at RBV” **Ages: 8 to Adult**
Sunday **1:30-3:00 p.m.**
Free **registration is required**

Join us at Redbud Valley for a geology walk. This walk is not stroller or wheelchair accessible.

25 “Botany Walk” **Ages: All**
Saturday **10:30-12:00 noon**
Free **registration not required**

Meet at Oxley for a winter botany walk.

February

1 “Saturday Morning Birding” **Ages: All**
Saturday **8:00-9:45 a.m.**
Free **registration not required**

Join us for birding at Oxley.
Bring binoculars if you have them.



11 “Natural Babies, Winter Green”
Ages: 1 to 5 only -with caretaker
Tuesday **10:30-11:30 a.m.**
\$2 for general public **Free for members**
 registration is required

What stays green and fragrant and shelters many birds? Come meet the Eastern red cedar. Meet at Oxley.

14 “Full Snow Moon Walk” **Ages: All**
Friday **7:00-8:30 p.m.**
\$2 for general public **Free for members**
 registration is required

Join us at Oxley for our full moon walk. Will there be snow to reflect the moonlight? Dress warmly in layers!

16 “Geology Walk at RBV” **Ages: 8 to Adult**
Sunday **1:30-3:00 p.m.**
Free **registration is required**

Join us at Redbud Valley for a geology walk. This walk is not stroller or wheelchair accessible.

22 “Botany Walk” **Ages: All**
Saturday **10:30-12:00 noon**
Free **registration not required**

Join us at Oxley for a winter botany walk.

****Please register 48 hours in advance of classes unless stated otherwise. Spaces limited. A minimum of 6 registrants is required.**

-Exploring nature with your child is largely a matter of becoming receptive to what lies all around you. It is learning again to use your eyes, ears, nostrils and finger tips, opening up the disused channels of sensory impression.

For most of us, knowledge of our world comes largely through sight, yet we look about with such unseeing eyes that we are partially blind. One way to open your eyes to unnoticed beauty is to ask yourself, "What if I had never seen this before? What if I knew I would never see it again?"

-**Rachel Carson**, *The Sense of Wonder*

Project WILD (Wildlife Integrated Learning Design)

Project WILD is a cross-curricular environmental workshop that concentrates on forest habitat, with plant/animal interactions through activities featuring science, math, social studies, language arts, and art. Participants (teachers, boy & girl scout leaders, and homeschool teachers) should dress comfortably for outdoor activities, if weather permits.

Date: Saturday, March 1

Time: 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.

Location: Oxley Nature Center

Cost: \$15 (includes activity guide)

Bring a sack lunch for a "working lunch"

You must register through program facilitator
Deidra Wakeley at 918-745-9264

