

V I S T A S



WEDNESDAY MORNING
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From the desk of V. Marie Martin
Foundation Director

Scott and Carol Ritchie (center) stand by the plaque where their names have been engraved as the recipients of the **2018 Friends of the Flint Hills**. The plaque is located in the atrium of the **Flint Hills Discovery Center**. Bruce Snead, President of the FHDC Foundation, and V. Marie Martin, Director of the FHDC Foundation, also appear with the Ritchies. Previous recipients recognized on the plaque are: **Symphony in the Flint Hills**, 2017; **Nancy Kassebaum**, 2016; **Jim and Cathy Hoy**, 2015; **Kansas State University**, 2014; **Brian Obermeyer**, 2013; and **Jane Koger**, 2012.



Despite the wintery weather during the April 14 commemoration, nearly all the previous recipients were in attendance. We want to thank the 100-plus guests who came from **Bartlesville (Okla.)**, **Wichita**, **Rose Hill**, **El Dorado**, **Matfield Green**, **Cottonwood Falls**, **Strong City**, **Elmdale**, **Emporia**, **Olpe**, **Reading**, **Paxico**, **Topeka** and **Manhattan**. Their presence made this a special evening for the Ritchies who have been so instrumental in efforts to preserve and protect the Flint Hills.

During her comments from the podium, Carol, who grew up in southwest Iowa, spoke about her passion for the outdoors and the prairie, and the need for children to experience it. **"Iowa is where I learned to love the land,"** she said. **"The Flint Hills is the land I love."**

The Discovery Center is pulling out all the stops for the annual Flint Hills Festival on Saturday, May 19, on the Blue Earth Plaza and inside the Discovery Center from 10 am-5 pm. To avoid waiting in line on the 19th, purchase your admission ticket in advance online and start checking out the vendors and events as soon as you arrive.

At the Festival, you will experience the culture and beauty of the Flint Hills and enjoy **live entertainment, food trucks, beer and wine tastings, children's activities, local craft vendors** and much more. Also during the festival, ticketholders will receive admission to the Discovery Center's newest exhibit: **BE THE DINOSAUR!** Regular admission rates apply, but FHDC members get in free with membership card and ID. Tickets are available online at: <http://www.flinthillsdiscovery.org/381/Flint-Hills-Festival>.

Many friends of FHDC have taken advantage of the **FHDC spring membership drive**, with over 350 new or renewing members participating so far. You still have time to purchase your year-long membership and get in free to the FHDC Flint Hills Festival!

Celebrate the Flint Hills by attending any or all of these amazing events:

The 81st Strong City Rodeo on May 31, June 1 and 2. If you don't do rodeo, watch the **Dirty Kanza** at Emporia on June 1, 2 and 3. Not sure which is tougher—being a rodeo rider or a gravel grinder!

Pioneer Bluffs, near **Matfield Green**, hosts the **312th U.S. Army Reserve Band** on the evening of June 6. Nothing gets you in the spirit of summer better than a great military band performance!

The final round of the **Kansas Cowboy Poetry Contest** will be held on June 8 at the **FHDC** at 7 pm; admission is free. The objectives of the Cowboy Poetry Contest are to encourage and develop the art and practice of cowboy poetry; expand outreach in support of this unique artform; and to support local grassroots events that can promote cowboy poetry and benefit the local Kansas economy.

Symphony in the Flint Hills showcases its **Signature Event** at **Rosalia Ranch**, in Butler County, on June 9. Singer/songwriter **Aoife O'Donovan** will join the Kansas City Symphony as guest artist. This year's theme is **Water Ways** which explores natural, cultural and structural elements of water in the Flint Hills. The day-long event includes prairie walks, covered wagon rides, inspirational talks, prairie art, cowboy poetry and an after-concert party and dance. Get your tickets early!

Since 1916, Camp Wood has provided the opportunity for kids to enjoy summer adventures in the Flint Hills tallgrass prairie! Starting June 10, Camp Wood offers a great season to learn about the wonders of the prairie from traditional camp sessions of horseback riding, archery and swimming to non-traditional camps like construction, drama, paintball, top-chef, forensics or media camp.

Washunga Days, June 15, 16 and 17, at Council Grove celebrates the history and culture of Council Grove and Morris County. The annual festival celebrates **Kaw Native American Heritage** with members presenting cultural demonstrations at the **Kaw Mission State Historic Site**, a school for Kaw youth in the 1800s. There will be food vendors, a beer garden and carnival, inflatables and a petting zoo during the evenings. Musical entertainment near the **River Walk** Friday and Sat. nights.

Country Stampede gallops into Manhattan on June 21-23. It is the largest annual country music festival in Kansas. Stampede has been held annually at **Tuttle Creek Lake State Park** since 1996. The population of Riley county can swell by 170,000 over the rollicking three-day event!

Thank you to our donors for helping us "GROW GREEN" on April 20. For the second year, the **Foundation** participated in the Greater Manhattan Community Foundation (GMCF) Grow Green Match Day. The **Flint Hills Discovery Center Youth Education Endowment Fund** established by the Foundation at GMCF **received \$6,855** which included a 50-cent-on-the-dollar match for each gift. **We would like to especially thank Mr. Phil Howe, Manhattan**, for his generosity in providing the matching funds to those organizations participating in this year's Grow Green Match Day!

VISTAS Memo, now online at the **FHDC website**, <http://www.flinthillsdiscovery.org/414/Vistas-Memo>. The Foundation's pages are located within the FHDC website, so be sure and take time to browse other sections of the FHDC website to keep up with all the activities happening at the Foundation and the Discovery Center.

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The VISTAS MEMO is provided to advance the cause of philanthropy in support of the Flint Hills Discovery Center. We thank and celebrate all those investing in the Center's unique and dynamic mission.