

Summer 2022

OKPAN QUARTERLY

Volume 4 (Issue 3)

IN THIS ISSUE

3 Letter from the Director

A letter introducing the summer issue from our executive director, Dr. Bonnie Pitblado.

4 Summer Events Calendar

Our summer events calendar for all things archaeology-related in Oklahoma and beyond. Keep an eye out for virtual events!

5 Move the Starting Line

Introduction to student-led community archaeology projects at the University of Oklahoma.

9 Treasure COVES of Information

Student-led project creating a visitor survey for the Edmond Historical Society and Museum.

12 Leave No Digital Trace

New "Leave No Digital Trace" social media campaign for the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge.

15 Accessible Archaeology

A guide to creating alternative text for the OKPAN Quarterly and other digital media.

19 Photo Contest Winner Announcement

Congratulations to the Summer 2022 Photo Contest winner, Charles Wende!

20 Oklahoma Anthropological Society

The latest events and news from OAS.

22 OKPAN Faces

An ongoing series highlighting OKPAN staff, volunteers, interns, and advisory board members.

LETTER FROM OKPAN'S EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



DR. BONNIE PITBLADO

Dear *OQ* Readers,

I hope you are all enjoying your summer and finding creative ways to beat the heat. The pages of this issue of *OQ* offer one way to while away the steamy August days!

Archaeology has changed a lot since I began my career, and the pace of change has accelerated in recent years. In short, in graduate school in the 1990s, I learned to do an archaeology that was largely divorced from the communities most affected by it: landowners, towns where fieldwork occurs, and most especially, descendants of those who left behind the sites that interested me. Today, I am trying to practice an archaeology that adds more value to more people and that avoids extracting knowledge from communities not interested in co-creating knowledge. It is a learning process for me, and one that I enjoy sharing with my students.

This issue of *OQ* illustrates how we are trying to shape an archaeology for the 2020s that serves, rather than exploits, communities and

their heritage. I hope you enjoy reading it as much as we are enjoying being part of a sea change in our field.

Best,

Bonnie Pitblado

OKPAN Executive Director
Robert E. and Virginia Bell
Professor of Anthropological Archaeology
University of Oklahoma

Upcoming Events

Calendar

(Scroll down to see full list of events)

August 16, 2:15PM

Mushroom Growing Workshop

Fort Towson Historic Site, Fort Towson

August 18, 7:00PM

Oklahoma Capitol Restoration Project
presentation by Trait Thompson

Will Rogers Memorial Museum,
Claremore

August 20, 10:00AM

Will's Cowboy Trader Days at the
Ranch

Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch, Oologah

August 20, 10:00AM

Oklahoma All-Black Towns State
Conference

Oklahoma History Center, Oklahoma
City

August 20, 1:00PM

Family Day at the Birthplace Ranch

Will Rogers Birthplace Ranch, Oologah

August 20, 6:30PM

Let's Talk About It: *The Birginian*
(1902) by Owen Wister

Pawnee Bill Ranch and Museum,

Move the Starting Line

Student-Led Community Archaeology at the University of Oklahoma

By Delaney Cooley and Horvey Palacios



Archaeologists establish their careers by examining the material remains left behind by communities throughout time. Yet for most of archaeology's history, this has not been done with respect for or permission from the descendants of those communities. Archaeologists—and the institutions they work for—have benefited from the scientific and historical developments identified from the history and heritage of marginalized people. However, the exploitative practices driving the discipline are slowly being corrected by a growing number of scholars who recognize that the key to understanding the past is not to extract but rather to engage with communities who are invested in its protection. Centering Indigenous archaeologies, community-based methods, and consultation efforts shifts control from the researcher to communities who decide their role in research and the extent of their participation. But these models, though successful, are not widely practiced, in part because collabo-

ration requires more discussion, resources, and time than typical research projects.

As students at the University of Oklahoma, we recognize the importance of ethical collaborations but experience research barriers just as much, if not more so, than experienced professionals. Today, only a minority of students graduate with the experiences necessary to practice ethical archaeology, often after significant personal investment, including piling on external training, professional opportunities, and projects beyond the requisites of their degree. While some students can engage with existing collaborative projects, participation is dependent on faculty who may not have ongoing research or appropriate roles for students. Instead, students would have better access and more equal opportunities if they could learn community engagement skills throughout experiences within the curriculum.

This is precisely what Dr. Bonnie

What is Community Archaeology?

Over the last several decades, new archaeological approaches have emerged to address the ethical shortcomings of the discipline by not only sharing results with the broader public but also engaging with communities to produce that knowledge. These collaborations bring reciprocal benefits to all partners and incorporate lines of evidence from diverse knowledge systems. While community can be broadly construed, these new approaches are specifically designed to empower Indigenous people and other descendant communities.



The Stonewall Inn in New York is a significant Queer heritage site identified in the Community Archaeology student blog for the Society for American Archaeology Queer Interest Group.



Volunteers tend communal gardens for the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma's Growing Hope program.




CHOCTAW
CULTURAL CENTER

**INDIGENOUS
ARCHAEOLOGY DAY**
— OCT 22, 2022 —

ALL AGES ARE WELCOME
TRADITIONAL FOODS WILL BE PROVIDED

SIGN UP NOW!

Point your phone camera at the QR code
and tap the pop up to learn more!



Treasure COVES of Information

Visitor Surveys at the Edmond Historical Society and Museum

By Regan Crider and Hannah Garcia



Since its opening in 1983, the Edmond Historical Society and Museum has made it their primary objective to teach the public about the heritage of Edmond as well as to present new and emerging stories that contribute to the culture of the community. Throughout the last several decades, they have offered an exciting rotation of exhibits and free resources to help with this goal, including their Children's Learning Center and Research Library & Genealogical Center. As many people know, however, maintaining a museum that is free to the public is no easy endeavor, and the institution must rely on a wide range of funding sources to keep their doors open, including large grants, donations, volunteer hours, and a membership program.

When we began this project, we were not sure what direction it would take. Regan initially met with the museum to establish a partnership, and it quickly became clear that funding was their primary concern. While we could not write the grants for them, they suggested that we might be able to help provide a critical piece of data for their grant applications: demographic information about the guests. Although collecting demographic information seems straightforward enough, there are many factors that dictate which methods to employ and what questions are most relevant. After a relatively unsuccessful literature review, we decided to join an online



Visitors tour the Edmond Historical Society and Museum exhibits.

museum forum to survey other institutions about their strategies. Several of the museums responded that they infer demographic information by asking for guest zip codes and cross-referencing them with census data. However, Amy Stephens, the Exhibits Coordinator at the Edmond Historical Society and Museum, expressed concerns with the zip code data for the museum because 75% of museum visitors are from the metro area.

Another popular method forum participants suggested was to survey guests as they visited the museum using a system called "[Collaboration for Ongoing Visitor Experience Studies](#)" (COVES). The system assesses visitor feedback based on an extensive questionnaire and allows museums to compare their data with others in the industry. Although the system is highly effective, the downside of COVES is its price, which even for an institution like the Edmond Museum, is simply too high. However,



The authors modeled their visitor survey from a template provided by COVES (Collaboration for Ongoing Visitor Experience Studies).



Leave No Digital Trace

Community-Based Archaeology in Cyber Space

By Kimb Frey



Stewardship of public lands is not merely the responsibility of the individuals who are employed as land managers; it is the responsibility of everyone. Campaigns like [Keep Our Land Grand](#) and [Leave No Trace](#) teach a broad audience—from the occasional road-tripper to the avid hiker—how to respectfully interact with natural and cultural spaces. However, campaigns like this fail to address how to act responsibly toward nature on social media. People often digitally “visit” sites before ever setting foot in the area by checking out informational websites or social media profiles, but does sharing every bit of information benefit these often fragile spaces? To help raise awareness of how people can respectfully post (or not) about natural and cultural spaces, I worked with the [Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge](#) to create a new campaign, Leave No Digital Trace.

I had previously worked with the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge Visitor’s Center and knew that I wanted to offer any support that I could in the wake of Covid, government-wide staff turnover, and dwindling funding. The Director of Visitor’s Services immediately had a project in mind: the Leave No Digital Trace campaign. As part of this social media project, I would create content, propose a social media strategy, and update the signage around the refuge. Based on each of our schedules, we agreed that my project would con-



The first image from the Leave No Digital Trace campaign posted on June 20th, 2022. See it [here!](#)

sist of a 12-post Leave No Digital Trace Campaign and a strategy document.

We modeled Leave No Digital Trace after [LeaveNoTrace.org](#)’s campaign to teach the Refuge’s visitors how to leave only footprints, be responsible outdoors, and protect the land from abuse and over-use. People are often ignorant of the effect that our social media presence has on our public spaces. Geotagging vulnerable and protected sites, posting digital tracks of unsafe and unauthorized trails, and promoting irresponsible behavior online puts cultural and natural places at risk. In light of this risk, our goal then was to use social media to promote best practices through educational posts and examples of responsible posting. To ensure this project encouraged long-term benefits, we also created an official internal guideline to ensure consistency on the refuge’s social media sites. We were confident that we would be

Make sure to check out the rest of the #NoDigitalTrace campaign on [Facebook!](#)

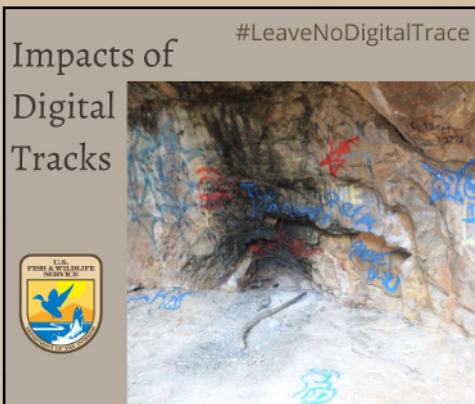


Photo by Joe Moore. Infographic by Kimb Frey & Quinton Smith

Effects of Digital Tracks: Unofficial trails on social trail apps may lead to places that are ecologically, culturally or historically sensitive. Increasing the footprint and accessibility to sensitive locations may result in degradation of these areas. This is why sensitive locations are intentionally left off official maps. This is done to protect the resource. However, when users share their treks and tag their locations, places like these will continue to be at risk.

Posted July 12, 2022.

Accessible Archaeology:

A Sustainable Legacy of Alternative
Text for the *OKPAN Quarterly*

By Elisif Dorsey



As a disabled individual developing a career in archaeology, I have encountered a number of barriers that have prevented me from fully engaging with my field's opportunities. Archaeology is, unfortunately, rather inaccessible, and in an age where inaccessibility can no longer be tolerated, it is time that more of us discussed these barriers and did something to remove them. I encountered the opportunity to address accessibility barriers within archaeology through the Community Archaeology class taught by Dr. Bonnie Pitblado in Spring 2022. In the course, Dr. Pitblado tasked students with collaborating with a community to address a specific concern regarding archaeology or heritage, with the goal of co-creating a product that produced reciprocal benefits. I chose to work with OKPAN not only because of the relationships I had in place with some of its members but also because I knew they were a team dedicated to making archaeology relevant and engaging to as many people as possible. After reaching out to them, it became apparent that the *OKPAN Quarterly's (OQ)* editors and staff had their own accessibility concerns. Together, we formulated a project to address a specific accessibility barrier within this magazine with the goal of allowing wider audiences to be able to engage with its digital content.

The *OQ* editors and I chose to address visual accessibility for individuals struggling or unable to



Author Elisif Dorsey poses with their service dog, Runa.

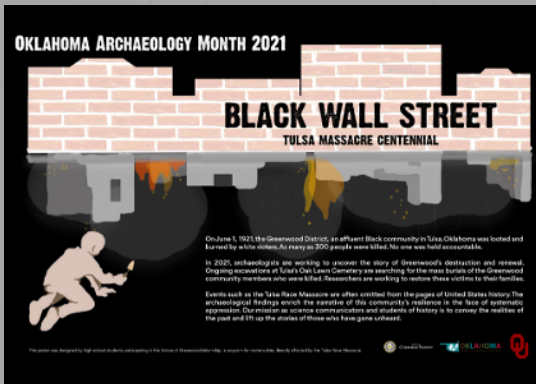
interact with the images and graphics in each issue. We decided to create a sustainable legacy of alternative text (alt text) generation intended to provide content comparable and supplementary to the images themselves. This text is embedded in the document to provide additional information for those who are visually or otherwise impaired. I was tasked with formulating the structure of the project under research parameters provided by my OKPAN partners. Reagan Ballard, a student staff member of OKPAN, was my primary collaborator throughout the process. Reagan, who at the time of our project was a senior in high school, has worked with OKPAN on previous projects, such as authoring the [Voices of Greenwood article](#) in the Fall 2021 issue of the *OQ*. Her experiences gave her unique insight into OKPAN's goals, meth-



*Author of The Voices of Greenwood,
Reagan Ballard.*



Check out Elisif and Reagan's example of digital text in the Fall 2021 issue of the OQ!



The Oklahoma Archaeology Month poster is an image that was featured in Reagan Ballard's *Voices of Greenwood* article in the Fall 2021 issue of the OQ. Based on Elisif and Reagan's criteria for alternative text, they have proposed the preferred text below.

Preferred Alt Text Example:

Black Wall Street: Tulsa Massacre Centennial, building outline with fire and figure with trowel. See Appendix for full text.

Non-Preferred Alt Text Example:

Illustration of Black Wall Street with burning wall and person with a tool. Contains text on Tulsa Race Massacre history.



A special thank you and congratulations to Charles Wende, our summer issue cover photo contest winner!

Charles Wende is currently a junior studying anthropology at the University of Oklahoma. He enjoys nature and wildlife photography.



OAS Fall Dig

September 15 – 18, 2022



The **OKLAHOMA ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY** returns for the fourth time to **MULDROW, OKLAHOMA** in mid September for our **FALL DIG**. Our previous excavations yielded artifacts dating back 800 years and more, the time period when nearby Spiro mounds was thriving. Join us this year and help us uncover tantalizing clues to Oklahoma's distant past!

Participation is open to ages 10 and older, 18 and under accompanied by an adult. Dr. Scott Hammerstedt of the Oklahoma Archaeological Survey will supervise the excavation and answer all questions at the dig. Members of OKPAN, the Oklahoma Public Archaeology Network, and graduate students of the University of Oklahoma Department of Anthropology will be on site to conduct demonstrations and provide instruction in proper excavation techniques.

To help excavate, all participants must be Oklahoma Anthropological Society members.

OAS Membership Fees:

- Society membership (starting at) - \$20
- Students over age 18 membership - \$10
- Additional family member - \$5
- 2 or more family members - \$10

Students between 10 and 18 years of age
with adult supervisor - Complementary membership



Our dig is an ideal opportunity for anyone who have wanted to participate in a genuine archaeological excavation, but have never had the opportunity. Guest dig kits, including trowels and other essential equipment for excavating will be provided by the society. The dig will also be an excellent chance for students and avocational archaeologists to sharpen skills and gain experience.

For more information, contact OAS Dig Chairman Ray McAllister at okla.anthro.society@gmail.com

SEE YOU THERE!

2022 OAS Fall Archaeology Car Tour



Quartz Mountain State Park, Lake Altus and vicinity, October 29, 2022

Join the **OKLAHOMA ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY** at **QUARTZ MOUNTAIN STATE PARK, OK** in late October for our **FALL CAR TOUR**. We will visit several historical and archaeological sites throughout Southwest Oklahoma. Guiding us will be Bob Blaising, retired archaeologist for the Federal Bureau of Reclamation, and expert on the areas history and pre-history.

The group will meet around **11:30 AM** at the **Quartz Mountain Lodge**, for lunch. The tour will begin at **1:00 PM** with stops to view and discuss the distinctive works of the Civilian Conservation Corps and the Works Progress Administration. We will also look at the history of Greer County when it was claimed as part of Texas, and at the Great Western Cattle Trail. We will discuss military expeditions through the area and still earlier, the Great Spanish Road to the Red River. A famous Kiowa Medicine dance was held near the Lodge, and the Wichita Tribe has a long ancestral history in the area. We will even hear about some sites where mammoth remains were found. We will return to the Lodge for supper and lodging will be Available at the Lodge, as well as at cabins and campgrounds in the State Park.



The tour is **FREE** for OAS members, but there will be limited parking at some stops on the tour, so reservations are required and carpooling will be encouraged.

Participants must be members of the **Oklahoma Anthropological Society**. Memberships in the Oklahoma Anthropological Society are \$20 annually, or \$10 for students. Family discounts are available. Membership benefits include a chance to participate in society excavations and other activities.

For more information, contact OAS Dig Chairman Ray McAllister at okla.anthro.society@gmail.com

OKPAN FACES

We're pleased to introduce you to the talented crew that helps inform the work we do at OKPAN.



ELISIF DORSEY

Intern

Elisif is an undergraduate student at the University of Oklahoma majoring in anthropology. They are an archaeology collections assistant with the Sam Noble Museum of Natural History and a former student intern in the museum's ethnology collection. They began working with OKPAN during a student research project with fellow intern Reagan Ballard to develop alternative text for the *OKPAN Quarterly*. They will be continuing efforts to create and maintain overall accessibility within OKPAN.



MEGAN WALSH

Outreach Coordinator

Megan is a bioarchaeologist in the graduate program at the University of Oklahoma. She graduated with her BS in anthropology from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville in 2021. She is currently a Masters student with hopes of pursuing her PhD. Her research examines pathology in cremated human remains from the Archaic Period in Athens, Greece. Her research interests include health inequality, paleopathology, identity, and mortuary archaeology.



The Oklahoma Public Archaeology Network's
Mission Statement:

Bridging communities with a passion for the past through public education and outreach, research and teaching partnerships, and professional development opportunities.

OKPAN Quarterly Staff:

Delaney Cooley - Editor-in-Chief

Horvey M. Palacios - Associate Editor

~ Alternative text generated by Elisif Dorsey ~

Click [here](#) to access an accessible version of this issue!

Please follow us on **Facebook** and **Twitter** and visit
our website, okpan.org!