

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

E-mail _____

Phone (H) _____ (W) _____

Outdoor Interests _____

Circle your membership level and send check to:

Dave Dunford
2115 Harrison St
Topeka, KS 66611-1127

Join the Prairie Packer listserve? Yes No

Referred by: _____

Membership levels:

New members joining Jan thru Jun:

\$25.00 for mailed newsletter

\$20.00 for e-mailed newsletter

New member joining Jul thru Dec:

\$12.50 for mailed newsletter

\$10.00 for e-mailed newsletter

Renewals due prior to January 1.

\$25.00 for mailed newsletter

\$20.00 for e-mailed newsletter



**KANSAS PRAIRIE PACKERS
BASECAMP NEWSLETTER**

BASECAMP is published by the Kansas Prairie Packers Association, Inc., at Topeka, KS. Membership in Prairie Packers is open to individuals and families interested in hiking, backpacking, canoeing, bicycling, cross-country skiing and other outdoor activities.

www.prairiepackers.org

JULY, 2009

MONTHLY MEETING

WHEN: JULY 8, 2009

WHERE: Pizza Hut, 10th & Topeka, Topeka, KS
Board Meeting 6:00 pm, Visit and Eat 6:15 pm, Meeting 7:00 pm

PROGRAM: presented by Larry Mah

ACTIVITIES

July 11-- Saturday Walk – Denise Myers 785.806.5666.
Shawnee Lake full moon hike at 8:45 pm swim beach parking lot.

July 18-27-- Summer backpack – Dave Dunford 234.4667
Pecos Wilderness, Santa Fe, NM area. we'll talk about car pooling at the July 8th PP meeting. Anybody with questions can call me. Dave

July 25-26—The Flint Hills Death Ride has been scheduled for either Saturday or Sunday, July 25-26. The actual date is not too clear at this point. It usually runs about 70-80 miles of gravel roads in the Flint Hills with a cut-off ride of 40-60 miles. (not a PP event)

August 1-- Hike & swim - Denise Myers 785.806.5666. Melvern Lake

August 8-- Konza moonlight hike-Richard Johnson – 587.8731.

August 12—6:00 PM board meeting; 7:00 PM monthly meeting, Pizza Hut, 10th & Topeka Blvd, Topeka.

Prairie Packers Basecamp
11300 S Stanley Rd
Overbrook, KS 66524



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Activities

August 21-23--Car camp – Mike & Shari LaRue – 836.3167.

We will camp in the Michigan Valley campground next to the Pomona Lake dam. This is a Corp of Engineer site with a playground, swim beach and nearby trails. You can arrive Fri or Sat. If you are camping in an RV we are in site A4. If camping in a tent, let us know. We can have one tent per RV site. Sunday morning we'll have pancakes at our site, just bring your coffee.

September 5--First Saturday Walk – 10:00 am – Denise Myers 785.806.5666.

September 9—6:00 PM board meeting; 7:00 PM monthly meeting, Pizza Hut, 10th & Topeka Blvd, Topeka.

September 26-October 5--Fall backpack - Need a Leader!

October 3--First Saturday Walk – 10:00 am – Denise Myers 785.806.5666.

October 14—6:00 PM board meeting; 7:00 PM monthly meeting, Pizza Hut, 10th & Topeka Blvd, Topeka.

October 17-18--Canoe Kansas River, DeSoto to Kaw point - John Stambaugh 862.6621.

November 7--First Saturday Walk – 10:00 am – Denise Myers 785.806.5666.

November 11—6:00 PM board meeting; 7:00 PM monthly meeting, Pizza Hut, 10th & Topeka Blvd, Topeka.

November 14--Soup hike - Rick & Trudy Racine 484.2108.

December 5--First Saturday Walk – 10:00 am – Denise Myers 785.806.5666.

December 9—Annual Holiday potluck and election of officers, Lake Shawnee.

January 1, 2010—NewYear's Day hike - Jon & Rosemary Ware 266.2144.

Treasurer's Report

Treasurers Report for

May treasurer report:

Income - dues \$20.00

Paid out - Newsletter. \$32.22

Balance 5/25/09 - \$1452.13

June treasurer report:

Income - dues \$40.00

Paid out - Newsletter. \$32.78

Balance 6/25/09 - \$1,459.35

Membership

70—Paid members

53—Emailed newsletters

17—Mailed newsletters

11—Comps

The Membership Committee would like to challenge you to contact 5 or more people to inform them of the benefits of belonging to the Prairie Packers. Tell them the reasons they should join—love of the outdoors, health reasons, social connections, being around a great group of people! Use email, telephone, word of mouth, cards, etc. to spread the news to all your contacts!

There will be a fabulous prize at the end of the year for the current member that has recruited the most new members. Be sure to tell your recruits when they pay their membership dues to let Dave Dunford know who referred them to join.

Officers and Committee Chairs

President Denise Myers 986-6626
dmmopp@yahoo.com

Vice President Mary Glanville 234.4667
mglanville@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer Dave Dunford 234.4667
davedunford@sbcglobal.net

Programs Olivia Boyd 554.5559
beba_55_2008@hotmail.com

Activities Shari LaRue 836.3167
shari@rockytopacres.org

Membership Patty Jordan
Jan & Terese Hamilton
Teresa Stambaugh

Social Events Judy Shipman 228.3655
Mary Flin 741.2989

Newsletter Editor/Web Page
Mike LaRue 836.3167
mdlarue@rockytopacres.org

Board Members

Olivia Boyd 554.5559
Jo Chen 633.6421
Richard Johnson 587.8731
Jan Hamilton 633.9122
Terese Hamilton 633.9122
Kate Sieverson 817.7080
John Stambaugh 862.6621
Teresa Stambaugh 862.6621
Jon Ware 266.2144
Rosemary Ware 266.2144

Deadline for July newsletter submissions—**24 July.**

ing the wind shifted from north to south several times. Ah, good times. I found out later that the guys in the other two canoes had similar experiences. The wind and rain calmed down to the point where I felt I could safely proceed. As I turned the corner near the Seward Avenue ramp I saw the other two canoes on the ramp and they'd been unloaded. You don't need to be a mind reader to figure that one out do you? One of the guys (Mel I think) had one of those fancy smancy cell phones that you can access weather reports with and it had predicted that there was going to be more of

the same crummy life threatening weather for the next three days. They took a vote before I got there and decided to call it quits. That's probably the smartest decision we've made as a group so far. As we were loading our gear and canoes into a shuttle vehicle Ray asked if anyone'd be interested in finishing the trip later this year. I said I would if I had time and out of the corner of my eye I could see heads bobbing up and down and I heard a couple of mumbled yeahs. To be continued.....

When it comes to the great outdoors of Kansas, the most difficult decision is deciding what outdoor activity to do first. Let one of our new publications help you decide. If birding is what makes you tweet, then you'll be glad to know that Kansas offers some of the world's greatest birding. And if your wild about wildflowers, spring is a great time to take a wildflower tour in Kansas. For more Kansas travel information please visit www.TravelKS.com.

Kansas Great Outdoors Guide

Grab the fishing poles, make sure you pack the bikes, water skis, hiking boots, binoculars and don't forget the camera. Now you're almost ready to explore the great outdoors of Kansas. The only thing you need now is the *Kansas Great Outdoors Guide*.

Kansas has tons of wide-open spaces available for recreational use and the *Kansas Great Outdoors Guide* will point you in the right direction for the best hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, watersports and wildlife watching in the state.

Scenic Byways of Kansas

Kansas is home to nine scenic byways, two of which are officially designated National Scenic Byways. *Scenic Byways of Kansas* offers a glimpse into each one of these unique byways, along with maps and destinations to experience along the way. A pull-out poster featuring Kansas Wildflowers is included.

Great Birding in Great Bend

If you are one of the millions of Americans with a passion for birdwatching, you should know about the [fantastic birding that awaits you in Kansas](#). And there is no better place to go birding in Kansas than [Great Bend](#).

Great Bend is just minutes from two of the hottest birding spots in the world, [Cheyenne Bottoms](#) and [Quivira National Wildlife Refuge](#). You can even enjoy wildlife watching and birding from your vehicle along the [Wetlands and Wildlife National Scenic Byway](#).

Trip Reports

A Walk in the Park Submitted by Jerry Reichenberger

It was all waiting for us in Utah. The sunshine, spiraling red rock slot canyons, the tink, tink, tink of hidden springs and the ancient aroma of junipers, sage and pinion pine. The only thing standing in our way was a massive, slow moving spring snow storm in the Colorado Rockies that was dumping record amounts of snow and threatening to keep us in Kansas. Was this going to happen? Hell no! My hiking pard Chris, and I left Wichita right on schedule for South Central Utah via Gallup New Mexico, then straight north to the Four Corners area, across the extreme Northeastern corner of Arizona and by entering Southeastern Utah at Bluff we made our way up to Canyonlands National Park. The mileage is surprisingly close to the Northern route of I-70 but not as fast. After a couple days of lying around Needles Outpost we traded the clean showers and wonderful food they provide for five dry days in Chesler Park and eating out of a bag.

This year we chose the shorter trail into Chesler Park but one that is dry and once inside the park there isn't a drop of water to be found either. When I say "park", I mean Chesler Park. The Needles District in Canyonlands has many loop and one way hikes with plenty of water. By going a different route this year, I'll have hiked all of them. After our hike last year I think Chesler is special and warranted a return trip. With about twelve pounds of water hanging off our packs we started out early Monday, the 20th of April and under a turquoise sky, cool temps and light winds we hardly noticed the extra weight. On the rim of Elephant Canyon the La Sal Mountains, fifty miles to the Northeast, were completely covered by snow from the recent storm and the huge sandstone needles, banded with

streaks of red and yellow offered a nice photographic contrast. We crossed the canyon and made our way up a rock chute to a notch in the Needles and there before us lay the sagebrush flats of crescent shaped Chesler Park. Only five campsites are available and to reserve one you better get it six months in advance. For the first two nights we had site number two. This is a nice site situated between two huge boulders and is an excellent spot to lay low and conserve water and energy during the heat of the day. The views of Cataract Canyon of the Colorado River and the Maze beyond are all visible from the comforts of camp. It's an amazing display of shadow and light on the canyon, mesas and buttes as the sun makes its way across the western sky. The first night in the desert is always a thrill and the dry air reveals constellations rarely seen in the muggy Midwest. I stood there amazed underneath a wealth of stars.

Chesler Park has a long loop trail of about 13 miles. It's a good idea to use the park as a base camp and use these trails to get up close and personal with the Needles as they wind through and along side them. We divided the loop into two sections, a top and bottom with some route finding in the middle. We did the top section first. The hiking is relatively easy with some short scrambles up and through the notches to gain access to other hidden parks in the area. The two small parks we visited are aptly named Devils Kitchen and Devils Pocket. The Pocket has only one campsite available and this outdoor funhouse would be yours exclusively as it is surrounded by towering bluffs. The many cottonwoods in the pocket belie the fact that this is a bone dry area and sitting beneath the trembling interplay of sunlight and shadow in the wind blown leaves was a perfect place for lunch.

The next day we moved the camp to site five and used the remainder of the day to fetch

water. This is no ordinary hike to a stagnant pool as the holes lay trapped in pockets of slick rock and hidden deep in Elephant Canyon. Elephant Canyon is beautiful and the hike along its unfractured surface of weathered sandstone is some of the best the park has to offer. There is a certain beauty in the surface of the white and pink stone. We spent most of the afternoon in the canyon and hiked out in the cool of the evening shadows and got back in camp to see the rock turn to a rose color.

Day three we hiked the Joint trail in conjunction with the lower loop. The Joint is a section of passages through solid rock and is shoulder width in places and about one mile long. There is an interesting cavern filled with hundreds of cairns of all sizes and gravity defying styles placed there by hikers. Once out of the Joint you enter the relatively flat, open desert called the Grabens. After about a mile the terrain begins to acquire a more rugged character, dipping into small arroyos and crossing frequent outcroppings of sandstone as we enter the Needles again. The views are incredible as you look back south and west. As we make our way through another notch the wind is forced between these slots in powerful gusts and is so strong I swear you can actually see or, more like, feel the rock being blasted away. The ravens that brave these currents shoot through like jet fighters with their wings pinned back but with much more grace and beauty and they don't tear the sky to shreds. Back in camp the evening has an amber glow to it from all the dust in the air and molten streamers wavered around the sitting sun. We climbed our favorite rock and watched the sunset for the last time.

On the trail out the next morning the wind picked up early and with it so did the sand. I swear my teeth are worn to a nub from the sand, my eyes feel like a striker on a matchbook when I blink and my nose is a little bloody from the arid climate. But you know I think everyone needs a little red dirt and sand in their flapjacks from time to time, it's good

for the soul. Here's to seeing you all on the sunny slopes of the Shinning Mountains this summer.

Kansas River Float
Submitted by Russell Gray

June 6, 2006 Saturday We met this morning at the confluence of the Republican and Smokey Hill River in Junction City with the intent of paddling on the Kansas River all the way to Kaw Point in Kansas City. We'd allowed seven days to do the job. There are six of us; Mel Heflin, Richard Johnson, Dave Dunford, Ray Jordan and me. We got going about 9:30 after the traditional "standing on the bank with the canoes behind us" pictures were taken. It was a beautiful day and the river was running reasonably fast. We found this terrific sandbar and there's a full moon. It don't get any better than this. After we got the tents set up and finished eating we sat around the campfire and ate popcorn that Ray Jordan had so graciously prepared over the campfire and swapped lies. Mel took a little light hearted ribbing because the tent he brought isn't exactly a rugged outdoor model but more like a Wal Mart \$49.99 special. All of us, including Mel, got to calling it the "Circus Tent" Oh well, as long as it keeps the mosquito's off of you who cares.

June 7, 2009 Sunday Last night after we'd been in the sack for about an hour all hell broke loose weather-wise. There was rain and lighytening with what we heard on the radio later 50 to 60 MPH winds. Two of the tents blew down but guess what? Mel's \$49.99 "Circus Tent" hung in there with the help of Mel and his tent mate Richard. My tent was closest to them and as I was spread eagled in my tent hanging on to the rope in the dome trying to keep it from blowing away I could hear Richard whooping and hollering and having a good old time. I thought to myself "Is he in the same storm I am?" He ex-

plained to me this morning that he figured complaining about it wouldn't do any good so he thought he might as well have some fun. That is so Richard Johnson. Mel had got up in the middle of the storm and had found logs to stack on the four corners of the tent to help hold it down. Mel is a resourceful guy. After his tent had blown down Cool Hand Dave Dunford crawled under a blue tarp and went to sleep in the wet sand for the rest of the evening. He's about as unflappable as they come and I can't imagine what kind of a crisis it would take to get him worked up about. We stopped in Wamego and had dinner at the local restaurant. I had a triple decker cheeseburger with bacon and extra fries which I know wasn't the healthiest choice on the menu but I figured "What the heck, I'm on vacation." And besides there's a remote chance I'll burn off all that fat before the end of the trip. Right? We're camped now on the same sandbar we camped on last year. It's about a half mile west of the bridge that goes north to highway 24 and south to Paxico and Newbury. I think all of us want to believe we got the bad weather out of the way last night and we won't have to deal with it anymore. But I noticed earlier that the guys were moving about quietly putting logs on the corners of their tents again tonight and burying deadmen rocks in the sand to tie their tents down. Do they know something I don't or are they suffering from some kind of negative weather neurosis as a result of last night? Maybe I'd better get out there and take some perfunctory precautions too.

June 8, 2009 Monday Good grief, last night was an almost instant replay of the night before only the wind blew 45 to 55 MPH instead of 50 to 60 MPH. The good news is none of the tents blew down. Who says you can't teach old dogs new tricks. That ought to just about guarantee we're done with the bad weather huh? Once again we had a tail wind and an agreeable current all day. It was sweet! We're on a sandbar/island now and we're sharing it

with Mommy turtles. It's very interesting to see how they work. They dig a hole about six inches deep in the sand and lay their eggs in them. I did not know that. It didn't appear they made an effort to cover them up so I guess they're counting on the sand to cave in and cover the eggs. One of the guys said he thought the Mommy turtles just crawl away after their job is done and leave the future of the baby turtles up to fate. It doesn't sound like a good idea to me but they've probably been doing it that way for a million years or more so who am I to argue with success. The other interesting thing the Mommy turtles do is disguise themselves in the sand by partially covering themselves up with the sand. There are so many things I don't know. I guess I knew that already because that's what my grand kids keep telling me. It's a beautiful evening and Ray popped more corn for us. Life is good.

June 9, 2009 Tuesday Last night was perfect with moderate temperatures and almost no wind but as soon as I got in the water this morning it began to lightly rain. Not a good omen. Following our portage at Topeka Water Department Dam the lightning began and by the time we got to the turn north after the Kansas Avenue bridge there came a monsoon wind and rain. The solo canoe I was in was bobbing around like a cork in the ocean and was becoming very difficult to control. I'd lost track of the other two canoes ahead of me a long time ago. I crossed back and forth across the river several times thinking I could get some kind of a wind or current advantage by doing so. It didn't work. Finally I found a horizontal tree trunk sticking out from the right bank and worked my way over to it so I'd have something to hang on to and a little protection from the headwind. It wasn't a great idea but it was better than nothing. It worked fairly well for that purpose but then the canoe started to fill up with water so while I was hanging on to the tree trunk with one arm I had to bail water with the other. To make matters more challeng-