



It is an honor for me to nominate Caroline (Susie) Johnson for the Illinois Department of Natural Resources 2016 Volunteer of the Year award. The years of service and dedication she has devoted to Goose Lake Prairie State Natural Area currently span over eighteen years. Her determination and desire to share our rich cultural history are truly awe inspiring as she enters into her nineteenth year of volunteer service to the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.

Susie joined the Goose Lake Prairie Partners as a volunteer in 1998. She has held numerous positions within the organization during her years of service. In 2004, Susie re-established the Tallgrass Journal newsletter and served as editor for many years. She has been president of the Goose Lake Prairie Partners from 2006 through June 2016. In 2006, Susie created the first website for the Prairie Partners and continues to be the Partners Webmaster. In 2007, she encouraged the Prairie Partners to hold an annual Nature Photo Contest/Exhibit and in 2012 the youth division was added to the exhibit. The Nature Photo Contest/Exhibit is enjoyed by all our visitors to the park.

Through the years, Susie has created many displays and bulletin boards for the Goose Lake Prairie Visitor Center. She is very active in rug weaving projects, working on cataloging the book collection, serving on the Mural Committee, and volunteering for weekend desk service at the Visitor Center. Susie has updated and revised the cards that are placed on the plant stakes and has just finished printing new plant stake cards. She has served as Committee Chair and Co-Chair for Cabin Festival, Prairie Day and the Nature Photo Show for many years. Susie has been active in Grant writing, securing funds for the festivals, and also reworking of the windmill, pump, and drainage to the pond. She has worked on the Butterfly Committee, ordering new specimens as needed. In addition, Susie enthusiastically served on every committee within the group with pride and perseverance.

Susie is an inspiration to all who have had the pleasure of working with her. Her love and dedication to the preservation and education of our heritage has benefitted thousands of park visitors over the past eighteen years. The time, dedication, and knowledge Susie has donated over the years makes her a highly recommended candidate for this most deserved award.

*Site Superintendent Duane Snow*