



CITIZENS FOR PRAIRIE DOGS

Prairie Dog Tales

January 2010

Volume One—dedicated in memorial to Crystal and Dr. Bill Barnes, God Speed

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Citizens for Prairie Dogs:

- Is a non-profit association (in process of applying for 501 (c)3)
- Relocates an average of 1,000 prairie dogs each year
- Provides educational programs
- Rehabs injured prairie dogs
- Provides basic care information and advice on wild or pet prairie dogs
- Feeds about 150 wild prairie dogs at Mackensie Park, Lubbock, TX 3-4 times weekly. We have done this since 2003.

2008 and 2009 in Review...

We had the most “trying” two years since we began in 2003. Although we did jump every hurdle hurled at us, we can only be extremely humble and grateful for everyone’s heartfelt support, be it monetary aide or well wishes and prayers. We truly thank all of our supporters from the bottom of our heart. **THANK YOU!!!!**

Please know that if we delay in our “thank you’s”, it is not because we are ungrateful or unappreciative, it is because we continue to be understaffed and stay so busy with actual relocation—we simply run out of time and energy to complete our tasks as timely as we should. We don’t forget....

Mother’s Day 2008 brought us tragedy as Joann Haddock, founder of Citizens for Prairie Dogs, had a rollover accident with a pheasant (yes...a pheasant—he won, too) and totaled our relocation SUV. We



Our “new” PD Mobile

found that as low as we were & without hope of having a 2008 relocation season, we only had to reach out and ask for help. We received a great amount of help—some from constant supporters and some from strangers. All were “prairie dog people”. People that realize how remarkable and special prairie dogs are. The tremendous support was touching and miraculous in every way. We were able to purchase a used Suburban and we are loving it so very much. More importantly, the prairie dogs are loving it—very spacious and comfy!

2009—It has been filled with more tragedies for prairie dogs in the

Lubbock and Clovis area than seen previously. Housing and commercial development has taken it’s toll. We hope you will help spread the message of responsible relocation.. See inside for more details.

Our hopes for the future...

May the prairies always remain for future generations of all animals living amongst them with such rugged grace and willful determination.

May the prairie dogs have some peace one day, and live their simple lives without man’s constant demands on the land and conquering

attitudes.

May the hawks always sweep and soar and hunt.

May the grasses always swish and moan and just be— no plows hovering nearby.

Endangered Species?

The current ruling by USFWS is that black-tailed prairie dogs are not eligible to be listed as endangered.

Citizens for Prairie Dogs does not believe that a listing would help the prairie dogs. Of course, we would love them to be protected and not one ever to die at the hands of a bulldozer, hunter or poisoner. We believe the true ammunition to help them is to provide state land owner incentive programs (worthwhile ones!) for private and public landowners, expanded relocation, and education of the importance of the prairie ecosystem by dispelling the ignorant myths passed on about the prairie dogs.



Pet Trade

Citizens for Prairie Dogs is absolutely against the pet trade. Although we know there are some prairie dogs that make excellent pets, should they BE pets?

Pet prairie dogs must be hand raised and so are caught just when they are coming above ground or right before-only about 5-6 weeks old. This is tragic as they are so very family oriented and social. Many go to homes very unfit. It is cruel to dismantle these close knit families.

The capturer simply takes them with no regard to the fact they will not all make good pets. In our personal experience for example, out of 10 baby prairie dogs hand raised (keep in mind some traders have hundreds), there will be MAYBE several excellent pets with the others being more shy, scared to death, and even bitiful. What happens to those? They are either released back to the wild after being human raised (w/less of a chance of survival) or sent to homes anyway and then later given up.

Pet Trade Horrors

Many pet stores/dealers end up with hundreds left over. What happens then? Well, some are simply discarded back to the wild with lessened defenses. Some are fed as hawk and snake food. Is it really THAT important that you have a pet prairie dog. We say NOT. We have heard so many horror stories of what pets are fed, some just unbelievable. Pet dogs get a hold of them in their own homes, some are electrocuted as they are very curious creatures. The list is long. You don't sell what you love and you don't sell what really doesn't belong to you.



“The idea of wilderness needs no defense. It only needs more defenders.”

Edward Abbey

Some of Our Current Relocation Projects

We have been working on several large locations that are continuous jobs while taking on many more from development in the Lubbock, TX and eastern NM areas.

Indiana Baptist Church has been the ultimate challenge, but we continue on. These prairie dogs definitely have a mind of their own and are quite unwilling to leave their homes (how can one blame them?) We thank IBC for their patience and support!

We helped remove 82 prairie dogs from Prairie Dog Town, Mackensie Park to thin the too-large population on their limited space. We also removed about 90 prairie dogs from the Meadowbrook Golf Course

right next door as the city of Lubbock was going to poison them (unfortunately they did poison a few—we have tried 4 different times to talk w/the mayor, no call back to date).



Saved this guy at Indiana Baptist Church

A farm in eastern NM does not want their prairie dogs, so we have been working it with a few more to go. We are still taking care of 8 prairie dogs we captured in 2008 that are not releasable. We are in need of donations and/or building supplies for outdoor enclosures for them to enjoy their entire lives.

Education projects

Each November, Joann Haddock goes to Harwell Elementary for their science fair.

The last two years she brought Piper Lee and Chip (prairie dogs rescued from the wild with health issues, unreleasable). She visits with two different classes where the children learn about prairie dogs. Although they mainly focus on Piper and Chip, they do get to learn about wild prairie dogs and their habitat.

It is always a joy to work with these children and wish there was more time and opportunities for MANY science fairs and programs.



More relocation

Unfortunately, many times we are not notified of prairie dogs in jeopardy until it is too late to save them all on a location.

Although it is difficult, at best, to deal with these situations, we believe the public needs to know about not only the good and happy stories, but also the brutal and horrific ones as well. After discovering an area of road expansion at Quaker Ave and Erskine @ Loop 289 in Lubbock (property owned by Texas Tech University), we contacted the groundskeeper. Although we did (and still have) permission to capture any surviving prairie dogs, they tell us there is no money in the budget to assist us in relocating all the prairie dogs!! We only asked for \$200 to \$300! It is a shame that some landowners chose not to be totally responsible and good stewards of the land.

*"What is life?...It's
the breath of a
buffalo in the winter
time. It's the little
shadow which runs
across the grass and
loses itself in the
sunset."*

Chief Blackfoot

Highlights of the GOOD

We want the public to know of the responsible individuals and businesses that believe in saving rather than killing.

We want to thank the following for opting for relocation over poison:

M/M G. Hicks, Mrs. Howard, Indiana Baptist Church, Lubbock Lake Landmark, Calvillo Funeral Home, M/M Hurlebusch, Betenbough Homes, Ms. C.

Wall, Big Spring Prison, Boys & Girls Club, TX DOT, South Plains Foodbank, Lubbock CDC, South Plains College, Ms. Elias, Tres M Proper-

ties, L. Higgins, Ms. Angle. (and others)

Again, thank you all so much. Relocation allows these prairie dogs a second chance to live. In a perfect world, relocation would not even be needed...Relocation entails lots and lots of hard work, more sweat, sometimes blood and often tears. Yet we believe in it. We must be guardians of these little guys.



Piper Lee, see below

Piper Lee-A Miracle

In August 2007, out of the blue I decided to call a friend, Nikki, to touch base. She told me she had been through Snyder, TX and saw a pitiful tiny prairie dog w/tusk like teeth. She knew the prairie dog would not make it much

longer. After I obtained permission from the city, on August 19 we went down to capture the poor youngster. The minute we drove up to the pathetic little enclosed town, we spotted her immediately. As I was flushing the burrow

she kept poking up just out of my reach. Then to my surprise, an adult came up before she did—unusual as the babies almost always come up first. I was beyond shocked at her condition. **NO WAY could she be alive.** Cont. below...

Piper Lee continued

Her mouth was unable to close due to one tooth growing in a curved path down her throat and then her two bottom front teeth growing out like two inch tusks. She could not eat or drink. She would have died within days or weeks. Never have I seen a

prairie dog her age

that small and pitiful.



Well, as you can see, she is just beautiful now and has a very gentle demeanor. She really can only be called a miracle. She is always loved by everyone who meets her. She lives with her buddy Chip and appreciates life now. JH

"Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it."

Chief Seattle

Highlights of the BAD

We hope you will take the time to contact any or all of these people/entities and we hope you will not support them or their products in any way. We also believe in karma! Top of this list is Jeff Thomas of Palo Duro Builders, builder of Zach's Club in Lubbock, TX. Others who chose inhumane methods of killing prairie dogs are: City of Lubbock (Parks & Recreation), NM DOT, X-Fab (Mike Stanton,

groundskeeper), O'Hair Shutters (George Tucker), South Plains Fairgrounds, Accenture Construction (Billy Scott)-built Buffalo Wild Wings, 19th St, Lubbock, Ford Devel-

opment, Dallas, TX (Rex Robertson), Lak-eridge Estates, Lubbock. There are many more. If you want more detailed contact info, please email or call me—citizens4pds@aol.com

806-657-4563

It is past time for people and businesses to choose humane methods of removal. We can't stop development, but we can make people civilized and more caring. JH



We need your help PLEASE...

There is never enough time or money in the relocation process. We pledge to continue to do the extremely hard physical and emotional work demanded but we need help in other ways in order to continue. No surprise— we desper-

ately need money, gift cards for gas or building supplies (Lowe's or Home Depot), volunteers, suitable land to take the displaced prairie dogs to, help in fundraising, and help to further public awareness for the plight of the prairie

dog. We have also spent about \$2,500 for food for Prairie Dog Town, Mackenzie Park, Lubbock, TX. They would starve without us.

Can you please help us so we can help the underdogs?

"As soon as we take one thing by itself, we find it hitched to everything in the universe."

John Muir

Future Plans

Currently we are working on a new website. Hopefully it will be up and running very soon.

If you wish to receive an online version of this and future newsletters, please contact us with your email address. For now, the newsletter will be sent

out bi-annually. We want you to know what we do and why we do it. In the future, we will have fun facts and info about prairie dogs and other animals



associated with them. There are many, many adventures along the way we will share with you. There are always many sad events as well. Those stories need to be told also. It is a journey—an important one.



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Citizens for Prairie Dogs is a Texas based non-profit association dedicated to the preservation of prairie dogs. We focus on directly saving those that are in danger of being poisoned, built on, or those unwanted on public or private lands by humane relocation.

We educate the public about the importance of prairie dogs and their tremendous role in the prairie ecosystem. Many people do not realize that in Texas alone, the number of prairie dogs has been reduced by 99.7% in the last 100 years.

We know our efforts are never enough but we do make a difference and will continue to.



Help us help them...