



National Park Service
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Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve News Release

April 24, 2013

For Immediate Release

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Chase County 4th Graders Travel to India Using Social Media



Monday, April 22nd was no ordinary morning for 4th grade students at Chase County Elementary in Strong City, Kansas. Using SmartBoard and Facebook technology, teachers Mrs. Potts and Mrs. Jirak, along with their students, Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve Superintendent Wendy Lauritzen, and park staff chatted live online with Range Forest Officer Paresh Porob of the Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary in the Indian state of Goa located in the Western Ghats of South India. This was the park's first attempt at using social media to link classrooms with wide ranging resources. Students experienced first-hand the possibilities of learning from someone who is over 8,000 miles away through a "virtual visit" that crossed many time zones and was literally taking place simultaneously both night (India) and day (US). The educational activity was a big hit, as displayed on smiling faces.

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.



In celebration of National Park Week, students were introduced to the *Ranger in Danger* interactive book series prior to the live chat session. *Ranger in Danger* is an exciting new adventure series for 9 to 12-year-olds, written by real-life Australian ranger Sean Willmore and Melbourne author Alison Reynolds. Each book is inspired by rangers from around the world and draws from experiences they have had. The books are interactive, so the reader must choose his/her own destiny at intervals throughout the book. The ending of the story depends on the choices made along the adventure.

One in the current six-book series, [King Cobra's Curse](#) was based from the conservation work and encounters of ranger Porob. After several twists and turns in the story, students stopped to communicate with Porob using Facebook's instant chat capability. Students asked Porob about his life, job, and the animals he protects, which also taught lessons in science, math, geography, and language skills. In addition to answering their questions, Porob described the actions taken that led to last week's discovery of a Bengal tiger lioness in the sanctuary he protects. Caught on camera using a wildlife camera trap, the tiger is the first one sighted in that sanctuary in over 100 years. The students were equally excited to learn that when Porob worked at a different wildlife sanctuary, he used to go on patrol with a leopard companion he had rescued from the roadside when it was only four months old. As the large cat grew, it became very protective of Porob, acting somewhat like a bodyguard as they patrolled the park together. Today, Porob and his team of rangers work at the Mhadei Wildlife Sanctuary, which covers nearly 208,000 square kilometers (80.5 sq. miles).

The students learned of the many dangers and challenges Parob and other rangers face every day, giving new meaning to the *Ranger in Danger* books. If you too would like to learn more about the *Ranger in Danger* books, information can be gathered from the <http://www.fivemile.com.au/ranger-in-danger.html> website. The books are distributed by the Thin Green Line Foundation, an organization that supports on-the-ground projects of rangers and provides aid to the widows and orphans of rangers who have been killed in the line of duty around the world.

To learn more about activities and educational programs at Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve, visit the facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/pages/Tallgrass-Prairie-National-Preserve/14111329259915> or the website at www.nps.gov/tapr, or you can make contact via the old-fashioned way by calling 620-273-8494.

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NPS Call to Action

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Goal 17: Go Digital