



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Tallgrass Prairie
National Preserve

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Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve News Release

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For Immediate Release

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Experience a Good Old-Fashioned Box Lunch Social and Wagon Rides at Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve



STRONG CITY, Kansas: Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve is pleased to announce the upcoming new interpretive program, *Box Lunch Social* on September 17, 2016 from 11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m. Wagon rides will be available at the schoolhouse from 12:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m., weather permitting. All programs are free at the preserve.

Bring a picnic lunch and bottled water to the Lower Fox Creek Schoolhouse at Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve on Saturday, September 17, 2016 to step back in time when the one-room schools were a gathering place for community and social events. The interpretive program begins at 11:30 a.m., after which the fun begins with a live auction. Those wishing to participate will have their lunches placed in a

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decorated box (provided by the preserve staff) and then “auctioned off”. If bringing a lunch, please call the preserve visitor center at 620-273-8494 (hit 0) to make a reservation, to assure that enough supplies will be provided. After the boxes are auctioned off, the lunches will be returned to their original owners. No money will exchange hands during this program.

Historically the “anonymous” boxes would be auctioned to the man who was the highest bidder. One way for a young man to indicate his attraction for a young lady was by bidding for and buying her supper. The bidder also had the pleasure of eating the dinner with the lady who had prepared it. It was often the occasion of some spirited and good natured fun when older men would try to raise the price that some lovesick young man was willing to pay to eat cold fried chicken with his sweetheart. This also served as a social outlet for the community and as a means of purchasing things needed for the community or the school.” Excerpt taken from *The One Room Country Schools of Kansas* by Bill Samuelson.

The Lower Fox Creek schoolhouse was an active school from 1882 – 1930, after which the students it served began attending the Strong City and Cottonwood Falls schools. The schoolhouse reverted back to the landowner and became housing for ranch workers, served as a space for community dances, and was later used for hay storage before it became part of the 14 area Garden Club’s special project in the late 1960s and early 1970s. In 1974 it became listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Come and learn more about this very special building and the role it served in the community. As part of the park’s Centennial celebration year, visit and create family memories while Finding Your Park and learning more about our rural heritage.

In celebration of the National Park Service 2016 Centennial, Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve invites you to discover the meaning of national parks and how your park inspires you - both in personal connections and memorable experiences. Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve is located two miles north of Strong City on Kansas State Highway 177 (the Flint Hills National Scenic Byway) and is a unique public/private partnership between the National Park Service and The Nature Conservancy. For more information, visit the preserve’s Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/NPS.TallgrassPrairie> , website at www.nps.gov/tapr, email tapr_interpretation@nps.gov, or call the preserve at (620) 273-8494. To learn more about The Nature Conservancy in Kansas, visit the Conservancy’s website at www.nature.org/Kansas or Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/TNCKansas> .

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