

IN MEMORIUM

There aren't enough words to describe such a magnificent, humble woman who made so many changes for conservation and the environment. **Pat Jones'** legacy cannot be written in a paragraph or in several pages.

Pat grew up the daughter of a prominent lawyer in St. Louis. While growing up during a time when girls were expected to behave a certain way, she enjoyed not being the stereotypical girl; she loved to go outside and get dirty, to explore nature, and to wonder what would happen next. Even until her last moments, this curiosity that was fostered at the family's weekend "Shack" never diminished. Pat became more than just the wife of the legendary Edward D. "Ted" Jones. Her passion, her drive, her interest and her ability to make things happen led to some amazing outcomes. She became known as the Prairie Godmother as stated in People Magazine in 2007.



“When you love something enough that you want it to last forever, you’ve got to give it away.” Pat Jones

In 1986, Pat donated her family farm, which would later become the Young Conservation Area. In 1997, while continuing with her desire and vision to promote conservation, she worked on donating her farm and acreage from her marriage with Ted to the Missouri Department of Conservation in partnership with MU's School of Natural Resources. In Pat's heart and mind, she

envisioned the property to serve as a place for research, restoration, and education. This place was to become Prairie Fork Conservation Area.

As we prepare to celebrate the 22nd year of fostering, caring for and nurturing those dreams at Prairie Fork, we reflect on the past fall's accomplishments. We have 10 research projects being conducted on the property. We restored another 60 acres of prairie to bring us up to a total of 456 acres of prairie plantings, along with many acres of invasive species management and acres under controlled burn management.

In education, we continued to host the following groups this fall:

- The Westminster's STEM Academy.
- Two large Edward Jones events, along with eight smaller tours and fireside chats with Pat Jones.
- The Missouri Pollinator Stewardship class through University of Missouri Extension for six consecutive classes.
- Fun City Youth Academy and United Community Builders groups came out to explore the prairies, forests and pond habitats, in addition two 4th grade classes and a 2nd grade class.
- A teacher's workshop focusing on how to incorporate insects in the curriculum.
- Project Wild Terrestrial, Wild Aquatic and Flying Wild workshops showcasing lessons from each of those areas of interest.
- The annual Youth Dove Clinic, with an added Youth Deer Hunt with mentors.
- Two scout group's campout, along with a Cub Scout pack.
- Two work days to help prepare for the educational events, with the assistance of the Conservation Leadership Corps.
- Dr. Mike Byrne brought out the Wildlife Techniques class to collect seeds this fall.
- Dr. Kerry Clark brought out the Soil Genesis Class to investigate the soil shed and the soil core.
- Dr. Christine Li brought out the Foundations of Environmental Education and a Taiwan Scholar come to talk about youth education.





Other uses on site at Prairie Fork included hosting meetings for the Missouri Prairie Foundation, Missouri Department of Conservation, and Missouri Department of Natural Resources. In spreading the word about Prairie Fork and its mission, Dr. Christine Li and Amber Edwards tabled booths at several events, along with presenting at the Missouri Environmental Education Association Conferences.

In October, The Prairie Fork Trust Board had an opportunity to hear from several PI's who presented research updates at the fall meeting. We continue to find new opportunities to connect people of all ages with nature. If you know of any group interested in wanting to visit Prairie Fork or to use it as a meeting space, go to the <http://prairiefork.missouri.edu/> and make an appointment on the calendar tab.

As one can see, the vision that Pat wanted for Prairie Fork continues to thrive and to develop in many ways. It is the hope that Prairie Fork will continue to expand and to serve within Pat's desires for this area that she and Ted loved so dearly. We will mourn the loss of a dear friend, a champion, and a visionary. However, Pat would want us to dry our eyes and to continue to follow in her footsteps of giving of our time and of ourselves by helping people of all ages to get outside and engage the world around them. As Pat always said, we need to, "learn, get dirty, and have fun!"

A celebration of life will be held at a later date in spring which is yet to be determined.

Donations can be made to: Conservation Federation of Missouri, Friends of Ted and Pat Jones, 728 W Main St, Jefferson City, MO 65101, <http://www.confedmo.org/donate/> Attn: Pat Jones OR Missouri Conservation Heritage Foundation, Attn: Prairie Fork, P.O. Box 366, Jefferson City, MO 65102. OR Katy Trail State Park, check or money order, please make it payable to Katy Trail State Park and send it to: Katy Trail State Park, PO Box 176, Jefferson City, MO 65102. To make an online donation: <https://mostateparks.com/katytraildonations> (Submitted and photos by **Amber Edwards.**)



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