

Natural Area Preservation Association, Inc.
4144 Cochran Chapel Road
Dallas, TX 75209

(214) 352-8370

Katherine Goodbar, Editor

NAPA'S NEWEST NATURE PRESERVE A NORTH TEXAS WILDFLOWER PRAIRIE

For people who see the beauty of land in its natural state, it is distressing to think that at some time in the future the land may be paved over for a shopping mall or filling station. A year ago Carroll McCarter was wondering how she could preserve her family lands, "What happens when all the land is gone and our area is nothing but concrete?" Like many other people, she had no idea how to begin so she contacted Texas Parks and Wildlife Department in Austin and they referred her to Natural Area Preservation Association.

Carroll's mind is calm now in knowing that as development comes closer every year, her little slice of Texas prairie northeast of Sherman will always be safely native.

"Carroll McCarter walks over her acres of prairie and remembers what it was like when she was a youngster.... just like it is now. The native grasses blow in the gentle breeze. The wildflowers open to the morning sun, untouched by hooves and only stepped on by bees' feet." That is a quote from a full page feature article in the Sherman Herald Democrat. Preserving land in perpetuity seems to be a new idea in Grayson County.... news worthy. Carroll is now a crusader for land preservation, "I am the only person in this county who has done this! There must be a lot more prairie here that should be saved!"

Carroll McCarter's 32 acres have been in her family since her grandfather bought the land at the turn of the century for \$6.00 an acre. Wagon ruts traverse her land, a testament to simpler times when the land was prairie as far as the eye could see. She grew up playing in the pastures and crisscrossing those old wagon ruts, which her family has long said demark a former overland trail to the Red River. As the land passed down to her, Carroll said that she became more aware of its value as prairie.

In the spring, the fields are a riot of color with wildflowers lifting their heads above the prairie grasses. Even after the severe drought of our 1998 summer, there are flowers blooming now.

After a brief visit to the site, Dr. Howard McCarley, Professor Emeritus of Biology at Austin College, reported, "...The most interesting and biologically valuable part is a native tall grass prairie community, apparently never plowed and in pristine condition. It contains an excellent stand of bluestems and other desirable grasses. I am glad the property is being saved as a natural area because such pieces of prairie are very rare." Dr. George Diggs, also of Austin College has contacted Carroll and has expressed an interest in coming to see the prairie and perhaps bring students with him. Dr. Diggs is co-author of the new "Illustrated Floras of North Central Texas".

Thank you, Carroll, for your foresight in preserving this land, and we hope that others in Grayson County follow your lead.



Spring on the prairie with wildflowers and little bluestem

NAPA LAND STEWARDS AND MEMBERS INSTRUCT MASTER NATURALISTS

Have you ever noticed how generous people who are truly expert in their field are in sharing their expertise? With schedules that are already over-crowded, they will make time to help others who need to know some of what they know. Many NAPA volunteers are in this category. In this case they are volunteering to help train volunteers.

The goal of the Master Naturalist Volunteer Program is to develop knowledgeable volunteers to increase public awareness, understanding and appreciation of our natural resources and to promote stewardship through education and active citizen participation. The program is sponsored by the Texas Agricultural Extension Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife, and the Fort Worth Nature Center and is organized and directed by NAPA member **Susan Battarby** and **John Davis** of Texas Parks and Wildlife.

Participants are required to have 12 weeks of instruction from experts in the various environmental fields, 12 hours of continuing education and give 60 hours of volunteer time in approved projects to receive certification.

The first course was held in April in Dallas for about 35 volunteers, and you will not be surprised to learn that when the experts were chosen to teach the classes, NAPA land stewards and members were well represented.

Wayne Clark, chief land steward for the James K. Allen Preserve and a member of the Vivian Johnson Malone Animal, Bird, and Land Preserve not only taught a class and led a field trip for the Dallas group, but also sponsored the second group of classes in September at the Fort Worth Nature Center where he is director and taught many of those classes. He also took his group on a field trip to the NAPA Allen Preserve.

Dr. Harold Laughlin, a member of the Ennis Kachina Prairie stewardship committee, gave important insights and instruction on trail building along with some delightful trail stories.

Bob O'Kennon may be the world's best field guide for plant identification - at least we at NAPA think so. Master Naturalists were awed by his knowledge and ability to communicate this knowledge under field conditions. Bob heads the stewardship committee at the Vivian Johnson Malone Animal, Bird, and Land Preserve in Rio Vista, is on the Jesus Canyon stewardship committee, and is co-author of the new "Illustrated Flora of North Central Texas" published by the Botanical Research Institute of Texas.

Dr. Neil Ford, a renowned herpetologist, who takes care of the management of our Devil's Walkingstick Preserve in Tyler and is a professor at the University of Texas at Tyler came to Fort Worth to teach the class on the reptiles of North Central Texas.

Other NAPA land stewards all over the state are sharing their knowledge where ever it is needed. They are a very fine group of people!

THE NAPA ANNUAL MEETING

Each year when the time comes to write up the Annual Meeting, it is always with the same sigh while wishing that all the members could have been at the really good meeting. In the spring news letter we talked about the chance to meet some of the people who are very active in our organization, the delight in seeing people whom you haven't seen in a long time, the happy banter that goes on before and after the meeting, the networking, and of course, the absolutely wonderful food that is always present.

Now is the time to get the next Annual Meeting on your calendar so you won't miss any of it. The meeting will be on January 21, 1999 at the home of

Mrs. Jane Albritton
3436 University Blvd
Dallas, TX

The finance meeting will begin at 2:00 p.m., the members meeting will be at 3:00 p.m., and the reception at 5:00 p.m.

We really want to see you there!

