

TEXAS BISON

2014 JOURNAL



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OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TEXAS BISON ASSOCIATION

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From the President

WOW!!!

Hello Fellow TBA Members;

WOW !!! I don't know how else to describe our May 2014 Texas Bison Association Spring Conference in Fredericksburg, TX. We had good attendance, a great meeting, and phenomenal fund raising. The wonderful members of the Texas Bison Association that attended the conference donated \$5,500 towards scholarships for the Junior Judging program. That is a fantastic boost to the TBA's Junior Judging program. Thank you very much to all who participated.

We also celebrated the 20th Anniversary of the Texas Bison Association while we were in Fredericksburg in May. That is 20 years of good people donating their time and effort to make the association work. Volunteer non-profit associations can be a challenge, but the members of the Texas Bison Association make it work. Thank you to all of those folks.

The Texas Bison Advantage Fall Workshop will be held on October 24 & 25, 2014 at the Jay Barksdale Ranch near Crockett, TX. Last year we had a ranch day in conjunction with the Junior Judging program. It was great; however, many folks did not want to choose between events. So this year we will be holding a non-competitive adult judging program on Friday, October 24 followed by additional events in Crockett that evening. On Saturday the youth take over with the Texas State Championship Bison Junior Judging event. It should be fun; put it on your calendar. In addition, plans are already being made for our 2015 Spring Conference to be held in Austin on the first full weekend of May; put that on your calendar also.

It continues to be a great time to be in the bison business. Prices are strong. The National Bison Association conducts a Marketers Survey twice per year and the large majority of those marketers continue to say that demand is exceeding supply and they are concerned about trying to meet that growing demand.



The focus of our 2014 Texas Bison Journal is youth. While many of the TBA members have spent all or a portion of the last 20 years creating and building this great industry, it is all for nothing if we do not transition this success to the next generation. We are at the point where we need to think about transition not only on a personal level, but also on an industry level. We need to listen to the youth, recognize their talents, and encourage them to get involved. We will all be better if we do.

For everybody that is raising bison, always be thankful for the opportunity we have to be around these amazing animals. And for those of you who are just thinking about it, talk to a Texas Bison Association member to learn more. It is a great opportunity.

Thank you to all the members of the Texas Bison Association for all they have done for this association and for the bison industry.

Sincerely,
Roy Liedtke
President, Texas Bison Association

"Whether you think you can or whether you think you can't – you are right."

Henry Ford

20th Anniversary of the TBA

~ Youth and Bison Edition of the Texas Bison Journal ~

From the inception in 1994 – twenty years ago – the members of the Texas Bison Association have always been about sharing information for the betterment of the entire bison community. As years pass, the idea of “the next generation” of bison ranchers becomes more a reality than a vision. With that thought in mind, this edition of the Texas Bison Journal is focused on “youth and bison.” And what a great number of youth and youthful projects are in the works: junior bison judging, York Jr. High’s fund raising project to support the State of Texas bison herd, bison recipes aimed at the younger set and of course, our very own Herdsmen – the buffalo mascot handlers from West Texas A&M University. There is so much more we can do ... and so appreciate all of you joining all of us along the trail.



The Texas Bison Association works to promote and preserve Texas bison through leadership, education and building public awareness for the bison ranching and meat industry. Founded in 1994, the Texas Bison Association provides assistance in raising and producing bison among our membership and promotes the nutritional health aspects of the North American Bison to consumers. The TBA

welcomes anyone with an interest in the preservation and promotion and production of the North American Bison.

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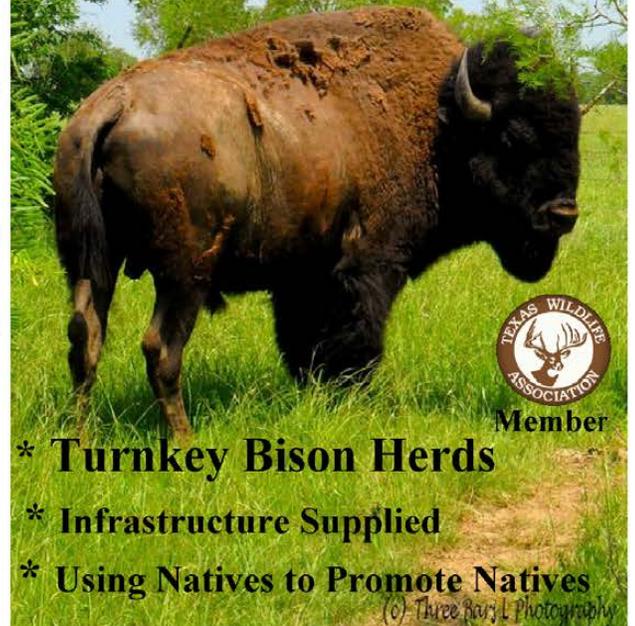
The Buffalo Drum News is always free at: www.allaboutbison.com

Our newsletter is a no-spin-zone reporting of current bison news every month. Over 700 articles have been archived, by issue, on the web site. We sincerely hope that you benefit from the sharing.

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The Bison Bibliography

Youthful Version:

American Buffalo

Steven Rinella; 2008. A great read for teens and above; The adventure of the author's personal buffalo hunt woven together with bison history, bison present and the future of bison. Exciting, entertaining, well written and well documented (and yes .. it was on the list last year, but well worth the mention to our younger readers).

Alias, The Buffalo Doctor

Jean Cummings; 1980. The documentary story of Dr. Bill Cummings and how his involvement with bison becomes a passionate family affair. And don't forget "Little Joe" ..the buffalo that loved to come in the house. Non-fiction; pre-teens and teens.

Where the Buffaloes Begin

Olaf Baker; 1981. Touchingly illustrated by **Stephen Gammell**, it gently tells a Native American perspective through the eyes of 10 year old "Little Wolf". Grade school and pre-teens.

Buffalo Before Breakfast

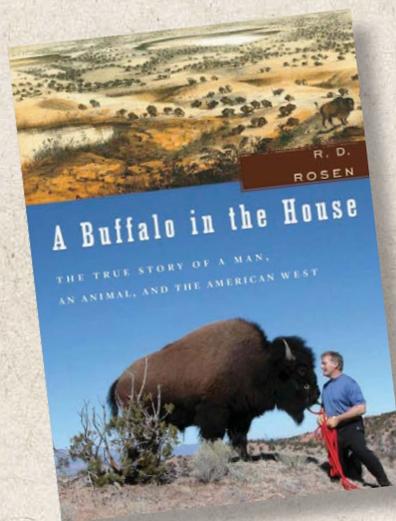
Mary Pope Osborne; 1999. Part of the Magic Treehouse series for mid grade reading (6-9 years of age). This book personalizes the native story of bison existence and bison destruction by bringing the reader into the happenings. Pretty comprehensive in what it covers.

Bonko

Józef Wilkon and Robert Wolfgang Schnell; 1969. Printed in the Netherlands, it is the fictionalized story of a newborn baby Wisent – the European bison. Delightful, whimsical and accurately telling the story of the third "member" of the modern day bison clan (along with the American Plains bison and the Canadian Woods bison).

The Buffalo in the Mall

Molly Levite Griffis; illustrated by Kim Doner; 1996. Purely a kids story with fun illustrations. It does some to de-mystify bison, but might also give some false hopes about raising them indoors (see Jean Cummings book above and R.D. Rosen's book below).

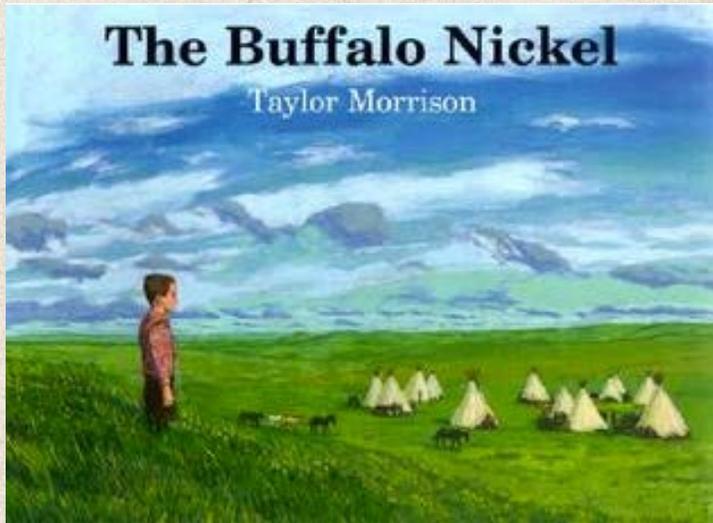


A Buffalo in the House

R.D. Rosen; 2004. The true story of an orphaned bison calf, lovingly raise by artist/ sculptress Veryl Goodnight and her husband, Roger Brooks. No fairy tail ending, though, as "Charlie" has a serious accident that eventually brings him down. But in the interim, the bond and interaction between animal and man is something both young and old enjoy sharing.

The Buffalo Harvest

Mayer and Roth; 1958. A gritty, earthy historical recollection as told by one who participated in the great killing of the bison herds at the turn of the 19th Century (Frank Mayer) to someone who wanted to listen (Charles Roth). For those who really want to hear how it happened and won't be put off by the honesty. Puts you out with the hunters. (And yes, this, too, was on last year's list, ... but an important and interesting book for all ages).



The Buffalo Nickel

Taylor Morrison; 2002. The story of the creation of the original (1913) buffalo and Indian head nickel, and of James Frasers, the artist who sculpted it. Well illustrated and weaving in the people, the history, the technical difficulties and the reasons that even today, it is one of the most recognized coins in the history of the world.

How To Find A Job Without Even Looking

Lonny Joe Coffey; Teens can really use Coffey’s encouragement that they .. each of them .. have talents and abilities if they will just lose, for a few minutes, the fears and insecurities we all harbor. Not a bad book for adults, either. And what does this have to do with buffalo, you might ask? Outside of the irrefutable fact that Mr. Coffey is a graduate of West Texas A & M University .. and thus personally a “buffalo,” or that he grew up working on his grandfather’s Hereford, Texas feedlot Not one thing. Still, an easy and empowering book for young and old alike.

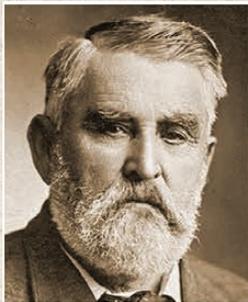
The North American Bison

John E. Becker; 2003. Factually pretty accurate, but concise and worded for pre-teens and early teens. What bison are and are not; how the great slaughter occurred and the direction we seem to be headed. Good basics.



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Charles Goodnight

Texan Colonel Charles Goodnight was inducted into the National Buffalo Foundation's Hall of Fame as a Historic Honoree in 1984.

Late in 1845 he accompanied his family from Illinois on the 800-mile trek south to a site in Milam County, Texas, near Nashville-on-the-Brazos, riding bareback on a white-faced mare named Blaze. He later took pride in the fact that he was born at the same time as the Republic of Texas and that he "joined" Texas the year it joined the Union.



In 1880 Goodnight helped organize and served as first president of the Panhandle Stock Association in Mobeetie. Two years later he bought the Quitaque (Lazy F) Ranch and reportedly became the first Panhandle rancher to build fences of barbed wire.

Goodnight was a pioneer in the use of artificial watering facilities and the ownership of permanent ranges in fee. As an early believer in improvement through breeding, he developed one of the nation's finest herds through the introduction of Hereford bulls. He often spent weeks at a time at the stockyards of Kansas City, buying and selling cattle to upgrade his herds. With his wife's encouragement, he also started a domestic buffalo herd, sired by a bull he named Old Sikes, from which he developed the "cattalo" by crossing bison with polled Angus cattle. He also invented the first practical sidesaddle, with an additional horn to rest the left knee, for his wife.

Charles Goodnight at times was a man of great wealth and land ownership. Various investments and projects succeeded, others failed resulting in significant financial losses. Those failures did not falter him and his wife's generosity when finances rebounded.

As civic leaders and promoters of the higher education he was

denied, the colonel and his wife opened Goodnight College at Goodnight in 1898. After selling out his interest in the Goodnight-Thayer Company in 1900, Goodnight limited his ranching activities to sixty sections surrounding his house and near the railroad. There he continued his experiments with buffalo.

The Goodnight Ranch became a major Panhandle tourist attraction and featured buffalo meat on its menus. Buffalo from the Goodnight herd were shipped to zoos in New York and other eastern cities, Yellowstone National Park, and even to Europe, and Goodnight's wildlife-preservation efforts gained the attention of such naturalists as William T. Hornaday, Edmund Seymour, and Ernest Thompson Seton. As a friend of Quanah Parker and other Plains Indian leaders in Oklahoma, Goodnight staged occasional buffalo hunts for former braves. He also exchanged visits with the Pueblo tribes in New Mexico and gave one tribe a foundation buffalo herd.

Like today and the efforts of the members of the Texas Bison Association assuring the bison future, so too did Colonel Goodnight over a century ago.

Visit www.nationalbuffalofoundation.org to learn about all Honorees

The National Buffalo Foundation has worked in partnership with ranchers, park managers and educational institutions to develop programs, research and activities to continue restoration efforts, explore herd health and bring buffalo back to the American diet.

The diversity of projects that the Foundation has undertaken can be reviewed at our website. Since 1995 over \$350,000 has gone towards bison research and education.

The Foundation's ability to sponsor projects is totally dependent on the gifting generosity of bison enthusiasts.

Donors can contribute on-line or mail a contribution to our Treasurer whose contact information is available at the website. In addition to supporting the Foundation's mission your donation is tax deductible.

The National Buffalo Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization.

Preserving the Heritage and fostering the Future of American Buffalo



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www.NationalBuffaloFoundation.org

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Bison Business Nears \$280 Million in Meat Sales in 2013

Sales Jump 12% Over Previous Year

Westminster, CO (May 19, 2014) – Sales of bison meat in restaurants and grocery stores jumped more than 12 percent last year, as the U.S. bison business neared \$280 million in total sales at the retail and foodservice level, according to information compiled last week by the National Bison Association.

The Economic Size of the Bison Business analysis is compiled each May by the National Bison Association, based on annual slaughter numbers, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Wholesale bison meat price report, and interviews with major bison marketers. Because of the significance of state-inspected processing, the association only compiles the report after the USDA releases its annual slaughter report of state and federally inspected processing numbers in late April.

According to the Bison Association's analysis, the sale of bison meat hit \$278.9 million in 2013, compared to \$248.3 million in 2012.

Dave Carter, executive director of the National Bison Association, said, "much of the increase in overall sales was the result of growing market penetration, and not higher prices to consumers."

"The 57,200 bison processed in 2013 represented an 11 percent increase in the number of animals harvested

over 2012," Carter said. "We are proud of this growth, but recognize that we will still be considered a niche product when compared to the major meat commodities."

According to the NBA analysis, 45 percent of every dollar spent on bison meat in retail outlets or restaurants went directly back to ranchers who are restoring bison to rangelands and pastures across the country.

Carter noted, "According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the average farmer and rancher in the United States receives less than 16 cents from the consumer's food dollar. We are pleased that nearly half of every dollar spent on bison flows directly back to the farmers and ranchers who raise the animals."

Carter noted that the association is encouraging existing producers to expand their herds, and for new producers to join the business, to keep pace with growing consumer demand.

Information on purchasing bison meat, and raising bison as a business, is available on the National Bison Association website at www.bisoncentral.com. Shoppers wanting to know where to locate bison meat in their area can also download the free BisonFinder app for smartphones and tablets.

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Who is Ernest Harold Baynes?

Born in Calcutta, India on 1 May 1868. Married Louise Bert O Connell. He passed away on 21 Jan 1925 in New Hampshire, USA.

Baynes needs to be remembered as the man and visionary behind the creation of the original National Bison Society in 1905. Himself a nature writer and lecturer, it was Baynes' badgering that got US President Theodore Roosevelt to sit as the honorary President of the NBS. It was also Baynes that persuaded William Hornaday be the Society's first President. Both Hornaday and Roosevelt have been recognized for their involvement in creating federal sanctuaries – most notably Yellowstone National Park, Wichita Mountain National Preserve and the National Bison Range in Moise, Montana. Baynes took on being Secretary of the NBS. He didn't want the recognition; he wanted the results.

Mr. Baynes wrote, lectured and talked "buffalo preservation" at every possible opportunity.

"I congratulate the buffalo upon having such an efficacious man as you to champion him," the president wrote to Baynes on Aug. 31, 1905 (shortly after the founding of the National Bison Society).

In a publicity pamphlet issued shortly after the creation of the National Bison Society, Baynes wrote:

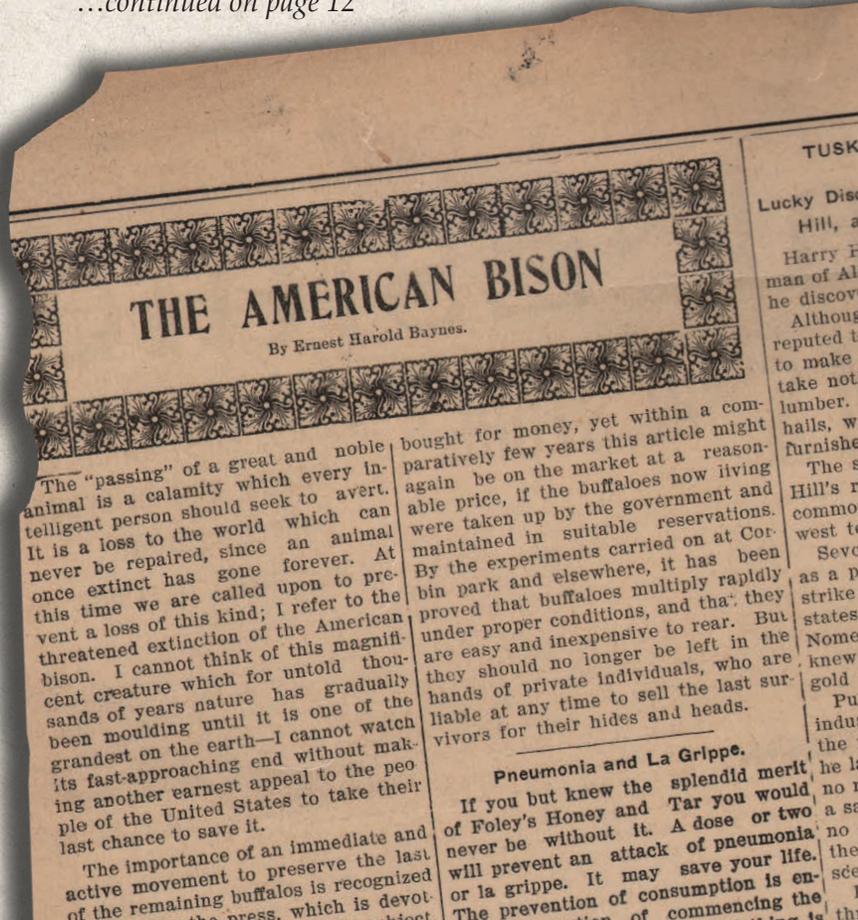
"The American Bison or Buffalo, our grandest native animal is in grave danger of becoming extinct; and it is the duty of the people of today to preserve, for future generations, this picturesque wild creature which has played so conspicuous a part in the history of America. We owe it to our descendants, that all possible effort shall now be made, looking to perpetual increase and preservation of this noble animal, whose passing otherwise be a matter of universal and lasting regret."



MR. ERNEST HAROLD BAYNES DRIVING THE ONLY TEAM OF BUFFALOES IN THE WORLD

Copyright, 1906, by ERNEST HAROLD BAYNES, Meriden, N. H.

In 2005, in Meridan, New Hampshire, where Baynes spent most of his adult life, there was discovered a scrapbook made by Baynes containing original works of his and his contemporaries from a hundred years earlier. In a September 5, 2013 story ...continued on page 12



THE AMERICAN BISON

By Ernest Harold Baynes.

The "passing" of a great and noble animal is a calamity which every intelligent person should seek to avert. It is a loss to the world which can never be repaired, since an animal once extinct has gone forever. At this time we are called upon to prevent a loss of this kind; I refer to the threatened extinction of the American bison. I cannot think of this magnificent creature which has gradually been moulding until it is one of the grandest on the earth—I cannot watch its fast-approaching end without making another earnest appeal to the people of the United States to take their last chance to save it.

The importance of an immediate and active movement to preserve the last of the remaining buffalos is recognized by the press, which is devoted

bought for money, yet within a comparatively few years this article might again be on the market at a reasonable price, if the buffaloes now living were taken up by the government and maintained in suitable reservations. By the experiments carried on at Corbin park and elsewhere, it has been proved that buffaloes multiply rapidly under proper conditions, and that they are easy and inexpensive to rear. But they should no longer be left in the hands of private individuals, who are liable at any time to sell the last survivors for their hides and heads.

Pneumonia and La Grippe.

If you but knew the splendid merit of Foley's Honey and Tar you would never be without it. A dose or two will prevent an attack of pneumonia or la grippe. It may save your life. The prevention of consumption is essential. Commencing the

Who is Ernest Harold Baynes

...continued from page 11

written by Alex Hanson for the Valley News – a paper local to Meridan:

“The scrapbook was among the countless boxes of Baynes’ papers found in the attic of the Annie Duncan house five or so years ago, when ownership of the home transferred to Kimball Union Academy. ‘It was in brown paper tied with twine and it was marked ‘buffalo scrapbook’ in Baynes’ unmistakable hand,” said Margaret Drye, president of the Meriden Bird Club (an organization also founded by Baynes).

“If the book proves anything, it’s that Baynes played a far larger role in saving the bison than he’s been given credit for.”

“While Austin Corbin, William Hornaday and Teddy Roosevelt are often recognized for their contributions (in saving the bison from extinction), Baynes has escaped notice.”

“Baynes’ efforts consisted mainly of keeping the issue in the public eye and in the corridors of power. He wrote op-ed pieces for papers around the country, and also wasn’t shy about contacting Roosevelt and his cabinet secretaries.”

“In a relatively short period, a creature that had once numbered in the “countless millions” had been reduced to a critically low point. Now was the time for action: ‘the least we can do now to partly atone for this ruthless slaughter is to join in measures to prevent what must otherwise be the final result of perhaps the greatest wrong ever inflicted by man on a valuable animal”

This was Ernest Harold Baynes. Thank him once in a while, won’t you?

1. Ancestry.com – records on Ernest Harold Baynes
2. Raymond Gorges, Ernest Harold Baynes, Naturalist and Crusader, (1928)
3. Mark V. Barrow, Jr. Natures Ghosts, pg 118 (2009)
4. Excerpted from the Baynes Notebook referenced above
5. Alex Hanson, Valley News Story – September 5, 2013
6. Alex Hanson, Valley News Story – September 5, 2013
7. Gorges, at 120, quoting Baynes



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Stuck in the mud

The room filled with the smell of Expo markers as Ms. Adams drew a picture of her little red car on the board that had been caught in a sticky situation. My name is Kenzie Arent, I am a 12 year old, seventh grade student. Once again I found myself in one of Ms. Adam's Texas History classes listening to one of her interesting stories. As I listened to her talk, I closed my eyes and tuned in to Ms. Adam's compelling adventure.

The tires spun helpless in the watery mess of a puddle, the axle sunk slowly as it tried to keep moving down the deserted dirt road. My history teacher, Ms. Adams, told us about how she often traveled, this time finding her way to Caprock Canyon, home of the State Bison herd. As I listened to her story I could see the rest of the class amused with huge grins on their faces. Ms. Adams travels here and there with a desire to see every piece of history that she can, so she can come back and share the stories with her classes. "Over the years my travels have taken me on many, many back roads allowing me to discover what others might miss."

This is why on a September morning, she stopped at a Texas Historical marker and decided to turn down a little red dirt road along side a cotton field, hoping to find one of those hidden historical gems of Texas. According to Ms. Adams, "The only problem was that there had been a gully washer in the night, I mean a real frog strangler! And there was what appeared to me to be a little puddle of water on that red dirt road."

Ms. Adams continued, "Now mind you, I have driven all over creation in my ten year old Silverado pickup truck through puddles just like this, but this trip I was in my low-rider Hyundai, Pepi. Who knew that my little red car would sink to the axles on that little red dirt road and be hopelessly stuck in seconds? No amount of reverse and forward could get traction on those spinning tires. So it was that I found myself knee deep in mud and about a mile from the nearest ranch gate." The class listened intently, between the laughter, at Ms. Adams always unique story telling talent.

"After taking a slippery hike to find the ranch gates locked and deserted, I waited by Pepi, in between the towns of Turkey and Quitaque, for a heroic car to pass by and help me break free of the mud's unyielding grip. Finally, after waiting for over an hour, an old, dirty pickup truck slowed to a stop and a gruff, old fireman sauntered out to help.



Photo by :Penny Adams

His tailgate creaked and crashed loudly as it dropped forward. After, he hiked a long chain out of his truck. It clanked and rattled as he hooked the rusty chain to his axle. "I'm too old to crawl in that mud under your car, Darlin'. You'll have to do this for yourself", the old fireman muttered in a sympathetic voice. This is how," Ms. Adams went on, "I managed to get mud all over my fresh, clean clothes. Try to explain that to the dry cleaners!"

"When I finished sprawling under my car and fumbling with the chain to tie it around my axle, the fireman gave me one direction, "Get your car in neutral, and when we go, WE'RE GONNA GO! No kidding!" Ms. Adams shouted, "Pepi and I flew out of that cotton field sliding all over the place and finally landed on the other side of the main road facing the opposite direction."

The class and I laughed at the imagined sight of Ms. Adams soaring through the sky in little Pepi with mud caked on her clothes, face, and car. It was a hilarious ending to her tall tale. However, in truth, it was only the beginning.



...continued on page 14

Stuck in the Mud

...continued from page 13

Bison Ideas

Following some thanks and appreciation to the old fireman, Ms. Adams went on with her journey to visit the bison, but she definitely had to change her clothes first.

Once Ms. Adams arrived in Quitaque, the Bison Festival just happened to be in full swing. The smoky smell of barbecue drifted through the air along with the southern sounds of Asleep At The Wheel, who were playing on a stage before a backdrop of true desert plains. Many colorful stands filled with arts and crafts and other fun activities lined the usually empty streets. The festival was filled with people; each one excited to support and to see the State Bison Herd. She was here to share the ideas that had been evolving in her mind ever since she learned about the state bison herd in a magazine. She was teaching Problem Based Learning this year, and this opportunity seemed perfect. She imagined that her class could adopt one of the bison, not by stuffing him into her little car and bringing him home, but by using a GPS tracking collar.



At the festival, Ms. Adams met Donald Beard, superintendent of Caprock Canyon State Park to discuss her ideas about how she could include the state herd in her classes.

Caprock Canyon is a state park in the Texas Panhandle that is home to the official bison herd of Texas. This herd is a direct line of descendants from the original Great Southern plains herds that roamed across the Texas plains until they were hunted to near extinction. In the 1870s, a rancher named Charles Goodnight and his wife, Mary Anne, saved a group of abandoned calves left to die on the plains. The bison at Caprock Canyon are their descendants. The

state bison herd is one of the only herds remaining of the Southern Plain bison and still graze on the same grasses that their ancestors did hundreds of years before.

From Mr. Beard, Ms. Adams learned of the park's plans to expand from 1,000 acres to over 11,000. The herd is easily monitored at 1,000 acres, but 11,000 acres of canyonland is a whole different story. Her idea was to place a tracking collar on the lead bison, then the herd's movement could be tracked and potential problems could be dealt with or avoided. Her students back at York Junior High, in Spring, Texas, would be able to help monitor the animals from their classroom. She knew this could be the perfect partnership and so did Mr. Beard. He agreed to help her in any way that he could. He also shared some ideas of his own for Ms. Adams' class.

Before making her way back home, Ms. Adams stopped by Caprock Canyon to see the herd that had brought her on this miraculous adventure. Once she arrived, she was immediately greeted by the bison, and the sign that had welcomed her a few seconds earlier had now become a scratching post for the back of a large, male bison. Bison were scattered throughout the park, each one grazing on luscious grass. She watched as the bison, so large and powerful, acted so gentle and kind. Eventually, she said her goodbyes, but couldn't wait to start helping the herd.

Bring Home the Herd

It would not be a simple task, buying a tracking collar for a lead bison. The best deal that Ms. Adams and her teaching team could find was \$3500. This included the collar and the software to monitor it. This collar will last for about 2-3 years, so not only will students this year get to track the bison, but for several years to come, students at York will be able to follow them using classroom computers.

Ms. Adams also discovered the possibility of buying a wildlife camera to place near a watering hole. With this, her students could observe the animals in their natural habitat without disturbing them. They could also be used to help Caprock Canyon find ways to improve the areas around the watering hole.

As beneficial as that might be, it was well beyond any small school budget that could be allotted to her, so how could all of the students work together to help the bison? Ms. Adams returned to her classes with a plan to raise some money.

As a student who sat in her class and listened to her crazy stories and her plans for adopting a bison, I think I can speak for all of my classmates, we all loved the idea of helping the bison. Kelly Shen, a student at York said, "The bison project is really interesting and

...continued on page 16



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Grand Champion Male
Grand Champion Female
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Producer of the Year-Market Class

DTBA Black Hills Buffalo Classic Show & Sale

Young Guns Yearling Bulls- *First Place*
Young Guns Yearling Bulls- *Third Place*
High Selling Bull

2013

NBA Gold Trophy Show & Sale

Heifer Market Class- *Gold & Bronze*
Producer of the Year

DTBA Black Hills Buffalo Classic Show & Sale

Young Guns Yearling Bulls- *Third Place*
Girlz Gone Wild Two Year Old Bred Heifer-
Second Place
Girlz Gone Wild Two Year Old Bred Heifer-
Reserve Champion Female
First & Second Highest Selling Bulls

2012

NBA Gold Trophy Show & Sale

Bull Market Class- *Gold*
Heifer Market Class- *Bronze*

DTBA Black Hills Buffalo Classic Show & Sale

Young Guns Yearling Bulls- *Reserve Champion*
Young Guns Yearling Bulls- *First & Second Place*

2011

NBA Gold Trophy Show & Sale

Market Producer of the year
Bull Market Class- *Silver*
Heifer Market Class- *Gold & Bronze*

DTBA Black Hills Buffalo Classic Show & Sale

Grand Champion Male
Young Guns Yearling Bulls- *First & Second Place*

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Stuck in the Mud

...continued from page 14

cool. It is new and I have never done anything like it before. I am very excited and ready to raise money to help the bison!" Some kids may not have believed all of her crazy stories, but the red dirt left in her parking spot sure does seem like convincing evidence that her adventures were true!

Each class brainstormed ideas to raise money. One of the first ideas took place outside of school. On a warm sunny afternoon, students volunteered at Nest Fest, which was a local festival to support our schools and junior highs. While there, students sold T-shirts, bracelets, hats, magazines, held a raffle, and even auctioned off a handmade walking stick. The students sold over 35 bison t-shirts and raised over \$200. "The best part was getting to interact with people and getting to help the bison at the same time. I did this to help the school and take care of the herd. I also loved getting to know the other people that helped with the booth and who love the bison just as much as I do!" said Megan Ellen, a student who volunteered at the booth.

York Junior High was visited by Donald Beard, Superintendent of Caprock Canyon State Park. While at York, Mr. Beard talked about the bison herd and Caprock Canyon. He explained how the bison were nearly hunted to extinction and how the Goodnights had rescued the calves, and that the bison herd at Caprock Canyon today are indeed the direct descendants of the Southern Plains Herd. His presentation all got us all motivated to help the bison.

As the project grew, it became part of every single class. In Mrs. Sandra Rahmaty's Science class, we researched Caprock Canyon and created posters showing the ecoregions, activities, and organisms of the park. We researched these ecoregions and found all of the species that call Caprock Canyon their home. We learned that the bison play a major role in the park's food webs. They are a primary consumer and only eat plants (Producers). Students also researched fun activities in the park. Other than watching the bison, you can hike, canoe, or even ride horses. We also found weather forecasts of Caprock Canyon, as we found more information we learned the park has an arid climate.

Language Arts teacher, Brandon Downing, taught us how to write persuasive essays in the form of letters to Carter Smith, the executive director of Texas Parks and Wildlife, Governor Rick Perry, and Laura Bush's foundation, Taking Care of Texas. These letters spread the word of our project and helped us gain financial support. We also planned to contact big wildlife companies who, in the future, might help us raise money or help us share our project with the public. Writing



this article is another example of how we have used the bison project to learn effective writing in Language Arts.

Mrs. Kristy Patrick, the Project Based Learning math teacher used the bison herd in her lessons as well. Her students learned how to calculate different percentages. Including the percentage of money we still needed to raise along the way. With the expansion of the park, students learned how to calculate percentages and other math concepts based on the amount of acres per bison needed for grazing.

Of course, Ms. Adams' Texas History class played a big role in the Bison Project. In addition to learning about the bison and how they were an important part of Texas history, we also discussed the bison project and brainstormed different ideas or ways to help the bison. We even wrote and will soon film public service announcements that will be shown at the Caprock Partner's meeting. From there, they will be sent out to Texas Parks and Wildlife, Taking Care of Texas, and the Texas Bison Association in the spring to promote the project and spread the word. Each day we get closer to our goal.

More Than Halfway There

In November, York students, along with the help of librarian, Jackie Goddard, and instructional technologist, Bethany Reese launched a Bison Project website, <http://yorklovesbison.wix.com/bison>. It has lots of information about the project and a donate button, so people can donate to our cause from all across Texas.

By the middle of the school year, the Bison Project had really taken off. On December 19, York partnered with McDonald's to create a York McTeacher Night. Twenty percent of McDonald's drive-through profits from that night went directly to The Bison Project! Although McYork was only expected to raise a little over \$500, the event had a great turnout, raising over \$950, increasing our total profit to \$2580.

Carter Smith from Texas Parks and Wildlife responded to our persuasive letters and agreed to help our Bison Project. Other organizations such as York PTO, Caprock Canyon State Park, the Texas Bison Association, Calfee Specialties, Cecil Miskin from Buffalo Gold have also supported our project. We are so thankful to all of them!

After our Bison Project was featured in a local newspaper and hearing the news of how much money we had raised, my own parents felt like they needed to pitch in and help out the bison. I was really surprised and excited when my mom donated \$500! I was really proud and appreciative that my parents were so generous and supportive! Thanks Mom and Dad! This donation brought our earnings to over \$3050! We only need \$500 more!



Home of the Herd

As I learned more and more about the bison, I wanted to see them in person. That is why my family and I ventured out to Caprock Canyon in search of the famous bison herd. After the long drive, we were finally greeted by the Caprock Canyon sign as the bright stars glimmered in the night.

The grass rustled in the spotlight of the luminous moon and in the distance I could see hundreds of silent shadows dancing in the night. The car rumbled along

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HELPING THE HERD

Stuck in the Mud

...continued from page 13

the dark rocky road we had been driving along to reach Caprock Canyon. Earlier we passed the large buffalo sign that I knew the buffalo loved to rub their thick musty fur against. As we arrived at our cabin I could see large mysterious figures in the night creeping closer to the car. I could make out the large hump on their back and their long tall legs. Their hooves clicked as they made their way towards the road and as the bison passed, their normally brown bodies were illuminated by the yellow headlights of the car. The misty dust that their hooves had

lifted into the air, created an eerie fog. The smell of their thick matted fur was so powerful and strong that it filled the air inside the car.

As the bison passed, it appeared as if they were floating across the road. The powerful, yet kind bison walked across with moonlit fur through the misty air. Bison after bison passed the aging trail and it seemed like millions made their way in front of us. They were like massive ghosts, the ghosts of those ancient animals that had once lived alongside the Plains Indians so long ago. These rare, beautiful beasts need our help and so does Caprock Canyon, a park where the buffaloes can truly roam.

Hi to all at the Texas Bison Association

Just checking in to update TBA on York Junior High's partnership with Caprock Canyons State Park and what we call the Bison Project. Our students have raised over \$4000 this year and the first GPS tracking collar from Telonics has been ordered and should be arriving next week to our campus. We will be taking some photos and installing the computer software and then shipping the collar on to Caprock where they will try to "encourage" one of the females to wear it!

Today we received information that we have been awarded a \$2500 grant from the Captain Planet Foundation to purchase a second collar! Can't wait to share that with the kids and staff next week. We have also received endorsements from JWPO, Taking Care of Texas, Texas Children in Nature, the Texas Wildlife Association, and of course both Buffalo Sold and the Texas Bison Association. You, of course, have been a supporter from the very beginning and we are so glad to add your logos to our website and feature your official endorsement in our hallways.

Penny S. Adams, York Junior High School

Check out our website yorklovesbison.wix.com



What's all this "Bull" About Crossing Bison and Beef?

from Dave Carter, Executive Director, National Bison Association

Clearing up misconceptions about cattle genetics in today's bison

You may have heard comments on TV, or read stories on the internet, that today's bison herds contain widespread cattle genetics. We want you to know the truth.

What's behind these comments?

To understand the full story, we have to go back more than 120 years. As the 1800's came to a close, the American bison teetered on the brink of extinction. The more than 30 million animals roaming North America at one time had been decimated to the point where fewer than 600 remained alive. Roughly 25 remained in the newly-created Yellowstone National Park. The remainder wandered in isolated clusters across the prairies.

Fortunately, five ranchers scattered along the Great Plains began to gather up those remnants and pulled the species back from the brink. Some of those ranchers experimented briefly with crossing bison with cattle in the hope of creating a hearty crossbreed. They discovered instead that the crossbred animals were highly infertile, had problems calving, and generally performed poorly. The ranchers soon dropped the experiment.

In the process, though, some cattle genetics were introduced into some bison.

How widespread are the resulting levels of cattle genetics in today's bison?

We have to set the record straight. Some media stories refer to "widespread levels" of cattle genetics in the bison herds on private farms and ranches across the United States.

Texas A&M University has conducted DNA testing on more than 30,000 bison in both private and public herds across North America. About six percent of those bison tested have shown evidence of cattle DNA. And, the level of cattle genetics in those bison average less than 1.5 percent of the genetic make-up.

Doesn't crossbreeding still occur?

There is an animal called a beefalo, which is the result of some modern crossbreeding. However, those animals—and the meat they produce—are clearly labeled separately from bison or buffalo.

The members of the National Bison Association are dedicated to maintaining the integrity of the all-natural buffalo. That's why our members have adopted a code of ethics that specifically prohibits crossbreeding bison with any other species of animal.

Can't you just weed out the animals with cattle genetics?

Remember that all of the bison in the world today descended from the fewer than 600 left alive in 1894. That genetic pool is very important.



Many ranchers today are testing their herds and culling the animals that have remnants of the cattle genetics. But, those ranchers are also taking care to protect the vital bison genetics that survived the "bottleneck" of the late 1800s.

Today's ranchers recognize that Mother Nature perfected this animal to thrive on the pastures and rangelands of North America. Even as we build the herds to meet growing consumer demand, we are dedicated to protecting the integrity of this species as an animal that produces nutritious meat, survives in harsh climates, and requires relatively little management.

We call it the Bison Advantage. We hope you call it delicious.

Still more questions?

Contact the National Bison Association at
www.bisoncentral.com

The [brief] History of Junior Bison Judging

Why do kids judge livestock?



2nd Place Team Winners

Youth judge of all kinds of “critters: cattle, swine, turkeys...so why not Bison?

Gerald Parsons, Oklahoma bison rancher, veterinarian, head of the North American Bison Registry .. and one of this century’s “best friends” to the American bison, correctly figured that the next generation of bison ranchers and conservators needed to learn in a practical setting.

What better way that for kids to judge bison in front of bison judges. For them to observe the animals and then have to stand in front of strangers who will not judge them and give “reasons”.

Junior judging of animals is different from judged animal competitions. It is really the “judges” .. the kids ... that are being judged.. and thus the “judges”.. the kids involved .. get to both participate and learn.

So Gerald got started. In 2006, he got his own Oklahoma Bison Association to hold the first formal Junior Bison Judging competition. There were four pens of four bison each – each pen a different age or gender – at the Pauls Valley Oklahoma animal auction facility. The format followed was the same as for most other junior livestock judging. That format is to place the four animals in ABCD order top one to bottom one ... and then stand and tell the judges “why” you placed A over B and B over C. Explaining the “why” of what you saw is just as, if not more important that getting the order of the animals correct.

There were about 30 young people at this initial Oklahoma competition and first place went to the team from Kansas. The competition was repeated the following two years and continues annually to this day.

In 2008, it was on to the National Bison Association

conference in Denver for the first “National Junior Judging competition. And last year in Denver 79 future bison ranchers from three states competed in some very stiff competition. It has grown each year and no doubt that the number of young people participating will continue to rise.

And so it now grows. The next generation , learning to look at bison with an keen eye and an appreciation for the differences in our big shaggy. It is a very proud addition to many and varied projects that private bison producers, through the various state and regional bison organizations .. and in cooperation with the National Bison Association, continue in the ongoing efforts to insure that bison will be around for all the generations to come.



First Individual Winner (Dr. Parsons is on the right.)

But there is a bit more to tell. So I will steal a line from the late Paul Harvey. – “and now, the rest of the story”:

Aubry Hensley won first in the individual title at the Oklahoma junior bison judging competition. Aubry is Gerald’s granddaughter. She won on her oral reasons. Well, you say, her granddad must have woodshedded her pretty well. Not so fast; don’t jump to any conclusions just yet, please.

Aubry actually had no formal training in either bison or judging. Sure, she loved to follow her PaPa around the ranch, but it wasn’t Gerald’s idea for her to compete. It was Aubry’s.

Not long before the competition she asked Gerald if she could compete. Since Gerald was not actually judging the kids that year, he saw no reason why she couldn’t enter.

So, Aubry called two of her cousins, and they formed a team. Aubry had not actually judged other animals. She had watched others but not done it herself. This was all new.

The night before the competition she asked PaPa Gerald to help her better understand how to do the oral reasons part

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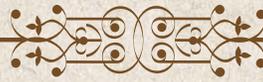
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of the judging. He really felt helpless as it was late, dark and there were no animals to

score. Aubry solved that problem with four pieces of taffy. "Let me show you", she said to Gerald. "Tell me it this is what I need to do", she pleaded. She then looked over the candy, and placed them ... top to bottom in her order of preference.

"I place A piece of taffy over piece of taffy B because it is more uniform" Aubry told an astonished Gerald; "Then" she continued, "I would place taffy B over C because it is a nicer dark color; taffy C over D as it is has a better shape. And she looked him squarely in the eyes as she spoke.

The next day she beat out the college and high school kids ... with her reasons on "why" she placed her bison the way she did. And she looked the judges clearly in the eye as she spoke. She got it right ... both the placement and the logic. She carried the day and the competition.

Aubry was 10 years old at the time.

There, my friends, is the future of not only our bison and our youth, but so much more. My dad always said that

"Good parents have good children". Guess it goes on down a generation as well. Gerald and Aubry, our congratulations and thanks to you both. Let the competition continue.



The Future of Junior Judging

Interview with Jay Barksdale

Jay Barksdale hosted the first Texas Bison Association Junior Judging competition at his ranches near Crockett, Texas this past fall. It was Jay's idea and drive that made it happen. He already has plans for the first Texas statewide junior bison judging competition this coming October. Jay shares his beautiful vision of what is to come.

Q Jay, you put together and hosted the first Texas Bison Association Junior Judging competition at your ranch near Crockett, Texas this past fall. What was your overall impression of the event?

A I believe that the event was a huge success in many ways. While the TBA Board was cautiously optimistic that a combined event would provide a great opportunity for interaction between current bison producers and the junior judges, I doubt that anyone expected the junior judges and their sponsors to stay and participate in every speaker presentation during the afternoon session of the TBA's Fall Workshop. These young men and women were also active participants in the question and answer sessions that followed each presentation. Many participants openly admitted that this was their first experience with live bison and that they were eager to learn more about bison and the bison industry in Texas.

Q How many different groups of contestants attended?

A We had student competitors representing seven different high schools register for the event and six schools participated on the day of the judging competition.

Q Why have this kind of event?

A As Texas bison producers, I believe that we have an obligation to see that the legacy and the future of the Southern Plains Bison is passed on to future generations of bison producers. This type of event provides all 4H and FFA members across the state a chance to interact with bison and learn how to identify the top body characteristics that will provide a sound basis to go out and confidently pursue acquiring a bison herd of their own.

Q Are there more Texas junior bison judging competitions in the works?

A Yes, more events are in the works. A Panhandle regional competition has already been scheduled for October 4, 2014. Charles Addington, a former TBA President, has agreed to host the October 4 event at his ranch outside of Wollforth. We are looking for a host ranch in the central Texas area that might be willing to host another fall regional competition. The second annual State Championship will be held in Crockett on October 25, 2014.



Q If a school or FFA group wanted to enter a team .. or an individual, who should they contact?

A Program sponsors and individual competitors can register for all of the bison judging events at www.judgingcard.com. Detailed information about each competition is available on the website along with contact information for the host ranch and the TBA.

Q Are there other similar judging competitions outside of Texas?

A Yes, the National Bison Association just completed their fifth junior national championship this past January, and a number of state and regional bison associations have had multiple junior judging competitions.

Q How do you go about teaching young people to judge bison?

A The best way to teach young people about bison judging is to have them compete and listen to the judge explain what he or she believes to be the distinguishing characteristics between the individual animals. While beef and bison judging have distinct differences, the most desirable characteristics in beef cattle judging will help form a solid foundation for the future bison judge.

Q What are the criteria against which bison are judged?

A Skeletal development, muscle conformation, hide qualities, etc.

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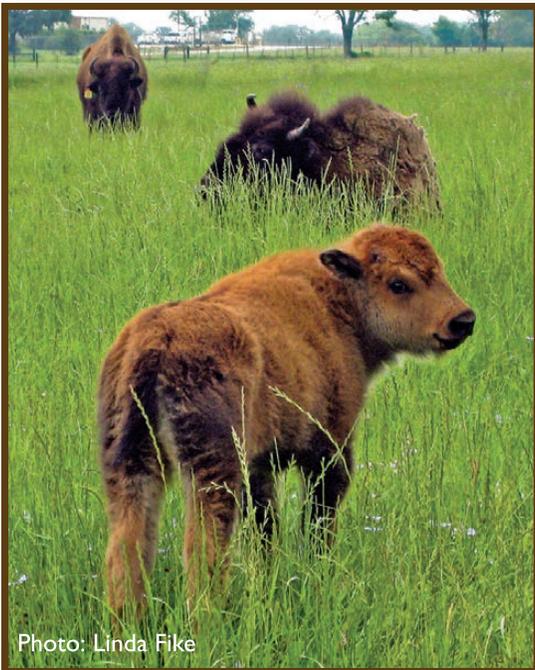


Photo: Linda Fike

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Q What kind of facilities and animals should a ranch have in order to safely host such an event?

A A host ranch needs to have handling facilities that will allow for a minimum of four separate animal holding facilities that can be viewed from at least three sides simultaneously. A host ranch would also need to have a herd large enough to allow for a minimum of four animal classes each comprised of four animals that require a high level of skill in selecting the four individual placement positions.

Q Ultimately, how would you like to see the competition structured – both in Texas and nationally?

A I would like to see the competition grow to include a collegiate carcass class judging contest, a junior live animal judging competition, and a commercial heifer competition that would provide Texas youth the opportunity to develop the skills required to operate a commercial bison herd. The commercial heifer competitors would be responsible for raising a pen of three heifers as well as keeping detailed records of the process. They would

also be tested on bison facts and would have to deliver an oral presentation on their experiences with bison. The commercial heifer competition would conclude with a video auction of each of the pens of animals. The collegiate carcass class judging competition would also conclude with an auction.

Q Can anyone watch the competition?

A Absolutely. We welcome everyone with an interest in bison to come and watch the competition.



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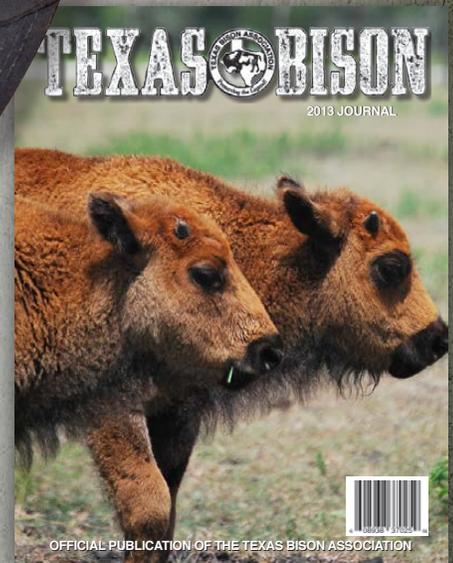
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Join the Herd

Whether you raise bison, or just love the magnificence of the animal. If your interest is to help promote bison conservation, stewardship and keep the herd building, and you just want to hang around people that are involved with bison, there is a membership for you in the Texas Bison Association. Whether you are young or not so young, we encourage you to join with us in the comradery, education and furtherance of our mission. It is a decision you will not regret.

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per calendar year

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West Texas A&M Herdsmen



*“Reprinted from National Bison Association Bison World February 2013 with permission”
Bison Heritage—West Texas A&M Herdsmen Manage Buffalo Mascot, Promote Bison Industry*

By Marilyn Bay Wentz

Among the organizations that have contributed to the preservation and vibrancy of the bison industry are the universities that have the buffalo as their mascot, especially those that own and manage a live animal. West Texas A&M, Canyon, Tex., and the University of Colorado, Boulder, Colo., are two of the most active university buffalo herdsman programs in the nation. Both not only select, raise, train and handle a live buffalo for sporting events and school spirit activities, the Herdsmen from these universities also have public outreach and education programs to educate the masses about the buffalo.

Each year since 2008, the West Texas A&M University has sent its top herdsman leaders to Denver for the National Bison Association’s Winter Conference and Gold Trophy Show & Sale. The gentlemen—aptly called for their mannerly “yes sir” and “How can I help you ma’am?” communication—assist the NBA staff by lending their muscle to set up and tear down meeting spaces, as well as standing by for other tasks as needed. They, in turn, have an opportunity to hob nob with the movers and shakers in the bison industry.

“Herdsmen must earn the privilege of attending the NBA conference,” said Shawn Burns, West Texas A&M

University Herdsman advisor. “Only officers attend, and to become an officer, a herdsman must have an exemplary record, both academically and within the herdsman organization.”

Burns, a student and herdsman at West Texas A&M University from 1989 until graduating in 1993 with a degree in Political Science, holds the title of Chief of Police for campus law enforcement and for 23 years has been the volunteer advisor to the Herdsman on the side.

The process to become a herdsman is vigorous, says Burns. Prospects annually go through a series of tests and must pass before joining the organization. Test material includes the history of the university, history of the herdsman program, the herdsman handbook, and handling procedures. If a prospect passes, he must be approved by the organization in a personal interview.

This year, there are 17 herdsman, who take turns caring for the buffalo mascots, educating fans and the public about bison, and taking the mascots for public viewing.

“Our goal is to have at least two buffalo in the program. The older animal would be the mascot, while the younger one(s) would be put through our training program,” said Burns. “Having an animal in training allows us to pass the training knowledge to the next generation of Herdsmen and also rotate mascots out

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West Texas A&M Herdsmen

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quicker to prevent the animals from becoming difficult and aggressive.”

The buffalo mascot is transported to and from events in a 16-foot stock trailer, custom designed for the needs of the buffalo and the Herdsmen activities. “One part of the trailer houses our portable panels while the other part the buffalo,” said Burns. “Designing the trailer this way allows us to carry our portable panels for static displays and the animal in one trailer, enabling us to appear more often with less expense.”

West Texas A&M, then West Texas State Teachers College, purchased its first buffalo in 1922 from Col. and Mrs. Charles C. Goodnight. The pair was named Charlie and Mary Ann, after the couple. Both lived on campus, but Charlie was the one tapped to run the sidelines at football games and be paraded during homecoming festivities. Charlie died in 1935, and the university went without a live mascot until 1977 when it purchased Lollipop, a female officially called “Thunder” to again be its live mascot. A bull, Buford, became Thunder II. After this, the offspring of Lollipop and Buford become the school mascots in succession, under the names of Thunder II through Thunder IV. This lineage was interrupted, as the Herdsmen brought in a heifer calf named Ladee or Thunder V. Recently retired is Bentley, an orphaned bull calf raised by NBA President Pete Cook and his wife Erica’s operation, Cook’s Bison Ranch. Bentley was donated to the West Texas A&M Herdsmen by the Cooks in 2008.

Although the herdsman program has been a line item in the university’s budget since 1993, last year the organization launched a capital campaign to build a permanent facility for the buffalo mascot. “We are currently housed in the facilities previously used as a dairy, which provides the basic necessities, but having our own facility will enable us to build something designed for



buffalo,” said Burns. He is also excited about having space designated for herdsman activities and public education.

The capital campaign was successfully launched with an anonymous donor contributing \$150,000, the amount originally needed to build the facility. “Unfortunately, unforeseen challenges are forcing the budget upward.”

Nonetheless, Burns is confident the funds will come in and the facility will be built. “We’re anxious to have a permanent home for the buffalo and the Herdsmen,” he said.

HERDSMAN UPDATE:

Since the Bison World Article appeared in Feb 2013:

- The shell of the Herdsman’s on-campus facility has been erected – see photos(still \$33,500 short of finishing the interior with bathroom and classroom facilities ... and remember, this being a State University all bids have to go through “that” process). Donations are still being welcomed and they want to try and finish this project over this summer. Go on and give the guys and gals a hand .. they deserve it ... and you can deduct it!
- The guys have expanded the bison pens and handling facilities with their own welding, sweat and talents.
- Plans are underway to pipe fence and enclose a larger grazing and exhibit pasture.



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- Cook’s Bison Ranch graciously let the Herdsmen sell off the last mascot .. who finally outgrew a safe ability to be led by halter, and put the monies back into the program. Last word was he was happily bragging to all his new herdmates about having “graduated” from WTAMU.
- The young bison heifer Barksdale Bison has donated has become the current WTAMU ”Buff” mascot.
- A second Texas bison – a yearling bull – has also been donated as the back-up ... just as Shawn Burns had hoped.
- And there is going to be a Herdsman (and woman) wedding – Justin and Whitney – which will take place just about printing time.

Here is what some of the current Herdsmen have to say about the “why” of belonging.

“I joined the West Texas A&M Herdsmen three years ago. I’m from a farm back in SE Colorado. When I first came to college, I didn’t know a lot of people down here. I heard about the Herdsmen and decided, why not give it a shot? Now looking back on the past 3 years, I can say that it was the best thing that I could have ever done. Not only have I made long lasting friendships, but I also have had the privilege of handling a buffalo. How many people can say that they did that in college? Being able to promote our

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West Texas A&M Herdsmen

...continued from page 29

school and be engaged in such a great organization is something that I take pride in.”

- Justin Souders

“I joined the West Texas A&M Herdsmen two years ago and it has been one of the best decisions I have made in my college career. Not many people can talk about how they were able to work with and run a buffalo during their college football games. It is truly a great honor and experience, but one of the greatest things about the Herdsmen is the memories and the friends that I have made during my Herdsmen career. We may all fight like brothers, but at the end of the day we all know we have each other backs. The Herdsmen was the first organization I joined in college and it is the best decision I have made, because I believe it was the organization that honestly got my college career on a roll. It is a decision I would not ever change and I encourage future students to join also.”

- Brandon Meier

“I joined the Herdsmen because I enjoyed being around such a majestic animal like the buffalo. The Herdsmen when I was thinking about joining showed such a love for what they did and I wanted to continue that. The sense of brotherhood is what inspired me to join. After joining, I have learned so much more about the buffalo and also myself. It keeps me striving to be the best person that I can be.”

- James Johnson

“I first joined the Herdsmen because of my family’s history within the organization. After a few weeks with the guys I realized that I was part of something that was bigger than myself, I was part of a brotherhood. The Herdsmen not only helped me find my path in college, but some of them became lifelong friends. Looking back, joining the Herdsmen was one of the best decisions I have ever made.”

- Zach Lauer

ED. NOTE: *These guys are so proud of the way their group participates together; they decline to have their individual pictures with their stories; another testament to the quality of this great group of young men and women!*

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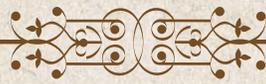
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Madeline and her dad take some pretty interesting road trips across Texas from their Austin based home. The one that inspired this story included a number of 'buffalo' stops along the way, not the least of which was the Goodnight buffalo herd and several of the Quanah Parker trail arrows. What follows is her inspiration from the trip. ed.



The Buffalo Spirit

By Madeline Sweany

Freezing rain pounded in heavy sheets on the Texas plains. The small buffalo calf found it harder to keep its mother in sight through the icy droplets. They were heading to a large cave to wait out the storm. Suddenly he was at the bank of a swift, swollen river. The herd was on the other side. He plunged in, and was consumed by the unmerciful current. The calf fought as

hard as he could, but he was being swept further down river. He fought for every precious breath, but soon he was swept into the icy blackness.

Great Hunter strolled through the empty vastness of the plains once the storm had passed. No decent food had been here for months, and the Comanche tribe

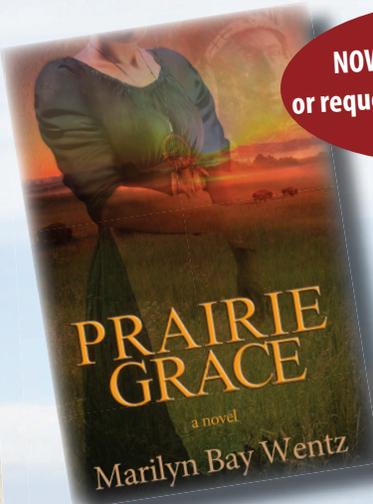
was starving. Not even he could bring home anything except for a scrawny rabbit, if he was lucky. And the shaman had said that the storm was only more proof that the gods were angry at them. But there, along the riverbank, was a buffalo calf, his hind legs submerged in the water. Great Hunter cautiously made his way to it. Even though the small horns barely protruded from its skull, he could already tell they were a beautiful pearly white. So, careful not to disturb it, he carried it back to camp.

“It’s breathing!” the shaman called. Sighs of relief echoed through the camp. “It is a sign!” he added. The gods sent this calf to us. If we can nurse it back to health and return it to its herd, they will bring the buffalo back. The sighs were soon replaced with cheers of excitement. The calf was fed the freshest, most delicious berries and grass they could find, and soon it grew until it could walk, run, and fight on its own. And over that time, a strong bond had grown between the calf and Great Hunter. They ran together on the grassy field and spent most of their time together.

Now the calf was self-reliant and his herd had returned. The small calf, now large and muscular, was reunited with his family. And Great Hunter turned to his people and said “Thank you for raising me as a true Comanche, and I will always be one, but now our paths are no longer intertwined.” And with that, he walked off with herd, growing fainter with each step, until he could no longer be seen. After that, the buffalo returned to the plains, and he watched over them guiding them and keeping them safe—just as he did for his tribe.

Dedication:

Thank you, Cecil, for showing us a great time and letting me see the true beauty of the buffalo.



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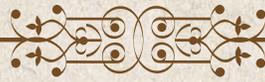
Quick read, keeps you looking for more. *Prairie Grace* brings out the human trials, the heartache, the joy, the atrocities, and the hope that were prevalent among the different cultures of that era.

--Dick Gehring, National Bison Association Board
Member, Owner/Operator, Black Kettle Buffalo Ranch

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The following article was written fully 180 years ago. We thought it worth sharing today. The facts they knew about and interest in American bison on another continent multiple generations ago is impressive. Texas Bison Association members are not the first to be captivated by the American Bison. Our mission is to make sure we are far from the last.

THE PENNY MAGAZINE

OF THE

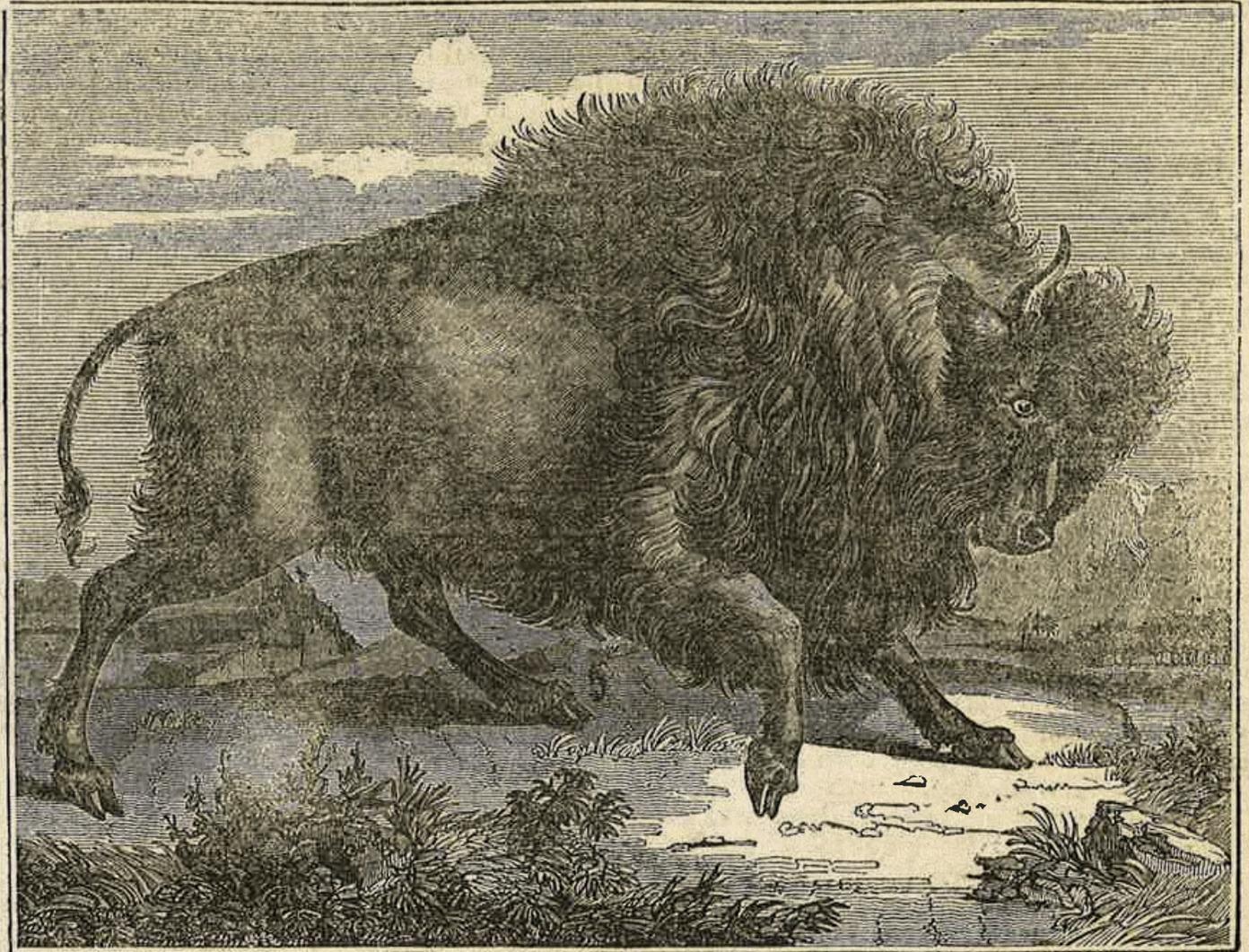
Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge.

147.]

PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY.

[JULY 19, 1831.]

THE BISON.



[North American Bison.]

London: Published by C. Knight, Pall Mall East.—Printed by William Clowes, Duke-street, Lambeth

THIS remarkable species of ox is peculiar to North America. Until of late years, it was very generally considered that the domestic ox, the wild bull (*urus*) of Europe and Asia, and the American bison were only varieties of the same species, or, in other words, that the domestic ox was the *urus* altered by civilization, and that the bison was the *urus* altered by climate. This was the opinion of Buffon, Pallas, and other distinguished naturalists. The identity of the *urus* and the bison being assumed, it became a question of somewhat difficult solution how these animals migrated from the old to the new world. Many ingenious theories were framed to meet the circumstances, but the necessity for these speculations has been superseded by the discovery made by Cuvier, that the bison of America is really a species distinct from the *urus*; and he has indicated the very important differences by which the distinction is established.

We may consider the bison as characterized by fifteen pair of ribs, (the wild bull has only fourteen,) and by the immense disproportion between its fore and hind quarters. The latter distinction is partly occasioned by the great hump or projection over its shoulders. This hump is oblong, diminishing in height as it extends backward, and giving a considerable obliquity to the outline of the back. The hair over the head, neck, and fore part of the body is long and shaggy, forming a beard beneath the lower jaw, and descending below the knee in a tuft. The hair on the summit of the head rises in a dense mass nearly to the tip of the horns, and directly on the front is curled and strongly matted. The ponderous head, rendered terrific by its thick shaggy hair and streaming beard, is supported upon a massive neck and shoulders, the apparent strength of which is more imposing from the augmentation produced by the hump and the long fall of hair by which the anterior parts of the body are covered. This woolly hair is remarkable not less for its fineness than its length. The difference between the winter and the summer coat of the bison consists rather in the length than in the other qualities of the hair. In summer, from the shoulders backward, the surface is covered with very short fine hair, smooth and soft as velvet. Except the long hair on the fore parts, which is to a certain extent of a rust colour or yellowish tinge, the colour is a uniform dun. Varieties of colour are so rare among the species, that the hunters and Indians always regard any apparent difference with great surprise. The fleece or hair of a full-grown bison, when separated from the skin, is usually found to weigh about eight pounds, according to Charlevoix. The horns are shorter than in any other species, nearly straight, sharp-pointed, exceedingly strong, and planted widely asunder at the base, as in the common bull. The tail is almost a foot long, and terminates in a tuft which is black in the males and red in the females. The eyes are large and fierce; the limbs are of great strength; and the appearance of the animal is altogether exceedingly grim, savage, and for-

limbs are of great strength; and the appearance of the animal is altogether exceedingly grim, savage, and formidable. According to Hearne, the size of the bison is, on the average, less than that of the *urus*, but exceeds that of every other species of the ox. It has been known to weigh 1600 and even 2400 lbs.; and the strongest men are said to be unable, singly, to lift one of the skins from the ground. The female is much smaller than the male; she has not so much of the long hair in front, and her horns are not so large nor so much covered by the hair. The males and females associate from the end of July to the beginning of September; after which the females separate from the males, and remain in distinct herds. They calve in April. The calves seldom leave the mother until they are a year old, and sometimes the females are seen followed by the young of three seasons.

The bisons generally seek their food in the morning and evening, and retire during the heat of the day to marshy places. They rarely resort to the woods, preferring the open prairies where the herbage is long and thick. They also associate in vast troops led by the fiercest and most powerful of the bulls. In both these respects their habits differ from those of the *urus*, which leads a solitary life in the deepest gloom of the forest. The herds of bisons are frequently of astonishing density and extent. Mr. James says, that in one place at least ten thousand of these fine animals burst upon the sight in an instant. He adds, "In the morning we again sought the living picture, but upon all the plain, which last evening was teeming with noble animals, not one remained." Notwithstanding their terrible aspect, the bison is not an enemy of man, and will never attack him unless when wounded or at bay. During the season in which the males and females associate, and when the passions of the former are in full activity, the noise of the roaring of these immense herds resembles thunder, and the males often fight most desperate battles with each other.

While feeding, they are often scattered over a vast surface; but when they move forward in mass, they form a dense impenetrable column, which once fairly in motion is scarcely to be turned. They swim large rivers nearly in the same order in which they traverse the plains; and when flying from pursuit, it is in vain for those in front to make a sudden halt, as the rearward throng dash madly forward, and force their leaders on. The Indians sometimes profit by this habit. They lure a herd to the vicinity of a precipice, and setting the whole in rapid motion, they terrify them by shouts and other artifices to rush on to their inevitable destruction. The chase of the bisons, indeed, constitutes a favourite diversion of the Indians, numerous tribes of whom may be said to be almost entirely dependent on these animals for all their necessities of life. They are killed either by shooting them, or by gradually driving them into a small space by setting fire to the grass around the place where the herd is

feeding. They are much terrified by fire, and crowd together to avoid it; and they are then killed by bands of Indians without any personal hazard. It is said that, on such occasions, 1500 or 2000 have sometimes been killed at a time.

The flesh of the bison is coarser grained than that of the domestic ox, but is considered by hunters and travellers as superior in tenderness and flavour. That of the males is poor and the flesh disagreeable in the months of August and September. They are much more easily approached and killed than the females, not being so vigilant, but the females are preferred on account of the greater fineness of their skins and more tender flesh. The hump of the bison is highly celebrated for its richness and delicacy, and is said, when properly cooked, to resemble marrow. The Indian method of preparing this delicacy is as follows:—The hump is cut off the shoulders, and a piece of skin is sewed over the severed part. The hair is then singed off, and the whole is ready for the oven. This is a hole in the earth, in and over which a fire has been burned; and into this heated receptacle the hump is conveyed, and covered, about a foot deep, with earth and ashes. A strong fire is again laid over the spot, and, supposing these preparations to have begun on the evening of one day, the hump will be ready for eating by the next day at noon. The tongue and marrow-bones are regarded by the connoisseurs in bisons' flesh to be the parts next in excellence to the hump. The skins of the bisons are of a loose and spongy texture; but when dressed in the Indian manner with the hair on, they make admirable defences against the cold, and may be used for blankets. They are called buffalo robes; the term buffalo being generally, but inaccurately, applied to the bison. The wool of the bison has been manufactured into hats, and has also been employed in making coarse cloth of a very strong and durable texture.

Vast multitudes of bisons are slaughtered every year; and it is to be deeply regretted that the white hunters and traders are in the habit of destroying these valuable beasts in the most wanton and unnecessary manner. It is common for such persons to shoot bisons, even when they have abundance of food, for the sake of the tongue or hump alone; or even for no other reason than because they come near enough to present a fair aim. It is, therefore, not surprising that, from all these causes of diminution, the bisons become less numerous every year, and remove farther and farther from the haunts of men. The numbers of this species still existing are surprisingly great, when we consider the immense destruction of them since European weapons have been employed against them. They were once extensively diffused over what is now the territory of the United States, except that part lying east of the Hudson's River and the lake Champlain, and narrow strips of coast on the Atlantic and Pacific. At the present time their range is very different; they are no longer found except in the remote unsettled regions of the north and west, being rarely seen east of the Mississippi, or south

of the St. Lawrence. West of Lake Winnipeg they are found as far north as 62°; west of the Rocky Mountains it is probable they do not extend north of the Columbia river. American authorities assure us that the time cannot be far distant when the bisons, like the Indian tribes which hover near them, will have passed away.

It is stated in the 'Dictionnaire Classique d'Histoire Naturelle,' on the authority of Raffinesque, that the bison is domesticated in the farms of Kentucky and of Ohio. It there associates with the domestic cow, and the mixed breed have the colour, the head, and the shaggy front of the bison; but they are destitute of the hump, although the back is always sloped. They associate indifferently either among themselves or with the bisons and domestic cattle, producing new and fruitful races. The fertility of the cross-breeds does not, however, as Buffon imagined, prove the unity of species in the original parents, for there is scarcely a truth in zoology more evident, than that the bison and domestic ox are of species essentially different. We do not feel sure, however, that this domestication of the bison in Kentucky and Ohio is at present practised, though it might well have been so before the encroachments of man had driven them into the remote regions of the west and north. The 'Encyclopædia Americana,' our obligations to which in preparing this article claim acknowledgment, makes no mention of such a practice.



The Bull Dancer Bison Ranch

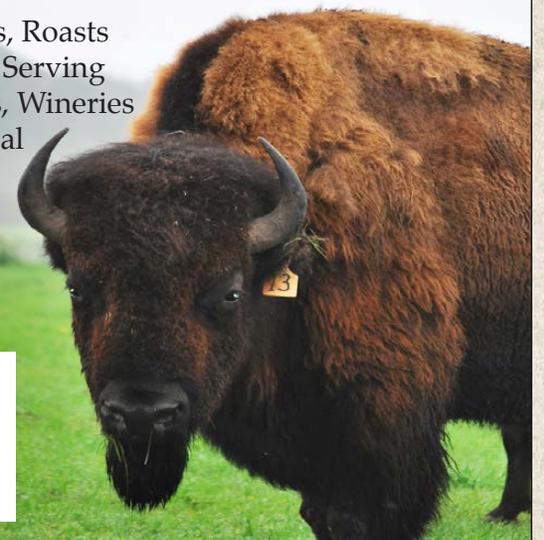
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Corey Harris's Cooking for Kids

Hearing the Texas Bison Journal was focusing on youth and bison, I knew I had to develop kid-friendly recipes. Challenging for someone who was raised an only child, has no children and doesn't particularly like or know how to cook for them. I employed my neighbor's adorable children to help me with this daunting task. Lane, their 5 year old son, was my sous chef along with 3 year old Lucia and 2 year old London, my tasters. Through my interview with Lane (he can talk) I discovered carrots, pizza and peaches were their favorites. I created a bison and goat cheese salad with grilled peaches, but that's for another issue. Left with carrots and pizza, Lane and I decided on Buffalo Meatloaf with Cheddar Goldfish served with Potato Pucks and Fiesta Buffalo Taco Pizza.



While creating the recipes, I paid attention to tasks kids can do in preparing the dish, i.e., mixing the ingredients and shaping the meatloaf into a fish, smashing potatoes with a wooden spoon, kneading pizza dough, etc. In addition, making the meals healthy and delicious was a priority. Carrots and zucchini are added to the meatloaf and the pizza is topped with greens and veggies.

While dreading this assignment, I admit the experience was enjoyable and enlightening. Two things I learned: cooking can be a bonding activity for parents and children while teaching healthy eating habits and according to Lane "everything tastes better with Ketchup!"



Buffalo Meatloaf with Cheddar Goldfish

- 1 pound ground buffalo
- 2 tablespoons chopped onion
- 1/2 cup grated zucchini
- 1/2 cup grated carrot
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup milk
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 cup grated cheddar cheese
- 1 cup Cheddar Goldfish

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Put all ingredients in a bowl. With clean hands, mix all ingredients. Be sure to break up goldfish while mixing. Mold meat into the shape of a goldfish. Use a round slice of carrot for the eye and the peel of the zucchini for the mouth. Bake for 45 to 55 minutes. Let meatloaf sit for 10 minutes before serving.





Fiesta Buffalo Taco Pizza

Taco Seasoning:

- 2 tablespoons onion powder
- 2 tablespoons garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- Salt and pepper

¼ cup canola oil, plus more for brushing on pizza dough

- 1 lb. ground buffalo
- 1 cup shredded mozzarella
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 cup chopped lettuce
- 1 cup fresh salsa
- ½ cup sour cream
- 1 tablespoon diced red onion (optional)
- 1 avocado, diced and drizzled with lime juice (optional)
- ¼ cup chopped cilantro (optional)

More →



Pizza Dough Recipe

Make taco seasoning by mixing all the ingredients in a bowl. Place sauté pan over medium heat. Add oil and ground buffalo. Sprinkle with 2 tablespoons of taco seasoning. Sauté until buffalo meat is cooked through. Let cool. Divide pizza dough into 4 individual pieces. Roll out dough on floured surface. Brush with canola oil, sprinkle with taco seasoning and grill until crisp, about 4 minutes per side; remove from grill. Mix cheeses in a bowl, then sprinkle on the crusts and top with buffalo meat. Return pizzas to grill, and cook until the cheese is melted about 5 minutes. Top the pizzas with chopped lettuce, salsa, sour cream, red onion, avocado and cilantro.

Potato Pucks



- Small Red Potatoes
- Oil for roasting
- Salt and Pepper

Place potatoes in microwave and cook until soft. Six small potatoes will take about 3 minutes on high. Let potatoes cool. Once they are cool enough to handle, place on a flat surface. Take the back of a wooden spoon and press potatoes until slightly flat. Place on a cookie sheet and brush lightly with oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Roast in preheated oven with the meat-loaf for about 20 minutes turning once or you can sauté on top of the stove in a fry pan.

Serve the whole meal with ketchup!



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Stan Harper Award

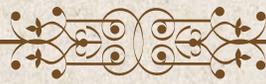
It was with great pleasure that the TBA recognized the dedication and support Stan Harper has given to the Texas Bison Association and the bison industry as a whole. Stan has long sustained one of the larger bison herds in Texas (and New Mexico). He told the gathering in Fredricksburg that he got his start in bison ranching in the 70's when he bought his first ranch in Missouri. His first bison came from none other than Ralph Houck, It was at Houck's Triple U ranch that many of the buffalo scenes in the movie "Dances with Wolves" were filmed.

Stan told the bison gathering that to sustain yourself in the bison business you need both "patience" and "passion." Stanley Harper has proven that he has an abundance of both.

We were also honored to have Stan's son Alan, his daughter-in-law Patti, and his VP of Operations, Mark Mitchell all there to share the presentation.

Stan was presented with a very large bison bull skull (what else would you give a bison rancher) beautifully painted with both the Texas Bison Association and the Harper Land and Cattle Logo. Darlene Wright did the art work.





Texas Bison Association Past Presidents

In celebrating 20 years of the Texas Bison Association we must also celebrate the men that brought us to where we are today – the Presidents that volunteered their time to make the TBA what it is today. Starting with the first President and founder of the Texas Bison Association:



ALVIN JONES "I've always said that if there's a genius in the animal family, it would probably be the buffalo, because they're able to survive under just about any circumstance."

KERR MITCHELL "The way I got interested in the bison business was many years back in 1995 a dear friend of mine took me to see his herd of bison in Colorado. He had a couple of hundred at the time. It was an exciting business and the animals were fascinating to me."

HUGH FITZSIMONS "Fifteen years ago when I bought my first herd, I did so because of what they stood for. They are the consummate animal icon of the Americas, and when you raise them you hopefully raise yourself to a higher standard."

PAT BIRSCHWALE "Why did I choose bison?" "Actually bison chose me. Growing up with a company named "Bison Building Materials", it just follows that there'd be no other area of ranching/agriculture for us to be involved with. It's really been perfect for our family, and friends love to help with round ups and doctoring."

JOE ADAMS "Like some others, bison to some degree chose me. Bison seemed to be a great fit considering my heavy out of State travel schedule, as they are extremely robust and to a large degree both self-reliant and low maintenance. The conservation factor and becoming a steward of such a magnificent and ancient species posed obvious rewards as well."

MARK HARRIS succeeded Joe Adams as TBA President. He innovated the TBA youth outreach program by embracing the WTAMU Herdsmen, which became an

NBA tradition within that same year. His mission was to energize and expose the youth of Texas to bison and bison production. Mark was taken from us quickly and unexpectedly before his term as TBA president expired.

TIM FRASIER "Frasier Bison LLC is dedicated to Texas bison as a viable land-use strategy regardless of the size, scale or paradigm. What bison mean to me: A calling and a chance to work on behalf of something important."

DAN HUMPHRIES "When I began dreaming of owning a bison ranch, I never really ever thought it would come true. I joined the NBA and the OBA and studied the industry for several years Then Susan and I purchased our first two animals and kept them on a far away ranch for a year. During that year we sold my paid off Harley Davidson and Susan's dream house to buy a small ranch which we named Bull Dancer Bison Ranch."

DR. CHARLES ADDINGTON, II "Bison are the testament to hard work and determination. They survived numerous insults and still continue to show progress. I truly believe that the conservation and production are one and the same and that each rancher raising bison is important."

ROY LIEDTKE "The great American bison is the most magnificent critter in the country. They are true survivors, and it is always a learning experience to be around them. I've always been fascinated by them. The bison have provided me with many wonderful opportunities in my life and I am very thankful for that."

Roaming Wild

IN THE CANYONS

Caprock Canyons State Park is home to the Official Bison Herd of the State of Texas! These descendants of the Great Southern Herd, saved from extinction by famed cattleman Charles Goodnight and his wife Mary Ann, were reintroduced to the canyons in 2011, and can now be seen roaming the park grasslands.

While you're here, explore a few of the 90 miles of trails, fish or swim in Lake Theo, then park your RV or pop up a tent and fall in love under the stars.

Find out more: www.tpwd.state.tx.us/state-parks/caprock-canyons
or call 806-455-1492. Or visit us on Facebook for news and events!



Caprock Canyons
State Park
Quitaque, TX





Excerpts from

May 2014 Tatonka Tales

Tatonka Tales is the newsletter of the Texas Bison Association

MEMBERS URGED TO HEAL THE RANGELANDS AT TEXAS BISON ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE

Bison ranchers can lead the way to restoring rangelands ravaged by mismanagement and drought, Texas Bison Association members were told at their spring conference May 2 and 3 in Fredericksburg.

Bill Neiman, co-founder of the Native American Seed Company, said the abuse of grasslands has caused wholesale invasions of foreign species and monumental waste of soil and water.

Neiman urged ranchers to look at restoring native species of grasses in their pastures. He said the nutritional value of native species is generally higher and that native grasses are generally more drought-resistant than “improved” grasses.

Neiman urged bison ranchers to lead the way in practicing sustainable range management.

TBA MEMBERS VISIT LBJ RANCH

TBA members attending the spring conference visited the LBJ Ranch, known in the 1960’s as the “Texas White House.” The state park at the ranch features a small herd of bison whose ancestors were brought in by Lyndon Johnson started during that era.

UPDATE ON THE STATE BISON HERD

TBA vice president Donald Beard, superintendent at the Caprock Canyons State Park, updated TBA conference attendees on the status of the official Texas state bison herd.

Beard pointed out that Caprock Canyons is working to restore the prairie ecosystem with native grasses, prairie dogs and the bison herd, which is thriving.

TAKING CARE OF TEXAS



Erin O’Neil Franz, executive director of Taking Care of Texas, introduced spring conference attendees to the nonprofit initiative founded in 2011 by former first lady Laura Bush.

Ms. Franz said *Taking Care of Texas* believes that conservation and commerce are not mutually exclusive.

Ecology, emotion and economics are all factors in decisions impacting the environment, she said, and “we can’t afford the luxury of green blinders.”

“The world is less than 40 years away from a food shortage that will have serious implications for governments,” she said, and it’s essential to bring leaders of industry, environmental groups, government and agriculture together to address the crisis.”

Taking Care of Texas practices “can-do conservation,” Ms. Franz said, which means “roll up your sleeves and work together with your neighbor to find win-win solutions.”

TCoT’s mission is to “communicate, catalyze and connect” various interests and resources to address environmental issues. Ms. Franz said, “for example, encouraging the planting of seeds of native plants reclaims the crushed-rock pads used for oil drilling sites.”

ANIMAL HEALTH COMMISSION REPORT

T.R. LANSFORD III, DVM, assistant executive director of the Texas Animal Health Commission, addressed the spring conference to explain the agency’s role in tracking and eliminating or controlling diseases among animals.

The TAHC was founded in 1893 because of the spread of the Texas fever tick. The commission has four missions:

- Assure livestock and poultry health.
- Disease control and eradication.
- Increase the marketability and trade of Texas animals.
- Prepare for and respond to emergency situations involving animals.

Lansford said regulatory diseases that can affect bison include:

- Brucellosis, tuberculosis and trichomoniasis.

The current brucellosis vaccine, RB51, is effective in only 15 percent of bison females, Lansford said. He cited brucellosis threats to Texas herds as:

- Importation of animals from the Greater Yellowstone Area, where brucellosis is common.
- incubating cow, latently

May 2014 Tatonka Tales

Tatonka Tales is the newsletter of the Texas Bison Association

- Cattle smuggled in from Mexico, or cattle walking across the border in remote areas.
- Any undetected herd already in the state.
- *Brucella suis* (swine) complicates the diagnostic picture and raises zoonotic concern. An estimated 20 percent of feral swine have the disease. And tests for brucellosis don't distinguish between *suis* and *brucella* strains of brucellosis.

Lansford said brucellosis and TB requirements for movement of bison are:

- Intrastate: No test required by TAHC. Requirements of individual exhibitions or sales may be more stringent.
- Interstate: Check with state of destination.

Trichomoniasis tests required (bulls only):

- Intrastate movements: The state is not enforcing its listed testing requirement on bison at present. However, auctions or exhibitions may have their own requirements.
- Interstate movements: Check with the state of destination.

Lansford said producers should always be on the lookout for a foreign animal disease outbreak. Symptoms include:

- Central nervous system problems.
- Unusual ticks/maggots.
- Vesicles/blisters.
- Sudden illness.
- Sudden death.

NATIONAL BISON ASSOCIATION UPDATE

National Bison Association executive director Dave Carter attended the spring TBA conference and presented a national overview of the bison industry. Notes from his comments:

– The price of bison went up to about \$10 a pound for retail ground before there was some consumer resistance observed. Now it's slightly cheaper, but prices remain very strong for bison producers.

– Carter urged TBA members to attend the NBA's summer conference in Branson, MO June 3-6.



BOARD MEETING NOTES

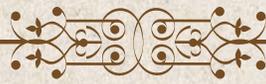
Roy Liedtke was re-elected president. Donald Beard is our new vice president. Cecil Miskin remains at the secretary's position, and Pat Bierschwale remains as treasurer.

Liedtke announced that the 2014 issue of the Texas Bison Journal will be published in early summer. The theme for this issue is youth and bison.

The board agreed to hold the fall conference at Jay Barksdale's ranch in Crockett. In addition to the junior judging, there will be a seminar for adults on how to judge the quality of a bison.

The board agreed to hold the Spring 2015 conference in Austin. We will include a reception for legislators. Members would have a tour of the capital and possibly a function at the Texas History Museum.





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Show for “Best In Class” — For your animal to be judged it must be unloaded by 8:00 p.m., Friday, December 5, 2014.

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NOTE: In an effort to be as “green” as possible, please let us know if you wish to be removed from our mailing list.